

EXPLANATORY

It will be seen as a glance that many of the events recorded in the following pages were written some years after they had actually occurred. Hence it will be easily understood that much that could otherwise have been made interesting is wanting, especially in matters of detail, and indeed it may be that for the same reason some events of importance have been omitted altogether. And for all this we must suppose that there is no one to blame. A religious community taking possession of a new foundation in a strange country is very much like a civil colony settling down in and processing themselves of a newly discovered territory, such as we read of as having taken place regarding America during the last decades of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries. When the first impressions and surprised arising from the novelty of the surroundings had passed away, the newly arrived naturally applied themselves to provide a means of subsistence, and even in this there was more to be contended with and overcome than they had foreseen or anticipated. A variety of manners and customs had to be learned and what was perhaps more difficult, much had to be on unlearned; savage tribes, whose tenant-right was founded on years of actual possession had either to be reconciled or conquered, and all this with much more had to be accomplished before the history of the settlement could be written. Possibly some such reason may have existed to excuse the inactivity of the inmates of Mount Argus. It is true that a chronicle or Platea was commenced some time or other and a few jottings of the first twelve months placed on record but for many years afterwards it was altogether neglected. When it was finally resumed in 1874, it was begun by the chronicler with a note of apology which ran thus: "Through a little negligence this Platea was discontinued from the year 1857 till 1874, when it was again commenced and connected with the past as correctly as memory would allow." Instead of a little he might have said a great deal of negligence. But it was well that memory was not the only source available. Whilst the work of attending day by day to the Platea was overlooked, there were others who, whether for amusement or a desire to preserve a record of those events worth perpetuating, were doing so in a private capacity, and notably so, the late Father Salvian. This religious, from his arrival in these countries until a few months before his death, kept not only a diary in which he took copious notes of most things occurring in the Province which came under his notice, but wrote out in a more extended form during the last years of his life what he called "the Annals of the Anglo Hibernian Province". To the industry which he exercised in this respect is due the preservation of much that would have been altogether lost or forgotten. Though his story was told in broken English and sometimes with a slight prejudicial colouring, his dates and facts remained the same. The Province is therefore much indebted to him for the time and attention which he bestowed in collecting and processing materials which may one day form the basis of a history of the children of S Paul of the Cross in these countries.

But whilst regretting the want of attention in chronicling the events of the Retreat during those seventeen years, it may on the other hand have its advantages. In the first place it will have less the appearance of a diary, be more uniform and consequently more readable; so too a greater amount of discrimination can be used in selecting what may be handed down to posterity. Though the materials are scanty enough, much has been preserved that would not be interesting: a mere repetition of the every day life of a religious community.

The Chronicle has been written on the one side only of the paper and this with the view of saving the trouble of re-writing, should any Superior in the immediate or distant future have the Platea printed in order the better to secure its preservation.

Looking back through the last forty years one cannot help comparing the Mt Argus of 1856 with the Mount Argus of today. The material buildings have all disappeared, but have

been replaced by others more suitable and imposing. So too, the members of that past community: all have gone to their reward. Some of them rest in the far distant Bulgaria, others again in the soil of their native Italy, whilst not a few repose beneath the shadow of the stately building which has since replaced the humble and unpretending structure in which they worshipped. Green as the grassy sward which, each succeeding Spring, will renew itself on their quiet graves, be the remembrance of their many virtues and their bright example in the hearts of those who knew and love them!

Norbert of S. Paul of the Cross, McGettigan

Mount Argus,

Christmas – 1896.

Introductory.

The close of the year 1829 saw the approach of better things for religion in Ireland. During that year the passing of the “Catholic Emancipation Act” removed many of the wrongs from which Catholics in this country had suffered for years, and placed on an equality with their more favoured brethren those who for conscience sake had borne the yoke of oppression during the long and dark night of bigotry and persecution. But it was only the dawn of a brighter day. The sun of liberty that shone down on the country showed to be sure that nation’s heart faithful to its trust, but with the exception of the deposit of faith, little else was present to cheer or comfort. Tired out in the long and unequal struggle, the people had lost sight of their civil rights and privileges, and from the continued and enforced slavery, they almost began to feel that they were in reality slaves. The spirit of the nation had been crushed and well nigh broken, and those who survived the storm saw in the light of their newly-found liberty how much the battle for faith and fatherland had cost them. The Church alike and the school had gone. Nothing remained to mark the Catholicity of be-gone days: no vestige of those centres of sanctity and learning which at one time had drawn to our shores the youth of other lands remained, and the temples which the piety of our forefathers had erected to the glory of the Most High were either razed to the ground or desecrated by ritual alien alike to God and to Ireland. And so the work of re-building had to be begun.

It was doubtless with feelings of mingled gladness and regret that the Irish Catholic of those days looked around on the wreck which presented itself to his view. Like the ship-wrecked mariner whom the waves had thrown high and safe on the beach, but had engulfed all his fortune and belongings, he thanked the Giver of all good for having spared his life, with which he might even in his poverty begin to live again. Nor was he without hope, for strong as the faith which lighted him through these years of darkness was his confidence in Him whom he had never ceased to trust. And with him too would be the brave men who both by work and example had often rekindled his failing courage to fight on for that victory which had just been won. It has generally been acknowledged even by non-Catholic witnesses that the preservation of the faith in Ireland was due under God to the exertions and sacrifices of the religious orders, and particularly to the children of S. Francis and S. Dominic; and eloquent testimony is borne to this by most writers on the subject, but by none more so than the gifted writer of the Centenary History of Maynooth College”. “This, he says, is not the place to enthuse at length on the signal services which these two great orders have rendered in the past, and will continue to render to the Irish church and Irish people. It is not difficult to trace their history in the pages of De Burgo, and also, if not in Wadding’s Annals, in the simple and eloquent pages of Father Meehan’s version of Mooney’s History of the Franciscan Convents in Ireland. From the beginning they took kindly to the Irish ; and the

Irish took kindly to them not merely the Celtic Irish, like the O Donnell's and O Brien's, but the Anglo-Norman Irish also, like the De Burgos and the Geraldines. The ruins of their once beautiful convents and churches, that still meet the traveller's eye in all the sweetest spots throughout the land, recall the munificent generosity of the Irish chiefs, and the exquisite taste of the friars both for natural and architectural beauty. When the savage edicts of Henry and Elizabeth drove them from their beautiful homes, they did not desert the people who had cherished them in better days. No ; so long as they dared, they still haunted, at the peril of their lives, the old convents which they loved so well ; and in even darker days, when to be arrested meant imprisonment, and oftentimes death, they still returned from their houses in the Continent in various disguises ; they hid themselves in the caves and woods, or in the hovels of the persecuted Catholics; they went amongst them, under the cover of night, to instruct the young, to administer the Sacraments, to say the stolen Mass. And thus, when every earthly hope was fled, and the poor Catholics lay prone and bleeding under the heels of the persecutors, the friars were always near them, and with a healing power from on high, they brought a balm for every wound, and poured into the nation's breaking heart the cordial of spiritual strength and vitality. St. Clement's and St. Isidore's never failed to send to Ireland the wine from the royal Pope to strengthen and to gladden the hearts of the poor persecuted Catholics of Ireland. They clung to our fathers when they were in want and in woe ; and, therefore, in these days of and freedom, we cannot, and we will not, forget them.” *page 83

To these deeds of heroism or words of praise the sons of S. Paul of the Cross could lay no claim: they had not yet taken their place in these countries to do battle against the enemies of our holy religion. Little over fifty years had elapsed since their saintly Founder had gone to receive his well-earned reward, and the infant Congregation had not sufficient time to grow and spread itself into distant countries. But though denied the privilege of sharing in the glory so bravely earned by the sons of the older orders by a circumstance such as deprives the younger son the right of inheritance, still there is no knowing how much Ireland may have occupied the thoughts of S. Paul in his prayers and desire for the conversion of the persecuting country. He desired the conversion of England; for this he prayed long and fervently, and when it pleased the Most High to draw aside the veil, and permit him to see his children labouring for that object in these countries, we are scarcely at liberty to conclude that there was not vouchsafed to him to see the part which the sons of S. Patrick would take in the fulfilment of that much desired wish. It was the same God who had on many previous occasions revealed to saint and prophet the mysteries of the future that enlightened our holy Founder on the occasion of his vision, but how far he saw their labours in detail must for ever remain a mystery.

Faithful to this desire of S. Paul of the Cross, his immediate successors in the government of the Congregation kept in view his wish to make a foundation in England. Frequently it seemed to be on the very verge of fulfilment when some unforeseen obstacle would intervene to prevent its accomplishment. At one time it was the want of benefactors sufficiently influential to encourage and carry out the design, at another subjects qualified were wanting. A knowledge of the English language was necessary, and from reports that have come down to us, this qualification seemed to our southern brethren an insurmountable difficulty. It appeared to them a much easier task to qualify for a mission to the Patagonians than to attempt to master the tongue of the Saxon.

As early as 1831 the long desired project began to take definite shape. In that year Father Dominic of the Mother of God (Barberi) became acquainted with the Honourable and Reverend George Spencer, and the latter, whose anxiety for the conversion of England was almost a passion, was delighted to find that a corresponding anxiety animated the breast of

the saintly Passionist. For some years these two zealous priests, who were to be so much alike in after life, corresponded regularly on the subject of the English foundation, and though they employed every available means at their disposal, yet did their plans for some reason or other always come to naught. Persuaded however that it was the will of God, Father Spencer multiplied his exertions, and in April 1839 presented a memorial to the seventeenth General Chapter, which was held that year in SS. John and Pauls, Rome, praying for a community to be sent to England. Another petition for the same object was presented to the same General Chapter by Cardinal Acton. The capitular Fathers agreed to accept the offer, but the gentleman who had undertaken to defray the expenses withdrew from his agreement, and again the matter fell to the ground. Nothing daunted by these disappointments, Father Spencer now asked the Superiors for a foundation in Belgium, and without much difficulty succeeded, and early in the following year, 1849, Fr. Dominic took possession of the new Retreat in the diocese of Tournay. During the November of the same year, Fr. Dominic, at the request of Dr (afterward Cardinal) Wiseman, paid a visit to London, but returned to Belgium without having arranged anything definite about the new foundation. But matters were gradually ripening. During the Summer of the following year, Dr. Wiseman, accompanied by Dr. Walsh, Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District, again called on Fr. Dominic, and this time gave him a formal invitation to England. The invitation was accepted, and on the 7th of September Fr. Dominic and Fr. Amadeus arrived at Oscot, where they remained until the 17th February '42, when they took possession of the first Passionist Retreat at Aston Hall near Stone in Staffordshire.

The events which followed the opening of the new Retreat by Fr Dominic until his death in August 1849 belong more particularly to the chronicles of some of the houses in England. It may be remarked however that they were years full of interest and glory for the Congregation. The saintly Founder of the Anglo Hibernian Province was a worthy representative of S. Paul of the Cross. His was no easy task during the seven years which he laboured for England's conversion. The nation inherited the hatred of the royal despoiler of convents and monasteries to the religious dress, and hence the appearance of the Passionist habit amongst them aroused their worst feelings, to which they strove to give expression on every available occasion. Not only was it a religious dress but one which they had never seen nor heard of. With the Franciscan and the Dominican they were in some degree familiar and so were not afraid; the graceful flowing robes of the Benedictine too they could understand, for the memory of their labours still lingered in the country. But the mourning garb and sandaled feet of the Passionist were strange to them, and besides the men who wore this habit had come amongst them with the avowed object of converting them to the faith of their fathers. England's conversion by the sons of S. Paul of the Cross was spoken of everywhere. Newspapers wrote about it; persons preached about it; gossiping women talked about it; fanatics raved about it, and for the moment the loaves and fishes of the establishment seemed in danger. No wonder then that the people were up in arms against them; that they were hooted and insulted whenever they appeared in public; that organised bodies of every shade of Protestantism entered upon an anti-Catholic warfare with the view of protecting merry England from the invasion of the common enemy.

None however paid less attention to these outbursts of bigotry and opposition than the saintly Father Dominic himself. He knew it was the natural outcome of long and carefully trained hatred of everything Catholic and consequently before converting to Catholicity, he must first remove the prejudices which had sunk into and taken deep root in the heart of the nation. For this he laboured, he preached, he prayed. He never found fault with the people for mocking him, for despising him, for hating him. He pitied them and multiplied his prayers for them, and hence during the short time which he laboured amongst them, he saw many

wanderers return to the fold, not only the greatest intellects of the land, but hundreds of the poor of whose conversion there is no record in the nation's history. After all though his mission was a hard and in some respects a thankless one, it was not without its bright side. He looked at the work in which he was engaged with other eyes than those of the flesh, and when he came to lay down his arms in death at a wayside Railway Station he was consoled by the thought that the Congregation was firmly established in the country, and that the work which he had begun would go on, prosper and succeed.

On his deathbed Father Dominic appointed Father Ignatius Spencer - whom he had received about two years before into the Congregation - Provincial of the infant Province, which appointment was afterwards confirmed by the Father General. Father Ignatius was in Belgium at the time of Father Dominic's death, the first intimation of which he had from the newspapers, as a letter written to him had gone astray. He hastened back to England and at once assumed the government of the Province.

During all these years we find not desire expressed to extend the Congregation to Ireland. Doubtless the want of subjects was a drawback, for though additional help had arrived from Italy, the ever-increasing duties in England were more than could be conveniently overtaken.

In the month of August 1851, soon after the first Provincial Chapter had been held in S. Wilfrid's, Father Vincent Grotti with Fathers Martin and Ambrose give a mission in Birr, King's County, which may be said to be the introduction of the Passionists to the Irish at home. Though a mission had previously been given in Dublin it failed to awake the enthusiasm in the breasts of both missionaries and people, which the strong simple faith of the country soon aroused into activity. From that day the Passionists and the Irish people understood each other, and from that day too Father Vincent became determined to obtain a foundation in the country.

A few years more however came and went before the realisation of his desire. From 1851 till 1855 he had frequently been in Ireland on missionary work; had spoken with Bishops and priests about a foundation and though he received encouragement from all sides it was without any practical result. A place had been offered by Dr Vaughan, Bishop of Killaloe, near Nenagh, but it was found to be unsuitable; so too an offer was made of a site in the neighbourhood of Belfast, but the peace-loving son of sunny Italy preferred not to risk his life amongst the adherents of the "glorious and immortal William". Besides he considered it would be more advantageous to get a foundation in or near Dublin, not only because it would be more central and convenient to England, but also because of the greater likelihood of meeting with vocations amongst the large Catholic population. For though the Congregation was scarcely a dozen years in England it was already showing signs of failing health and vitality, arising principally from the want of funds and young men to increase its members. True there had been a goodly number of applications, and many had joined and even persevered for a few years, but the greater number of them for some reason or other gave up the religious life and returned to the world to engage in other pursuits. The infant Province was also much crippled for want of funds. The Catholic population amongst whom they laboured were for the most part extremely poor, and hence unable to give; moreover the country had not yet thrown away the effects of its anti-Catholic teaching to understand how those who served at the altar should live by the altar. Many expressed themselves willing to accept the teaching of the fathers and join the church, if such teaching were supplemented with some of the good things of this world, but they could not understand why men were asked to travel the difficult and thorny path that leads to eternal bliss, without that material support which they considered necessary to sustain them on their journey. Little wonder then

that F. Vincent looked anxiously for a foundation in Ireland, when, in 1854, he was charged with the government of the Province. He saw at once how poor the Congregation was in those necessary elements which in a great measure could guarantee its existence and success in these countries. For this he sought an interview with Dr Cullen, then Archbishop of Dublin, and His Grace not only received him graciously, but promised to aid him in securing a place in his diocese for the Congregation of the Passion.

This was in 1852, but it was not until the September '55 that the Archbishop communicated with F. Vincent to the effect that he was unable to provide a suitable site and that F. Vincent himself should take the matter in hand. In August of this year F. Vincent, who was staying for some days in Dublin after concluding a series of missions in the country parts of Ireland, was introduced to the Rev. Matthew Collier, who at that time was one of the curates in Rathmines, and during the conversation, Father Collier expressed his surprise that the Passionists had no house of their order in Ireland. F. Vincent told him how anxious he was to get a foundation, also how desirous the Archbishop was, and that the only drawback was the one of a place suited to the work and the requirements of the Congregation. It then occurred to F. Collier that a place known as Mount Argus, and belonging to a Mrs Byrne, a great friend of his, would suit exactly and that he thought Mrs Byrne would willingly dispose of the property. They set out at once for Mount Argus, but were disappointed to find that Mrs Byrne was from home. F. Vincent was delighted with the situation, and made up his mind to secure it if at all possible, but as he was obliged to leave for England, he instructed F. Collier to see Mrs Byrne as soon as she returned and communicate to him the result of the interview. As nothing definite had been heard from F. Collier, F. Vincent accompanied by F. Bernadine returned to Dublin in the following April and soon, in company with F. Collier paid a second visit to Mount Argus. The result of this visit was that Mrs Byrne professed her willingness to treat regarding the sale of the property, and eventually consented to allow the Passionists to become the owners of Mount Argus for the sum of £2,200. F. Vincent immediately communicated the good news to the Archbishop, and his Grace requested that before giving his formal approval, F. Vincent should give him a statement in writing as to the spirit and aims of the Congregation, and the work which they were prepared to undertake in the diocese. This document was supplied without delay, and the Archbishop, after consulting his Chapter, informed F. Vincent to take possession at once. The next step was to obtain the consent of the Father General, who at that time was the Most Rev, Father Anthony of S. James, and his Paternity joyfully gave the necessary permission to complete the purchase of Mount Argus. It was necessary however in order to secure a proper title that the property should pass through the Encumbered Estates Court, which was done, F. Vincent becoming a yearly tenant meanwhile; hence he was unable to take complete possession until the fourteenth of August 1856.

The grounds of Mount Argus which thus came into the possession of the children of S. Paul of the Cross may be said to be without a history, so far as can be obtained at the present day. It is however a townland in itself distinct from Harold's Cross, Kimmage, Rathlands or any of the adjoining properties, and contains at the time of writing about twenty four acres and is well enclosed and protected. Like most places in the immediate neighbourhood of the metropolis, it probably witnessed many stirring scenes between the eighth and the thirteenth centuries, when Dublin was made the battleground of many a hard-fought field between the invading Danish despoiler and the defending natives. In this however, it was not so much exposed as were the northern suburbs in consequence of fewer facilities for landing; and the history of those disturbed times tells us how the vicinity of Howth was a frequent witness of those wild engagements so terrible in their results to

invaders and invaded, until the Good Friday of 1014 when “the last great struggle between Christianity and heathenism” was decided on the plains of Clontarf.

No one will deny however that with the coming of the Passionists, Mount Argus began to have a history, and that the grain of mustard seed planted on the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Lady, 1856, has since developed into a magnificent tree whose branches extend themselves to every part of the island. And yet it is a history to which the world can bear only partial witness. The mission of the sons of the Passion of Christ is to men's souls; to those who for a time may have forgotten their obligations to the Most High, or to still further train in the ways of holiness those who persevered in the habits of a sinless youth. Their voices are soon to be heard, alike in the crowded city and in the rural district, and peace and rest were to be brought to many a weary soul through the preaching and influence of the Cross. And when not engaged in missionary work from home, the fathers were content in their attendance on those who visited this little church, and soon Mount Argus became a centre of pilgrimage towards which day by day toiled the sin-laden and the afflicted, certain to return to their homes happier and better for the visit. Surely this is history in the highest and truest sense, for though its record appears in the Book of Life it is nonetheless real: and such is the history of Mount Argus for well-nigh half a century.

The Feast of the Assumption, '56, was a day of much joy and gladness for the Passionists in Ireland. On that day the first mass was celebrated in the little temporary chapel of Blessed Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus. The holy sacrifice was offered up by the Hon. and Rev. Father Paul Mary Pakenham, the first Rector of the new Retreat, and there were present besides Father Vincent and Br. Seraphin, Father Collier and three seculars. It was indeed a small beginning, but was not wanting in those elements which bade the little community hope for the best. Each succeeding day now brought new and sometimes distinguished visitors to the Retreat, amongst whom was his Grace the Archbishop, who expressed himself well pleased with all he saw, and before leaving, gave Father Vincent a donation of twenty pounds towards making the necessary alterations in the house. Several presents of church furniture were also received and prominently a set of vestments of Cloth of gold from a Miss Farrell, and a magnificent cope from the Franciscan nuns in Taunton, Somersetshire, England. As a matter of course the room used as a chapel soon became too small to accommodate the numbers who attended, and it was deemed advisable and indeed necessary to build a new Chapel, and accordingly the foundation stone was laid by F. Vincent on the 19th September. The ceremony, though witnessed by a large number of people was of the simplest kind, as it was intended to celebrate the opening on as large a scale as possible. The building was completed in three months, and the 18th of December was fixed for the opening. The Archbishop had promised to officiate on the occasion but was unable through indisposition to be present. His place was supplied however by Dr. Whelan, Bishop of Bombay, who dedicated the chapel and sang the mass. There were also present Dr O'Connor, Bishop of Saldes, and a large number of priests both secular and regular. The Sermon was preached by The Very Rev. Dr. White, Provincial of the Dominicans, and a devout and attentive congregation heard for the first time the story of the friendship which existed between the children of S. Dominic and those of S. Paul of the Cross. We are unable to state at this distance of time what the offertory amounted to, or indeed whether there was such a thing at all and it may be taken for granted that the offertory was not forgotten, also that the amount was worthy of the occasion. The following is an abridged account taken from one of the Dublin papers of the time. After speaking of the work and spirit of the Congregation of the Passion, their introduction into Ireland by the Archbishop of Dublin, and their establishment in Mount Argus, the writer goes on to describe the opening. “Hitherto, owing to the circumscribed means of the community, the institution was deficient in the great desideratum

of a suitable Chapel, where the holy sacrifice might be offered and the other observances of religion carried into edifying effect for the benefit of the laity of the District. A chapel has been erected in connection with the institution, small it is true, as compared with the spacious temples of parochial worship, and comparatively humble in its architectural details and style of decoration. Yet no true Catholic could enter the chapel of Blessed Paul and fail to be struck with reverential delight on viewing the consummate taste and appropriateness of its interior structure. Yesterday it was crowded with a congregation comprising a large number of the influential Catholic gentry of both sexes, resident in various parts of Dublin, and on entering it previous to the opening of the ceremonies it presented an aspect of grandeur and solemnity which one would scarce think could possibly be produced in so comparatively small a building. The sanctuary, which is more than ordinarily spacious as compared with the size of the chapel, was richly carpeted, and the altar, of beautiful design, wrought in imitation of white marble, blazed with a multitude of wax lights sustained in richly-gilt candelabra. Above the altar appeared the figure (half life size) of the crucified Redeemer, exquisitely coloured and suggestive of feelings at once painful and consoling. The tabernacle, reredos, and appendages of the altar, displayed the most correct taste in all their details. The chapel ceiling is angularly arched with tasteful cornices running along each angle. An elevated gallery at the extremity opposite the altar is appropriated for the organ choir. The side windows were draped with hangings of crimson damask admitting a soft chastened light, the effect of which was very beautiful. The ceremonial commenced at eleven o'clock, at which hour a procession issued from the sacristy into the chapel, comprising a large body of parochial and regular clergy, including several dignitaries. At the rear of the procession came the Right Rev. Dr QuWhelan, Lord Bishop of Bombay, who officiated as prelate celebrant, also the Right Rev. Dr O'Connor, Bishop of Salde. The procession, headed by the Cross bearer and acolytes issued from the chapel, and made the circuit of the edifice exteriorly, the celebrant sprinkling the walls with holy water, whilst the choir of priests, led by the Rev. Dr. Laphen, P.P. and the Rev. Dr. McLaughlin O.C.C. chaunted the appropriate canticles. The procession then entered the chapel and proceeded around the walls interiorly, repeating the ceremonial according to the ritual, and finally returned to the sanctuary, where all knelt in front of the high altar. The Litany of the Saints was then solemnly intoned, and with the impressive form of supplication ordained by the church, the blessing of the Most High was solemnly invoked on the Temple now devoted to his service. The assistant priest was the Rev. Fr. Eugene, FF. Bernadine and Joseph acting as deacon and subdeacon respectively; Very Rev. F. Vincent as Master of ceremonies. At the conclusion of the high mass, the very Rev. Dr. White O.P. delivered a discourse appropriate to the occasion. We regret that our space does not permit us to give the sermon in full. After the sermon Benediction of the B. Sacrament brought the ceremonies to a close."

A few days later, on the his restoration to health, the Archbishop paid a visit to Mount Argus, and was much pleased with the New Chapel, and congratulated F. Vincent on having accomplished so much in so short a time.

The work of the Passionists may be said to be fairly begun now. At this time the community consisted of twelve religious, amongst the latest arrivals being Fr. Gasparini and Fr. Osmund Maguire, the latter of whom was appointed Vice Rector. A number of missions and retreats were given in Dublin and in the country districts, and notably so a Retreat given by Fr. Vincent to the ecclesiastical students in Maynooth, the remembrance of which remains to the present day. Kind friends and generous benefactors multiplied as time went on, and Fr. Vincent's most sanguine expectations were realized to their utmost extent. He found himself and the little community surrounded by a priesthood and a people - foremost amongst whom was his Grace the Archbishop - not only desirous to take advantage of their ministrations, but

to appreciate and recognise them in every possible manner. As yet no vocations to the Congregation had been awakened among the youth of Dublin, but donations of money and offerings for Masses enabled the Provincial to lessen the burthens with which some of the Rereats in England were laden, and this brought joy to his heart. His coming amongst the poor but generous Irish people was in no way a disappointment. High as was the estimate which he had formed of their Catholicity and their liberality, it fell far short of the reality. He found amongst the peasantry and even the educated classes much that resembled the faith of those with whom his early life was spent; but their love of their religion and its ministers far exceeded anything that he had ever experienced or even dreamt of; hence it was that there sprung up between him and the Irish people, a friendship genuine and lasting, - a friendship that failed not during all the years of his after life. Even after his return to Rome, he identified himself in many ways with the Irish students studying in the different Colleges there, and there are on the mission to this day many Irish priests who hold in reverence and benediction the name of Father Vincent Grotti.

1857

The year 1857 began for the little community in Mount Argus pregnant with the highest and brightest hope for a happy future. It seemed to them as if they had been years instead of months in Ireland. The Christmas festivities had come and gone, so had those peculiar to the New Year, and the gladsome ceremonies which belong to that joyful season, and which were carried out with all the exactness of the ritual, served to draw still closer the Passionists and the ever-increasing crowds which continued to frequent the church. Blessed Paul's Retreat seemed to have come into existence to supply a want which the Catholics of Dublin had for a long time felt, but of which they were in a manner unconscious until it was supplied. The same is sometimes seen in the lives of individuals. There is found in the lives of some men from time to time a want which seems to prevent the realization of happiness, of which, even religion apart, they desire to possess themselves here below. Some natures, though confiding, are at the same time weak in themselves; unable to lead even for a day in the most ordinary affairs of life, and hence suffer disappointment and even shipwreck on the calmest seas of commercial enterprise. They cannot account for their frequent failures, but are convinced that they are unable to succeed; they are upright and honest in all their dealings with their fellow men, but they lack that power of will, or may be cunning which their more successful or perhaps less conscientious brethren possess. It may happen that the hand of a stronger brother is extended to them; they are led by paths which they had not known before, and without prejudice to conscience or to honour, they then succeed in the race. They found in the strong friend the want of which they had been conscious, but which they were unable to supply.

In some such way did Mount Argus supply a want for a long time felt by the Catholics of Dublin. Churches were not wanting in the city, even those of the religious orders, and opportunities were given at all times to avail themselves of the ministrations of the fathers attached to them. But these churches were in the city, and surrounded with all that bustle and confusion which are invariably identified with city life.

The solution of that problem which directs the soul when desiring to make its peace with God, to seek silence or even loneliness is by no means a difficult one. It rests on a principle and a practice as old as Christianity itself. It was taught by the Founder of the Christian religion; practised by his immediate followers, and perpetuated by their successors

down to the present day. The soul wishes to be alone when it desires to speak with God, and in proportion as it is in earnest about its work, so does it try to separate itself from the distracting influence of a busy world. All this Mount Argus offered. It was within easy reach of the city, only a few minutes drive, yet sufficiently far removed to possess that quiet and solitude peculiar to the country. Then the Passionists were new, and this may have served to attract some whose curiosity extended itself even to things religious, and as the fathers were naturally anxious to stand well with their newly-found friends and benefactors, the wants of all were attended to without delay or disappointment.

And so did the months of January and February pass away. The work of the fathers however had so increased, that it was not possible for them to keep the entire observance, especially Matins, hence it was deemed expedient to send a class of students from one of the Retreats in England. They arrived about the end of February, with Fr. Joseph Gasparini as Lector. About this time too Fr. Ignatius Spencer addressed a letter to the Catholics of Ireland through the newspapers, asking for funds towards the education of our Students, and in which he was not disappointed; and so the machinery of observance at home and work abroad ran on smoothly and with the utmost satisfaction.

It was a happy state of things, which, as the saying has it, "was too good to last." And so it turned out; for soon a blow, disastrous as it was unexpected, would fall on the new foundation, dealing for the moment panic and discouragement all around. Towards the end of February, the health of the Rector, Fr. Paul Mary, which was never robust, began to show signs of complete failure. For many years he had suffered periodically from a development of heart disease, to which, in his anxiety to fulfil the duties of the hour, never received at his hands that care and attention which it should have obtained. This time however the attack was more serious than it had ever been before, sometimes producing partial unconsciousness, and the worse fears of the community were realized on the morning of the first of March when he swooned away, never to regain consciousness in this world. The shock produced by the almost sudden death of Fr. Paul Mary was painful in its effects. At first the religious could scarcely believe the evidence of their senses, and it was only when the lifeless remains refused to respond to their repeated efforts to restore animation, that they become convinced that their beloved Superior belonged to them no more. Equally so was the shock felt in Dublin. His death took place on a Sunday morning, on the morning of a day when he was to address a congregation of his fellow citizens in the church of St. Francis Xavier, Gardiner Street, on behalf of a local charity: and it was not until the appearance of Fr. Ignatius Spencer in the pulpit, who undertook to supply his place, that the large and expectant gathering were made aware of his death. "I am here to-day," began the saintly and venerable Passionist, "to take the place of one whose voice shall never be heard in this world: Fr. Paul Mary died at an early this morning!" The announcement, say one who was present, almost produced a panic in the church. A great suppressed wail went up from the assembled hundreds, and tears flowed freely and abundantly from eyes that made no effort to conceal their sorrow.

The funeral obsequies and interment took place on Wednesday, the 4th, and in the meantime those customs peculiar to our Congregation had been observed. On Monday afternoon the body was conveyed from the cell to the chapel, where it was deposited on the plain wooden board in front of the Altar, the head strewn with ashes, and supported by a pillow of bricks according to the Rule. During Monday evening and all day on Tuesday, the chapel continued to be thronged with successive crowds of all classes who came to offer the tribute of their respect to the memory of the departed. On Tuesday night the body was placed in a shell, over which was fitted a leaden case, and these were enclosed in a coffin of polished

Irish oak, bearing on the lid a crucifix in bronze work, and shield of the same material bearing the following inscription:-

“Admodum Rev. Pater Paulus Maria a Sto Michaelae
Cong SS. Crucis et Passionis Dni N. Jesu Xti. sacerdos
Olim in saeculo Hon. Carolus Reginaldus Pakenham,
Ann. XXXV. menses VI, dies XX.

Obiit 1^o Martii 1857.

R.I.P.

“The funeral solemnities,” writes a local paper, “on Wednesday commenced at half-past nine o’clock in the morning, when the office for the dead was solemnly chaunted. His Grace the Lord Archbishop presided, attended by the Very Rev. Monsignor Yore V.G. P.P. and the Rev. Doctor Taylor, P.P. There were also present the Lord Bishop of Bombay, the Very Rev. Dean Meyler, and over sixty of the parochial and regular clergy of the city. The office and high Mass were sung by a choir of priests, the Rev Messrs F. Bell, Beardwood and McMahon officiating as chaunters. The celebrant of the high Mass was the Very Rev. Monsignor Meagher, P.P. V.G., assisted by the Rev. FF Doyle and Collier as deacon and subdeacon: the Rev. Dr. Forde was master of ceremonies. At the conclusion of the Mass, the Archbishop, assuming his mitre and crozier, and standing at the head of the bier, pronounced the solemn absolution of the dead, and then proceeded to bless the side chapel and vault beneath it, recently erected, wherein the body was deposited, amidst the prayers and tears of the brotherhood, and of the vast congregation assembled. Thus has closed the grave over one who was born to high rank and fortune, endowed with rare talent and ability, and possessed of much learning and rich acquirements, but who cheerfully made an offering of them all at the altar at which he so worthily served. Amongst all of the noble friends and relatives of the deceased, of all who knew and admired him as a denizen of the gay world, none were present, save two military officers, who had once been his comrades in arms, and who came to offer the last tribute of friendship and respect to his memory. Such was not the case with the poor. Crowds of the tenantry of the Pakenham estates in Longford were present not only on Wednesday, but on the two previous days.”

Some biographical notice of Father Paul Mary will naturally be looked for in these pages, for though it is only a chronicle, which is supposed to deal only briefly with passing events, yet this event is of so much more than ordinary importance, that to dismiss it with only a few brief lines of reference, would be unworthy of the manner in which his memory is held in the Congregation, of which he was so bright an ornament. And yet the task is by no means an easy one. As his life was far beyond that of the ordinary individual, to tell its story should be the work of one who is more than a mere chronicler; so too time has dimmed the recollection of much which could at an earlier date have been added to illustrate the beauty of his character. The Newspapers, especially the Dublin press, had much to say of him at the time of his lamented death, but little beyond the fact that he was the son of a noble house, a convert to Catholicity, and one who had the courage to exchange the gaudy trappings of the fashionable world for a life of poverty in the religious state, and that his life as a priest was one of which the world had seen too little, owing to early death, and hence the end was much to be regretted. Most respectful however were all notices, non-Catholic as well as Catholic; some indeed were full of sympathy with the Congregation in consequence of the loss sustained.

No biography proper of Fr. Paul Mary, so far as I have been able to ascertain, has even been written. As noticed above, several short sketches of his life appeared in the papers at the time of his death, but none of them went beyond the ordinary newspaper notice. That which appeared in the Nation, a reprint of which was afterwards made and distributed in the form of a leaflet, entitled "The Dead Passionist" was the most lengthy. It was said to be from the pen of the late Cashel Hoey, but considering the style in which it is written, this report could hardly be correct. It is altogether wanting in that simplicity of language which characterizes the writings of Cashel Hoey. It speaks of his noble birth, his soldier life, his conversion to the true faith and his death, and tells all this in a manner which would seem to be an effort at word-making rather than the simple story of a retiring and holy life. It is little more than two columns of the paper, and may be found in extenso in Fr. Salvian's "Annals" Vol I page 271. In the same "Annals" it is also noticed that shortly after his death a short biography was written "by one of our fathers" with a view to publication, but before it found its way into print, there appeared without the knowledge or permission of the Congregation, a short memoir by a Lady Friend, and entitled "Glimpses of Father Paul Mary," on the appearance of which, it was deemed advisable for some reason or other not to send the biography by one of our fathers to the press. Both these, namely the MS and a copy of the "Glimpses" were, according to Father Salvian, placed in the Archives of the Retreat, but at the time of writing this chronicle, they were not to be found. We were able however to gather some items of information from the pages of an Australian magazine, written by a Father Woods, and afterwards transferred to the Highgate Catholic. Father Woods joined our Congregation about thirty years ago, but was obliged to leave through ill health, and if not personally acquainted with Father Paul Mary, would have heard and remembered distinctly the leading events in his life. With this and Father Salvian's "Notes", together with some information picked up from some of the senior fathers, we have been able to arrange the following brief narrative:

Charles Reginal Pakenham was the fourth son of Thomas, the third Earl of Longford, and was born on the 21st of September 1821, in Harcourt Street, Dublin. The house in which he first saw the light is situated nearly opposite the present Railway Station, and as far as we could ascertain, is now included in a large educational establishment. As far as worldly honours went, he belonged to the very highest rank of the aristocracy. His mother was sister to Earl Beauchamp, and his paternal aunt was married to the "Great Duke" of Wellington. Another brother of his mother was the Hon. Major General Lygon, whose favourite in after life the young Pakenham became. The Longford family at all times stood well with all classes of their countrymen. They were good and generous landlords, and though staunch Protestants, the question of religion never entered into their dealings with their tenantry. It is said however that some of the female members of the family did on a few occasions lend their services to that Department of Protestantism known in this country as "Souperism", but that it was only when they reached that venerable stage of Spinsterhood which absolutely excludes all the other chances, that they gave themselves thus lovingly to the Lord. But so fruitless were their efforts in this respect, that like the ship's track in mid-ocean, they passed and left no trace behind. They spent their time and their money, and went their way – perhaps rejoicing, but the faith of those amongst whom they spent themselves, and to whom they brought the "glad tidings" of evangelical regeneration remained the same as before.

Of the early life of the subject of our narrative very little has come down to us, nor beyond the fact that his childhood and youth were surrounded with that comfort and luxury to be found in the homes of the wealthy, is there much room left even for conjecture. It is said however that as a child and a boy he was remarkably shy and backward, not a common feature in the children of the nobility, but which may be accounted for in his case because of

his health, which at no time of his life was strong or robust. It is also said of him that even whilst still young, he was most conscientiously exact in the fulfilment of every duty, and that he was more than ordinarily attached to his father, whose memory he venerated through life, and of whom he always spoke with the greatest reverence. He was only fourteen years old when he lost this beloved parent, and to the attachment so early formed, and the loss so soon occurring, may, in addition to the warmth of his affectionate nature, account for the lively recollection so long and so devoutly entertained.

Whilst still quite young, he was placed in a preparatory school near Richmond in Surrey, England, and after the usual curriculum, he passed to Winchester, then considered one of the most select of the public schools in England. After a few years spent in Winchester, came a turning point in his life. He was destined by his family for the military profession, and his own inclinations led in the same direction. Hence it should follow that his future education, ought, amongst other subjects, to be directed to the study of those branches necessary to one intended for the profession of arms. Consequently he removed to the military College, Sandhurst. Here he soon distinguished himself by his industry and the regularity of his life, and in due time rose to be sergeant Major of the College, which made him in a manner chief officer of the school. It may be mentioned here that in some of the references to this period of his life, we find it stated that he went from Winchester to Cambridge; but the result of inquiry does not confirm this opinion, nor does it seem at all likely that having chosen the life of a soldier for his future, he should neglect the best means of acquiring that Technical Training and knowledge where it could best be found. To act otherwise would be entirely unlike him. Once convinced that a certain work had to be done, the best means of bringing about the desired result were had recourse to. And this it was which next to the grace of God brought about his conversion in after life. When the church of his fathers ceased to satisfy his craving for the higher and more perfect, at once did he address himself to the best and most reliable authorities within his reach.

He was not yet eighteen years of age when he received his commission. The regiment which he first joined was at the time stationed at Barbadoes, and he was obliged to make a voyage to the West as a matter of form, though he had no intention of remaining. He stayed, indeed, only a few weeks. Soon after his return to England, his uncle, General Lygon, who was inspector-General of Cavalry, had him appointed his aide-de-camp. This necessitated much travelling through the country, inspecting the different military stations, a work which we are told he did not like much, though it increased his knowledge of his profession. He used to say that he led a wild and dissipated life at this time, but it does not appear so from other circumstances, at least in the sense in which dissipation is usually taken. He was too studious, retiring, and temperate to be dissipated, and at this very time he was so hard a student, that he would spend six or eight hours a day in study when not otherwise engaged. Thus he acquired not only a thorough knowledge of his profession, but also four or five modern languages, all of which he could speak with tolerable fluency.

Thus did his life go on until he was about twenty eight, when he became a captain in the Guards. This was in 1849, one of those exceptionally rare occasions when it became pleasing to the lady who calls herself Queen of Great Britain and Ireland to permit her countenance to light up the dark shores of this benighted Island! It has been said and over and over again repeated, that Fr. Paul Mary, then the Hon. Captain Pakenham, was in the royal staff as one of her Majesty's Aides-de-camp, and "that all the house of Longford from the Earl to the Dean, assembled to welcome their kinsman to his native city." This is not correct. It was a cousin of Father Paul, of the same name, and also an officer in the Household Troops, who accompanied the Queen.

His position at this time was that of one from whom much would be expected. "He was a promising and rising young officer", writes one who knew him, "and whose uncle, 'the Duke', was well inclined towards. He had everything in his favour. His talents were of a high order, and his manner and address singularly graceful and winning. He was tall and slight, very fair, and of fresh complexion. Large, clear, and most expressive blue eyes, with light curly flaxen hair, gave his face a most youthful and innocent appearance, while there was something of such dignity and sweetness in his regular features that one could not help respecting him at the first glance." And all this was made still more attractive by reason of the prospects which family distinction and wealth held out to him.

It has been already said that his uncle, General Lygon, was very much attached to him, and the veteran soldier showed how practical was the attachment by making him his sole heir to a property said to be worth ten thousand a year. Thus was his future insured from the invasion of the conventional wolf, and insured to the exclusion of even possible anxiety. Yet it was just then, when the world had adopted him as the child of her favours and her choice, lavishing upon him her richest and her best, that he began to lose all taste and relish for her gifts. The period of unrest had set in, and the gay man of fashion became unhappy with himself and dissatisfied with his religious surroundings. The great wave that had swept over England, carrying on its crest, even from within the very Establishment itself, the agitators in the Tractarian movement, made the young guardsman pause and consider his own position. He saw giant intellects leave the Protestant church, and the fabric reel beneath the blow, and he became convinced that it was because of the church's inability to detain them, her helplessness to provide that for which they yearned, that they went out from her sanctuary never to return. He had always been a sincere and devout Christian, living up to more than the mere demands of Protestantism. At this time he was an advanced Anglican, indeed very High Church, so much so, that there entered into his daily life much that is neither commanded nor recommended by the "Thirty nine Articles". He fasted regularly, and even went so far as to go to confession to one of the ministers of Margaret Street church. He was a great admirer of Newman. He read his books eagerly, and earnestly pondered over those mournful sighings for better things in his parochial sermons. "It was Newman", he used to say, "who taught me how much beauty there is in religion, and I gladly embraced his teaching." Still all this was only playing with the fringe of things, and by no means sufficient to satisfy the longing of a heart which in its striving was earnest and truthful, and determined not to rest till the whole truth should be discovered. But he could not yet make up his mind to become a Catholic, not that he feared for a moment the consequences which such a step would bring about, but he was not entirely convinced that such a step should be taken. The light by which he was surrounded was not yet sufficient to show him the way clearly: but it was coming. The horizon of that brighter and better day was becoming clearer and clearer, and the shadows which had hitherto obstructed his vision were fast disappearing from his path.

An incident occurred about this time which may find a place here. One day whilst paying a visit to his sister, Lady Carbery, he saw a little silver medal in her hand and asked the meaning of it. "Well Charles", she said, "a French lady left it here, and I will give it to you if you promise not to wear it." "Why not?" he asked. "Oh", she replied, "They say that all those who wear these medals become Catholics." "Well then," he said, taking the medal and placing it round his neck, "I will wear it to disprove what they say." He wore that medal till the day of his death, and often used to tell the story of how he came by it.

When the late Father Isidore Van Stalle was a member of this community (1871-2) amongst his many other good works, he received a number of non-Catholics into the church,

one of whom was a young lady from Rathmines. She was highly educated and accomplished, and also very religious after the Protestant idea of things. She was led Romewards, more because she had lost all faith in Protestantism, than from a desire to become a Catholic. However she applied to Fr. Isidore for instruction, which he undertook himself; and after a length of time, during which he explained to her all that he considered necessary, she told him that she was quite prepared to become a Catholic but for one difficulty: she could not believe in our Lord's presence in the Blessed Sacrament. His reply was characteristic of the man: "I can give you instruction but I cannot give you faith: faith is not the gift of man, it is the gift of God, and He will give it to you if you pray." He told her to go to the church and pray earnestly before our Lord in the tabernacle. She obeyed, and after spending three or four hours in the church, she returned to Fr. Isidore, and told him that God had answered her prayer. She was afterwards received, and soon joined the Sisters of the Good Shepherd and became a very useful member of that body. So it was with young Pakenham, he prayed long and fervently; he prayed in season and out of season; he prayed morning, noon and night; he prayed always, and his prayers were heard; the few remaining shadows died out of his life, and in the light of the risen sun of his newly-found faith, he saw distinctly and was satisfied. He used to tell how he was helped towards this happy consummation by some of his Protestant friends, who, though their misgivings in the Establishment were as strong as his own, yet never followed him into the Catholic Church. One of these was a Canon of St. Paul's, who used to lend him Catholic books, and openly encourage him to secede. "Why then do you remain?" asked Pakenham. "Well", he would reply, "I don't preach – I merely hold my canonry and preferment, and were I to resign these I would be a beggar." Alas for the will that is under the control of the loaves and fishes! When the resolution was at last made, he paid a visit to his friend, Rev. Mr Richards, of Margaret Street church and told him upon what he had decided. "Well", he was told, "Of course it is useless to try to stay in the church if you have lost faith in her system."

This was his farewell. He turned aside from S. Margaret's never to enter a Protestant church again. Speaking of himself regarding this time he says, "I did not leave one moment too soon. Already some of the leading Tractarians (he referred to Froude and Fr. Newman) had made their choice between Rome or infidelity in favour of the latter, and I began to fear for my faith. Yet it was a hard fight because the spirit of irreligion had sunk so very deeply into English society, and I stood quite alone. I met with no sympathy anywhere. My uncle advised me to travel. My brother, Lord Longford, was amazed about my mental anxiety on such a trifling matter. My favourite sister wished me to see a very high authority on the Roman question, and on pressing to know his name, found that it was the Rev. Tresham Gregg, one of the very men who I may say had driven me from the church of England. It was a hard struggle, even for me, who had nothing in a pecuniary sense to lose by the change. What, therefore, must be the difficulty, where Rome means penury or almost starvation!"

It is very remarkable that though only a few years have passed since the death of Father Paul Mary, that so many inaccuracies and mistakes concerning some of the principal events in his life have found their way into print. If it proved nothing else, it shows the necessity of carefully recording events while they are still fresh in the mind of the writer. For instance the writer in the "Highgate Catholic", February 1896, probably quoting from Father Woods in the Australian Magazine already referred to says: "It was Father Knox of the Oratory who received Pakenham into the church, and a few days afterwards he was confirmed by Cardinal Wiseman, in company with the Bishop of London's examining Chaplain, Rev. F. W. Allies, and Dr. Markell, a leading clergyman of the Diocese of Exeter." (Transcriber's note – Fr. Norbert includes a footnote here – Fr. Ignatius Spencer is responsible for the following: "Fr. Paul Mary was received into the church by Bishop

Wiseman, at Hastings, on the 15th August, 1850.” Sufficiently conclusive, we think.) The same writer in the March no. says that “he (Fr. Paul Mary) was known in the Noviciate as ‘Brother Charles’, or, to distinguish him from a lay brother of the same name, by ‘Br. Charles Mary’”. It is also stated in the May No. of the same magazine that “in consequence of his ill health in the noviciate, an application was made to Rome, so that he might make his profession before the twelve months’ probation was completed, and that Rome refused, the Father General stating in his reply, that as great graces had been given to Mr Pakenham to renounce the world and dedicate himself to God in the Congregation, so too would the necessary graces and helps be given him to persevere.” Side by side with these statements, we place those recorded by Father Salvian. He says, “Pakenham was received into the church and confirmed by Dr, afterwards Cardinal Wiseman. He was clothed in our noviciate, Broadway, on the 22nd May 1851, taking the name of Brother Paul Mary of S. Michael. During his noviciate the poor novice was severely tried by a most serious illness, and as his life was despaired of, he received the last Sacraments and made his profession in *Articulo Mortis*.” To some extent at least, these statements contradict each other, but one would be more inclined to accept the testimony of Father Salvian, as the more correct, for though in his records of men and events he sometimes permits his prejudices to run away with historical accuracy, yet in a matter of fact such as we are recording, there was no room for coloured glasses. At all events his reception into the Catholic Church produced great consternation amongst his friends. His own family were very sad over the matter. His mother felt it deeply, and it is doubtful whether he ever saw her again. Lord Longford thought it was a most extraordinary step to take, but with a generosity begotten of an indifference to almost all things religious, he took little notice of the change. He had come into his title and property early in life, and as the “set” amongst which he cast his lot were in no way concerned with the religious questions which agitated society of that day, he bestowed scarce a second thought on the matter. But it was his uncle, the old General, who felt it most of all. As already stated, his uncle was particularly fond of him. He believed in him as one honourable man believes in another, and knowing the genuine material of which his nephew was made, whilst regretting sincerely that he had gone over to Rome, he knew that such a step must be the result of honest and honourable conviction. At first he tried to argue the question with him, but the blunt old soldier was not equal to the logic of the younger and more versatile mind. Young Pakenham had thought the subject out for himself; and given it all his most serious attention; had accepted Catholicity as the result of earnest inquiry, and consequently his well-meaning relative, who had always taken things for granted, was no match for him in the field of polemical warfare. Hence they agreed to differ, and for some time the question of religion was never attended to, each respected the feelings of the other, and thus mutual intercourse became the same as before. They were living at this time on the General’s estate, which was situated between Campden and Broadway in Worcestershire. The nearest church was that attached to our noviciate, and here morning after morning might be seen the youthful convert assisting in the most recollected and edifying manner at the great Sacrifice of the Altar. The circumstance at first sight seems but an accidental one, but in reality it was the design of the Most High, by which his will in his regard should be made manifest. We are not at liberty to suppose that whilst Pakenham was contemplating a change of religion, that there ever entered into his mind the further step of the religious state, as the former was sufficient to occupy all his attention for the time being, but when this object has been attained, and he felt contented and happy, it was but the further outcome of that noble generosity which brought him into the Catholic Church that now inspired him with making another and a greater sacrifice for that God for whose sake he had already risked so much. His was not a heart to be satisfied with half measures, for whilst he knew that to “keep the commandments” would fulfil the law and gain eternal life, yet was he yearning for the higher and the better state, which would result

from attending to the words, “if thou wilt be perfect, go sell all thou hast, then come and follow me.” If the announcement of his conversion to Catholicity was a severe shock to his friends, the additional declaration that he was about to become a Passionist, produced consternation and almost panic amongst them. There were some few who did not know him well, who only laughed and said that he would soon get tired of his choice. Those however who understood his calm, resolute will, were more alarmed: he would disgrace his family – would kill himself – would go mad, indeed must be mad, to select such a mode of life. Those were some of the general opinions, while not a few tried to reason with him and convince him of his folly. But it was of no avail: his mind was made up, and he set about making his arrangements with that tranquillity which characterized all his movements. He resigned his staff appointment, and disposed of the proceeds in charity. He sold his Commission in the Guards for a handsome sum, and founded with it a home for penitent women, a secret which his humility made him conceal. He parted with all his servants, to their intense grief, for he was a kind master. He even sold his books, except a few, and gave the price in charity. The old General watched all these proceedings with the greatest anxiety. He had been too much hurt by the first announcement to say much more than a few words of very energetic remonstrance. Real sorrow and grief at losing his favourite nephew, whom he had made his heir, and who was his only intimate companion in the world, so crushed him, as almost to deprive him of the power of utterance. But when the preparations were nearly completed, the pent-up emotions broke forth; “God, God,” he exclaimed one day, “you’ll break my heart! Why do you persist in this madness? I never hindered you in your choice of a religion; you had your own way in everything. If you wish to be a Catholic, that is nothing to me. If you wished to sell your commission, that also, though a disappointment, I did not object to. But why this new madness? My dear Charles, what you want is change. You have studied too hard and led too confined a life. Well now, go abroad for a couple of years, and give up your present folly.” Similar harangues were addressed to him by other relations, to all of whom he gave but the one answer, “if thou wilt be perfect etc.” Some went so far as to predict that he would end his days in a lunatic asylum. ‘I wished he were dead’, said his Kinswoman, the Countess. . . . , “but the worst of it is, we shall be like the Spencers, who have not only the sorrow of losing their near relative, but the shame of seeing him going about barefooted, like a dirty, mad mendicant, begging for prayers for the conversion of England.” Even some of his Catholic friends did not think too highly of his choice. He went to see Cardinal Wiseman a few days before he finally left London. The Cardinal did not like to discourage him, but he feared for his health and so did all his best friends. They could not bear the idea of one so promising consign himself, as they thought to a living tomb. His answer was, “the Kingdom of heaven beareth violence, and the violent only bear it away.” “It was in March 1851”, says the writer in the Highgate Catholic, “that he finally turned away from London to take the last sad leave of his uncle. The few days he spent at the Hall were not at all pleasant ones. Reasoning and expostulation were both in vain, and each tried as best he could to master his sorrow. One Saturday evening, Pakenham went out of the park gates on horseback, attended by a single groom. He rode quietly down to the monastery, and sent the horse back with the groom, who brought also a kind note to the General.” This was the parting.

We have not yet noticed the difficulties which attended his application for admission into the Congregation. When first he made known his desire, his request was refused. The Superiors did not consider that his health was sufficiently good to observe the austerities of the rule, and hence could not give him any encouragement. Besides he was not quite twelve months a Catholic, and though they could not but admire his piety and fervour, yet it was a first fervour, which, taught by experience, they knew did not in many instances stand the test of time. Then again his whole life and surroundings were diametrically opposed to what is

required of the Passionist. With all these considerations before their minds, the Superiors, though not absolutely refusing, told him to wait, but held out little or no hope. Again and again he renewed his application, and eventually believing it was the will of God, they consented to receive him, and after the usual term of probation he received the habit of the Congregation on the 22nd of May 1851, taking in religion the name of Paul Mary of St. Michael the Archangel.

The years' noviciate passed without much to distinguish it from that of other novices, excepting that ill health developed to an alarming degree. As stated above, he was considered so ill at one time, that it was deemed advisable to administer the last Sacraments and receive his profession in *Articulo Mortis*. Shortly afterwards he recovered however, but whether from the weakness of his constitution or the change in his mode of life, his eyes became so weak and inflamed, that it was feared the sight would become seriously impaired. He was for weeks confined to his room, which, by order of the physician was always kept dark, or nearly so, and this was an additional affliction, as it deprived him of the society of books. During these weeks he was frequently visited by his uncle, who again renewed his entreaties to return to the world. He even went to far as to point out to him that he was evidently acting contrary to the will of God in his choice of a state of life, as everything seemed to be opposing him. To all these temptations – for temptations they might be called – there was only one answer: “My life belongs to God: he gave it: whether he recalls the gift now or later on, it's all the same to me: may his will be done.” The same resignation to God's holy will, and an earnest desire to acquire the virtues of his state were remarkable during the twelve months noviciate. He was most obedient, even to matters of detail, and none was more agreeable or cheerful with his fellow novices, whether on the ordinary walks or in the fulfilment of the duties assigned him at home. And this is the more remarkable as he and they were in many things so far apart: he the highly educated, highly accomplished, fashionable man of the world, the pet child of fortune, asking as to how this or that should be done. And so, pleasantly in many respects, the years noviciate passed away.

After his profession, which he made on the 23rd of May, 1852, he left Broadway for the house of study, which at that time was Cotton Hall, near Cheadle in Staffordshire, then known as St. Wilfrid's Retreat, but since abandoned by the Passionists. Though the life in St. Wilfrid's was much the same as that led in the noviciate, it possessed some advantages favourable to Br. Paul Mary. The Rule of course was the same, but much of the time devoted to spirituality, for which the noviciate is specially intended, was now occupied in study. With him study was an easy pursuit. He had long since acquired the habit of study, which as is well known constitutes much towards success. In fact he had been a student all his life. His mind had been trained under the best masters, and how to succeed in grasping the subject before him, was made easy by reason of already acquired methods. By reason of this training, he was much superior to his fellow students, but he was never known to manifest by word or sign, aught which would make him compare favourably with them. His health too improved somewhat in St. Wilfrid's. The natural position of the Retreat, standing at a considerable elevation on the north-east side of the valley, was in itself health-giving; so too were the rambles through the adjoining country which from time to time he made with his companions.

With all these advantages however, it became evident after a couple of years that there was no hope for his permanent restoration to health. About the middle of '54 he and four other students were removed to London, where they continued their studies under Fr. Eugene Martorelli. Here his health began to decline so rapidly that it became a cause of great uneasiness to his superiors. They determined therefore to try the effect of a warmer climate,

and accordingly arranged with the Father General that he should go to Rome, where, besides hoping for better health, he could also finish his ecclesiastical studies. They arranged also that he should be raised to the priesthood before leaving England. He was ordained Sub-deacon by Cardinal Wiseman on the 24th of March, 1855, Deacon by Bishop Ullathorne, afterward Bishop of Birmingham, on the 22nd of September following, and priest by the same prelate on the 30th of the same month. On the 31st of the following month, October, he was sent to Rome, in company with a class of students, with whom he was to remain in the capacity of Spiritual Director. During his short stay in Rome, he continued to give the same edification as he had given to his religious brethren in England. He was exact in the least observance of rule, which he followed as closely as if he had been in robust health, even to attendance at the night Choir. Soon he came to be the idol of the community in SS. John and Paul, all of whom spoke of him ever after in the highest possible terms. But his health declined in Rome as elsewhere. He went to other houses in the Province and beyond, and then realized the dream of his youth, that of travelling through Italy. He cared little however for anything now but God, and no foreign scenes or distant travel could detach his heart from that centre in which it now rested.

Early in the Spring of the following year, '56, he returned to England, and on the 15th of August, as we have already seen, took possession of Blessed Paul's Retreat, as its first Superior; and in the story of the first six months of that Retreat will be found the history of the last six months of his eventful life. During most of that time he was able to take part in the active work of the Retreat, and even recovered his strength to the extent of helping on Missions, one of which was given in the parish church, Rathmines. The remainder is easily told. Though he had these intervals of comparative strength, the attacks of heart disease were becoming more frequent and painful, showing but too clearly that it was fast gaining ground, and now might at any moment claim his life. And yet he relaxed not in the fulfilment of every duty that he was at all able to discharge. He was convinced that his time here below would be short and it seemed as if he desired to work the harder in order that the harvest gained would be the greater. Hence he was constantly engaged in the confessional, helping and consoling the fallen on their way back to God; catechising, instructing, and when able, preaching words of hope and encouragement to all who sought him. Thus did the days speed on till the 1st of March, 1857, when his soul was called by its Creator and its Reward, and was given up with a generosity truly characteristic of a generous and a saintly life.

It has been said of Fr. Paul Mary by some of his brethren in religion, that he was very exacting and almost hard on those over whom he was placed. This accusation is badly founded if not absolutely false. That he would be exact can be easily understood, but in no way exacting, especially in the sense in which it is here applied. His military training could have no other effect on his after life than to make order and discipline even in the religious state things to be scrupulously attended to, and the principle, if applied even with military exactness, would not be out of place in the cloister. Besides he was a young Catholic, and a still younger priest, and consequently in the very nature of things, had still much to learn. He was little over six years in the church when God called him to himself, and not quite two years in the priesthood, and errors of judgment, easily mistaken for unkindness, would be a natural outcome of inexperience. But apart from these reasons, which would be sufficient to refute the charge, he was one of that class who can never be unkind to others: he was hard on himself. The lives of the saints and holy men sufficiently prove this. Not to go beyond our own Holy Father and Founder, who so hard on himself, and yet who more charitable and full of consideration for others? Whilst others slept, he watched; whilst he insisted on others enjoying themselves according to the Rule, he mortified and denied himself. In his administration of the goods of the Congregation, there was no "cheeseparings" policy, yet the

poorest and the last were sufficient for his own use. It is only he who loves to pamper himself, who must and will have special meats and drinks, who is niggardly in his distribution to others, and even insulting in his refusals. Now it is well known that Father Paul Mary was hard on himself. His life was too full of great and noble sacrifices to leave room for the possibility of denial. And it is testified to by those who lived with him during his few years in religion, that the same austerity and self-denial were practiced almost to a fault. There is no room therefore for such a calumny, nor will it ever find an echo in the breast of a true son of S. Paul of the Cross.

The following letter from the pen of Father Ignatius Spencer was addressed to the Dublin papers a few days after the death of Fr. Paul Mary. It is entitled to a place here:-

The late Very Rev. Father Paul Mary.

Jesu Christi Passio

Blessed Paul's Retreat, Harold's Cross,

March 5th 1857.

Sir. The afflicting event, which has taken place in our house, of the death of our beloved and valued companion, and which has excited such universal sympathy among the inhabitants of Dublin, leads me to address to them a few words more through your paper.

It might, very probably, appear to the minds of some that the removal of Father Paul Mary would prove a death blow to this, our infant establishment – that we ourselves would be greatly discouraged in our efforts to support it, and that consequently others who were so well disposed, as many have hitherto been, to assist us, would begin to think the undertaking a hopeless one, and change their minds about it. I think it will be well to explain our own feelings at this time. Humanly speaking, and at first sight the loss which we have met is almost beyond calculation, and might well discourage us. I do not speak of pecuniary loss. This loss might easily be calculated and repaired, and, in this respect, his death does not affect us here. He came to Ireland poor, like the rest of us, and poor he died. It was in other far more important respects that he was so valuable to us. Had it not been that we possessed a subject fitted for the undertaking as he was, it is very probably that we should not have ventured, at least at this time, to attempt our first entrance, as an order, into Ireland. It might seem as if Providence had called him amongst us on purpose to be the leader of our first colony in this country. There was everything, we may say, in him which would recommend him to the affections of the Irish people, and thus qualify him to do them good. As a worthy member of one of the first and most respected families of the aristocracy of the country, he would receive honour from your people, in whom I have always observed and admired the really Christian and Catholic disposition to give honour to whom honour is legitimately due, whether from personal virtue and worth, or from rank and station, secular as well as ecclesiastical. But there was in him what would be far more valued and honoured in Ireland than earthly greatness of whatever kind – and that was, that in the midst of its glitter he turned his mind and heart to the pursuit of what religion and faith present as great, and that as soon as ever the bright light of God's Truth shone before his eyes, for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ, he trampled under foot all that which the world admires and valued at once on the imitation of his crucified Lord in a life of deep poverty, penance and humility. He was indeed what a Passionist ought to be in his own character and at home. The time was not given him to show what he was calculated to be as a missionary. He died, as it is known, on the morning of the very day when he was to have spoken for the first time to his country people from a pulpit of Dublin, the city of his birth. Had it pleased God to preserve

his life and health, he would, I believe, have taken a worthy place among the noble army of apostolic men whom the Catholic church has in all ages produced to defend the cause of God and his truth. Fervent, devoted zeal for souls is the first, the vital quality of a missionary. This he had, and it was in a most remarkable way the spiritual necessities of his own dear country-people which peculiarly interested him. I speak my own opinion, grounded principally on the remarks which I was able to make, and on conversations with him during the last period of his life, which I have spent with him in this house, when I say that he had already an extensive and most correct knowledge of theology, which his settled habits of study and observation would have constantly improved; and I conceive he had all the qualities which would have made him a powerful and convincing preacher. What I have heard from others who have heard some of his few public discourses quite confirm this judgment. To these more essential qualities there were joined in him an extensive knowledge of the world – a world not less understood by him, because, after a period of its fullest enjoyment, he had in the prime of life abandoned it – great maturity and acuteness in judging of men and things – a perfection in manner for society suitable to his high birth and education, and a singularly attractive and, at the same time, dignified personal appearance. Humanly speaking, then, his loss is a heavy one indeed; but the thoughts of God are not like those of men, and he can turn all events to good when he pleases, and will do so for those who trust in him. We will not, then, suppose that all these talents and gifts were bestowed for himself alone, and that, because God has thus quickly called him to himself, his short but noble religious and ecclesiastical career is to prove without fruit, for the church and for his country. It must not be that this foundation, for which it seemed he was peculiarly adapted and called, and of which he was, as it were, the corner stone, should now fall; and the little church which was built under his auspices, where he began so zealously to labour for his people, and which is in some way consecrated by possessing within it his blessed remains, must yet continue to be a place of benediction to those whom he loved so well. Oh! instead of being disheartened, we should all take new courage, and unitedly resolve that his blessed death shall not be the blasting but the confirmation of all his hopes and ours. This is my feeling. I trust to go on with the part assigned to me in the work with only greater spirit and confidence. I believe, from what I see and hear among my remaining companions, this is likewise their mind. Will it not be yours also? I speak to the Catholics of Dublin and Ireland, but of Dublin especially, who, by the favourable reception so many have given me on my visits to them, and much more by the unequivocal marks of the deep love and veneration for one dear departed brother, though so imperfectly known to them, which they gave during the two days in which his remains lay exposed in our church, have shown how well, thus far, they have been disposed towards us. Oh, yes! You will, I trust, show that you enter into the feeling I have now expressed by assisting me generously to the completion of the serious undertaking, which is charged on me, of collecting means to pay the cost of this foundation, but much more by going forward with increasing zeal in the pursuit of virtue and perfection, which it was his and is our one desire to see embraced by you all, and on which many we believe have entered under his guidance during the short time he was amongst you.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant

Ignatius of S. Paul – Spencer

Passionist.

After the death of Father Paul Mary, Father Osmund Maguire, who had been Vice Rector, was appointed as interim Superior. Though it could not be denied that the loss of

Father Paul Mary was a great blow to the infant community, still the attendance of the faithful to Mount Argus was not only as great as before, but went on increasing.

About this time a new relationship was established between Blessed Paul's Retreat and the people of Harold's Cross and the adjoining neighbourhood. The Very Rev. Mgr. Meagher, the parish priest of Rathmines, expressed a wish that our fathers should commence and take regular charge of a Sunday School, where the children who lived within easy reach of the Retreat might attend Sunday after Sunday to receive instruction in the catechism and the rudiments of religion. The Archbishop was asked to sanction the request, and his Grace gave his permission and blessing to the new work, and hoped it would successfully supply a want which had long been felt in the locality. The beginning of the Sunday School was very modest and somewhat primitive. At first only a few children attended, and these came with a curiosity and timidity such as young people bring for the first time to a penny show. The number however soon increased, and encouraged by the presence of their older brothers and sisters, the little ones soon became sufficiently courageous to feel quite at home. As time went on the work grew, and eventually developed into a regularly organized Sunday School, the children all coming to a fixed Mass on Sundays and again in the afternoon. A staff of teachers, both male and female, superintended by one of the fathers, and assisted by one or more of the senior students, conducted the school, and were in charge of the children. The care thus taken of the children of the neighbourhood, which, it may be said, was very much wanted, was always gratefully acknowledged by the parish priest, who for that and other services was our best friend during his life time. It may be said here that the Sunday School received scant encouragement from his successors, and rumour even whispered that they would have been much pleased, had it been given up altogether. Its existence was said to be a vote of censure on them for not making sufficient provision for the religious instruction for the young people of the parish; also that it had the effect of attaching them to Mount Argus in after life. How true all this may be cannot be stated for certain, with the exception of the part which states that those who became acquainted with Blessed Paul's Retreat in their youthful days, remembered it gratefully ever after. In consequence of those rumours, and also as we had no parochial jurisdiction or responsibility, some of our Superiors thought of giving up the school, but inasmuch as no such request had ever come from any official quarter, and also because it was looked up in the light of a contract, which we had freely entered into, the school went on and still goes on to the present day.

It was about this time also that the number of public masses to be celebrated on Sunday and holidays of obligation was fixed by the Archbishop. His Grace requested that these should be said every hour from six to twelve inclusive, and in addition that there should be mass on holidays of obligation at five o'clock for the convenience of those who were obliged to go to work at six. Permission was also given to duplicate, should the number of priests in the Retreat be not otherwise sufficient. The same order still exists.

It has been already stated in these pages that the period of which we write was one in which the people of this country were emerging from a long, dark night of suffering and persecution. True, nearly thirty years had elapsed since the dawn of liberty for religion had appeared, and it may indeed be said that during those years it had made rapid strides towards regaining that life and manhood which it possessed in pre-persecution times. It was no longer an offence against the law to celebrate or to hear mass; to administer or to receive Sacraments, nor did the Statute Book contain any prohibition why all these things should not be carried out with all the grandeur and solemnity possible. But it may be said that religion, like most other things, has a growth, particularly as regards details and ceremonial. It is true that the mass which is celebrated or the sacraments which are administered in the cave or on

the mountain side are the same as if sheltered in the grandest cathedral and accompanied by all that is majestic and inspiring in the church's ritual, still it must be acknowledged that to the perfect and complete fulfilment of Catholic practices, there is a something which time alone can give. Wealth, though it can do most things, must wait for time to develop the result of its power, even in the production of material things. Buildings in which the church's ceremonies may be carried out cannot be built in a day, nor can its influence cause cloistered aisles to spring into existence as if touched by the fairy's wand. Hence there was still much wanting in Ireland to bring her into perfect touch with other Catholic countries, but in nothing more so than in the absence of religious processions.

We are not prepared to state here, nor is it at all necessary, whether it is an evidence of weakness or strength in human nature, to be particularly fond of outward display. But it is so, whatever the cause. From the youth who has just changed his long clothes for a first pair of "knickerbockers" to the veteran who has just returned from active service with the latest decoration, there is the desire that these things should not remain hidden or unknown. And it is right that it should be so. There is no reason why well-earned decorations, no matter under what circumstances attained, should be relegated to the conventional cupboard, to pass the remainder of their days in the society of the family skeleton, when by their display others might be stimulated to the possession of similar honours.

Now the church in her wisdom utilises all this for a wise and a religious purpose. She knows that men will assemble for all manner of purposes, even unlawful ones; how they wish to march, whether to the merry strains which accompany the gay and lively wedding party, or the dismal wail, associated with the name of Saul, which is supposed to cheer a lonely pilgrimage to the last resting-place. So too affairs political and social. National grievances are not unfrequently discussed to the stirring notes of the fife and drum; and the brass band plays a more prominent part in giving expression to the sentiments of the assembled crowd than the most forcible language of the platform orator. For the same reason, though actuated by higher and nobler motives, do men wish to take part in religious gatherings and processions. They love to see themselves decorated in the regalia of the sodality or confraternity to which they belong, even though such decoration be badly wanting in taste or artistic effect. To them it matters not; it is their badge of membership; they love it, and as such it serves its purpose.

It may be said that when the Passionists came to Mount Argus, religious processions were entirely unknown in Dublin. A few Confraternities or tertiaries existed, attached to the churches of the religious orders, but they had not yet reached the maturity of corporate existence. It occurred to our fathers to establish some such custom during the month of May in honour of our Blessed Lady. In the beginning of the month the devotions consisted of the Rosary and occasionally a short discourse on some of the mysteries; later on permission was given by the Archbishop to have Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament two or three times a week. Then came a procession round the chapel, some members of the congregation carrying a statue of our Lady, meanwhile the choir and the children singing appropriate hymns. Gradually it grew in numbers and in the interest taken in it, and from the church the procession began to go round the grounds of the Retreat. On these occasions, when the weather permitted, the sermon was preached in the open air, and the spirit of the people being now thoroughly roused, they were present in thousands. Subsequently the May processions in Mount Argus became a regular institution and they form one of the chief attractions in the neighbourhood of Dublin at the present time. Other churches soon began to follow the example of the Passionists, particularly that of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Inchicore.

Another event occurred this year in which B. Paul's Retreat shared the common interest, namely the general Chapter of the Congregation, which was held in May in SS. John

and Paul, Rome. The provincial Chapter had been due some time before, but was put off for the reason that the province had been divided, and it was considered advisable to allow some time to elapse in order to see how the new state of things would work. Up to the present the Province was known as the "Anglo Belgian" Province; when divided, we belonged to the "Anglo Hibernian." Owing also to a somewhat unsettled state of things in some of the Retreats in England at the time, and which does not belong to these pages, there was some difficulty about holding the provincial Chapter in England. In an audience however which the Fr. General had with the holy Father, and in which he mentioned the difficulty about the chapter, his Holiness ordered that the chapters of both provinces should be held in Rome immediately after the general chapter. This was accordingly done, with the result, at all events so far as we are concerned, that Father Ignatius Pauli was elected Provincial, and Father Osmund Maguire Rector of Blessed Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus. Fr. Ignatius at the time of his election was Lector in SS. John and Paul, Rome. We shall meet him again.

1858

There is very little beyond the ordinary to record during the year 1858, except that the number of the faithful attending Mount Argus was ever increasing, and the demand for Missions and retreats more frequent from the bishops and priests throughout the country. Fathers Vincent and Osmund conducted a mission in the little church attached to the retreat during the month of March, but there was not sufficient accommodation for half the people who desired admission. The confessionals were well attended during the day and till a late hour every evening, and the opportunities thus given for the reception of the Sacraments, compensated in a great measure for the other disappointments.

It was during this month too that Mt. Argus became our own property. As already mentioned, it was necessary that the property should pass through the Incumbered Estates Court, in order that we might secure a legal title, which Mrs Byrne was unable to give. Accordingly on the 26th March of this year, the lands and houses known as Mount Argus were formally sold to our representative, and the Passionists entered into rightful possession.

Amongst the Retreats and missions given this year, particular mention is made of the Annual Retreat to the students of All Hallows College by Fr. Vincent, and a four weeks' Mission in Blanchardstown by FF. Vincent, Ignatius Spencer, Bernard and Bernardine. It is stated that during the Mission as many as ten thousand persons received Holy Communion. It was during this mission that Thomas Joseph Kelly, afterwards Father Xavier, received his vocation to the Congregation. An interesting incident is related of him and which happened at this time. So much was he pleased with the labours of the fathers, and so grateful did he feel for the interest they had taken in himself, that he determined to make some present to the fathers by way of compensation. Accordingly he and his companions contributed a sum sufficient to purchase a Missal, which was sent to Fr. Bernard, in Broadway, and gratefully acknowledged. Thomas Joseph Kelly afterwards joined the Congregation, and in due time made his profession, and was ordained priest in Dublin in September, 1869. He worked for some time in the Province, but his health, which was never robust, showing signs of failure, he was sent to America, in the hope that the warmer climate would restore his strength. It was not to be however, and he died in our Retreat in Baltimore, on the 8th Sep. 1875. His name in religion was Xavier of the Blessed Virgin.

The year eighteen hundred and fifty nine began with a new horarium of observance, drawn up by the Provincial, Father Ignatius, whose practical eye saw the necessity for such a change before he had been long in these countries. Hitherto the horarium was modelled on that peculiar to Italy, and altogether unsuited to this province, considering the work which we had undertaken. According to the old arrangement, we retired to rest at seven thirty in Winter and eight in Summer; got up to Matins at twelve thirty in Winter and one in Summer; Prime and Tierce at five, and the public Masses began at half past five. In some of the retreats it was impossible to maintain this high rate of speed, and consequently a few of the local Superiors introduced a modification or change, to enable them to fulfil their obligations to the public. This led to confusion and a want of uniformity which the Provincial did not like, but it was impossible to avoid it, especially in Dublin, as numbers of those who came to confession would otherwise have been disappointed. All this the Provincial saw and determined to remedy. The reasons will be best understood by giving the Provincial's letter in full:-

Jesu Xpi Passio.

Ignatius of the Infant Jesus, Provincial of the Anglo Hibernian Province of S. Joseph. To all the Reverend Fathers and most beloved Brethren of our Province, health in the Lord.

From the time of our appointment to the direction of this Province, we perceived in our four houses a want of uniformity in the observance of our Holy Rules, resulting from the variety of duties, which we are called upon to fulfil in favour of the people, especially in the performance of evening service, and hearing confessions.

Some of our Religious suggested to us that we ought to remedy this want of uniformity, and allow more time for the confessions of those who frequent the sacraments in our churches, if only the time of going to rest at night were fixed at nine o'clock. We paid attention to this representation, and for six or seven months we have reflected upon it and repeatedly have offered our prayers in order to know the will of our Lord in an affair of so great importance.

It was also remarked by some of our fathers, that taking into account the climate of these countries, our occupations with the people, and the physical constitution of the subjects, reducing the time of our being up for Matins to one hour would greatly facilitate the continuation of our observance. All these things having being reflected upon, we came to the resolution of framing a new horarium, a copy of which we herewith enclose. This horarium has been examined in Rome by the Father General and his Consultors. It has not as yet been approved, but we are allowed to practise it as a trial for a few months. During the lapse of this time, every one of the religious is permitted to make any reasonable remark which he thinks proper. If at the end of this period, the greater number of the religious, and especially of the Superiors are satisfied, the horarium will receive its sanction from Rome.

We would desire that the New Horarium should begin to be observed with the opening of the New Year, 1859. If however there should appear to be some difficulty in putting this our desire into immediate execution, we allow ten days delay, during which any of the religious may offer to us their remarks on the subject, by private and confidential letter.

Given at this Retreat of St. Joseph,

Highgate Hill, London.

This 30th day of December, 1858.

Ignatius of the Infant Jesus, Provincial.

The new horarium was approved by the Father General and his Consultors on the 23rd September, 1869, and has since been common to all the Retreats in the province where the full observance is kept. The hour for matins was fixed for two o'clock all the year round; Prime and Tierce at six; Sext and None at twelve; Vespers at three; Compline at a quarter past seven; Rosary and night prayers at a quarter to nine, and rest at nine o'clock. The hour for the last mass on week days was fixed for half past ten, but was afterwards changed to ten o'clock, which is still the hour in this Retreat.

Another event of more than ordinary importance occurred this year in the laying of the foundation stone of the new Retreat. It had been felt almost from the beginning that the work of the fathers was very much crippled for the want of a sufficiently commodious house to live in. The old house was much too small; it had not been built for us, and consequently was in no way adapted to our life and the character of our observance. Besides the increasing work both at home and abroad demanded an increase in the number of workers, which was not possible because of the insufficient accommodation. It was deemed necessary therefore to build a new retreat, and accordingly on the 13th of June of this year, the foundation stone was laid in the absence of his Grace the Archbishop by the Most Rev. Dr. Whelan, Bishop of Bombay. The ceremony is thus described by a writer in the Evening News of the 14th June:-

One of the most interesting ceremonies at which it has been the privilege of the Catholics of Dublin to assist for a long time took place yesterday afternoon in the beautiful grounds of Mount Argus, Harold's Cross. It has been known that for some time past the venerable brotherhood of the order of Passionists have been engaged in the holy work of the conversion of souls in the immediate vicinity of our city; but it was also known that the fathers of the community had only provided themselves with a temporary residence, the pioneer only of that permanent establishment which the piety of the faithful was to raise, and which, under the blessing of the Almighty, was to be available in the meritorious project of contributing to the spread and the sustainment of Catholic piety. Founded but a little better than one hundred years, the order of Passionists has drawn around it the affections of men by the earnestness of its preaching and the examples of holiness which it affords. The Blessed Paul, surnamed of the Cross, with that sanctified intention and devotion to the Saviour of mankind, with which his beautiful name has been identified, instituted the order for two objects – first, to promote in the hearts of the faithful a living remembrance of the sufferings and death of Christ, and secondly, to this end, to give missions and retreats. To the exercise of this rule it were needless now to say that the professed Passionists have proved themselves strict adherents, and have shown that they are devoted servants of their divine Master. Wherever a house of the order has been established, increase in piety, abundant grace, and all the exterior evidences of advancement in the ways of godliness have become conspicuous until at length the rule originated by the Piedmontese priest, and which at his death in 1775, at the age of eighty one, had but twelve houses acting under it, has now being adopted by countless ecclesiastics, all of whom yield to the abnegation of self which it demands, and perform the special duties which it enjoins. Nor could it well be otherwise. When it is recollected that by successive occupants of the chair of the Sovereign Pontiff, Benedict XIV, Clement XIV, Pius VI and Pius VII, was the order approved and privileges conferred upon its members, no wonder will be excited that it became an object of lively ambition to obtain membership within it. But, though so famous on the continent of Europe, as an order under

whose salutary rule the greatest good could be accomplished both for its members and their penitents, it was not until the year 1841 that one of the principal objects of its blessed Founder could be accomplished. Looking towards England as the centre of the great heretical movement in progress throughout the world, the venerable missionary of the Cross prayed for the conversion of that country for upwards of fifty years of his holy life, and was ultimately so blessed of God as to receive a revelation from Heaven that the ardent desire of his soul would be granted in due time. In 1841 the first house of the order was established in England, and in May, 1849, the first Passionist Mission was given in Ireland, in the church of Saint Audeon, Dublin by FF. Dominic, Vincent & Ignatius. The result of this mission is well known – even sufficiently so to render necessary any argument on our part – suffice it to say that so much good flowed as to call forth mission after mission by members of the order, until at last it was felt that a most desirable object would be the permanent establishment of the order amongst us. With this view, the Very Rev. Father Vincent, on behalf of his venerable brethren, secured the possession of Mount Argus, a beautifully situated retreat, at Kimmage Road, Harold's Cross. Here the fathers have erected a small temporary chapel, capable of accommodating about six hundred persons, and from hence they have afforded to the Catholics of Ireland since 1856, the benefit of no less than thirty-four missions and retreats. As time progressed, however, and as it became evident that there was spreading the benign influence of that holy desire, so well expressed by a Catholic poet, Aubrey de Vere. –

*Glorious the thought; not mortal the design.
 Defamed by fools, in earthly hearts to raise
 Unearthly citadels of prayer and praise:
 Revering, to renounce all bonds that twine
 With heavenly, human love: though grace divine
 To rise o'er Virtue's secondary ways; -
 Hidden to live with God: and by His gaze,
 Illumed, yet veiled, like moontide stars to shine!*

- it was found to be a matter of necessity that a home should be provided for the accommodation of the Fathers in order that the demands of the people might be fully and adequately supplied. Steps were at once taken to carry this purpose into effect. Plans were sent in and estimates sought, and finally the designs of Mr. J. J. Mac Carthy, architect, and the contract of Mr Meade, builder, for £12,000, were accepted. And, these preliminaries being desposed, the initiative in the erection of the new monastery came to be taken yesterday. According to previous announcement, the laying of the first stone took place shortly after three o'clock. At that hour thousands of the Catholic body having congregated in the charming grounds attached to the Retreat, the proceedings of the day commenced. A procession, formed of servitors and ecclesiastics, preceeded by the cross-bearer and acolytes, came forth from the convent and moved towards the site selected for the deposition of the first stone. The procession included the Rev. Fathers Ignatius (Hon. Mr Spencer) Vincent, Osmund, Bernard, Raymund, Charles, Leonard and Joseph, of the order of Passionists; Rev. Father Fox O.M.I., and the Rev. Messrs. Collier, Clarke, Doyle, Brock, McCormick, Dennan and Duff, and others of the clergy of the city. The Right Rev. Dr. Whelan, Lord Bishop of Bombay, in cope and mitre, attended by Monsignor Meagher, V.G, and the Rev. W. H. Anderdon M. A., closed the procession. On arrival at the ground, the Lord Bishop took his seat on the throne prepared for him, and the clergy having formed around, the Rev. Mr. Anderdon ascended a temporary platform and proceeded to deliver a sermon appropriate to the occasion. Taking as his text the latter part of the first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, the reverend preacher proceeded to say – In these words did the Apostle speak of the exultation and extension of the holy Catholic church, and the great end

which she was to fulfil, not only on earth, but even towards the orders of the celestial hierarchy, in showing forth and revealing the infinite wisdom and manifold attributes of God. The angelic choir, as they saw the disposition of that divine wisdom manifested towards man, through his instrumentality burst forth into renewed shouts of praise and adoration. The Church of God – ‘the fulness of Him who is filled all in all’ – was established by Christ as the agent by which his grace should be conveyed to mankind. She is his spotless spouse, a revelation of his own mind, a development of his wisdom, and a manifestation of his divine attributes and perfections. His ministrations are as manifold and various as they are perfect. In her we have the Sacraments, and the many other channels through which the good are made more perfect and are enabled to persevere; the tepid and wavering are recalled into active spiritual life, and the poor sinners are brought back to the fold. The church has existed in every age, and has spread throughout all the nations of the globe, embracing among her children people of every tribe, class and colour. For each particular member of the one great body, she is a most watchful and tender parent. She adapts herself to the peculiar circumstances of every one in his own special sphere, guiding each to the great end for which all were created. Enriched by her divine Head and Founder, she is becoming more zealous and more anxious in the great work of the salvation of souls as the world grows old. The reverend gentleman alluded to the extension of the various religious orders and the incalculable blessings conferred on the country through their untiring exertions. They were assembled there now to lay the first stone of a building, which, he trusted, would be a source of great blessings, and productive of most important spiritual advantages, not only to the metropolis but to the country generally. Where they stood would soon rise an edifice in which would dwell an order of priests distinguished for their piety and virtue, and their zeal for the salvation of souls – men who show the holy Cross on their breasts but much more so in the lives – worthy and faithful disciples of Him who suffered thereon for our salvation. He asked the public to come forward and sustain those good priests and to enable them to extend the sphere of their usefulness even to the fullest extent. He could already imagine that he saw there an increased number of penitents round the tribunals of penance, a more numerous body of devout partakers of the adorable Sacrament, the ignorant attending in order to be instructed and directed in the right path. He could imagine the poor souls in Purgatory being relieved by the prayers offered up for them, and the heavenly hosts breaking forth into louder shouts of exultation at the wonderful wisdom and goodness of God thus more fully made manifest. In the name of heaven, then, he asked sympathy and help in behalf of that holy order – for the sake of their country, their neighbours, themselves, and those who could come after them.

The Right Rev. Bishop, at the conclusion of the sermon, proceeded to the scene of deposition of the first stone of the new monastery. The ritual was strictly observed in the ceremony. The stone was blessed immediately after the Litany of the Blessed Virgin had been sung by a full choir, and the stone having been blessed and deposited in its proper place, the pastoral benediction was given, and the large congregation separated.

Another Dublin paper of the same date gave also a somewhat lengthy account of the ceremony, but we have chosen to copy the above in preference, as it is less inaccurate in the wording of the description, and goes more into detail with regard to the work of the Congregation.

Bright were the hopes of the sons of S. Paul of the Cross on that day. No dark cloud marred the prospect of success, for was not Ireland's generosity the banker who held himself responsible for the completion of the noble structure wherein would be renewed the song and

the chant of other and of better days? Nor were they alone in their joy. It was shared to the full by the friends whom they had drawn around them, friends whose friendship was becoming more valuable and enduring as time went on. For over four years they watched the noble building growing into the splendid proportions which it eventually assumed, and the sight was to them as if they had been aroused from a troubled dream. Hitherto their ideas of cloister-life had been associated with days long since gone by; - with a far-away yesterday in their country's history, or if they developed at all into concrete form, it was but to see them embodied in the small, unpretending convent, or the equally unassuming building which had done service for a monastery in some back street in the larger towns or cities. They were not ignorant that for centuries the face of the country had been studded with majestic and imposing buildings where all that their forefathers held sacred and cherished had been taught and practised, and where the unbroken hymn of praise went up by day and by night from the hearts and lips that knew no quite. And well too could they recall the fearful storm which had swept away every vestige of these homes of learning and sanctity. Indeed it might be said that there was still lingering in their ears, like the distant rumbling of the exhausted thunder-roll, the dying echo of the Sassanagh's visitation, whose murderous incursions had brought so much suffering and desolation to the land. And hence they watched the growth of the Retreat of Blessed Paul at Mount Argus with wonder and with gratitude. Its existence in their midst was an evidence of the coming of a new and a better day, and consequently they were prepared to make every sacrifice in their power towards the re-building of monastic life in Ireland. The Catholics of Dublin or elsewhere to whom the fathers appealed for assistance were not wealthy, but they were numerous and they were generous, and with the relaxation or abolition of penal restrictions, they could look forward to the possession of worldly goods in the near future. The time was passed when the house could be claimed by a non-Catholic neighbour for five pounds, and in the meantime with the slender resources of which they found themselves possessed at the dawn of liberty they were working with energy and some success to recover their long-lost fortunes and possessions. And hence the task of building became an easy one. Friends were many, money was plenty and whether it was given as a personal offering to the Passionists, or as a help toward religion in general, it mattered not, - the purpose was served.

We have been unable to ascertain the exact terms of the contract between our Superiors and Mr Meade with reference to the building of the new retreat: how payment was to be made, either with regard to time, or the amount of the instalments. The total amount contracted for was unquestionably a large sum - twelve thousand pounds - and particularly so in those days when labour and materials were much less expensive than they have since become. But as the work of building extended over four years, and as the money flowed in with a generosity that seemed almost supernatural, there should not have arisen any difficulty in the entire and satisfactory completion of the contract. And yet a difficulty did arise, and one which, though we are face to face with the subject, we cannot very well explain. One thing however is certain: Meade threw up the contract, got paid to date, and left. Why this was so is not so certain. One rumour which has come down to us is to the effect that funds were wanting on the part of the contractor, but this is again denied; another that it was owing to a disagreement between himself and the architect, who took exception, and rightly so, to an inferior quality of granite which he found him working into the building. Of course the inferior would be a softer quality, and consequently could be prepared with less expense, and therefore a very likely temptation to which a builder would yield, and to which many of his class have yielded. Better for Mount Argus if it had not been so, for instead of engaging a new and a competent contractor, the fathers undertook to finish the work under their own immediate superintendence.

It has been said and with much truth, that “the man who is his own lawyer has a fool for his client,” and indeed the same might be said of the man who is his own builder. One may be a good religious, an eloquent and persuasive preacher, even a distinguished and a profound theologian, but it does not at all follow that he is an authority in the science of bricks and mortar. This is no rash assertion, for the consequences resulting from the Passionists becoming their own builders have proved it, by reason of the shameful burden of debt contracted then, and which St. Paul’s Retreat has had to bear from that hour to the present. These remarks are not made in the spirit of fault-finding; it is rather in the spirit of regret that they are chronicled at all.

It would often be amusing, if it were not attended with serious results, to notice the folly of some of the superiors of our Congregation. Once elected to the office of Rector or Superior, they seem to think that all knowledge necessarily follows the appointment. Whatever may have been their early training, or where or under what circumstances received, or how much it may have been in opposition to what is necessary for the good government of a religious community, it matters not: with the installation comes every gift. They know all about the rearing, and the feeding of cattle, though their early life may have been spent in the crowded city or the halls of a college; so too, as if by inspiration, do they know all about farming, and on the most scientific principles; they are familiar with kitchen-gardening, even to the extent of undertaking to grow in these northern climes, the most delicate vegetable, such as would not condescend to smile on anything less luxurious than a tropical sun. Nor is this all: they would engage to build a cathedral, and would lecture professional gentlemen on the different styles of architecture, and the proportion of parts to each other, as well as the amount of light and shade that should be allowed in forming the nimbus of a Patron Saint. Now all this would surely be amusing, if it were not expensive, but expensive it is, inasmuch as what is thus spoiled, is wasted, and it not unfrequently happens that the work is done a second and a third time, and eventually the professional has to be called in to finish it. It would be much better in all such instances to employ the person whose department it is, and to abide by his decision for “no cobbler should go beyond his last”.

Brother Alphonsus Zeegers, a Dutch man, who was afterwards joined in the capacity of assistant by Brother John Walsh, took sole and absolute charge of the building as Clerk and Master of Works, and thus became responsible for every department of labour in connection with the completion of the new retreat. Now both these men were good religious, and skilled workmen at their own trade, which they had learned and practiced before they joined the Congregation, but had never served an hour in the capacity of builder, who is supposed to be familiar with every branch of trade included in his contract. Changes and additions soon began to be made in the original designs, and these meant multiplication of expense, twofold, if not threefold, workmens time was misspent, for they would never fear the religious overseer as they would the lay man; and all this and much more with the result that money had to be borrowed at a high rate of interest in order to complete the retreat, and that to the amount of thousands which in some form or other remains unpaid to the present day. Better would it have been for us to have erected a less expensive and less pretentious home: with little more than half the cost, an equally good and much more commodious monastery could have been build, and thousands of pounds saved, which during well nigh forty years has been thrown away in the payment of interest. About the building itself we shall have more to say when we come to speak of the opening.

Another very successful Mission was given in our church towards the end of this year, during which thousands approached the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion. Part was taken in the mission by the Provincial, Father Ignatius, and it was his first attempt in the

English language. It is said that he was understood quite easily, having spoken slowly and with great distinctness. He afterwards acquired a thorough knowledge of the language, writing it with wonderful correctness, and speaking it with ease and fluency, a degree of perfection seldom attained by his countrymen.

1860

The second day of the week is usually known in Scotland as the “Parson’s Sabbath”, probably because on that day he rests from the anxiety and exertions of the preceeding one. And possibly there is some truth in it, as the Sunday is with most of them, a day that puts to the test their highest and best intellectual craft and power. It is not an easy matter to preach three sermons every “Lord’s Day”, even though they may not be on three distinct subjects, carefully excluding each other; and this perhaps to the same congregation, and for a number of years. A Presbyterian clergyman told me once that were it not for Rome and the system of Catholicism, it would not be possible for them to make their sermons attractive for any length of time. Apart from the four sermons each year which every Presbyterian minister by virtue of his ordination oath is bound to preach against the errors of popery, it is at all times a savoury morsel to present to a Presbyterian appetite, and the more it is flavoured with vituperation and administered with a goodly share of lung power, so much the more palatable of course. In any case Sunday is a pretty hard day for them, sufficiently so to justify the saying, and it is not surprising that they should sleep and take their rest on Monday. It is so in many other departments of life also; hence “after the storm come a calm”, which is true not only of those contrasts which the elements present us from time to time, but in things social as well.

The year 1859 was more than ordinarily a busy one in Mt. Argus. The preparations for the commencement of the new building; the ceremony of laying the foundation stone and the consequent enthusiasm which all this called forth, produced more than usual excitement in and around the quiet retreat, where hitherto solitude and peace were the reigning deities. The activity thus awakened was followed in 1860 by comparative calm. True the work of building was pressed forward with energy and success, but it had been well started, and no additional impetus was necessary in order to have realized the best hopes of all concerned. From every part of Ireland money flowed in in abundance, not only from Dublin and those districts of the country where the fathers had given Missions or Retreats, and where we were to some extent known, but even from distant towns and parishes where a Passionist had never set his foot, or where his voice had never been heard. Well would it have been for Mount Argus, had the good Sons of St. Paul of the Cross remembered that this plentiful harvest – this “seven years of plenty” – could not last always, and with the foresight of a Joseph, made provision for the years of smaller blessings which were to follow in time.

The second Provincial Chapter of the Congregation in these countries was held in June of this year in St. Anne’s Retreat, Sutton. It is called the “Second” Provincial Chapter, though it might be called the “Fourth”. When the second Chapter was due in 1854, Father Pius of the Name of Mary was in the Province in the capacity of Visitor General, in consequence of some irregularities which had been reported to Rome regarding us, and which he had been sent to investigate and correct. Whatever these irregularities may have been, they don’t concern these pages, as St. Paul’s Retreat, Mount Argus, was not then in existence. At

all events the usual Chapter was dispensed with, the Visitor General, by reason of the jurisdiction which he possessed, re-appointing the Superiors already in office for a further term of three years. Then in 1857, as has been already noticed, the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius IX, ordered the election of the Superiors both for this and the Belgian Province to be made in Rome immediately after the General Chapter which was held in the Retreat of SS. John and Paul that year. Hence the Chapter of 1860 has been called the “second” Provincial Chapter. The chapter was presided over by the Very Reverend Father Joseph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary from the Belgian Province.

A few days before the Chapter, all the capitular Fathers were assembled in Highgate, to take part in the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the new church, which took place on the 29th of May, and which by the way has since given place to the present noble structure which looks down from the top of Highgate Hill on the busy city of London. On the following day the Fathers journeyed to Sutton, and the same evening the solemn triduum began, resulting in the re-election of Fr. Ignatius Paoli to the office of Provincial, and Father Osmund Maguire, Rector of Mount Argus.

This Chapter was remarkable for two extraordinary events, especially when viewed in the light of modern history; first, the elections were finished in one day, and second – no decrees were made! These things speak loudly in praise of the Province, and of the healthy state in which the Chapter found it. The Provincial was elected in the forenoon, and in the afternoon “sederunt” all the other elections were made. The acts of the Chapter drew attention to some slight want of uniformity in the secular dress of the brethren; also, that except on Missions and Retreats, our fathers should always preach in surplice and stole both in our own churches and outside. The Chapter continued its sittings till the 5th when it was formally closed, soon after which the different Superiors left for their respective retreats. A right royal welcome was given to Fr. Osmund on his return to B. Paul’s, as he was deservedly popular both with the religious and those in the neighbourhood of Mount Argus.

The Feast of our holy Founder, B. Paul of the Cross, was kept with more than ordinary solemnity in Mt. Argus this year. Before his canonization, as is well known, the Festival was kept on the 16th November. On that day sol. High Mass was sung by Mongr. Meagher, P.P. Rathmines, and the panegyric of the Saint was preached by the Rev. W. H. Anderdon. A very large Congregation attended both morning and evening.

Towards the end of this year, a new difficulty arose with regard to the new retreat in course of erecting. Some “busy bodies” reported to Rome that the cells and other apartments in the new retreat were not in keeping with the proportions specified in the Holy Rule. In consequence of this report, the Provincial and his first Consultor journeyed to the eternal City, and the result of their interview with the Father General was the following letter from his Paternity:-

Retreat of SS John & Paul, Rome.

22nd September 1860.

The Very Rev. Fr. Ignatius of the Infant Jesus, Provincial of the Anglo Hibernian Province, and the Very Rev. Fr. Vincent of S. Joseph, first Consultor of the same Province, having come to Rome, submitted to our consideration some important matters in reference to the building of the new Retreat at Mount Argus, Dublin. The answer to them is the following:-

First, with regard to the dimensions of the cells and corridors, mentioned in the Holy Rule, it was decided that the 12 “Palmes” allowed as the dimensions of each cell, are to be understood “15 di Passetto Romano”, which is equivalent to eleven feet one inch, English measure; and the corridors, which in the same Rule, are said to be eight “Palmes”, must be understood “Ten di Passetto Romano”, equivalent to seven feet five inches, English measure.

Secondly: with regard to the new Retreat, now in course of erection, in Dublin, it was found through some misunderstanding, that the corridors and some of the cells, exceeded the measure allowed by our holy Rule. The Most Reverend Father General, taking into consideration the advanced state of the work, has most graciously consented that the entire Retreat may be continued according to its present fixed dimensions, but at the same time ordained, that should it be found necessary in course of time to build again, then there must be no departure from the holy Rule, but what is therein prescribed must be strictly attended to.

Signed

Anthony of S. James. Praep. General.

And so that ghost was laid.

It is related of the lay brother who lived with the Venerable Strambi that he was in the habit of saying that “saints are all very good in their own way, but they are very hard to live with”. So that it is not from the sinner and the law-breaker only that we have to suffer here below, but even from the elect and the chosen. There are some souls and consciences so constituted, that zeal for the promotion of their Father’s glory and the glory of their Father’s house, compels them in their all-embracing charity, to be ever solicitous for their neighbour’s welfare. Of course they mean no injury to the neighbour, quite the contrary, theirs is a holy desire to keep the world straight on the lines which they have laid down, perhaps more for others than for their own direction. Hence it is the greatest possible mortification for them to see a brother act in any way contrary to their standard of excellence; to speak a word which would in the least degree savour of the maxims of this wicked world, and health and appetite would pale away almost to vanishing point. They are favoured souls, not “like the rest of men”: Their place in life is like that of the ship’s commander: not only to bring themselves safe into port, but all the other souls on board. Consequently their word of advice or reprimand is always at the disposal of their brethren, and lest the erring one should be too downcast to ask for advice, it is given gratuitously. And should this not have the desired effect, the name of some one higher in authority is invoked, so that no effort may be spared to save him from himself. Possibly it was some such spirit which animated the “busy body” of Mount Argus who reported progress to Rome in 1860. He had probably been reading the 68th Psalm, and coming to the 10th verse, found himself “eaten up” with a desire to be zealous for the Lords “house”. Better he had continued reading, and followed the example of the royal writer, as described in the 11th and 12th verses. It would likely have the effect of fixing his mind more on himself and less on his neighbours. As it was however, the building of the new Retreat went on according to the original plans, and with the sanction of the highest authority in the Congregation. The cells of the brethren, though large enough to supply the wants of a poor Passionist, are not by any means too spacious, and particularly so the one in which these chronicles were written is scarcely large enough to satisfy even the requirements of the Holy Rule. It would not be difficult to treat this subject at much greater length, but a mere Chronicler must not turn lecturer.

The years 1861 and '62 are hard years for the chronicler. They are absolutely wanting in almost ordinary events, at least so far as any record has come down to us. True the religious attended to the observance; they neglected not the work to be done in the church, but no unprejudiced mind requires to be told these things. The good sons of St. Paul of the Cross got up to Matins at two o'clock; and again at six and the various other canonical hours of the day their voices were heard in choir singing the divine praises in a manner worthy of their holy vocation. But sure this again need not be told, only that it is a weakness of our poor human nature to say a word in praise of itself when the opportunity offers.

Now as this is not a work of fiction, and as facts so persistently absent themselves, one is at a loss to know how far imagination may be allowed to play a part in filling up the pages where the material proper to them is so very scanty. One is reminded of the story of the emigrant, who, on returning to his native land after an absence of many years, is surprised and disappointed to find that most of the familiar faces and landmarks of by-gone days have either wholly or in part disappeared. True there remain the fields and the hillside where he played as a boy, but the humble home in which he first saw the light has long since vanished before the crowbar of the destroyer; true also the little church within whose walls he received the gift of faith in Baptism and was subsequently strengthened in that same faith by other Sacraments, occupies the same site, but another voice speaks in the sanctuary, and unknown faces surround the altar rails and fill the body of the sacred edifice. Here and there however he is able to distinguish a face or a form that links the past with the present, and thus affords him an opportunity of living those youthful days over again, for though much trouble and hardship had to be endured during those intervening years, time was sparing in his inroads on personal appearances. And thus as we say sometimes, "reading between the lines" the history of those years of absence, he is yet able to discover much that recalls the days and the scenes of his childhood.

So too may we in our own small way find on closer examination much in those two apparently barren years, that did not appear at first sight, or which has not been handed down in written form. It is certain that during those years the Passionists made the acquaintance of most of the Counties in Ireland. The many missions which our fathers gave in most of the large towns and in many of the thickly populated districts had this effect, and the growing popularity of Father Vincent made him be sought for in most of the conventual and educational establishments in the country to give the annual retreats to the inmates.

Missions in those days, though conducted on nearly the same lines as in our own time, were very different from what they are now. They were in themselves a novelty, which of itself is at all times calculated to draw a crowd; the fathers were new, and though their gospel was the same as that to which they had always listened, it was put before them in a new and popular light which was certain to make men more alive to its obligations and more interested in the affairs of their souls. They would travel many miles to be present at the services of the Mission, and would frequently remain fasting until a late hour in the afternoon in order to receive the sacraments before returning to their respective homes. And if disappointed one day they would wait until the following, providing themselves with lodgings as best they could, and if such were not available within doors, they would content themselves with resting beneath the open canopy of heaven. Those were days of strong and simple faith, when to come nearer to God in point of sanctity, the Irish peasant knew no hardship or difficulty.

The same can hardly be said of the days in which we live. True the grand old faith still beats strong in the heart of the nation, as it does in the heart of every individual Irishman, but comparative prosperity, and the absence of persecution for conscience sake, together with the introduction of various and conflicting political elements, have to a great extent alienated the present generation from that complicity in religious matters which was so characteristic of their fathers. Not that the Irishman can or ever will be anything religious but Catholic. He may absent himself for years from the sacraments; he may not recognise the obligation of hearing Mass with regularity which he ought; he may in the excitement of the electioneering campaign be heard to cry out "no priest in politics!" but unlike his French or Italian brother, he will never formally cast off the yoke of his mother the church, neither will he risk his entrance into the world beyond the grave without being protected and fortified by the last sacraments. And this may be said to be a peculiar feature in the Celtic character. He may in the weakness or in the enthusiasm of the moment permit himself to be carried away to say or do something which is disloyal both to his religion and to his settled convictions, but with the moment of reflection and calm will return his better reason, and like St. Peter, he will bewail for years the forgetfulness of the moment in which he knew not the Master.

Many are the stories that have come down to us of those days and the impressions made on the minds of our fathers, even those of English nationality, regarding the respect of the Irish for their religion and for the priesthood. The late Father Ignatius Spencer was in the habit of letting a story which illustrates this peculiarity of the Irishman's character. On a certain occasion when coming from the city to Mt. Argus, he noticed in the neighbourhood of Harold's Cross two boys whose ages could not be more than eight or nine, engaged in a regular stand-up fight, and seemingly determined on each other's destruction as if thousands of pounds or the fate of nations depended upon the result. So engrossed were the youthful pugilists in their efforts for victory that they noticed not the father until he had gone some yards beyond, when all at once a truce to hostilities was declared, and both boys ran after the priest, touched their forelocks in token of respect for his Reverence; this done, they returned to the ring, to settle their own individual grievances.

Nor was it to preach the word of God and administer the Sacraments that our fathers were called upon during many of those missions and retreats: they had also to use their influence in settling quarrels – some of them of long standing – between individuals and sometimes between families. The old Clan system, though dying out in these days, was then in existence, much to the detriment of religion in the district or parish where it existed. To quarrel with an individual was to offend all his relations and all of the same name, together with all those who by intermarriages were indirectly related to them and then the offended party took advantage of the first opportunity to demand and if possible to have satisfaction. These accounts were generally settled at the country fair or market. Elated with the successful sale of some property brought to market to be disposed of, and still further stimulated with refreshments which were considerably stronger than water, the enemy of his house was sought out, a battle ensued, in which all the friends and relations took part, the result of which was the survival of the strongest. Then came the charges and the counter charges in the local Petty-Session Court, ending in heavy fines or imprisonment in the County Jail. Time and again the local clergy denounced these outrages, but they were in many instances unable to prevent them. It sometimes happened that the priest belonged to one or other of the offending parties, and consequently his words were looked upon by the opposite side in a partisan light, and therefore fell short of having the desired effect. Here the Missionary was absolutely independent: all were alike to him. He had no relations amongst either party, nor could he have any favourites, and hence his position as a missionary priest and a stranger enabled him to speak and interfere with the freedom of an Apostle. Much good was therefore effected in

this way by the fathers, and many reconciliations brought about which were final and lasting in their good results.

A good story is told of Father Vincent Grotti, who, whilst engaged on a mission in a North-Western County, was called upon to uproot a long-standing feud which existed between two families and their followers in the parish. The parish priest had explained to Fr. Vincent shortly after his arrival the whole nature and cause of the dispute; the scandal it was giving, and his own inability to settle it: in fact that it was one of the reasons – if not the reason why he had asked for the mission. That same evening Fr. Vincent took occasion during the sermon to refer to the necessity of charity, without which no one would be known as our Lord's disciples, but without making any reference to the parties concerned. A few days afterwards he sent for one of the leaders, and after a long interview in the sacristy, the man consented to forgive and forget, if his Reverence would just wait till after the fair day of G – when they might have one more good fight and be done with it. To this of course Father Vincent would not consent. Before leaving however he promised the father to call again when he would have further considered the matter. Next day Father Vincent interviewed the leader of the opposite faction. He was less exacting with regard to terms than his opponent, and promised the father that he would leave the matter entirely in his hands and abide by his decision. This meeting also took place in the sacristy. “Well then”, said Fr. Vincent, “since you leave the matter in my hands, you will meet me here in this sacristy at twelve o'clock tomorrow”. The man promised. Meanwhile the good father saw the rival warrior, and requested him also to meet him at the same time and place, without telling him however that his enemy would be there too. During the course of the forenoon on the following day, when the church was comparatively empty, Fr. Vincent removed the large Crucifix from the platform to the sacristy, and partly hid it away from sight in a dark corner of the room. He also told the parish priest of the meeting and requested him to be present. Punctually at twelve o'clock the more amiable of the combatants arrived, and when asked by Fr. Vincent if he still meant to leave the settlement to him, replied in the affirmative. He had scarcely said so when a knock at the door announced the arrival of number two. When he was admitted, and seeing before him the enemy of his name and clan, he looked as if he seemed about to forget all the surroundings - the presence of the priests and the sacredness of the place, and then and there attack him. The two stood gazing at each other, as if deciding what they should do. It was a moment of suspense. Both men were armed with stout blackthorns, which they held partly in the hand and partly suspended from the wrist by a leathern thong. Fr. Vincent was the first to speak. He referred at once to the object for which he brought the men together; the long-standing scandal which had existed in the parish because of their forgetfulness of the gospel precepts; the necessity of a reconciliation which should be complete and lasting, and asked both men to declare in the presence of their parish priest that they were desirous to do so. The one who had already promised Fr. Vincent to be guided by him at once said that he was willing that it should be so. The other hesitated and remained silent. Quick as thought Fr. Vincent stepped aside, and taking the Crucifix from the corner where he had placed it, and holding it in his hands, confronted the man where he still remained standing. The father raised his voice to a loud – almost to any angry pitch – which it is said he could do when the occasion required – and told the man if he would not be reconciled for his sake or for the sake of the parish priest, to be so for the sake of Almighty God. The effect was electrical: in an instant both men were on their knees. “Now”, continued Fr. Vincent, “let there be an end to this sin and scandal for ever. Either you give it up or you give up Jesus Christ, whose Crucified image is looking down upon you: you can no longer have both: which will you choose?” Almost in the same words and in the same breath, both men said in loud and earnest tones that they would give up all the world rather than be

separated from their Redeemer. Each begged the others pardon and promised never to renew the quarrel, and after a warm and hearty shake hands, both left the sacristy together, and the friendship pledged that day was never afterwards broken. Needless to say the parish priest was delighted as were all the good people of the parish.

On the 3rd of August of this year, 1862, the Congregation sustained a severe loss in the death of the Most Reverend Father Anthony of St. James, the Superior General of the entire Order. The death of this religious deserves more than a passing notice even in these pages, both by reason of his personal worth and the part which he played in the government of the Congregation for a number of years. It has been said of him that he resembled more closely our Holy Founder than any other Superior who had held the office of General since the death of St. Paul of the Cross. His was the government of a saint. Severe and exacting with regard to himself, his treatment of others partook of the gentleness and the care of a mother. His anxiety too to promote the interests of the Congregation never slept, as will be seen from the following letter written from Rome at the time of his holy death, and the greater portion of which is transferred to these pages. The letter itself may be found in extenso elsewhere. (Fr. Salvian's "Annals", Vol. I. p. 428.)

Fr. Anthony of St. James was born of Giovanni and Antonia Festa in Marciana in the Isle of Elba on the 18th October 1787, and received the name of Anthony in Baptism. He entered our Congregation in 1803, receiving the habit on the 12th of July of that year. He retained the name of Anthony in religion. After his profession which he made on the 13th of July, 1804, he began the usual course of studies, in which he so distinguished himself as to be appointed Lector of philosophy at the end of his course, and whilst still only a Deacon. Shortly after his ordination to the priesthood, came the general dispersion of the religious orders in Italy, and the Passionists, like all the other bodies, were obliged to leave their monasteries. Father Anthony betook himself to Naples, where his rare talents and piety attracted the notice of the Prince of Saint Gatto, who took him to his palace to superintend the studies and the spiritual direction of his sons. Here he remained until peace and liberty were restored to the church, when he returned to our Retreat of SS. John and Paul, to join, in rebuilding the Congregation, the others, who, like himself, had been in banishment during the time of dispersion and persecution. After the re-establishment of community life in the retreat, he was appointed Lector of Theology, in which office he continued till 1821, when he was elected Rector of the Retreat, which he governed for three years, at the end of which he was appointed Provincial. He remained in the Offices of Provincial and Consultor until the general Chapter of 1839, when he was chosen Superior General of the entire Congregation, the duties of which he continued to discharge until his death, a period of nearly twenty four years. Though he protested again and again against his re-election, as in the case of our Holy Founder, the Capitulars were deaf to his entreaties, and so he remained in office till the end of his life.

It was during the twenty four years which Father Anthony was General that the Congregation began to make itself felt outside the narrow circle in which it had hitherto worked and existed. Whether it arose from want of subjects or from some other cause, the Passionists did not show any desire to go beyond their native Italy, or even to multiply themselves at home. Content with leaving matters as he finds them is a strongly developed feature in the Italian character, and unless lead by a superior power or prompted by a hope of gain, he prefers to do exactly today what he had done yesterday rather than run any risk by going aside from the beaten path. Whilst this is perfectly true of the nationality it is not so of the individual, and Father Anthony was one of the noble exceptions. He wished to see the Congregation spread its wings over many lands, and his wishes were granted to the extent

that during his lifetime eight new Retreats were opened in Italy, two in France, one in Belgium, one in Holland, four in England, one in Ireland (Mount Argus) and three in America. He also revised and had printed, our Regulations, adding much that was useful and practical for the growing wants of the Congregation. He introduced besides the periodical examination of our students in the work gone through in class, and in order the better to equip them in the successful discharge of their missionary duties, he enjoined, that besides the old horarium of studies, the young men should be trained in literary and scientific pursuits, so as to be better prepared to meet the growing irreligious and infidel tendencies of the age. So great was the esteem in which he was held in Rome for prudence and sanctity, that he was chosen Confessor to the Conclave in which Pius IX was elected pope, and was afterwards offered an Archbishopric, which he declined, preferring to live and die amongst his brethren. No wonder then that his loss was felt, or that the writer of the letter from which we have been quoting should have said: "his death was the greatest blow the Congregation received since the Holy Founder passed to his eternal reward." R.I.P.

1863

The year 1863 may be said to be a somewhat eventful one in the history of the province and particularly so of Mount Argus. The work of missions and retreats – the demand for which was increasing day by day – was carried on with great success. Bishops and priests alike joined in their praise of the great fruit which was everywhere the happy result of their labours, and the better state of things established amongst the people was both edifying and enduring. The Passionists were thus finding their way to the hearts of the Irish people, and by the high road of religion the surest and the most lasting link binding the children of St. Paul of the Cross to the children of St. Patrick. But not in Ireland only was this work attended to: England, and occasionally the "Lan' o' Cakes" heard the voice of the missionary, but with what result must be looked for outside these pages. Mention may be made here of Missions given in Killinkere, Co. Cavan, Warrenpoint, Co. Down, retreat to the priests of the diocese of Dromore, Newry, and to several communities of nuns. The mission in Killinkere however was remarkably successful. It was conducted by Fathers Osmund, Raphael, Alphonsus and Clement. It lasted three weeks and was closed on Sunday the 15th of November. A local newspaper thus describes the work of the fathers during the three weeks: "The mission from its beginning to its close was one glorious triumph of grace. From the second day it was found impossible to procure a sufficient number of priests to hear the confessions of the crowds anxiously flocking to the tribunal of penance. It was no rare occurrence to find those zealous souls fasting for two and even three days, and strange as it may seem, yet too true – and to their praise be it told – night after night hundreds remained in the church in order to secure for themselves the chance of a place in the confessional for the following day.

The assistance rendered by the neighbouring clergy was invaluable. Altho' obliged to travel morning and night during the three weeks to and from their own respective parishes, distances varying from four to sixteen miles, they were moretheless in daily attendance and unremitting at their labour in the confessional. It was certainly a novel but imposing sight to witness the crowded church every available place being occupied. With two Bishops and twenty five priests earnestly engaged in hearing the confessions of the multitude, yet without being able to effect any apparent diminution in the vast crowd which was constantly receiving new supplies from the influx of fresh penitents, and thus the stream poured and the number kept up to the very last hour. The venerable bishop of Kilmore, the Right Rev. Dr.

Browne, notwithstanding his advanced age, undertook a long journey to be present at the good work. Nor was it his presence alone he vouchsafed, but his labour likewise, for he too together with the coadjutor Bishop, the Right Rev. Dr. Conaty, were in the midst of this little army of priests, assiduously labouring to gather in the rich and ripe harvest which the Master of the vineyard sent them.

The renewal of the baptismal vows with the Papal Benediction, which was the concluding ceremony of the mission, was grand and imposing. It took place at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, in the open air on a picturesque hill, a short distance from the chapel. There were about twenty five thousand persons present. The day, thank God, was most favourable; it would seem to have been sent specially by Providence, for the preceding and subsequent days were accompanied by continuous and heavy rains. The scene was indescribable. To witness such a scene is certainly an event in ones life never, never to be forgotten. One spirit and one soul seemed to animate that vast multitude. The lighted candles which they held in their hand during the ceremony of the renewal of the baptismal vows, caused the effect to appear most enchanting. It would seem too that twilight had fallen before its time to add to the grandeur of the scene. The galaxy of light beaming on the animated countenances of all assembled, the mingled tears of sorrow and heartfelt joy which filled the eyes and trickled down the cheeks of thousands as with one voice they made the hills and the valleys re-echo again and again with fervent acts of love and generous pledges of their future fidelity to God. Truly they were, as the preacher remarked, happy and filled with joy on that day. I shall never forget it. His words died away with the last benediction, when the silence was broken by the sobbing of many grateful and generous hearts. Many a prayer was offered up for the zealous labourers who were happily chosen to be the instruments of so great a work, that they may be long spared to the church and the Order of which they are members to produce by their preaching and labours the like fruit in other portions of the Lord's vineyard."

We have anticipated the events of the year by giving the above account of the Killinkere Mission, which, as has been noticed above, did not close till the 15th of November. The reason for doing so was that when speaking of missionary work in general, it served as a happy illustration of the labours of the fathers in those days. The chronological order of the year's work will now be taken up.

The Spring and Summer months were full of excitement and activity in Mount Argus in pushing forward to completion the new Retreat with the object of having it ready for the Provincial Chapter which was to be held this year. A word however about the General Chapter first. The Twenty first general chapter of the entire Congregation was opened in the Retreat of SS. John and Paul, Rome, on the 3rd of May, and was remarkable in point of the number of Capitulars present, the largest ever held since the foundation of the order. There were present twenty two capitular fathers, the increase in numbers being owing to the recently founded houses in America. Altogether there were at this time six Provinces: three in Italy, the Anglo Hibernian, the Franco-Belgian and the American. Father Peter Paul of the Seven Dolours Cayro was elected Superior General. It was in this Chapter that the retreats in America were erected into a canonical Province. The founding of a retreat or hospice in Paris for the English speaking resident in the city was also sanctioned, though with some hesitation, considering that it was to be a departure from the ordinary observance. It was also sanctioned to send some fathers to California and elsewhere to make new foundations, but looking upon their efforts in the light of subsequent days, the less said of them, the better. They did not succeed and were soon obliged to return.

The Third Provincial Chapter began its deliberations in St. Saviour's Retreat, Broadway, on the 24th of August, and resulted in the re-election of Father Ignatius Paoli as Provincial and Fr. Osmund Maguire as Rector of Mount Argus. Like its predecessor three years ago, this chapter made no new decrees, but recommended the careful observance of those already made.

The letter convoking this chapter was written on the 3rd of April from Madrid, where the Provincial, Father Ignatius, was staying at the time. His Paternity had gone to Spain with Brother Alphonsus to collect money towards the reduction of debt on the province particularly on St. Joseph's, Highgate. He appointed the 24th of August, and the place of meeting, Mt. Argus. Afterwards he went to Rome to attend the general chapter, and on his way home was present at the opening of the new house in Paris. It was then ascertained that the new retreat in Dublin would not be ready for the 24th August, and a second letter was sent to the superiors of the province, appointing Broadway. As this second letter did not reach all the superiors in sufficient time, some of them in obedience to the first started for Mount Argus, disappointed that they had to retrace their steps immediately to Worcestershire.

The great event of the year, at all events so far as we are concerned, was the solemn opening of the new retreat of Blessed Paul of the Cross. Its growth had been watched with eagerness and pride by the Catholics of Dublin, who looked upon it as a sign of returning peace and prosperity for religion in the country. Apart altogether from the local interest which it awakened, it served as a sort of religious or national triumph, for it must be remembered that religion and nationality meant almost the same thing in Ireland. To the Irish the story of conventual and monastic life was associated with their ideal Ireland, and though the history of those bygone days was written plainer in ruined abbeys and desecrated cathedrals than in books, the lessons taught and the moral pointed were familiar to the most unlettered amongst them. The story told by the winter's fireside or in the light of the Summer setting sun, was faithfully handed down from sire to son, and commented upon with an intelligence and a force that served to keep its memory green. Doubtless they regretted the loss of those ancient temples with all the susceptibility of their sensitive nature, but they ceased not to hope that God would some day reward their fidelity to the faith which had been taught therein in the re-building of those old centres of Catholic worship. Consequently they viewed with pleasure the multiplication of churches and religious houses in the land, even though they were necessarily devoid of architectural beauty or decoration. But when the penal restrictions had well nigh disappeared, and the state of the people recovering socially and financially, the severe plainness commanded by law began to give way to a style more in keeping with what should belong to the house of God. True there were in Dublin at this time many churches and ecclesiastical buildings, but they were to some extent the signs of semi-penal days, hence when the new monastery at Mount Argus became an accomplished fact, it revealed to them a reality which had hitherto lived only in their dreams. Well and justly therefore were the Catholics of Dublin proud of it. It was their own in the sense that their generous offerings had built it; it was theirs too because they hailed it as an additional evidence of the return of their long lost liberty.

The morning of Tuesday, the 8th of September was all that could be desired to add to the success of the day's ceremonial. The sun shone out with almost a midsummer splendour, and the genial warmth of the atmosphere was more peculiar to June or July than to the declining Autumn. Long before the hour appointed for the service to begin, hundreds of anxious and devout worshippers thronged the roads leading to the retreat. Not only were the citizens of Dublin present in great numbers, but many from the country districts also, testifying by their presence the wide-spread popularity of the Sons of St. Paul of the Cross.

The solemn proceedings of the day commenced at eleven o'clock, when High Mass was celebrated. The Celebrant was the Most Revd Dr. Whelan, Bishop of Bombay, Deacon, Fr. Bernardine, Subdeacon, Fr. Sebastian. The Archbishop presided, wearing his archiepiscopal robes. The chaplains in attendance upon his Grace were the Rt. Revd Mgs. Meagher, P.P. Rathmines, and the Very Revd. Fr. Ignatius Paoli, Provincial. Fathers Osmund, Raphael and Bernard acted as masters of ceremonies. Amongst the secular clergy present were Revd. Frs. Clarke, Rathgar, Collier, Brock, McCormick, Bentley, Dennon and Breen. The sermon was preached by Father Alphonsus O'Neill, who in the provincial chapter a few weeks before, had been elected Rector of St. Joseph's Retreat, Highgate, London. His text was from the Psalms, "Come, behold ye the works of the Lord, what wonders he hath done upon earth." The following is taken from the "Catholic News" report which appeared at the time: "The presence of God is everywhere manifest. On the tops of the highest mountains, on the bosom of the vast ocean, in the strong oak, in the gardens and in the fields, in the lilies and in the flowers, the wonders of God were visible to every eye. If they looked to the heavens, where the sun in its course gave light and life to the earth, they saw one of the wonders of creation. The stars shining in the heavens and the planets travelling their prescribed courses were equally the wonders of creation, as were also the seasons of the year, the growth of Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. The wonderful providence of God was seen when he raised nations to the highest pitch of power and glory, and again hurled them back to nothingness and confusion. Sometimes he raised men to that degree of power that they swayed the destinies of millions and again he cast them from their thrones and crumbled them in the dust. Then again, were they to look to themselves – to the living man, what a mighty world of wonder was seen there! Man's understanding, the power of his will, the power of vision, the acuteness of his hearing, the delicacy of his taste, the beauty of his form, everything that was in man, was what God hath made it, the living image of himself. Notwithstanding all these wonders, mighty above, below, around and within him, it was in his saints that the power and greatness of God were most wonderful. There was an awful degree of sublimity in the power which he gave them over all nature, in calling men from darkness to light, from weakness to strength – men whose works and teachings astonished the world. They were the instruments of God's holy will upon earth. Here was one of these holy saints whose name would ever find a place in every Catholic Irish heart. The name to which he alluded was that of Blessed Paul of the Cross. He (the preacher) addressed his hearers under a responsibility more than ordinary. He had much to say of the Founder of his holy order, yet he would make this observations as brief as possible, from being unwilling to trespass on the time of those whom he addressed. As a child of Blessed Paul of the Cross he should tell them what that holy saint expected of them, and of himself, but he prefaced those observations by telling them who blessed Paul was. He was born on the 3rd of January, 1694, in the town of Ovada, Italy, and which at the time was subject to the Republic of Genoa. The designs of God with respect to him were manifest from his very infancy. His birth was made manifest by a miraculous light. The light which was in the room when he was born was dimmed by the superior brilliancy of that which had been sent from heaven. His angel spirit marked the growth of his childhood. From the cradle to the grave he preserved his baptismal robe of innocence, which he carried, unstained by a breath of sin, before the tribunal of his God. His childhood and his manhood were like those of his divine Master, a long life of mortification and self-denial, which beginning with his infancy ended in his grave. Even in his childhood he had won the admiration of all, and almost the veneration of his own parents. His Christian mother had instilled into that tender mind lessons of piety which, like another Samuel, that child of God had eagerly imbibed. At that period of life, when many a promising, bright and holy childhood entering upon the career of the world is shipwrecked, the young Paul was in daily meditation at the foot of the Cross. He had learned the necessity of watching over his heart,

which he preserved in its purity by avoiding the pleasures of the world and the occasions of sin. His relations and friends had arranged for him a fitting alliance in society, but he renounced his proffered bride. He felt the voice within him calling upon him to renounce all things and follow God. Cheerfully did he make the sacrifice. He tore asunder the ties of flesh and blood, and cast from him the rich and noble inheritance bequeathed to him by his uncle. “No”, said he, “I shall have nothing of this inheritance – my breviary alone shall be my inheritance for ever.” Riches and ease and the pleasures of the world he abandoned for a life of poverty. A child of the Cross he went forth into the world as an outcast, exposed to all the inclemency of the weather, often taking his hard repose under the canopy of heaven, yet poor and an outcast like his divine Master, he accomplished a great work. He founded a Congregation and yet lived in his children. He would not be a father to an earthly family – he chose to be the father of countless spiritual children. He (the preacher) did not intend to be the panegyrist of such a life, which could not be properly treated in a brief discourse. It was enough to say that Blessed Paul zealously preached the word of God and brought thousands to the foot of the Cross. He submitted to fatigue and labours for the sake of his divine Saviour. He was full of the spirit of charity, and was remarkable in his devotion to the ever Immaculate Mother of God. If he could but picture the life of such a man, B. Paul would find a place in every Irish heart. He would for the present, be content with the sketch he had given of the pious founder of their order. Almighty God had shown his great love for man by raising up saints to do his work throughout the world. He would ask them to look to the history of the church for the past seventeen hundred years, and they would have recalled to their minds the labours of the holy founders of religious orders whose children had cultivated the spiritual world, and who had reaped harvests for God in Heaven. Oh, how many gigantic heresies had been crushed during those years by the saints of God – by the Johns, by the Francises, the Benedicts, the Ignatiuses and many others. The church progressed and became triumphant, and the spirit of the world was trodden down and crushed by the spirit of God. The men who piloted the Catholic Church against the persecution of heresy were those who had been taught in the school of the Cross. Humble men, like the twelve illiterate fishermen, who were the first Apostles, had done the work of their Saviour. The preacher then referred to the persecution of the early Christians, who modelled their lives after that of their divine Lord. He mentioned the zeal and fervour with which they preserved their faith up to the fourth century, when the spirit of the Cross was lost and the spirit of the world took its place. Previous to the fourth century the words Christian and saint were synonymous – now, alas, sinners are not numbered by families nor by villages, towns nor cities, but by whole nations. The revd. Preacher also referred to the days of the early church in Ireland, when the successors of St. Patrick had done so much for the spread of the true faith throughout Europe. He spoke of the spirit which sustained the Irish people in their attachment to their religion during the centuries of persecution through which they had passed, and of the glorious prospects for the Catholic Church in Ireland, where so many grand temples were being reared in every quarter of the land. He also acknowledged the goodness of God to his own order, who should feel ever indebted to Him for that magnificent building which they had just opened. Next to the Almighty they were indebted to His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, to whose encouragement they owed so much, and truly the Passionist Fathers were indebted to the many faithful Catholics who had forwarded their large contributions towards the erection of their new building.”

The report continues:

“A procession was then formed, consisting of the crossbearer, acolytes and priests, and preceded the Archbishop to the new building, and through its long and splendid corridors to the beautiful little chapel of the Passion. During the procession appropriate

psalms were chanted, the Archbishop having, as he passed along the various corridors, sprinkled the walls with holy water, and solemnly blessed the institution. After remaining a short time in the little chapel, while the solemn blessing was being pronounced, the procession returned to the old monastic chapel, through which the Archbishop and clergy passed on to the vestry. We have thus noticed the opening of a religious retreat, grand in its proportions, still grander in the objects for which its pious founders erected it. We have no doubt that the great advantages which it offers to persons anxious for religious retirement will be largely sought, not only by Catholics who reside in its immediate neighbourhood, the citizens of Dublin, but by the faithful from every part of Ireland. The monastery will remain open to the public during the week. On Friday at eleven o'clock, there will be solemn High Mass in the Chapel of the Passion, within the Retreat, and sermon by the Revd. W. H. Anderdon, M.A. On Sunday, the last day on which the retreat will remain open to the public, there will be sol. High Mass at twelve o'clock and sermon by Revd. Father Joseph."

It may seem somewhat, if not altogether superfluous, to add a description of Blessed Paul's Retreat in these pages. It is the Platea or Chronicle of the Retreat, which is supposed to be kept in the Retreat, and when read by anyone, will probably be read in the Retreat. Why then trouble with a description of the building, when the original can be seen by looking around? For this reason. Time has always been favourable to change; and there is no work or achievement of man that has not in some way been obliged to submit to the universality of the decree. Kings ruled over the land of Egypt that knew not Joseph, and therefore were the children of Israel enslaved and persecuted. The great Roman Empire itself, whose wealth of resource and power of resistance seemed to guarantee at one time a length of reign as eternal as the hills upon which its defences stood, crumbled before the influence of time like the conventional "House of Cards". But why go so far back for examples when we have them nearer home? During the forty years which have elapsed since the time of which we are writing, even St. Paul's Retreat has not been an exception. Many changes have taken place in the interior arrangements of the retreat, notably one, which we shall point out presently. But first of all the description, which we take from the newspaper already quoted.

"In announcing the opening of the new monastery of the Passionist Fathers in Mount Argus, we believe we are correct in pronouncing it to be the noblest religious house erected in these countries since the so-called reformation. It is delightfully situated on a spot commanding an extensive and enchanting prospect, and a locality extremely favourable to the mixed spirit of the Order, for whilst the retirement of the situation secures monastic solitude, its contiguity to the populous suburbs of Harold's Cross and Rathmines, afford ample scope for missionary labours. It was built from designs of the distinguished architect, J. J. McCarthy Esq., and follows the general plan of the Passionist Retreats in Italy, with modifications in its details to suit the climate and other circumstances of this country. It consists of three sides of a quadrangle, two of which are already complete, and the third be occupied by the church. The completed sides comprise the monastery and House of Retreat. The front, or south wing, is two hundred and five feet in length, and the west wing is one hundred and forty feet long. The front entrance is an arched porch of singular beauty. It is ascended by five steps of chiselled granite, and consists of two light and graceful columns with beautifully moulded capitals and bases, supporting a pediment whose tympanum encloses in relief the Badge of the Passionist order. The gable of the porch is surmounted by a floriated Cross. From the porch the cloister is entered through an inner vestibule, from which reception rooms open on each side. The cloister runs the entire length of the front wing, affording access to the community rooms, as well as the other rooms and offices set apart for the various duties of the religious. The central cloister leads through the west wing to the refectory, and has on either side lavatories and various offices set apart for the duties of the lay brothers. The floors

of the refectory, vestibule and cloisters are paved with ornamental tiles, specially manufactured, and laid in mosaic patterns, and, as they harmonise finely with the groined ceiling, produce a splendid effect. The refectory is a room thirty two feet square, and lighted by eight large windows, four on each of the east and west sides, and is demi-wainscoted in pitch pine, beautifully polished, the seats and tables of polished oak, are ranged along the sides. Behind the refectory are situated the kitchen and the various culinary offices. The upper floors are approached by staircases of chiselled granite and consist of corridors placed immediately above the cloisters. The corridors of the south wing are occupied by the cells of the religious. On both sides of the west wing corridors, are situated the rooms intended for the use of seculars on retreat, including a spacious reception room for the exercitants. On the upper sub-corridor is situated the infirmary." (sic) "The library is placed at the extremity of the middle west corridor, and the chapel is situated on the upper floor immediately above the library. Although the style of the house and of all its details are of the severest simplicity, the chapel has been made as beautiful as the slender means at the disposal of the community could afford. It is oblong in shape. In length it is forty five feet, in width, twenty feet. The altar is beautiful and graceful in design, the centre of the reredos being a painting by Laby of "The Agony in the Garden." The stalls for the religious are arranged round the remaining sides, and are made of the best pitch pine, richly panelled and corniced, and in conjunction with the altar and ceiling, produce a graceful and solemn effect. Over the stalls are placed the "Stations of the Cross". The ceiling springs from a moulded and richly gilt cornice, and is decorated in exquisite taste. The ceiling itself is a beautiful work of art. It is divided into two hundred panels by moulded ribs of wood tastefully gilt; the panels are disposed in Mosaics of gold and purple, and contain the symbols of the Passion, interspersed with monograms of the Holy Name.

The entire of the exterior is built of granite, and although of the greatest plainness of character and simplicity of design, as is required by the spirit of the order, yet from its height, massiveness, and boldness of outline, it produces quite a monastic effect. The only ornaments introduced on the exterior are simple crosses, surmounting each gable, and a figure of Blessed Paul, the Founder of the Congregation, occupying a niche in the gable of the south front, and a figure of St. Patrick occupying a corresponding position in the west front. A campanile, surmounted by a gilt floriated Cross, containing bells that ring the signals for the various monastic observances, is raised above the roof of the west wing. The monastery is situated on an elevated platform, which affords ample scope for the development and display of its majestic proportions. When, by the addition of the church, this magnificent structure will be completed, it will form a principal feature in a scene of unrivalled beauty. Its towers and belfry; its slanting roofs and pointed gables, will harmonise with natural grandeur around. It will overlook the city and its environs on one side, whilst on the other the chains of the Dublin and Wicklow mountains are presented in sublime contrast with the river, the park, the picturesque woodlands, and the far-famed Bay. The surrounding country, strewn with the still splendid wrecks of ancient and famous monastic, episcopal, and collegiate establishments, will inspire the disciples of Blessed Paul of the Cross with a generous and holy emulation of the heroic labours of the apostles and doctors which this land sent forth in the olden times to multiply centres of religious impulse, which perpetuated in Western Christendom the sanctity that illustrated the deserts of Egypt and Syria."

Such was B. Paul's Retreat on the occasion of the solemn opening in 1863, but the visitor to Mount Argus today, 1897, would find that much of it has been changed. The library for instance is no longer where the report pointed out, indeed it has changed places two or three times since, and at present another change is in contemplation, which will probably take place in the near or more likely in the distant future. As to the Infirmary, it has never been

seen except on paper, as some of the religious living in the retreat for more than thirty years can testify. The religious, when sick or indisposed, generally remains in his cell, and is there nursed back to health or into a happy eternity.

And the greatest change of all has taken place in the choir. It will have been noticed that in the report of the newspaper representative, the choir has been called the "Chapel" and the "Chapel of the Passion", and that it was of all the other portions of the new retreat, the most beautifully and artistically finished. And so it was. So appropriate was it for the purpose for which it was intended, that apart from more solemn surroundings, it was capable of inviting and inspiring devotion. In the course of three or four years after the opening however, the work of destruction began by the removal of the altar to the church, and in its stead a very plain and unsightly fabric substituted, altogether out of place and harmony with the rest of the surroundings. Now it might be maintained that the public church was the more appropriate place for the better altar, so as to make the church the more attractive, but it must be borne in mind that the church was only temporary, in fact that at this very time steps were being actively taken to begin a church as soon as possible. All this would mean of course that in a few years at most the old church would cease to be; that the altar would have to be thrown down a second time, and restored to its original place in the Choir. This frequent pulling down and building up of the altar could have no other effect than its deterioration if not its entire destruction. All the same it had to go, and notwithstanding that the ordinary care was bestowed on its removal, it was necessarily somewhat damaged.

Later still a greater change took place. When the new church had been built and opened, and the choir which formed part of the additional buildings transferred, the altar found a new resting place, together with all the other furnishings in the choir, leaving nothing but the four bare walls and the still highly and beautifully decorated roof. And so it stands to this day, a desolate, lonely apartment, sometimes used as a joiner's shop, sometimes as an artist's studio, but more frequently as a lumber room, or as political platform orators would say: a once happy home over which had swept the blighting hand of landlordism. We shall have occasion to speak of these things in detail in their proper place, so shall not further anticipate.

Whilst the rejoicings peculiar to the opening of the new retreat filled the thoughts of the community, it pleased God that they should be darkened by the death of one of their members - Confr. Edward of the Holy Angels, Smith. The blow was not entirely unexpected, as he had been in failing health for some time. It renewed in the minds of the religious however the great loss which they had sustained six years before in the death of their first Superior, the saintly Father Paul Mary Pakenham, and served as a reminder that youth is no barrier against the visitation of the common foe who so capriciously claims his victims. It was the second death in Mount Argus. Through being only a student he was little known to the outer world, still the heartfelt sympathy of the people of the neighbourhood was with the community in the loss caused by the death of one who had he been spared, would one day have been a successful worker amongst them.

Conf. Edward was a native of the Archdiocese of Armagh, and in early life went to Scotland with the view of settling down in business. He went to Dunbarton, near Glasgow, where he joined his brother, who had been there for some years before. During a mission which was given there by some of our fathers, he conceived the idea of joining the Congregation, and after due consideration and consultation with the Superiors, he was sent to the Noviciate in Broadway, where in course of time he made his religious profession. After

his profession he was sent to our retreat in Highgate, London, where he joined a class of students, and where he read his philosophy. During his stay in London his health began to fail, and ere long it was evident that he was suffering from an advanced development of consumption. With the view of preventing the further inroad of the disease, he was sent to Dublin, hoping that the change of air would have a beneficial effect. But the improvement brought about by the change lasted only a short time, and he gradually became weaker until on the 6th of this month, September, he resigned his soul into the hands of his Creator. Conf. Edward was a most observant religious, and until prostrated by sickness, was remarkable for the exactness and punctuality with which he attended to every rule. He was very industrious and hard-working with regard to his studies, his great desire being to become a successful missionary. He also showed signs of more than ordinary talent, and would therefore, had he lived, have been a fruitful labourer in his Master's vineyard. But the Master willed otherwise.

When the above was written, the material at hand was rather scanty, just a simple statement in the "Annals" collected by the late Fr. Salvian, saying that Conf. Edward died in this retreat on the date mentioned above. The entry of the death was evidently made many years after the event took place, and whether it was because distance of time dimmed the recollection of further particulars regarding him, or because he was "only a student", or for whatever reason, the notice of his passing to a better life is recorded with almost shameful brevity. Subsequently however the following was supplied from the Archives of the Noviciate, Broadway :

Conf Edward of the Holy Angels, whose secular name was Edward Smith, was born in Dunturk, Co. Down, Diocese of Dromore, Ireland, on the 6th of June, 1838, clothed on the 30th of October, 1860, and made his profession on the 1st of November 1861.

R.I.P.

1864

With the coming of 1864 a new state of things came into existence in Mount Argus. Indeed it might be said that the new order of things did not await the New Year. Before the advent of the Christmas season the religious had taken possession of the new retreat, and with it of all that was necessary to constitute the realization of their long-deferred hopes. The past seven years had not been all sunshine in the old retreat. Crippled as they must have been for the want of room to attend to the observance of the rule, which, particularly with regard to the choir duties, is such a prominent feature in our religious life, they must have been delighted beyond measure with the change. The old retreat was at all times too small. Besides it had not been built to serve the purpose, nor could any amount of changing effect the desired end. Though one room had been transformed into a choir, another into a library and recreation room, and another again into a refectory, still no amount of "tinkering" could rob them of the secular appearance with which they started in life. Then every apartment was so near every other apartment. The kitchen sent its savoury message to mingle with the spiritual atmosphere of the choir, and who can tell how many beautiful and heavenly trains of thought were interrupted if not entirely spoiled by the intrusion of its wicked and distracting influence? To have the appetite sharpened and tempted by the "fiz" of the broiling chop or the inviting exhalations which it emitted during its torture on the gridiron, must certainly have been a

source of distraction to the soul striving after companionship in the higher paths, for poor rebellious human nature, true to its downward instincts, will, even in the most spiritual surroundings, strive to obtain a favourable hearing. And so more or less were the inconveniences felt all round. Consequently it was with a sigh of relief, if not of real pleasure, that the religious took up their abode in their new home, where every provision was supposed to have been made for their wants, and every facility afforded for the entire and satisfactory fulfilment of their obligations.

And yet the new home was not without its drawbacks and inconveniences, not so much noticed then, when the sense of novelty and improvement was fresh in the minds of the community, but looked at now, after the lapse and experience of many years, they are seen and felt in the lesson taught by time. The exterior presents of course all that the newspaper representative said of it: a solidity of construction and boldness of outline, no where else to be seen in the neighbourhood of Dublin, or indeed in all Ireland and this coupled with the commanding view of the surrounding country gave it at once a position and an appearance altogether its own amongst the religious establishments in the land. Within however the picture lost much of its charm. Many of the cells were found to be inconveniently small, though this objection could hardly be sustained, considering the scanty furnishings required and permitted by the rule, but the arrangement of many of the cells is such as to make them most uncomfortable, and in Winter time scarcely habitable. In most of them the door and window are placed in diagonal corners, thus leaving completely unsheltered from draughts the place occupied by the religious during the day, for the remaining fourth corner will naturally be that in which the bed is placed. The gas fittings too, or rather their position, were very defective. To enjoy the benefit of the gas light, it is an absolute necessity to sit in the draught, either in the current from the door to the window, or from the door to the fireplace or vice versa. And all this for exterior effect, that the doors along the corridors might present to the eye an appearance of uniformity and regularity, being placed at equal distances from each other. Then many of the cells are without fireplaces, which is so necessary for ventilation, and in the event of sickness, for that warmth so essential to the comfort of an invalid, for as has already been remarked, the use of an infirmary never passed beyond the paper on which it had been described. Doubtless if our Holy Founder lived till our day and resided in the retreat which bears his name, the infirmary would be used and with advantage to the sick religious, but in this, as in some other things, his spirit of charity accompanied him to heaven. Perhaps it is the spirit of the age in which we live that makes it so. In these days of progress and practical politics we live differently from our fathers of a hundred and twenty years ago. Theirs was an age of simplicity which believed in appearances, and, without waiting for those dogmatic assurances which are now required, its charity went forth to the relief of sickness or distress, no matter under what guise it presented itself. Nowadays a religious has no right to be sick, or should he be, he has no right to give any trouble beyond that which he himself is able to overtake. But enough of this.

On the whole however the new retreat was a great comfort in many respects, and as the work of furnishing went on, each day added additional comforts. Generous benefactors were not wanting in coming forward to supply the funds for the necessary materials to furnish the rooms. The chairs and tables for the cells were of a uniform size and pattern, comfortable enough and sufficient in their equipments to suit the requirements of each. Most of them, especially the tables, remain good to the present day. Thus were the children of St. Paul of the Cross launched as it were on a new sea, with brighter and wider prospects of doing good for those amongst whom their lot was cast. Additional priests could now be placed in Mt. Argus, to attend to the wants of the hundreds who flocked to the little church, for whilst the Masses and other public services were attended by large and devout Congregations, the

Confessionals were crowded from early morning till a late hour at night by numbers desirous to avail themselves of the opportunities thus afforded them.

Not the least among the advantages which came to us in consequence of the opening of the new retreat was the increase of vocations to the Congregation. Not only did the account of the ceremony find a place in the pages of the metropolitan press, but nearly all the provincial papers as well gave lengthy accounts of the new building. It thus became known throughout the whole country that the Passionists had come to stay, and the wide-spread popularity which the order had already gained in many districts by reason of the missions and retreats given by the fathers from Mount Argus, was now still further enhanced, when having taken up their residence in the new monastery, the people were assured that they would be amongst them for all time. This turned the attention of many young men who were desirous of dedicating themselves to the service of God and his church in religion, and consequently applications to join the Congregation multiplied. Until 1856, when the order found a resting place in Ireland, the noviciate was largely made up of other nationalities, not all of whom persevered. A number left during the year's probation, others later on, even after profession. Gradually however the broken ranks were filled up with recruits from this country, and whether it was because they were more accustomed to a life of self-denial, or that they inherited from their forefathers a love of monastic life and discipline, we know not, but the result was that most of them became willing and efficient workers in the Congregation. And now that a guarantee had been given of our remaining amongst them, it seemed to foster and quicken the desire of many to become members of our body. And so on to the present day rushes the stream of applications from the old land, keeping full and vigorous the communities of the province, and giving subjects for new foundations both at home and abroad. What is it after all but "history repeating itself": the children in faith and nationality of the Columbas and the Brendans and many others, perpetuating in our day the grand and noble work which those heroes of the Gospel so successfully proclaimed in the centuries gone by. *Esto perpetua!*

During this year, '64, the angel of Death paid another visit to Mount Argus, claiming this time as its victim Conf. Leo of the Blessed Sacrament – Holohan. It is thus recorded in the "Annals":- "On this day, July 3rd, died at St. Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus, Dublin, our good student, Conf. Leo of the Blessed Sacrament – Holohan. He was born near Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny, 9th January, 1839, received the habit of our Congregation in Broadway, 6th March, 1861, and was professed on the 7th of the same month in the following year.

"Since his entrance into the Congregation, Conf. Leo gave great edification by his faithful observance of the holy Rules, by his punctuality in attending to his studies whilst in health, and by his patience, resignation and cheerfulness during a protracted illness of more than twelve months. The disease under which he laboured, and of which he eventually died, was consumption, and for the last seven weeks before he died, we were in daily expectation of his last. The dangerous nature of his disease, rendered necessary the continual attendance of his brethren for the seven weeks, and being fortified with the last Sacraments, he rendered his innocent soul to his Creator on the 3rd of July 1864." Fr. Salvian's "Annals" Vol II. P. 71-2.

The above paragraph is scanty enough, but it is the only available information to hand.

Two events of more than ordinary importance, though differing as widely as the poles, occurred in the Province this year: one the visit of the Father General, the other the death of Father Ignatius Spencer. Strictly speaking, any record of Fr. Ignatius belongs to St. Ann's Retreat, Sutton, of which house he was Rector at the time of his holy death, but he was so much a child of the province in general, and so closely and so long identified with this retreat during the first years of its existence, that he deserves a notice however short in these pages.

His life and work are well known and have been in the hands of the public for many years in a handsome Vol. of biography written by Fr. Pius Devine C.P. and published shortly after his death.

Fr. Ignatius was in all things an Englishman, indeed it might be said that he was in all things intensely English, but unlike many of his countrymen, his love for Ireland and the Irish was sincere and genuine. He inherited none of the anti-Irish and bigoted ideas so common to many of his nationality and his class, but would criticise in no mistaken language the injustice and cruelties of England towards Ireland, and especially so in things religious. His sympathy always went out to the people of this country, and his admiration of their fidelity to their faith was unbounded, as was also his appreciation of the purity of their lives. Hence he was always a favourite in Ireland, and in the many missions and Retreats in which he took part in the country, was venerated as a Saint. With the building up of this retreat he had much to do. Being one of the first who came here, and continuing to reside here for the most part until elected Rector of Sutton, he worked with voice and pen on behalf of St. Paul's Retreat, and so successfully, that he might well be called one of its founders. Apart from the suddenness of his death, which intensified the grief of the Catholics of these countries, his loss was felt in Dublin as that of a personal friend, and by none more so than by the poor. Though his early life and after training were surrounded with all that high birth and the luxuries of life could confer, he seemed to have forgotten all this when, in his capacity of priest, he had to labour amongst the poor. There was at the same time about him a calm dignified manner and bearing, and which was the more to be admired, because it was natural. He was never known to take offence, no matter how great the disappointment or mortification, but had always some excuse ready on behalf of those offending. His death was a severe blow to the Congregation in this Province, for which he laboured ungrudgingly to the last moment of his life. He passed to a better life on the 1st of October of this year at Carstairs, Scotland, and his remains found a last resting-place beside those of his old friend, Fr. Dominic, in the vaults beneath the church of St. Ann, Sutton.

The second important event of this year was the visit of the Father General, Father Peter Paul, to this Province, and which in point of time, preceded the death of Fr. Ignatius, though it occupies a subsequent place in this narrative. It was the first time that a General of the Congregation had set foot on these shores, and consequently his arrival was watched with more than ordinary anxiety. Father Peter Paul's predecessor, Father Anthony of St. James, frequently resolved during his term of office to visit England, but was prevented because of the many infirmities from which he suffered for some years before his death. The General, accompanied by a lay brother, Br. Dominic Luigi, arrived in England in the June of this year. His object was of course to make a visitation of the houses of the Province, and to see for himself the work which the religious were doing in these northern climes. To be sure that Visitation, though a matter of much importance in se, was but an ordinary and simple duty, and should not attract very much attention, but to meet the Passionists of the Anglo-Hibernian Province in the flesh was something towards which we are told his Paternity looked forward with some degree of concern. Though as we have already stated, it was the

first time a living General had set foot on our shores, it was not the first time one sent by the General, and having all the jurisdiction of a General paid a visit to the Province.

As in all sections of society, there are occasionally to be found some individuals, who, whether from a peculiar idiosyncrasy, or from over zeal for the welfare of others, exercise themselves with a holy freedom in the management of their neighbours' affairs. Their eyes are always open to see what they consider abuses or relaxations, and with the view of promoting the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls, these real or imaginary abuses must be corrected. An appeal is then made to the higher powers, which results in an investigation, which investigation almost always results in – nil. And so was it with us in the earlier days of our existence in these countries. In the fulfilment of the duties which we had undertaken in England, the local superiors found it necessary to make some changes in our mode of life, which, though they did not in the slightest degree affect the integrity of the Rule, were considered by some busy-bodies as unnecessary and dangerous novelties. Rome was immediately acquainted with these formidable innovations, and Rome sent her Visitor to right the sinking ship. It was found however that the ship was quite sea-worthy, and that which was represented as a dreadful inroad on the Constitution of the Order was only a mere setting of the sails to enable the ship to live and work in Northern waters. The busy-bodies were thus baffled but not defeated: “the snake was scotched not killed.” Again the complaints were renewed, and again inquiry was instituted, and this time by a Right Rev. Monsignor, a secular priest living in London. This Prelate visited without notice the Retreats of the Congregation in England, saw for himself, and reported to head quarters. His report was such as to put a stop to gossip ever after. It may seem somewhat out of place to introduce this matter into a chronicle of the Retreat, as the events referred to happened before St. Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus, existed, and naturally should have no place in its records, but it explains what is said of the General's hesitation in coming amongst us.

There are some natures both individual and national, susceptible to receiving impressions, and even of retaining them long after the facts which have called them into existence have passed away. Whether this may be accounted for by reason of atmospherical influences or racial peculiarities, or a habit acquired as the result of long and relentless persecution, is a problem that would require the pen of the wary statesman or the profound philosopher to solve, but without going into the philosophy of the subject, it is generally admitted to be a highly developed feature in the Italian character. The native of that sunny land is said to be a child of sudden impulses, capable of momentary excitement even to phrensy point, and that whether the object be a good or an undesirable one. That he is suspicious is an acknowledged fact, and that he takes to himself suspicion and nurses it in his breast for years, is another attribute with which he is credited, but whether he does so from a spirit of revenge or a sense of self-protection, we are not prepared to say. At all events some such fancies lingered in the mind of the good Father General, notwithstanding that the causes which gave rise to them had been proved to be groundless. Or perhaps he may have shared with many other foreigners a mistaken idea of the Irish character. We are often painted as being just a degree removed from those who live outside the pale of civilization. We have the reputation of being a hospitable nation and people, but sworn enemies of law and order, and that it is only the presence of the strong arm of England in our midst that prevents frequent scenes and deeds of bloodshed.

Besides these general apprehensions, we have it on record that his Paternity was informed that the class of students then in Mount Argus had set aside in a great measure the spirit of their vocation, and allowed its place to be taken by a spirit of insubordination and bigoted nationality. All these memories and circumstances must have contributed to make the

good Padre feel uncomfortable, and made him wish to be back in his quiet retreat of S.S. John and Paul; nor did the first impressions made on him on entering our Retreat tend to lessen his apprehensions or remove his doubts. During his visitation of the Retreats in England, the General was accompanied by Father Ignatius Spencer, who acted as interpreter, with the exception of Sutton, of which house Fr. Ignatius was Rector, where this duty was discharged by Father Raymund. Father Ignatius accompanied the General to Ireland, and were met at Kingstown by Father Osmund, the Rector of Mount Argus. Before leaving the Retreat, Fr. Osmund arranged with the community to give the distinguished visitor a magnificent reception on his arrival, and also a grand surprise. When the carriage in which they would drive to Mt. Argus from the railway station arrived at a certain bend in the avenue, Fr. Osmund, by a pre-concerted arrangement with “the man on the look-out”, would display a white handkerchief from the window of the carriage. This was to be the signal for the bells to ring out a peal of welcome. The religious were instructed to retire to the students’ recreation room, where they were to remain until the General and his party entered the room. Fr. Ignatius, who was in the secret, lent himself quite willingly to the manner of reception, and enjoyed the fun to his heart’s content. When the carriage drove up to the hall door, the bells ceased to ring, and the whole party got out. Fr. Osmund opened the door, after discharging the driver, and the next moment they were standing in the corridor. The place was as silent and as quiet as the grave, in fact painfully so considering the occasion. The General looked around with an expression of evident pain on his face. He gazed from the tiled floor under his feet to the groined roof over his head, but still not a sound from any part of the building. It looked as if the religious had deserted the retreat at his approach, or that to mark their disapproval of his presence, had remained stubbornly shut up in their cells. Meanwhile not a word was spoken. The suspense was becoming painful, when at last the General, in almost despairing tones, begged to be brought to the church or the choir, where he might offer his prayers before the Blessed Sacrament. This was immediately done. The prayer finished, they returned to the corridor when Fr. Osmund, in a scarcely audible whisper, as if afraid to break the silence, invited them to the students’ recreation. The poor General followed, more like a prisoner led to execution, than as one who was Lord and Master of the place. The scene which followed baffles description. On entering the room where the whole community of priests, students and lay brothers were assembled, a cheer of welcome went up from all present, which considering the reaction that it must have produced, was nearly too much for the good old man, so that he had to be escorted to a chair, which had been previously placed on a raised platform, and on which he remained seated for some minutes without being able to utter a word. Meanwhile the cheers of welcome were renewed, and the joyful expressions of the faces of the community told him that the joy thus manifested came from their hearts. The religious then approaching and respectfully kissed his hand, after which ceremony, having recovered his power of speech, he thanked them for the reception they had given him, and made known to them the gloomy and unfavourable manner with which he had been impressed on entering the house. Fr. Ignatius then explained to him how it had all been previously arranged, and that the seeming neglect in the beginning was but to make the subsequent welcome the more marked and impressive – in fact that it was meant to be a real Irish Cead Mile Failte. One of the students then read a Latin address of welcome to his Paternity, to which he briefly replied in the same language, expressing the delight he felt in being so warmly received by his Irish children.

During the days spent in Mount Argus the General was pleased and edified with everything which came under his notice. He saw that the Rule was kept with the same exactness and entirety as in any of our retreats in Italy, and that the missionary work of the fathers was greater than he could have imagined. A glance at the “Book of Missions and

Retreats” showed him what was done outside, but what astonished him most of all was the number of confessions heard in the church day after day. He had never seen the like before, and except that he saw it with his own eyes, could not have believed such a thing possible outside a mission. Over and over again he spoke of it, and in his conversation with the priests of the community, encouraged them in the great work in which they were engaged. He told them that they in Italy had no idea of the good work that was being done in Ireland, that not even in Rome, the mother and centre of Catholicity, was anything like it to be seen. During his stay in the Retreat, a large photograph of the General surrounded by the community was taken, a copy of which he brought with him to Rome, to remind him of his Irish children. Probably some copies were kept here, but, if so, they have long since disappeared.

The Father General left no relics of his visit in the form of decrees or regulations: he saw that the Rule was observed with the utmost fidelity, and in his exhortations to the religious, he remarked that he had only to encourage them to persevere. He took his departure from Mount Argus with feelings of mingled joy and regret: joy, because of what he had seen and experienced during his visit, and regret at parting with the Passionists of St. Pauls, to whom he had become much attached, notwithstanding the shortness of his stay amongst them. He left England towards the end of July, being accompanied by Father Eugene Martorelli as far as Hartingham, one of our houses in the Franco-Belgian Province.

The impressions made on the mind of the good Fr. General during his visit to this province, and particularly to Dublin, formed the subject of many conversations after his return to Rome. He put straight and into shape many strange and erroneous ideas which had existed in the minds of his fellow-countrymen regarding the work and the lives of their brethren in these northern countries, and was in the habit of saying that the missionary spirit of St. Paul of the Cross lived in the Retreat bearing his name in Ireland to such a degree as would put to shame the most zealous amongst them. The good reports thus circulated by the highest authority in the Congregation had the effect of putting an everlasting quietus both on the ungenerous and suspicious characters abroad, and on the restless and uncharitable at home, at all events during his life time. He died in Rome on the 30th of May 1877, being at the time of his death first Consultor General. R.I.P.

The Feast of B. Paul of the Cross – 16 November – was kept with more than ordinary solemnity in Mt. Argus this year. The efforts which were being made in Rome towards his canonization lending additional zeal and interest to the celebrations. Later on we shall have occasion to speak of the happy event.

Towards the end of this year a new horarium, probably owing to the visit of the Fr. General, was made out for the church services of the different houses of the province. That for Mt. Argus was as follows :

On Sundays Mass at 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 o'clock. The last a Sol. High Mass with sermon immediately after the first Gospel.

Catechism and Benediction for the children at 3 o'clock.

Rosary, Sermon and Benediction at 7.30 o'clock

On Holidays of obligation all the same as on Sundays with the addition of an extra Mass at 5 o'clock for the convenience of those who were obliged to go to work at 6.

Week Days Masses at 6, 6.30, 7, 8 and 10 o'clock

Stations of the Cross every Friday evening at 7.30. The above differs somewhat from the horarium of to-day. There is no longer a sermon either morning or evening on holidays of obligation, nor is the last Mass on either Sundays or holidays a sung mass, except on Festivals or the Sunday within the Octave. There is at present Rosary and Benediction every Wednesday evening, of which there is no mention in the '64 ordo.

The number of priests in the province at the end of '64 was twenty nine thus distributed:

Highgate 8, Broadway 6, Sutton 6, Mount Argus 6, Paris 3, = 29

1865

Whether the saying "after a storm comes a calm," had any influence on the home life of Mount Argus during the year '65, we are unable to say, but it is certain that the records of that year are scanty in the extreme. Probably the peace and comfort attending the residence in the new retreat, and the facilities thus afforded for the fulfilment of their duties both at home and abroad so occupied the minds of the religious, that to notice passing events with a view to their perpetuation, never presented itself to a member of the community. Possibly too there may not have occurred any event of more than ordinary importance, though this assumption could hardly be possible, considering the work that was being carried on and the growing popularity of the retreat, and hence we are obliged to conclude that the want of materials for this year was owing to the fact that no one was responsible for the Platea, and, as is usual in such cases, the work remained undone.

Much however is chronicled for this year of the other houses of the Province. In Father Salvian's Annals we have long and fanciful descriptions of work done in Highgate; of out-door processions in Broadway and Campden House, and as if to break the monotony of things purely religious, there are some notes of polemic warfare between our fathers resident in the Noviciate and some apostles of the Bible-reading class, who seemed to fear that the lovely Vale of Evesham was about to depart from the principles of the Reformation. This led to several smart passages of arms in the local newspapers; private letters addressed to individuals; recriminations and threats of violence, all of which happily resulted in nothing but a war of words. The enthusiastic disciple of well-fed religious principles stuck to his guns so long as the sirens of war were provided from head quarters, but when these began to fail, we are told that he "raised the siege", and betook himself to other pastures, where the prospect of a more liberal remuneration re-awakened his zeal. And so the Passionists of St. Saviours were left in quiet possession of the souls entrusted to their care in Broadway.

Another event of more than ordinary importance took place in the Province this year, ie the opening of the new Retreat in Glasgow. For some years past our fathers were anxious to get a footing in Scotland, and more than one foundation had from time to time been offered, but for some reason or other had to be declined. In some of the places the surroundings were entirely unsuited to our manner of life, and they so thinly populated, particularly with regard to the Catholic population, that there was no visible means of support for a religious community.

Catholicity at this time was just trying to raise its head in Scotland, but its efforts to make itself felt were extremely feeble and slow. Unlike England, where the episcopal form of

church government was still recognised, Scotland had drunk so deep of Presbyterianism, that it regarded the spread of Catholicity with a horror which language would fail to describe.

If these pages permitted the introduction of the subject, or even allowed one to approach within reasonable distance of solving the problem, the question might be asked, which of the two countries, England or Scotland, sinned more in bringing about the curse of the reformation. Both were Catholic at one time, and intensely so. Stately Minsters and cathedrals studded the whole island from the Pentland Firth to Land's End, and the cloistered life of Evesham and Westminster was no more exact than that of Melrose and Dunfermline. In both countries the property of the church was at the disposal of the poor and the needy, and administered with more wholesome effect than can be overtaken to-day by the huge system of poorhouse management. No land laws were necessary to force allegiance from the Scotch Crofter or the English Labourer, nor was the sound of the Sheriff's Crowbar ever heard in the land. Religion flourished; sacraments were administered, the wants of the people were attended to, and all were happy. Suddenly however, and like a mid-winter hurricane sweeping over the face of a fair day in June, all this disappeared. To be sure the sound of the coming storm was heard with more or less distinctness before it actually broke over the heads of the people, and noble and heroic struggles were made to stay its progress, but at last when the edicts of Elizabeth went forth in the one country and the fanaticism of Knox and his followers let loose in the other, Catholicity was forced to leave. But England, as we have said, retained the episcopal form of ecclesiastical government, the only relic of her glorious past, and even that in a corrupt and mutilated form. North of the Tweed however it was different: in neither the cabin nor the castle was there to be any longer a home for the Mitre or the Crosier.

In noticing this subject even in a passing way, one is inclined to look for a proportion between cause and effect. The effect was fearful, almost to the extent of visibly showing the face of an angry God, consequently what produced such results must have been terribly displeasing in his sight. If we look then for a proportion between cause and effect, we might safely conclude, in answer to the above question, that the national sin of Scotland was greater than that of England, as the evil consequences have been more lasting. Besides England has of late years been making restitution for her crime in the number of her children who are returning to the faith of their fathers, whilst the Scotch converts are as the Angels' visits – "few and far between." The increase of Catholicity therefore which has been going on for some years past in the "Lan' o' lakes", is not due to the return of Sandy to the faith of pre-reformation days, but to the influx of Catholics from this country and particularly from the northern counties. These immigrants settled down in the principal centres of trade and manufacture, such as Glasgow and Greenock, and so rapidly did they increase in numbers, and the want of priests so much felt, that the Bishop of the Western District was much pleased when our Superiors accepted the charge of a large parish in the city of Glasgow. Possession was taken on the 1st of August of this year, Fr. Eugene Martorelli, first provincial Consultor being appointed Superior pro tem.. The congregation increased so quickly that in a few years it became necessary to build a new and larger church, new schools and a new dwelling house for the fathers. The church is one of the best in Scotland: the schools, all of which are new, accommodate about 1500 children, and are in a state of perfect working order and efficiency.

Another subject, one more congenial, and also more appropriate to these pages, must find a place in the records of this year. No doubt the spread of the Congregation is a sufficiently important and interesting theme to notice even in a passing way, 'though it may not, strictly speaking, belong to the chronicle of an individual retreat, still to remark here that a new house was opened in Glasgow, or even that Scotland was holding fast to the teaching

of John Knox and others, may not after all be considered too “far-fetched”, when it is borne in mind that the supply of home materials was scanty in the extreme.

The news from Rome therefore of the approaching canonization of our holy Founder, Blessed Paul of the Cross, was received with joy in the Province, but no where more than in this retreat which bore his name. Even apart from the joy of seeing our Father and Founder raised to the honours of the altar, there was an additional source of anxiety in Mount Argus, not only that the canonization should take place, but that it should take place soon.

The time was fast approaching when the Passionists would again be obliged to turn their attention from the more spiritual duties of their state to the very material ones of bricks and mortar. Day by day the little church in which the congregation attending Mount Argus worshipped, was becoming too small, and it was beginning to be recognised on all sides that the building of a new and a larger church was a necessity to which attention should be given in the near future. Existing facilities made the case more urgent. Our friends in Dublin and elsewhere admitted the necessity, and were therefore prepared to help on the good work, if it were once begun; the site was already secured, so that there was no cause of delay in that respect; and last, though perhaps not least, it might be said by outsiders, that inasmuch as we were now provided with a comfortable home for ourselves, we were slow in providing for the wants of the people. All these reasons were urgent and indeed unanswerable.

It will be easily seen therefore how intimately associated in the minds of the religious was the canonization of Blessed Paul and the building of the new church. The old church was dedicated to St. Patrick, as B. Paul, not being canonized at the time of its opening, could not receive that honour. Though the children of the Passion were by no means anxious to evict the national apostle from the patronage of the church, it was at the same time very natural that they should wish to see the new church opened under the invocation of St. Paul of the Cross. Just then, and as if in answer to their hopes, a letter came from the Father General, ordering certain prayers on an appointed day, that the final examination of the two last miracles wrought through the intercession of B. Paul might be successful. The day fixed for the devotions was the 14th of November, and consisted in exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8 o’c till 12 noon, during which time Litanies and other prayers were said and sung, and a constant vigil kept by the religious of the community. The devotions had been announced at the different services in the church on the Sunday previous, its object explained, and the faithful invited to join. Consequently from 8 o’c to 12 the little church was filled with devout worshippers, all of whom seemed as anxious and as enthusiastic as the religious themselves. Benediction of the B. Sacrament was given at noon to a congregation which filled every available spot in the church. Next day, the 15th, the Cardinals appointed to examine into the miracles, met in Rome, and we may add that they reported favourably of the Servant of God, which sent a thrill of joy throughout the whole Catholic world, but especially in those places where the Passionists were known. Whilst speaking on this subject we may anticipate a little: on the 31st of July, in the following year, 1866, the same Congregation of Cardinals met again at the request of the Pope, to vote for the canonization of Blessed Paul, and the votes being favourable, the reigning Pontiff, Pius IX, fixed the 29th of the following June for the solemn canonization of the Saint.

If the events of 1865 were so meagre as to oblige us to preach from the text: “after a storm comes a calm,” the advent of ’66 reverses the quotation. Indeed it might be said that ’66 was a year of more than ordinary activity in Mount Argus, not only by reason of the duties engaged in, but also in consequence of the novelty by which some of them was surrounded.

It would be foreign to our purpose to argue in favour of novelty, for whilst it is said that “there is nothing new under the sun”, it may with more than ordinary force be applied to the life led in the cloister. The life of the religious is essentially conservative; a code of Rules is given him to study during his probation; with these he makes himself acquainted, and finding that he can undertake their observance, he solemnly promises to do so on the occasion of his profession. Hence-forward the work of each day of his life is a repetition of the one that preceded it. But whilst the religious life admits of no innovation such as would interfere with the integrity of the Rule, of which the church has approved, it can be changed and modified by the properly constituted authorities so as to meet the requirements or necessities of climate or nationalities. Therefore to depart from the comparatively if not purely contemplative life to the active one of parochial responsibility, is not an infringement of the duties of the cloistered religious; it is but taking part with the church’s authority in the churches mission here on earth, namely the salvation of those for whom the churches Head came to suffer and to die. So too when it is the management of schools; attendances in public hospitals or poorhouses; all these are departments of the same vineyard, presided over by the same husbandman and Master. The same might be said of the building of churches, their decoration and furnishing, so as to make them more worthy dwelling places for the Most High and more attractive and inspiring for their respective congregations. All these things, though they may not find a place in the written constitutions of the religious, are not by any means novel or foreign to the work which he has undertaken at his profession, but a duty discharged in obedience to the Church whose servant he is. Therefore when we speak of this being a year of more than ordinary excitement, bordering upon novelty, it is not at all implied that there was any departure from those obligations which go to make up the life of a Passionist.

Early this year, the Most Rev. Patrick Fallon, Bishop of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora, made arrangements with our Superiors, which enabled him to come and reside in Mount Argus. His Lordship, who had been in failing health for some time past, applied in the usual form to the Holy See for a Coadjutor, as the state of his health prevented him from attending to the wants of his diocese. The usual meeting of the priests of the diocese was held; three names were selected and forwarded to Rome, and after some weeks’ delay, the Holy See appointed the Bishop of Galway to administer the diocese during the life time of Dr. Fallon. When matters were thus arranged, his Lordship came here to reside, which he continued to do until his death, which took place on the 12th of May 1879. His Lordship was accompanied by his servant, who remained in faithful attendance during all the years he resided amongst us. We shall have occasion to speak at greater length of this good and saintly prelate, when we come to chronicle the events of ’79.

We are again face to face with a provincial chapter and its consequences, this year a few months earlier than usual. Fr. Ignatius Paoli, who had been Provincial for nearly six years, and who had worked indefatigably and successfully for the well being of the province, had been appointed by the Father General to make in his name a Visitation of the new

province in America, and also whilst there to preside at their provincial Chapter. It then became necessary to hold the Chapter of this province three months earlier, so as to enable Fr. Ignatius to reach the land of the “Stars and Stripes” in sufficient time. In order that this arrangement might be carried out, the Fr. General obtained the necessary permission from the Holy See, and accordingly on the 11th of April, the Provincial issued the usual convocatory letter to the Rectors and Superiors of the Province, appointing St. Ann’s Retreat, Sutton, as the house where the Chapter should be held, the date fixed being the 8th of May. Fr. Damasus, second provincial Consultor of the Franco-Belgian province, presided. It is unnecessary to say that the capitular fathers were all present at the time appointed; that the usual preliminary ceremonies were faithfully carried out, and all canonical enactments scrupulously observed. All the elections took place on the same day. Fr. Eugene Martorelli was chosen Provincial, and Mount Argus got a new Rector in the person of Father Alphonsus O’Neill, who had been Rector of St. Joseph’s, Highgate, for the previous three years, and F. Osmund, who had been in charge of St. Paul’s since the death of Fr. Paul Mary Pakenham, was sent as Superior to the new foundation in Glasgow.

Very little of importance is recorded of the Chapter beyond the usual recommendation to the religious of the Province to be faithful in the observance of Rule, and of the decrees of former chapters both General and Provincial. One or two items however may be mentioned. The fathers paid a well-deserved Tribute of respect to the memory of the late Father Ignatius Spencer; praised his life of self sacrifice amongst us; deplored the loss the province had sustained by his death, and exhorted the religious to imitate the many examples of virtue which were conspicuous in his life. Attention was also given to the re-admission of those who had left the Congregation; but what the arguments were pro or con, or what the conditions laid down or conclusions arrived at, there is little or nothing on record beyond what might be called an opportunity given to the chronicler to indulge in a tissue of personalities.

Another subject considered was the proposal of an additional foundation in Ireland. The offer was made by a pious and wealthy family residing in Ramelton, Co. Donegal, who had become acquainted with the Passionists in England, and were anxious to see them established in their native town. Everything looked bright and promising. The Bishop of the diocese, the Most Rev. Dr. McGettigan, was satisfied with the arrangements, and hoped the Superiors of the Congregation would see their way to accept the offer. The Kelly family undertook to defray all expenses, to give a site rent free for a new Retreat, and to provide a house which would be sufficient to accommodate a small community in the meantime. A fairly good church already existed. The Chapter agreed unanimously to accept the foundation, and asked Fr. Eugene, the newly-elected Provincial, to visit Ramelton, and confer with the Bishop and the Kelly family about taking possession. Shortly afterwards the Provincial paid the promised visit, but for some reason or other he was not satisfied with the surroundings, and the foundation was lost to us. The Chronicler of the event relates it thus:- “This foundation was never carried to effect, for the reason that the locality was too far away into a wild country, and too distant from any large town or railway station.”

It is often said that “it is well for us that we know not the morrow.” When the hidden morrow conceals a misfortune, it is perhaps as well that we don’t know it, but it might be said that it would be better to know it, as then we could guard against it. So too if we saw that the future contained good things, we would not permit trifling difficulties to prevent their ultimate attainment. Apart from the providence of God, which has the regulation and disposition of all things, there is much left to ourselves, wherein, if we exercise the faculties with which God has endowed us, we may become – as many have become – the architects of our own fortunes. Or if by a careful survey of the surroundings, taking possibilities and

probabilities into account, it is not at all impossible to lift a corner of the veil which may enable us to get at least a partial glimpse into the future. And so might it have been with the Ramelton foundation. Had a little patience and discrimination been practiced, and a delay of some weeks or even months been allowed, we might to-day be in possession of one of the most flourishing Retreats in the Province. The real version of the story of the Provincial's visit is this: Father Eugene drove to Ramelton on an outside car from the nearest railway station, a distance of about fourteen miles. It rained or rather poured during the entire journey, so that when the good old man reached his destination, he was as wet as if he had walked through the sea all the way from Hollyhead. It rained all night as well and most of the next day. Everything and everybody looked cold and wretched; the town and surrounding country shared the dismal appearance produced by the heavy rainfall, all of which had such an effect on the Provincial, that he at once abandoned the idea of the foundation, and hurried back to Dublin as quickly as possible. Had the Provincial not been of that timid nature which takes fright at the first appearance of difficulties, or had he paid a second visit, the result might have been quite different.

The town of Ramelton is by no means small. It is one of the largest and most prosperous in the country of Donegal, and at the time of which we write contained a population of 1628 about two thirds of whom were Catholics. The parish included a large country district, with about the same population as the town, and as we were to have charge of the whole parish, we would have had under our jurisdiction nearly four thousand souls. The town itself is beautifully situated on the south bank of the Swilly, and in the centre of a large Catholic district, inhabited by a hard working and comfortable people. Nor was it so far removed from those conveniences and facilities afforded by a railway. The nearest station at the time was Londonderry, a distance of about fourteen miles, but there was a branch line in course of construction which has since come within a few miles of the town. Besides this a steamer plied daily between Ramelton and another line of railway, by which Londonderry could be reached in little over an hour. It was not therefore so far removed from civilization as the historian of the period would give his readers to understand.

Before the generation of Kellys who lived in the times of which we are writing passed away, they secured additional property in Remelton, all of which was given to the church. The new purchase consisted of a magnificent dwelling house, at present occupied by the parish priest; a site for a new church, with sufficient to build it, a large kitchen and fruit garden, all rent free for ever. The new church has since been built, and religion is now, as it always was in a flourishing condition. If we contrasted this offer with foundations accepted since then in other parts of the United Kingdom, the comparison would not be favourable to the latter. Ramelton would have been not only self-supporting, but carefully managed, could contribute to the support of less flourishing houses, whereas some of the more recently acquired retreats, notably those in the south and south-west of England, are to the rest of the province in their consequence, what an unlucky marriage is to the contracting parties – a fairly pleasant honeymoon, but abiding misery ever after.

We noticed above that one of the results of the recent provincial chapter was a change in the government of St. Paul's, Mount Argus, Fr. Osmund having gone to St. Mungo's, Glasgow, and was succeeded in Dublin by Father Alphonsus O'Neill. The new Rector was one of those men to whom work is life, indeed it might be said a necessity of existence. He belonged to that class of men who knew not the word "difficulty" except to remove it. He was young and strong; full of courage and energy, and determined to spread, as far as in him lay, the influence of the Congregation in this country. The want of a new church in Mount Argus therefore appeared to him a "gigantic necessity", which would have to be attended to

at once. Not a moment was to be lost. Already too much time had been spent “looking around”, and speaking about a new church, instead of taking advantage of the “acceptable time”, which, if allowed to pass, might not return. Accordingly, plans which had been prepared as far back as the days of Father Vincent Grotti, and which were approved in Rome, were submitted to Mr. J. J. McCarthy, architect with the view of having them reduced in size, the original plan being considered much too large. Mr. McCarthy’s plan was selected and met with the approval of the superiors of the Congregation and the Archbishop. For the present no builder was employed, the new rector, in his anxiety to have the work commenced, undertaking to supply the want himself for a time at least. Everything was now ready, and the 29th of the following month, June, was appointed for the laying of the foundation stone.

It may be said of the building of churches, as of most other things here below, that their history “does not always run smoothly”, and it was particularly so of the building of the new church of St. Paul of the Cross, Mount Argus. As we have already said, the plans were prepared and approved by the responsible authorities; the day was fixed for the laying of the foundation stone; thousands of bills and posters proclaimed the fact to the citizens of Dublin, and the newspapers carried the announcement to the provinces and even outside of Ireland. Thus as everything was about to pass off as merry as the conventional “marriage bell”, an interested party, whose object could scarcely be called friendly, brought the joyful proceedings to a stand still. We will try and give an account of the events which followed just as they occurred, though they will read more like a chapter of romance than a sober narration from the chronicle of a religious house.

Dublin was full of rejoicing at this time, in consequence of its Archbishop, Paul Cullen, being proclaimed a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, and additional gladness accompanied the appointment, for the reason that it was the first time in the history of Christianity that a Cardinal’s hat had adorned an occupant of an Irish See. Congratulations and addresses poured in from all sides. Public bodies, civil and religious, vied with each other in the warmth of their good wishes, and not the last to do so was the community of Mount Argus, represented by the rector, Father Alphonsus. His Eminence was naturally pleased with the newly-conferred dignity, and the more so as the people of the Archdiocese looked upon in the light of a personal favour. Meanwhile he was preparing to leave for Rome, and as the date for laying the foundation stone at Mount Argus would occur during his absence, he appointed his Vicar General, Mgr. Meagher, parish priest of Rathmines, to officiate in his stead. So far, so good. The interested individual referred to above was one of the curates of the parish. This gentleman, whether through that spirit of jealousy which some secular priests regard religious bodies, or for the greater glory of God, we are not in a position to say, at all events he waited on the Cardinal on the eve of his departure for Rome, and advised him to stop the building of the church in Mount Argus, as the Passionists were already so much in debt, that to complete or even to continue the work would be an impossibility. He told his Eminence that one of our fathers had borrowed a thousand pounds from a lady in Harold’s Cross, a Miss O’Brien; that it was partly forced from her, and that as she had no other means of subsistence, and had more than once requested repayment, and as we were unable to do so, it was an unmistakable evidence of our insolvency, and consequently to allow us to begin to build a new church, would in the circumstances be worse than madness. The Cardinal listened to his story, and agreed with all he stated, and without further inquiry, wrote to the Rector to postpone the laying of the foundation stone sine die. His Eminence said in his letter that he was going to Rome; that during his stay there he would have an opportunity of speaking with our Superior General concerning the financial position of Mount Argus, which he understood to be in a very unsatisfactory condition, and that the church building scheme should remain in statu quo until his return to Dublin. But the rector was quite equal to the occasion. He called next day at

the residence of the Cardinal, but learned that he had started that morning for Italy, and would not return to Ireland for some months. The state of affairs then presented itself thus to Father Alphonsus: all the necessary arrangements had been made for the laying of the foundation stone of the new church; the day was fixed; it was noised abroad far and near; friends and benefactors were prepared to play a handsome part on the occasion – in fact Dublin was on the tiptoe of excitement, and he foresaw therefore that to postpone the ceremony would be to compromise us seriously with the public. But what was to be done? Only one way out of the difficulty presented itself, and that was to follow the Cardinal to Rome; get him to unsay the prohibition and let the work proceed as arranged.

It was well for Father Alphonsus that he knew the way to Rome, and better still that he knew the ways of Rome in Rome. Having being educated there, he spoke the language of the country like a native, and besides he acquired a knowledge of the Italian character which he never could have learned elsewhere, and so at once made up his mind to follow the Cardinal to the sunny south. He started immediately for London to consult with the Provincial, Fr. Eugene. The Provincial would not sanction the undertaking at first, but was at length persuaded to give the necessary permission, and without a moments delay Fr. Alphonsus left Highgate for Rome.

No unnecessary delays were made by the poor Passionist on his journey southwards. He tarried not to admire and to be enchanted with the lovely scenery through which he passed, nor did he wait to confer with sympathetic friends who would probably have spoken a word of hope or encouragement with reference to his business to the Holy City – no, none of these things, his object was to get there as soon as possible, and with the same alacrity dispatch the business which brought him. Consequently he arrived in Rome a few days before the distinguished traveller of whom he was in pursuit. On his arrival in SS. John and Paul, Fr. Alphonsus lost no time in laying a statement of the whole case before the Father General. He explained away the imaginary difficulty which had arisen with regard to the loan of a thousand pounds; that it could be refunded immediately on his return to Dublin; that the Cardinal had been led away by the exaggerated report of one who was no friend of the Passionists, and that our position in Ireland was such at the present moment, that not to go on with the work of which we had given the people public notice, would be to shake if not to destroy the confidence that had hitherto been reposed in us. It was well for Fr. Alphonsus that the Father General was the same Father Peter Paul who had visited Mount Argus shortly before, and who had seen the work in which the fathers were engaged, and also how necessary a new and larger church was in order that we might be able to attend to the growing wants of the people. His Paternity therefore agreed with Fr. Alphonsus, and offered to accompany him to the residence of the Cardinal Prefect, at the time Cardinal Barnabo, in order to have the matter satisfactorily arranged. This visit was paid on the following day, and after hearing the case, his Eminence promised to make it all right with Cardinal Cullen on his arrival in Rome, which he did to the satisfaction of all concerned.

On his arrival in the eternal City, the Cardinal Archbishop of Dublin took up his residence in the Irish College, and we can imagine his surprise when he was waited upon by the rector of Mount Argus, whom he believed to be chanting the praises of God in the metropolis of Ireland. “What”, he exclaimed, “Fr. Alphonsus, you here in Rome!” “Why, your Eminence,” replied the other, “there was no other course left me; as I could not see you in Dublin, I was obliged to follow you here. On the receipt of your letter, forbidding the laying of the foundation stone of our new church, I hastened at once to your residence, and learned that you had just started for Rome.” He then explained as he had previously done to the Fr. General and to Cardinal Barnabo how any delay or postponement of the ceremony

would be very injurious to us with the people of Dublin; how the story of our financial position was all a falsehood; how he had spoken with the Fr. General and with the Cardinal Prefect, and that they were perfectly satisfied with his explanation, and so in order that the ceremony should come off on the day appointed, nothing was now wanting but his Eminence's withdrawal of the prohibition. This was done shortly afterwards, and Fr. Alphonsus was now master of the situation.

Having been victorious thus far, Fr. Alphonsus was determined to add another link to the chain of success which had attended his visit to Rome. He sought and obtained an audience of the Holy Father, Pius IX, and his Holiness gave his apostolic blessing to the work and to all who would contribute towards its completion. He read the petition craving his benediction, and with his own hand wrote at the foot of the paper, "Domine, dilexi decorum domus Tuae", adding his signature. Thus fortified with the highest possible authority, Fr. Alphonsus sent a telegram at once to Dublin, saying that all difficulties were removed, and that the ceremony of laying the foundation stone was to be carried out as already arranged. This done, he started immediately for home, arriving in good time for the 29th of June. We copy from one of the local newspapers a description of the proceedings of that memorable occasion:-

The ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the new church about to be erected at B. Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus, took place, says the Freeman's Journal, on the 29th of June, Feast of S.S. Peter and Paul. It was celebrated with marked solemnity and splendour in accordance with the requirements of the Roman ritual, and in the presence of a numerous body of clergy, and a large and highly respectable assemblage of the laity, whose attendance testified their warm appreciation of the self-denying zeal, and unostentatious but not less devoted usefulness of the community of Mount Argus.

Comparatively few years have passed since the priests of the Order of Blessed Paul of the Cross commenced their labours at Harold's Cross for the advancement of religion and the salvation of souls, and in that time their exemplary piety and unwearying efforts have done more for both those sacred objects than it would be possible even to indicate much less to detail in the columns of a newspaper.

The generous assistance of the Catholics of the city and suburbs of Dublin, enabled them to raise one of the noblest of the religious houses, the erection of which, in this country of late years, so strikingly proclaims that the opportunity offered for the revival of Catholicity – for the restoration of its ancient grandeur and beauty – has not fallen to the lot of an unworthy generation.

There is however one most prominent deficiency visible to the eye of any visitor to Mount Argus, and this is the small and unsightly structure, which temporarily serves as the chapel of the Retreat. It has been long felt that this deficiency should be repaired, and yesterday the commencement of the work for this commendable purpose, was auspiciously made.

The corner stone was laid with prayer and canticle of a Temple suited in its extent and architectural elegance to the vast and earnest Catholic population of the immediate district, as worthy of the administrations of so admirable a body of priests, whose order is rendered illustrious in the church, and dear to the Catholics of this city and country by the sanctified memories of such men as the Hon. and Rev. Fr. Spencer and the Hon. and Rev. Fr. Pakenham.

It will not be easy to regard without emotion the removal of the present chapel, even though it be confined in space and unsightly in appearance, when it is remembered that its altar and its confessionals are hallowed by the ardent piety and ever arduous labours of such true disciples of Him Who suffered many sorrows for the world's salvation. But such feelings of regret will be consoled by the reflection that the building up of a suitable Church to the glory of God, will be a becoming tribute to offer to such memories.

The ceremony commenced at twelve o'clock with High Mass. The Right Rev. Mgr. Meagher, P.P. Rathmines, officiated as high Priest, the Very Rev. Fr. Alphonsus, Rector of the Retreat as deacon, and the Revd. Fr. Joseph Gasperini as subdeacon. Amongst the other clergy present and assisting at the ceremonies were:- Rev. Fathers Clarke, Rathgar, Dinnan, Bently, Fox, O.M.I. Halby and Collier. The Passionist fathers were :- Very Rev. Fr. Eugene, Provincial, F.F. Osmund, Raphael, Sebastian, Peter Magagnotti, Leonard, Celestine, Patrick, Joseph Carroll and John Baptist. At the conclusion of the High Mass, the Revd. Father Fox, O.M.I., Inchicore, preached a most impressive sermon. Its power of thought and beauty of expression were such as might be expected from so distinguished a pulpit orator, and produced a manifest effect upon the crowded Congregation, who listened to him with wrapt attention.

A procession was then formed, preceded by a Cross-bearer and acolytes, and proceeded through the grounds to the place at which the stone of the new church was to be laid. At this place appropriate preparations were made for the ceremonial. Adjoining the house, and just in front of the site of the Stone, a dais and canopy were erected, and richly draped and furnished. This was for the reception of the officiating Dignitary, the Right Rev. Mgr. Meagher, upon whom as Chancellor and senior Vicar General of the Archdiocese, as well as Pastor of the district, this duty devolved, in the absence of the Cardinal Archbishop.

The first stone was duly laid, the prayers and litanies prescribed for such a proceeding being chanted by the clergy. The procession then returned to the chapel in the same order in which it had left it, and Benediction having been given by Mgr. Meagher, the proceedings terminated.

The new church will be in the Romanesque style of architecture, from designs by Mr J. J. McCarthy.

We have never been able to ascertain what were the feelings of Cardinal Cullen in connection with the above ceremony. That he must have considered himself outwitted, or as the Americans say, "cuckued" may be supposed, but he was too much of a diplomatist to show his hand either by word or sign. Rome had spoken, and when She did, Paul Cullen knew how to be silent. If he did however yield to any sentiment of disappointment, a balm was soon offered to his wounded feelings, for the work of church building at Mount Argus so auspiciously commenced, shortly afterwards came to a stand still. The foundations were laid all round, and rose about a foot above the surface, when the work had to be discontinued for want of funds, where, without further note or comment, we will leave it till 1873.

The sudden cessation of the work at Mount Argus was a surprise to everyone and a disappointment to many. That there must have been a miscalculation somewhere is certain, but what it was, or who was responsible for it, has not come down to us. To compare the newly-discovered poverty which brought the building to a stand-still with the "flourish of

trumpets” which accompanied the laying of the foundation stone, is to say the least of it, a trifle suspicious, and one cannot avoid thinking that after all there must have been some truth in the story told by our Rev. friend and neighbour to land in (*transcriber’s note: there’s a word here I can’t decipher.) ????? concerning our financial position in St. Paul’s. To gloss over the fact would be cowardly, almost criminal. Looking at it from a purely business point of view, it was foolish in the extreme to have undertaken a work of such dimensions without having some guarantee that funds for its completion were either already in hands or in prospect. The expense attending such an undertaking could not have been mistaken, nor should our position, no matter how viewed, have been overrated. The victory gained over Cardinal Cullen was as brief as it was brilliant, and like the flash of lightening, which it resembled, it went its way, leaving Mount Argus in darkness. Perhaps the cause might be found in the subsequent history of the Retreat. Events can be weighed and analysed now after a lapse of thirty years, which may not have appeared on the surface at the time, or if they did, they were not common property. That Mount Argus has been pressed down by a fearfully heavy debt for years, is now well known to every religious of the province, and that there must have been a time when this debt was contracted is equally well known, but it is hardly imaginable that it could have been so as early as 1866. At that time we were still new in Dublin, and popular; money was coming in in abundance, and hitherto, if we except the new retreat, the outlay was very trifling indeed. And of the same new retreat, it has been said over and over again, that funds sufficient to build it three times over came in during the course of its erection. If so there must have been a waste somewhere in those days, and there is no other way of accounting for the almost shameful position we occupy today. Speaking of the subject it may be well to state here that efforts have been made for the past few years to reduce this heavy debt, and to some extent with success, and it is to be hoped that the time is not far distant when Mount Argus will be our own once again.

It goes without saying that the Rector and community of St. Paul’s were not a little disappointed because of their inability to continue the work of church building at Mt. Argus. So too were many of our friends and Benefactors in Dublin, but the defeat of their hopes was met in the best possible spirit. It was well known that our object in building was altogether for the accommodation of the increasing numbers that day after day and week after week came to St. Paul’s, consequently we had the sympathy of the people. It was felt by all that the old church was not only too small, but was inconvenient in many other respects, and as these inconveniences still existed, some means should be taken for at least their partial removal. The Rector therefore resolved to add to the old church that portion of the building in which the religious lived before taking possession of the new Retreat. This part of the building was two stories high, and nearly the same length as the church itself, hence its addition would make sufficient provision for the present necessity. The work was commenced at once. The old house was completely gutted; the walls and roof re-plastered and painted, and as far as art and good will could play a part, it was made very soon to present a fairly good ecclesiastical appearance. Two or three new confessionals were added, and a new altar rail, which though of no artistic pretensions, still served its purpose sufficiently well. The whole transformation was gone through with an eye to rigid economy, for in the face of our recent failure, we could not afford to be extravagant beyond what was absolutely necessary. An additional comfort was the room acquired in the sanctuary. Hitherto this was very much felt, especially on the occasion of a festival, when more than the ordinary number of ministers was present. Lastly the new altar in our own choir was removed to the new Sanctuary. It will be remembered that we noticed when speaking of the opening of the new retreat, that the choir was of all the most

elaborately finished of the various departments in the house. The panels in the roof were filled with emblems of the Passion of our Lord, artistically and richly finished; the wainscoting and benches of pitch pine, elegantly carved, particularly the capitals of the different pillars dividing the panels; and the altar, the centre figure, was equally rich and tasteful. The material was wood, somewhat plain, but decorated with much skill and entirely in keeping with the surroundings. From each side of the altar rose fluted pillars which supported a canopy that partly shaded the altar, and underneath which was let in against the wall, a large painting of the "Agony in the Garden", set in a richly gilt frame. All this was taken down and removed to the church. It was not done however without much grumbling by more than one member of the community, and even years afterwards it was characterized as an act of vandalism. Of course its removal could be looked at from two standpoints. To change the altar from the choir certainly spoiled the picture which the choir made as a whole; it would certainly suffer some injury, no matter how careful the workmen employed were; besides the church to which it was removed was at most only temporary, and consequently a temporary altar would be sufficient, without disturbing a permanent piece of furniture from the place for which it was originally intended and for which it was specially made. Such was the thesis of the grumblers. On the other hand it was deemed necessary to make the new addition as attractive as possible and that with the smallest possible expenditure; and as the new altar was already made, and would lend a charm to the new sanctuary, it was considered advisable to remove it. And so it was. Years afterwards however when the present church was opened (1878) the altar was restored to its original place in the choir, as we shall see later on. When the whole work was finished, there was a solemn opening and dedication of the addition to the church, which in every sense was most successful. It is to be regretted however that the details of the ceremony have not come down to us, even the names of the preachers, as the occasion was more than an ordinary event in the history of the retreat, but it is recollected by some who were present that the attendance was large and enthusiastic, and that the sum realized exceeded the expenditure incurred in making the changes and improvements.

The year sixty-six was befittingly brought to a close in Mt. Argus by a fortnight's mission, which began on the 9th of December, and was conducted by Fathers Alphonsus (Rector) and Leonard Fryer. The facilities afforded by the addition to the church enabled the work of the mission to be carried on in a manner satisfactory not only to the missionaries and their assistants, but to all attending. On the day of the closing, Father Alphonsus blessed a large Crucifix, which was placed under a canopy outside the church, and which became known in the neighbourhood as "the Mount Argus Calvary." It remained in its place until the building was removed many years afterwards, when it was found on examination to have been so injured by the weather, that its removal to a new site was impossible. The "Calvary" however came into existence in a more imposing manner later on.

On the 7th of this month (Decr.) F.F. Dominic O'Neill and Nicholas Higgins were ordained to the priesthood by the Most Rev. Dr. Whelan, having received the orders of Subdeaconship and Deaconship from the same Prelate the previous week. Fr. Dominic is still alive and working usefully for the order; Fr. Nicholas died recently, having left the Congregation some years before his death.

The year 1867 was the most eventful, as it was also the most joyful, in the history of the Congregation of the Passion. Though from the beginning it had borne on its standard the sign of the approbation of heaven, by reason of the manner in which the work of the heavenly Master was fulfilled by its children, yet it was not until this year of grace that it could take its proud and privileged place beside the older orders, when its saintly Founder was placed amongst the canonized saints of the church. Though the Congregation had been more than once approved even in the life-time of St. Paul, and had received many marks of affection from the Vicar of Christ after his death, still something remained wanting, and this want was supplied, when the highest authority on earth declared that his life was holy, that his virtues were heroic, and in consequence of which he was numbered amongst the saints of God.

Members of religious orders and congregations have a peculiar veneration for and attachment to their Holy Founders. And it is right that it should be so. He is more to them than an ordinary Patron Saint. The Patron Saint is one selected and confessed by others, and mostly at an age when the recipient has neither the right nor the power to select for himself, and he grows up accustomed to the name, and by and by learns to regard the Patron Saint whose name he bears with more than ordinary attachment, if not devotion. But it is altogether different with the Founder. Perhaps in considering or reviewing a vocation to the religious life, or analyzing the ways and means that led up to the ripening of the determination of entering religion, few think how much the Founder may have had to do with finally fixing the choice. The very habit worn by a certain religious body attracts some, and thus helps to draw to that particular body: that habit was the choice of the Founder, and thus did he aid in the selection. Again a preference is given to an order because of the spirit of the order. One prefers the life of the missionary, another feels himself called to the instruction of youth in the schools, and again another selects the silence and solitude of the cell, or the equally silent manual labour in the fields. And yet it was the different founders who determined these various kinds of life, and so as it were anticipated the choice which should come into the resolve of their respective clients in after years. It may not have been noticed at the time, but it will afterwards. The religious who loves and observes his Rule will bless the Founder whose pen traced the line of life for him, and will also with joy engage in all those exercises in which he knows the Founder took part during his sojourn here below. Hence his love and veneration for the Founder grow with his years in religion, or at all events will grow in proportion to the fidelity with which he endeavours to walk in the Founder's footsteps. Truly then did the sons of St. Paul of the Cross rejoice this year, when as it were the seal of heaven's approbation was set on the work of their holy Founder's life, and consequently on theirs, as it was a perpetuation of his.

They rejoiced too because within one century after his holy death, he was raised to the honours of the altar. This brought his life and memory within the recollection of many who were living at the time, who, though they did not actually see him, must have heard him spoken of by some who were his companions in life. Though it is not a very unusual thing for a saint to be canonized ninety two years after his death, as others received that honour in a shorter period of time, such as S. Dominic and S. Francis, the former of whom was raised to the altar thirteen years after his death, whilst only two years elapsed in the case of the great saint of Asissi. These however were the exception, so that the cause of congratulation and joy on this point remained all the same with the children of St. Paul of the Cross.

It will probably be remarked here that we have been anticipating. The canonization of our holy Founder did not take place till the 29th of June of this year, and it may be a cause of surprise that the first six months were barren of anything interesting. And yet it is so, with the exception of one item, so far as any record of those months has been preserved.

A few pages back we mentioned that a large addition had been made to the old church or chapel, and in consequence of which that the different services could be carried out with greater solemnity and in a more becoming manner, and that the additional facilities thus afforded were not only appreciated but taken advantage of by the people. A great want had still to be supplied. Up to the present the church was without an organ, or any instrument, if we except an old harmonium which was in an advanced state of consumption. The energetic Rector saw this, and at once resolved to remedy the defect. The temporary gallery was enlarged and improved, and provision made not only to accommodate the “Queen of Instruments”, but also a large number of singers, and on the 4th of April, the new organ to use a conventional phrase, was solemnly “opened”. The following is the substance of an account given in one of the daily papers:-

High Mass was celebrated yesterday in the chapel attached to B. Paul’s Retreat, Mount Argus, to inaugurate the magnificent new organ which has just been erected there. A large and devout congregation were present to evince their appreciation of the services rendered to religion by the good Passionist Fathers since their auspicious establishment at Harold’s Cross. High Mass was commenced at eleven o’clock, the celebrant being the Very Rev. Mgr. Meagher, P.P., V.G., Deacon, Father Joseph, S. Deacon, Father Basil. Father Dionisius acted as Master of Ceremonies. Several of the neighbouring clergy occupied seats in the Sanctuary. Immediately after the first Gospel, the Rev. Father Gaffney, S.J. ascended the pulpit, and preached an eloquent sermon. The music selected was Haydn’s Mass No. 4, and seldom, indeed, has the performance of that fine composition been given with more effect than it was yesterday, when, for the first time, the tones of the magnificent organ were heard giving utterance to the sacred music of the church. Mr. J. F. Fanning, who has been lately appointed organist of the church, presided at the instrument, while he directed with his accustomed ability a large and efficient choir, including some of the principal vocalists and instrumentalists in Dublin. (Here follows a long list of names.) Mr. Fanning sang the “Cuius Animam” at the offertory in his very best style. His fine tenor voice was in excellent tune, and did every justice to this beautiful piece of sacred music. It is impossible to say too much of the fine instrument at which Mr. Fanning has now been appointed to preside. Thousands of persons heard its performance yesterday, and we have not met one who did not speak in praise of its beautifully sweet tone and large volume of sound. The opening performance which consisted of the “Splendente Te, Deus,” by Mozart, was such as to show how excellent were the various resources of the instrument. Every note uttered forth was perfect, and this was observable throughout the entire music of the mass. At the conclusion of the ceremonies, Mr. Fanning played Handel’s Grand Halleluiah in a most brilliant manner, and repeatedly, in the course of the day, he kindly played a number of solos for the purpose of affording to clergymen from various parts of Dublin an opportunity of judging of the qualities of the instrument. The result as far as we have seen, is that this has been adjudged one of the finest organs in the diocese – certainly it is regarded by the Passionist Fathers and their numerous congregation as a very great addition to their elegant little church. The case of the instrument is in the Romanesque style. Its compass consists of two complete sets of manuals. Here follows a description of the organ: its height, width and depth; the number of stops & pedals etc etc and which is unnecessary to describe in detail, as the same instrument is now in

the new church, and can be examined even to-day by anyone having a musical curiosity to satisfy. The description is then resumed:

There are five composition pedals, and two octaves and a half of German pedals. The manuals and stops are so constructed as to stand out from the organ, and to enable the organist to sit with his face towards the altar. This arrangement is a very important one, and to Mr. Fanning, who is an excellent tenor singer, and who takes a leading part in the vocal music, it will be of very great advantage. This organ occupied a place near the large organ in the Concert Hall of the Exhibition Palace during the International Exhibition in Dublin. Exteriorally and interiorally it is a work of elaborate finish, and is in every respect a credit to the eminent firm who have just completed its erection. It will long, we hope, be employed in the holy service to which it has just been dedicated.

The weeks which followed the “opening” of the new organ and the departure of some of the religious of the province for Rome in order to be present at the canonization of our holy Father and Founder, were chiefly spent in preparation for the coming event. It would be no figure of speech to say that the whole congregation was on the “tip-toe” of excitement, neither would it be a stretch of the imagination to assert that Mount Argus partook to the full of the joy and rejoicing that animated every child of St. Paul of the Cross. He would soon become more intimately connected with his Irish community, as after his canonization, their church and retreat could be canonically dedicated to Almighty God under his invocation. Hence there was a special feature in their rejoicings, apart from the other houses of the province. The Superior General, Father Peter Paul, whose acquaintance we have already made, gave permission for two religious from each retreat of the province to go to Rome for the ceremony of the canonization. The rector or superior of each house was supposed to be one of the two, and he was free to select his companion, but was requested to give the preference to the seniors. Unfortunately ill health prevented the venerable Provincial, Father Eugene Martorelli, from making the journey, but in his stead, the first Consultor, Father Ignatius Paoli, took charge of the little band of Anglo-Hibernians. They were joined by some of our religious from America, who arrived in Liverpool early in June. They started from London in “batches” of four and six, travelling to Paris, where the night was spent in our retreat, leaving in time to make room for the contingent immediately following. Many incidents are told and some recorded of the difficulties which beset them between Paris and Rome. At that time hundreds of bishops and priests were on their way to the eternal City, to be present at the grand function on the 29th, and Italian officialdom was boiling with rage and indignation at the still-existing power of the Papacy, of which the constant flowing stream of clerical strength was a sure indication. Already the abandoned and faithless sons of sunny Italy, with the sacrilegious Victor Emmanuel at the head, had dared to possess themselves of some of the most fertile provinces of the papal states, and were even now looking eagerly forward to the time when an opportunity might be given them of seizing the Pope’s own city, the capital of the Christian world. Unfortunately they had not long to wait, neither did they neglect the opportunity.

It is hardly possible even in a quiet narrative of events, such as these pages are supposed to be, to avoid placing on record a reference to that sacrilegious event which made the year 1870 the blackest in the history of Catholic Italy. That the land of faith and song, of saints and martyrs, of heroic deeds undergone for God and religion, could have become so degenerate and faithless to the glorious traditions of the past, is a problem, if not a mystery, that would seem to defy human solution. Its kings and rulers in the papal chair, were, with

scarcely an exception, the mildest and the most fatherly of men. Though history tells us that some of them were not in their private capacity all that they should have been; all the same the people were prosperous and happy. Religion flourished amongst them; and the monastic and conventual establishments which existed in their midst, were year after year enlarging the calendar of the saints of God. Many of the Founders of these same establishments were of their own nationality, and if we except a few, their own blood flowed through the veins of those who ruled them from the Palace of the Vatican. Hence the change which took place about this time is the more difficult of explanation. Not only did they seem to have cast to the winds the faith and traditions of their fathers, but as if possessed by the devil himself, the very manifestation of the progress and existence of religion, so infuriated them that they seemed like beings bereft of reason. The response then to the invitation of the sovereign Pontiff, Pius XI, was this year a galling disappointment to them. From every country in the catholic world came representatives of the faith. Bishops and priests, both secular and regular, also many dignitaries, both ecclesiastic and lay, obeyed the summons of the Pontiff King, and with a cheerfulness and an alacrity which proved that the Pope was still the beloved of nations. Consequently the party of Victor Emmanuel lost no opportunity in making matters as uncomfortable for the travellers as possible, whilst passing through their territory, and particularly the frontier. Their portmanteaus and other travelling conveniences were torn open, their contents examined and scattered about in a manner never intended by a civilized Revenue, and in many cases were much injured. The officials only shrugged their shoulders and laughed. Some of the fathers were so treated, notably Fr. Salvian, who was not only deprived of a small quantity of snuff, but was fined the sum of seventy one francs for smuggling, notwithstanding that the amount – less than one pound – had been allowed to pass the French authorities. Several other modes of annoyance were had recourse to, notably one which resembled a sort of quarantine. As many of the travellers came from distant countries, and as the Italians in their desire for sanitary perfection (sic) could not allow them to pass without undergoing a process of purification, lest some species of contagion or infection might cross the border, they undertook to fumigate the passengers even whilst sealed in the railway carriages. The fumigation consisted in burning a lot of rotten leaves and vegetable matter, which had been previously dried and prepared, and by means of an instrument which was worked on the principle of a syringe, they blew volumes of the smoke into the different compartments of the passengers, particularly those occupied by clerics or religious. On more than one occasion the travellers were well nigh suffocated, whilst officialdom enjoyed side-splitting laughter on the platform. Years have passed since then, and the Italy that seemed to yearn for a purely civil and concentrated government, administered from the city of the popes, is no longer a united Kingdom. Victor Emmanuel gained his end; he lived and died in the palace which he had taken by force from the Vicar of Christ, a wretch despised and reprobated. His son succeeded to the stolen inheritance, but to see the malediction purchased by his sire ripen in the fair land that once was Peter's. The country is divided into sections and factions, who have nothing in common but their hatred of religion. Socialists, free masons, political intriguers, and idlers swarm the land, nor are the high places within the very shadow of the ill-gotten throne without their crafty occupants, and like Scot's description of the Kennel, "each dog striving which shall get the biggest bone". To prop up this discontented and divided government, over-taxation must be had recourse to, and so the legitimate consequences of poverty and crime are the result. The Kingdom of the so-called united Italy is therefore tottering to its fall, and may God speed the day!! It may be said that the above wish is father to the thought: be it so: the state of affairs, social, political and religious remains the same, and it requires no far-seeing diplomatist to predict the result. The

present unsettled of European governments cannot exist. God is no longer recognised as the centre of a religious system founded by himself, but as far as counter systems can prevail, he is excluded from the world of his own creation. God is proverbially slow; in the old law he waited for the reformation of morals amongst his own people until it repented him that he had made man; so also is he waiting to-day, and so sure as the deluge was permitted to purify the earth in the olden time, so also will come in his own good time a similar retribution on the heads and homes of those who robbed his Vicar of his patrimony and his liberty: and again we say, may God speed the day!!

Our pilgrims to the eternal city arrived in Rome towards the end of June. They were all in good time to be present in SS. John and Paul for the celebration of the feast of the titular Saints of the Retreat, and to those who had not been familiar with the manner in which high festival is observed in the centre of Catholicity, it was a sight long to be remembered. It began with solemn Vespers on the 25th, the Vigil of the Feast, at which over one hundred Passionists were present. The ceremonies were carried out as only Rome can do, and the singing was in every respect worthy of the grand occasion. The officiant at Vespers was the Passionist bishop of Bulgaria, Mgr. Plum. Next morning, the Feast itself, about three hundred masses were celebrated in the church and the retreat. Cardinals, Bishops and many priests, both secular and regular, crowded to the Basilica to offer the holy sacrifice in honour of the martyr brothers, SS. John and Paul. The masses began shortly after one o'clock, and were over at a comparatively early hour. The remainder of the day was spent in the usual festive manner peculiar to ourselves.

The morning of the 29th came, and with it came to St. Peter's the thousands which the invitation of the Sovereign Pontiff brought from all parts of the world. A detailed account of that days ceremonial, or indeed anything more than a mere reference, would be out of place in these pages, as it can easily be found elsewhere, particularly in the life of our holy Founder, written by Fr. Pius Devine, and published shortly afterwards. Fr. Pius was present on the occasion, and thus had ample opportunity of seeing all that was worth noting. It may not be out of place however to give at least the substance of an article which appeared in the London Times descriptive of the ceremony. It was written by a non-Catholic, for a non-Catholic Journal, and hence its testimony is the more appreciable; besides too it might be difficult if not impossible years after this to obtain a copy outside the files of the big Daily itself: *The ceremony of yesterday was of that surpassing character, which silenced the voice of criticism, but too willing to be hostile, and conjured up unutterable emotions, even in the breast of one not of the Fold.*

Two hundred years have passed away since the Fete of the Centenary of St. Peter was celebrated. In that interval thrones and dominions, principalities and Powers, have been swept into oblivion, while the Church of Rome exists, and, externally, never presented a grander phase than it did yesterday. I do not urge it as an argument in its favour; I state a simple fact, and a hard one it is for those who think to upset in an hour an Institution founded in the traditions of antiquity, and in the faith and affections of many millions of human beings. What Pius IX. felt and thought as he was borne into the centre of this gorgeous scene it would be impossible to conceive.

Leaving his chair and ascending his throne, he stood for several minutes as if transfixed. Cardinals and bishops, with their lighted tapers, surrounded him, and a sea of heads surging and stretching away to the extreme distance. I thought he looked pale, and no

wonder if he did for if a heretic trembled with emotion, what must have been the sensations of one who regarded himself as the representative of the Great Apostle whose centenary they were celebrating, the very centre and depository of Truth?

Yet there were no indications of weakness in his voice, which was as firm and clear as I ever heard it. The cardinals having paid their homage by kissing the hand, and some of the Bishops by kissing the knee of his Holiness, the great function of the day, the canonisation of the saints, began.

When all was ready the Cardinal charged to conduct the canonisation advanced to the throne, accompanied by a master of ceremonies and an advocate of the consistory, who in the name of the Cardinal begged 'instanter' that his Holiness would permit the names of the Beati to be enrolled in the catalogue of saints. The Prelate Secretary of the Brief replied in Latin that the Holy Father was well acquainted with their virtues, but before deciding on so important an affair exhorted that intercession should be made to the Apostles and all the Court of Heaven for light to guide him.

The Pope and all the mitred host then knelt, while two singing chaplains intoned the Litany of the saints, the ecclesiastics joining in, and the vast multitude in the church responding as with the voice of many waters. There is a plaintive monotony in the notes, which is very touching, and, familiar as they are to the members of the Roman Catholic Church, not a voice was silent, and a body of sound rose and swelled through the vast edifice that made one's nerves thrill with emotion.

The same forms being observed as in the first instance, a second time the cardinal advanced, and the request was made 'instanter et instantius'! that the Beati should be canonized, when, in answer, prayers to the Holy Spirit, the source of light and holiness, were implored. Again the Pope and his prelates knelt and prayed, and, rising, his Holiness intoned the Veni Creator Spiritus in a voice so clear and loud, and with a precision so remarkable, that people looked upon one another with astonishment. A third time the postulants advanced, and intreated 'instanter instantius, et instantissime' that the canonization should take place, and an answer was returned that the Holy Father, convinced that the act was approved by God, would now pronounce his definitive decision, which he accordingly did, seated in his chair of State, with his mitre on his head. After some other forms the 'we discern', 'we confirm' was repeated, the silver trumpets sounded, the cannon roared from St. Angelo, and all the bells in the city were rung for joy at the consummation of the hopes of the Church.

The Pope now intoned the Te Deum, that fine old Ambrosian hymn. Oh, how grandly it rose and died away, as it was sung by the choir, and was then taken up by fifty thousand voices, pealing forth with a power which lifted one above the world, and then dying away, as if the effort was too great for the human soul to sustain. Do not call this rant or over-excited enthusiasm; you should have heard and seen properly to have felt. I confess that even now that I choke with emotion, as I recall the impression it made upon me. That glorious hymn, chanted as it was by tens of thousands in union, will ring in my ears for ever, and I found myself joining in the universal song of praise, not as a Roman Catholic with Roman Catholics, but as a Christian man with his fellow-men in acknowledgment of that Great Power whom we all worship.

High mass was performed immediately after the conclusion of the ceremony of canonization. It presents no peculiarity until we come to the offertory, which on this occasion included the presentation of the offerings made to the Pope by the friends of the new saints, or the religious Orders to which they belonged.

During the whole of the morning these offerings lay on tables on the left of the high altar. They consisted first of five large wax candles, weighing two of them 60 Roman lbs and three twelve lbs each. These were beautifully painted with flowers, intermingled with

arabesque, in gold and silver. Secondly, two large loaves, on silver salvers, one of which was gilt and bearing the arms of the Pontiff. Thirdly, two barrels, one plated with gold, the other with silver, filled, one with wine and the other with water. Fourthly, three cages of elegant construction, in one of which were two turtle doves, in another two pigeons and in the third various small birds of different kinds. Each saint presented the offerings above described, and the ceremony was conducted with great pomp. As many saints so many processions, each formed by two mace-bearers and a master of the ceremonies, two cardinals preceded by their gentlemen, and followed by two members of the Order to which the saint belonged, or by two priests or laymen, the postulator of the cause and two other cardinals with their gentlemen bringing up the rear. The ceremony therefore continued for some time, and during this interval we were indulged with a Litany composed expressly for the occasion by the well-known soprano Mustafa, in which the names of the new saints were introduced for the first time.

To give effect to the music three several choirs were formed, one of which was placed, under the direction of Mustafa, near the High Altar; another over the great window at the entrance of the church, directed by Melizzi and a third, composed of 400 voices, in the cupola, under the direction of Copocci. Such delicious music surely was never heard, as the dulcet tones floated in a series of echoes through the vast building first rising from earth in a full body of sound, then gradually diminishing in power, though not in distinctness, and then softly breathing forth as though they were angels' whispers.

As the High Mass proceeded, and the incense began to spread its misty veil over every object, nothing could exceed the beautiful effect of colours. His Holiness took the sacrament in both kinds. (sic) The benediction was given, and the long expected ceremonies of a day which will mark an important epoch in the history of the Church were brought to a close. So far the Times.

It may be interesting to note some additional particulars gathered from other sources. No expense was spared in the decoration of the Basilica for the occasion of the canonization, the total amount having reached something like £24,000 of our money. The gold lace alone, if connected in one continuous band, would extend to a distance of fifty miles, whilst the silk and fringe of various shades and colours would extend to nearly three hundred miles. During the function, there were as many as thirty thousand candles burning; then there were the paintings and costly banners, representing the newly canonized, and lastly the richness of flowers which adorned the various altars and other places of special prominence.

Our fathers left Rome on the 5th of July, and their return journey was attended with some of the inconveniences to which they had to submit on their way to the eternal City, but eventually all arrived safely at their respective destinations.

The next greatest event of this year was the founding in Mount Argus of a central College for the students of the Province. Hitherto the old system was the order of the day, but for a variety of reasons the higher Superiors thought the time had come when a departure from the old state of things should be made, in order to meet the requirements of modern thought and modern irreligion. For a body such as we, Passionists, are, such a departure from the old lines was deemed necessary for the reason that as we are employed in giving missions and retreats, and liable therefore to answer every question, more than the elements of philosophy and theology should be in the mind and on the lips of the preacher. As the occasion deserves more than a passing notice, let it be borne in mind that any remarks which may here be made or criticisms indulged in, are not intended to depreciate the old system, or make it seem wanting or ridiculous in comparison with the new. The old system served its

purpose long and well, and perhaps is still sufficient in countries where the controversial element is still an unknown quantity. In Italy and France, for instance, this may be the case. In those countries the people may be divided into two classes – the earnest practical Catholics, and those who profess no religion at all. Amongst the latter there is no inquiry after the Truth, no difficulties to be removed, no instructions to be given, because they court no inquiry. Therefore those engaged in labouring amongst the people of those nationalities, have but to attend to the requirements of the good and encourage them on the road to greater perfection. This may not always be the case, but, as a general rule, it must be. Here in these countries however the case is different, and in England, particularly so. There are many in England who are tired of the cold formalities of the Establishment, who are anxious and yearning for something more substantial than the husks thrown to them by the church established by law, but who in justice to their own conscientious convictions, know not where to turn in order that their cravings may be satisfied. This leads to inquiry, probably to controversy, and naturally the priest, perhaps the missionary, is called upon to answer their questions and solve their doubts. These people are for the most part well read in the current literature of the day. They are acquainted with all the opinions, anti-religious and otherwise, ventilated in the daily press, in the different magazines, and in the church and clerical organs, enough of which exist to represent the various and conflicting shades of thought living outside the fold of Catholic Unity. The priest must therefore be prepared for all these comers, and in order to be able to account for the faith which is in him, he must have drunk deeply at the fountain of instruction during the years of his scholastic life.

Now this could not be possible amongst us under the old system. It may be safely asserted that no one man, how gifted so ever he may be, can teach many subjects with equal success. One man may be a first class mathematician and yet be a very inferior classical scholar, another may know the classics off by heart and who may never have solved a single problem in geometry. Again we have men well versed in the knowledge and interpretation of the sacred Scriptures, but whose acquaintance with the principles of theology would scarcely carry them safely through a one week's mission, and vice versa, and it has been known that some who taught theology for years would hardly observe correctly the ceremonies of an ordinary low mass. Every man, at all events, every educated man, has some one strong point, perhaps some have more than one, but very few. "To one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another faith to another grace of healing to another the working of miracles, to another, prophecy, to another, the discerning of spirits; to another diverse kind of Tongues; to another, interpretation of speeches." I Cor XII And the method of education all the world over proves the truth of these statements. In the Universities it is so, one man, one subject; the same in Colleges, and even in the smaller educational establishments – unless where poverty obliges otherwise, the same distribution of work is observed. And not only is this order observed with regard to a single course on any given subject, but the same individual teaches the same subject throughout a long life time. He is thus enabled to read up all the opinions which those professing the same subject elsewhere have given expression to; he has an opportunity of studying all objections, and thus placing before his students a clear and distinct view of the class subjects in all their bearings. And so men grow grey and eminent in the work of the chair, which by keen competition they won in early life.

Amongst us however the case is different. A student who has distinguished himself more than his class fellows during his course, is appointed some time after his ordination to teach. And what does that mean? He gets charge of a class of ten or twelve or perhaps more young men straight from the noviciate, and as these young men have been taken from many ranks in life, he finds his task by no means an easy one. With the less advanced he has to begin at the very beginning, to teach them sufficient Latin to enable them to read and

understand their philosophy; then after the usual time is spent in philosophical studies, they go on to theology. Meanwhile as time permits, they get a bird's eye view of Scripture, of Canon Law, and the composition of meditations and sermons. Perhaps if the Lector is more than an ordinary hard worker, he will give a few lessons in ecclesiastical history; maybe he will exercise them in English composition occasionally, but as these subjects do not strictly speaking enter into his professional duties, they may be omitted, and as a general rule they are. His work is to teach philosophy and theology, as these are the subjects in which his students will be examined. The usual three years theology are gone through; the students are presented to the diocesan authorities for examination, and should they succeed in passing that august body, they are ordained priests, and soon after are sent to take part in the missionary work of the Congregation.

It will be seen at a glance, and it must be acknowledged too, that the above is a very superficial course indeed, and that it is capable of putting men in a false position, when their work lies side by side with that of other men whose training and equipment have been entirely different and much superior. The system bears evil fruit too in another way: it does not of itself beget a habit of study. The time is so short for the work that has to be gone through, that at best it belongs to the system of "cram" rather than of training of educating. Hence it leaves little lasting impression, and unless the individual is naturally a student, he rarely goes back to his studies after he has tasted of the excitement of missionary life. He has not studied any subject sufficiently deep to understand it thoroughly, and consequently cares not to renew its acquaintance, for to love any subject of knowledge, we must in some degree at least, understand it. Hence the course of meditations or sermons with which he started in life are preached over and over again; the instructions and catechisms which at one time were comparatively new, are made to do service in town and country for years, the preacher or lecturer trusting to the change which place and circumstances may afford.

Our Superiors saw all this and determined to improve on the existing state of things. It was the dearest wish of Father Ignatius Paoli – himself a great educationalist – to have a central college for all the students of the Congregation on this side of the Atlantic, and fixing his mind on the Netherlands, was well nigh securing a suitable site near Tournay in Belgian. His object in this was that by bringing together many nationalities, not only would facilities be given of learning the different languages spoken, but a breadth and expansion of mind must necessarily be the result, and which too often is prevented by isolation. The Superiors in Rome approved of the design, but just at the last moment, some evil genies frustrated the plans of the good Padre.

Fr. Ignatius however was not to be baffled. He was not one of those men whom a passing disappointment would turn aside from the pursuit of an object, of whose worth and necessity he was convinced. He was sufficiently discerning to recognise the importance of a project, and equally strong in carrying it to its legitimate conclusion. He was at this time First Provincial Consultor, and resided here in Mount Argus. Father Eugene Martorelli was Provincial. These two men were very much alike in some things: in some others they were as far apart as the poles. Both were Italians, and both brought up in the same school. Both were distinguished students, and whilst still young, and before coming to these countries, taught with great success both philosophy and theology. Each was in turn Provincial of this Province, and in that capacity were wise and careful administrators. But here they part. Father Eugene was naturally a timid man, extremely slow in departing from the old conservative lines on which his policy was built, and hence was considered by his more progressive brethren to be in some respects, narrow-minded. That he was a faithful disciple of an old school is certain, hating and fearing novelty, but it is equally certain that he would recognise and identify himself with any scheme having for its object the well-being or amelioration of those for whom he was officially responsible. But such a project or movement should be put

before him by some one in whom he had absolute confidence. And such a one he found in his first Consultor, and thus did the stronger and broader mind act on the less reliable, or rather, knowing and trusting each other, they acted together. Father Ignatius was more a man of the world than his provincial; he had travelled much, and being a keen observer, he not only studied the ways of men, but saw what men expected and required from the priesthood of the day. Well read, not alone in the history of his time, but of earlier periods, he saw that there were growing even within the church, elements of discord and opposition, which were becoming day by day more antagonistic and practiced in the species of warfare which they had undertaken, and that such opposition could not be successfully met except with weapons equally new and formidable. Therefore his anxiety to have established amongst us a college wherein all the elements of modern warfare might be taught to those whose duty it would become in after life to go forth and do battle with the common enemy. The Belgian foundation having failed, he turned his attention to S. Paul's, Mount Argus, and to this scheme, as a modification of the greater, the Provincial gave his immediate consent. So too the higher Superiors in Rome, though it was whispered at the time that Rome yielded somewhat reluctantly, but was overcome by the pressure brought to bear by Fr. Ignatius. As soon as convenient therefore the students were brought from the other houses in the province, and St. Paul's "Retreat" was to be known in future as St. Paul's "College."

At this time there was a class of students in St. Joseph's Retreat, Highgate, who were reading theology, and who had already received minor orders. Another, and a junior class, was in St. Ann's, Sutton; these too were brought to Dublin, and what with a class already in Mount Argus, and some recently professed in Broadway, the number of Students present on the day of the opening of St. Paul's as a College was 29. The opening ceremony took place on the 19th of November; and with high hopes for its future success, and grand ceremonial worthy of the occasion St. Paul's College took its place as the Alma Mater of the Anglo-Hibernian Province. The subjoined account which appeared in one of the Dublin papers, is worth preserving. It is taken from the Freemans Journal of the 20th :

It had long been felt by the Reverend Fathers of the Passionist Congregation that a necessity existed in the Anglo-Hibernian Province of their body for an ecclesiastical Seminary in which the young professed members would be properly trained for the important religious duties which the order specially undertakes. Foremost amongst these is the mission undertaken from its very foundation – namely the restoration of England to the communion of the faithful.

This was the dearest wish of St. Paul of the Cross, Founder of the Passionists, as it was also of Fr. Ignatius, who had been known in the Anglican world as the Hon. and Rev. George Spencer, but who forsaking all the advantages of his Temporal condition, and high family influence, took upon himself the robes of the order, and it may be said gave up his life to win back his countrymen to the universal fold, chiefly through the prayers and supplications of the faithful Irish people. These prayers excited by his holy zeal were not wanting, and it is not too much to say that through the blessing of God the recent great religious progress in England has been owing to them.

Another member of this great Order had set an example of abnegation which cannot but have largely added to the impulse of educated Protestants to look kindly on and carefully consider the faith which is within their Catholic brethren, the result of which could not but eventuate in many conversions. This was the late Father Paul Mary, whose memory is now regarded by the inhabitants of Dublin as truly blessed, giving up as he did all the pride of station in its most fascinating aspects, to become one of the humblest amongst the humble, and the most pious amongst the pious priests of St. Paul's Retreat. The memory of the Hon. and Rev. Charles Reginald Pakenham, it is not too much to say, will live for ever amongst the

Catholics of Dublin, and of Ireland, to stimulate their zeal and add fervour to their devotedness.

An Order like this could not but have perceived the necessity of providing for its service, priests, trained up with a special reference to the peculiar missionary duties which it has undertaken; a problem whether their extinction as a corporate body was not the most likely result, as things stood. They now saw the seed put forth its germs, and the fruit was about to be nurtured into a plentiful harvest. The increasing numbers of the Passionists required a College wherein the nascent forces could be properly disciplined in order to the more effectual accomplishment of their spiritual labours. There were reasons also for rejoicing amongst those who were present at the ceremony. The religious there before them were mainly their relations and acquaintances, although many were also from the neighbouring Kingdom. All were united in the same spirit, and all submerged their mutual peculiarities to be blended into one harmonious body.

The number of alumni already in the College is thirty one for the purpose of filling the various professional chairs when that number is increased as it is sure to be in a short time, the ordinary community of ecclesiastics has been enlarged to fifteen. The inauguration of the new college consisted in the celebration of the divine sacrifice of the Mass with a pomp and splendour which could not be exceeded, though the present chapel of the convent may be considered a temporary one, the eminent architect Mr. J. J. McCarthy, having recently designed an exquisite plan of a new church corresponding in style with the extensive conventual buildings, the foundations of which are already laid and considerable progress made in erecting the walls. The present chapel, however, though wanting the fine proportions of the contemplated one, is, in its adornments and decorations, very beautiful, spacious, and well calculated for the accommodation of the community and the large congregation which worship in it. The choir is separated from the nave by a chancel arch, within which are the stalls for the community, the members of which are separated from the public during divine service and the recital of their offices. The altar is unquestionably one of the most beautiful of its kind we have ever seen, and on Tuesday, when adorned with the loveliest flowers of the season, intermixed with a thousand lights, flashing back radiance from the sacred utensils of gold and silver and the gorgeous vestments of the attendant priests, the effect was one which raised up the minds of all present to that glorious country, where, for all time, the faithful shall enjoy splendid visions. The music, which was under the management of Professor Fanning, who presided at the organ, was extremely fine, and abundantly added by its effect to the holy charms of the scene. The church, spacious as it is, was filled in every part with a congregations which numbered amongst its members the elite of the Catholic citizens of Dublin, and all seemed deeply impressed with the great prospective importance of the undertaking which they, in common with the Passionists, had assembled to consecrate with their prayers. Precisely at eleven o'clock the members of the community walked in procession, habited in the garb of their order, into the sanctuary and took their respective places. Immediately after the celebrant priests arrived at the altar. These were the Very Revd. Monsignor Meagher, V.G. P.P. Rathmines, celebrant, Deacon, Fr. Dionisius; subdeacon, Fr. Gregory, Fr. Salvian of St. Ann's Retreat, Sutton, Lancashire, acting as master of ceremonies. Amongst the other ecclesiastics present were – Very Rev. Fr. Eugene, Provincial, F.F. Ignatius, Alphonsus, Pancras, Christopher, Sebastian, Pius, Bernardine, Joseph, also the Revd. F.F. Collier, Bentley and Breen C.C. Rathmines. The clergy, as well as the lay members of the community, were placed within the sanctuary during the celebration of the holy Sacrifice.

At the conclusion of the first gospel the Very Revd. Father Ignatius ascended the pulpit and delivered a sermon of great power and eloquence appropriate to the occasion, and which was heard with interest by all those who were so happy as to be present. In the course

of his splendid discourse the Very Revd. Preacher said: This was a day of rejoicing to all who had assembled for the function. His brethren could feel the joy the more intensely. They saw this to be the crown of a great many trials and difficulties. The grain of wheat sown in these countries by the first Passionists had been trodden unto death. So far had the power of opposition and conflict gone, that it became a problem whether their extinction, as a corporate body, was not the most likely result as things stood. The preacher then dwelt at great length upon the necessity of collegiate education. This he showed from the great dignity and work of the priesthood, and from the provisions and enactments of ecclesiastical authority from the beginning. This latter portion of his sermon was clearly elucidated by apt quotations from the great Council of Trent. It was a double cause of rejoicing that this institution should be planted in Ireland – Ireland, formerly the nursery of learning and culture, which people its own fair domains with noble champions of the gospel, and made many nations its debtors by the doctors and apostles she sent them. The preacher concluded by invoking a blessing upon all and hoped that the charity and cordiality which was now evoked would accompany the labours of the Passionists to the end.

At the conclusion of the sacred ceremonies the fathers of the community entertained a large number of gentlemen at a *dejeuner* in one of the newly-elected lecture halls of the collegiate portion of the convent. Nothing could exceed the kindness and urbanity of the various members, clerical and lay, of St. Paul's Retreat to their guests, who all came away deeply impressed with a conviction of the blessings which the new college will confer by extending the numbers of the Order of the Passionists to work for men's salvation in the future as they have done in the past.

After the ceremonies in the church, the religious assembled to put forth their own declarations upon the events of the day. During the proceedings the Very Revd. Father Eugene, Provincial, addressed these words to his assembled subjects: - *Patres et Filii carissimi inter caetera potentiae Die miracula, hoc minimum mihi non videtur, quod hodie, tam frequenti religiosorum concursu, inaugurationem Collegii hujus liceat celebrare. Ecquis non videt quanto hujus modi collegii dicatio gloriam accrescit Ecclesiae! Adsunt (pro* dolor!) fratres carissimum adsunt tempora illa preiculosa de quibus dicit apostolus: 'Instabunt tempora periculosa: erunt homines scipsos amantes, cupidi elati, superbi, blasphemii, parentibus non obedientes, ingratihabentes quidem speciem pietatis, virtutem autem ejus abnegantes.'* (ad Lit. c. 2.) *Quibus ergo armis tantes malis occurrere possumus? Quibus nisi religiosis Institutionibus Catholicis, gymnasiis, Collegiis denique in quibus studiosa Iuventus apprime docetur quomodo tela nequissimorum hominum retendere possunt. Video quam ingens harum rerum hic sese mihi aperiat campus, sed longe impar est mei ingenii vis, rebus tantis explicandis Utinam visi eruditi, et fecundia chasi hanc in se provinciam suscipiant omnes que ingenii nervos in hoc explicent, ut in medium proferant innumera, quae religionis, quae ecclesiae, quae moribus Collegia catholica contriberunt. Ipse vero, Patres et Filii caussimi, virium mearum probe conscies, sacrorum collegiorum laudes viris eruditis et disertis oratoribus relinquens Deum optimum precor, ut collegium hoc nostrum, Divo fundatori nostro dicatum, incolumem et florentum ecclesiae, litteris, et congregationi nostrae in perpetuum servet."* So far the Freeman's Journal. (Transcriber's note: most of the Latin above was very difficult to decipher – so almost certainly contains many errors.)

It would not be too much to say that the above is a wretchedly poor account of what was not only a great but a very interesting occasion, but as it was the only outside testimony available, it was considered better to insert it than have no testimony at all. It is copied "word for word" from notes and scraps found amongst the papers of the late Fr. Salvian. The writer seemed to have got lost in a sort of beatific vision, which recalled the memories of Fr. Ignatius Spencer and Fr. Paul Mary Pakenham, and became so transported at the sight of

lighted candles and gorgeous vestments, that we are surprised he did not exclaim with the Apostle : “Lord, it is good for us to be here!” Better had he omitted panegyrics and celestial ravings, and give a true and intelligible account of the day’s ceremonial.

Within a few days after the opening of the new College the professors and students settled down to the work for which they had come together. The following is a list of the teaching staff and the various subjects assigned to the respective professors:-

Besides being President and Spiritual Director

Fr. Ignatius Paoli was appointed Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Sacred Eloquence;

Fr. Joseph Gasparini, Professor of Moral Theology and Canon Law;

Fr. Pius Devine, Professor of Dogmatic Theology and Sacred Scripture;

Fr. Pancras Driffield, Professor of Philosophy.

Later on Fr. Jerome Smith was appointed to take charge of a preparatory class, as some of the students coming from the Noviciate were found to be backward in Greek and Latin. Some other changes and appointments took place which we shall notice before the end of this year.

On class days the students had to attend two classes each day, one at least of which was Theology or Philosophy; the other subjects were so arranged that the students had two classes each week.

Fr. Ignatius was not only most punctual in attending to his own class, but in his capacity of President was most vigilant in seeing that the same regularity was observed by all the others. He was an extraordinary combination of discipline and indulgence. He was kindness and generosity to a fault, when a display of either became necessary, but severe and exacting when he believed no bona fide reason existed to exempt from duty. And he was seldom mistaken in his judgment, for as we have already remarked, his knowledge of men was far beyond the ordinary. No wonder then that the work of the College prospered under his guidance. He was beloved by all, both professors and students, and it would be no exaggeration to say that the latter body were attached to him in bonds of affection which seldom exist between Superior and subjects. And he was kindness itself to them in return. Whilst on the one hand he would insist on the class work being scrupulously attended to, on the other there was no privilege allowed by Rule that should not be theirs. On one occasion when visiting the house of a friend, he was offered some apples just before leaving. The good Father said, “I don’t want any for myself, but I have thirty six boys at home, and if you give me one for each I will be delighted to bring them.” Needless to say the request was granted. And so he became not only their father and guide but their very idol and model in everything appertaining to religious and intellectual life. He was also very particular with regard to the students recreations. He was a strong believer in the saying that “all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.” Consequently he was most exact about the weekly walks and occasionally would insist on what is known amongst us as a “long walk”. From these walks there was no exemption, except in the case of sickness, when he would always make some provision for the invalid’s enjoyment at home. And so did the work of education and religious discipline go on under his experienced and fatherly management, for whilst he spared no pains in advancing the work of the different classes, he was equally anxious for the religious observance.

It may be well here to anticipate a few years, and place on record in a continuous narrative the ultimate fate of the College, as we could only do so later on in a lingering and fragmentary manner. It will also finish the first vol. of the Chronicle, and bring to a close what was the most eventful year in the history of Mount Argus.

The college as such lived till 1875, though the last two or three years of its existence resembled more a home on which a blight had fallen than a seat or centre of intellectual activity. It has been already stated that the college was founded with the approbation of the Fr. General and his Council – indeed it could not have been otherwise – and it has also been chronicled that this consent and approbation were obtained through the great personal influence of Fr. Ignatius. It was whispered at the time that this consent was given somewhat reluctantly, how true this may be, I cannot say, but I make no apology for saying that its foundation was displeasing to some of the senior fathers of the province, and who made no secret of their sentiments or signs of disapproval. By and by their whisperings became louder; and as is the result in all such cases, becoming accustomed to the sound of their own voices, they proclaimed their disaffection from the house tops. In the first place they objected to the word “College”. Our Holy Rule says that our houses should be called “Retreats”. So far all right; but they did not add that the same Holy Rule gives power to the General and his Council to change or modify with the sanction of the proper authority, whatever may to them seem good for the Congregation. They next declared that “college training” would destroy the spirit of the Passionist; that it would fill his mind with “new-fangled” ideas, and prevent the growth of simplicity which was the very essence of religious life. So too would he be led to consider himself above his brethren of the old system, which could only result in uncharitableness and pride. And even some who were superiors carried their objections so far as to protest against having any of the “college priests,” as they called them, in their communities. In this however they did not succeed.

During the following year, '68, the work of the college went on vigorously, though the occasional absence of Father Ignatius was sometimes felt, particularly in those departments for which he was directly responsible. His place was fairly well filled however by Fr. Jerome.

After a few very successful missions given by our fathers in the diocese of Down and Connor, the Bishop of that diocese, Most Rev. Dr. Dorrian, expressed a wish to have a community of our religious in his diocese, and in the summer of this year, a suburban district of Belfast, known as Ardoyne and Ligoniel, was offered as a foundation. Our Superiors had always been anxious to get a second foundation in Ireland, and particularly in the North, not only to extend our influence in the country, but to increase the opportunities of obtaining additional vocations to the Congregation. Consequently the offer was willingly accepted. After the preliminary arrangements had been made, Fr. Raphael Gorga was appointed first Superior of the new Retreat. Fr. Eugene was still Provincial. It just happened that neither the Provincial nor Fr. Raphael possessed much of that quality known as “business capacity”. Fr. Eugene, as has been already noticed, was a very timid man in dealing with externs, and would rather let a case go by default, than, as he was in the habit of saying, “compromise the Congregation”. Fr. Raphael, on the other hand, would go in for the Rule, the whole Rule and nothing but the Rule, without taking any notice or making any allowance for conditions ruled by circumstances of time and place. The Bishop was a good business man – a keen man of the world, and our admission to his diocese should be on his conditions. These conditions almost led to a dead lock. The Provincial was not strong enough; neither had Fr. Raphael tact or diplomacy enough to see that these difficulties were only such as are ordinarily associated with new departures, that they would not nor could they be lasting, which time has proved to be true, so Father Ignatius, in his capacity of First Provincial Consultor, was entrusted with the settlement of the whole concern. This necessitated frequent journeys to Belfast; interviews both with the Bishop and the gentleman from whom the ground was to be purchased; also visits to London to confer with the Provincial, borrowing money to pay the fine for the new Retreat; getting certain conditions in the agreement changed or modified, and eventually getting the terms duly signed by the contracting parties. All this of course meant

long and frequent intervals of absence from the college and from his class, which no one regretted more than the venerable President himself. He took care however on his return to Mount Argus to ascertain that the work in its various departments was being attended to and the classes given with the same regularity as if under his own immediate supervision.

When the little community was settled in Ardoyne, they found themselves face to face with another difficulty – the want of a church. Arrangements were at once made to erect a temporary chapel, which was completed and opened early the following year. With this too Fr. Ignatius was identified, thus prolonging still his absence from the college. But a longer term of absence was soon to begin. In the April of '69 Fr. Ignatius left for Rome to attend the General Chapter, which that year was held on the third of May in SS. John and Paul, and it pleased God that he should never return to his well-beloved Anglo-Hibernian Province. In that Chapter he was elected Procurator General, and the following year was consecrated Bishop of Nicopolis, and Administrator of Valachia. In 1883 he was raised to the dignity of Archbishop of Bucharest and died in Vienna in April 1885. R.I.P.

Now came the opportunity for those who had been opposed to the college from the beginning. They raised their voices louder and louder in the cry for a return to the old system, and proclaimed that in doing so they were but voicing the sentiments of Rome. How far Rome may have been implicated, we are unable to say, but it is certain that no active steps were taken to perpetuate the great work begun by Fr. Ignatius in Mt. Argus. But the enemies of the College did not succeed just yet. The establishment, though only in its infancy, was laid on sure foundations, thanks to the strong arm and clear intellect of its first President, and so more had to be reckoned with than the mere sentimentality of the opposition could overcome.

On the 15th of June '69 the Provincial chapter was held in ST. Ann's Retreat, Sutton. In this chapter Fr. Pius Devine was elected Rector of St. Paul's and was also appointed President of the College. Fr. Pius had worked in perfect harmony with Fr. Ignatius in the establishment of the college, and as his own early training showed him the advantages of college life, he threw himself heart and soul into the new order of things, consequently his appointment as Rector and President at this time was hailed by the students as fortunate and opportune alike for themselves and their Alma Mater. And so it was. Fr. Pius however had to give up his chair of Dogmatic Theology and Sacred Scripture, but his place was taken by Fr. George Martucci, one of our fathers who came over from Rome at this time. During the few years which Fr. George remained in St. Paul's, he discharged his duties faithfully and well, and made many friends both in the community and outside. He returned to Italy in '79, where he died shortly afterwards. During the three years of Fr. Pius' Rectorship therefore the college went on fulfilling the noble work for which it was called into existence, but the provincial chapter of 1872 resulted in changes not beneficial for things academic, and so the college was permitted to gradually sicken and eventually to die, and in 1875 the old one horse carriage became again the vehicle on which the Passionist students were to drive to fame, and St. Paul's "College" was again to be known as St. Paul's "Retreat".

It may be well to mention here that during the existence of the college, the other Retreats of the province were obliged to pay a certain amount yearly towards its support. This was done with some regularity in the beginning, but after a few years, first one and then another began to fall behind, some disputing the claim, others ignoring it, so that the Rector was obliged to refuse to have more than one class and one Lector in the Retreat. And so the battle ended!

Fr. Norbert.

(Transcriber's note: The Chronicles end as above. On the following page are two entries from Visitations carried out, by Fr. Gregory, Provincial, in 1896(?), and Fr. Fidelis, General Visitor, 1899. I include them below.)

It gives me much pleasure to express our commendation of the labour which has been expended in putting together all the facts and circumstances connected with the foundation of this retreat. It is done with care and good judgment and cannot but prove interesting and instructive to our religious at present living, and to those who will come afterwards it will be read with all that pleasure and satisfaction attached to the early beginnings of the history of the Church. We sincerely hope the reader will express his gratitude to the Chronicler (whether living or dead) who had a very difficult duty to perform in writing the history of events most of those who took part in it have passed away by breathing a fervent prayer for his happy estate. We now wish him to continue the good work until he brings it up to our own days, when it will be much easier to continue the history of the foundation of St. Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus.

Given during the time of the S. Visitation, September, 25th, 1896 (**or maybe 1898?**)
Gregory of St. Joseph, C.P.
Provincial.

I have read the first Volume of Father Norbert's Chronicles of Mount Argus with the greatest interest and Pleasure. I hope that he will go on with the work and finish it. It will be a labour of love to him, and a work of real value, not only for this Retreat of St. Paul of the Cross, but for the Anglo-Hibernian Province, and the Congregation, and will, I hope, be preserved in some permanent form.

Fidelis of the Cross,
Visitor Genl. And President
of the Provl. Chapter.

Mount Argus,
July 16th, 1899.

(Further note from transcriber: Within the Chronicle – at page 99, to be exact) was a single sheet, very closely typed on both sides, with the heading “First Passionist Activities in Ireland”. It ends abruptly at the bottom of the second page, so presumably there was more to it originally. For completeness sake I include what I have to hand below.)

FIRST PASSIONIST ACTIVITIES IN IRELAND.

The first Passionist to tread on Irish soil was Fr. Ignatius Spencer when he came to Carlow on the 2nd of September 1848 to conduct a retreat for the ecclesiastical students of the Diocesan College. (Life p160) Nothing memorable recorded of this visit, but it would seem that he made many friends in Carlow, and he returned many times during the following years to his “beloved Carlow, which seems for him to have been a kind of Irish base of operations.” (op. cit. p171) In the following year, he again came to Ireland, but this time in company of Father Dominic and Father Dominic, to give the first Passionist mission in Ireland, at St. Audeon's, High St. Dublin. “At the invitation of the Rev. M.B. Kelly, P.P., of the above church,” writes Fr. Ignatius (Spencer), “Father Dominic, the Provincial, Father Ignatius, and Father Vincent having made a rendezvous at Aston Hall, set off for Dublin by Liverpool, on Friday, April 27th, 1849. They crossed the sea that night, and reached Dublin at 10 o'clock on Saturday morning. After celebrating Mass, they went with Mr. Kelly to visit his Grace the Archbishop,

Dr. Murray. A lodging was found for them a few doors from the church – No. 33, High Street – where they lived by themselves, followed regular hours, allowing for dinner and supper one hour each, which included recreation.” (Life of Dominic, p 318.) The mission began on April 29th and ended on May 20th, with a communion of no less than 3,000 people. It is also recorded that fifteen Protestants were received into the Church as a result of this mission. Although by all accounts eminently successful, this mission did not for some reason or other, arouse any great enthusiasm among the people; and it was over two years before the Passionists were again invited to the Irish mission-field. This time it was to Birr, King’s County, where in the month of August, 1851, Fathers Vincent, Ambrose and Martin gave a memorable mission which for many reasons may be regarded as the introduction of the Passionists to the Irish people. Soon after Fr. Ignatius again toured Ireland preaching his Crusade of Prayer for the Conversion of England. In September 1851, we find him at Thurles to plead England’s cause before the Irish Hierarchy assembled in Synod. Thence he proceeded north “to Strabane and Derry, not omitting Omagh, where, at a ‘tenant-right’ meeting he listened to Gavan Duffy. The return journey to England took him through Dublin and included visits to Maynooth, All-Hallows, innumerable convents, and an interview with Lord Clarendon, Viceroy of Ireland from 1847-1852. In this ‘grand campaign’ as he called it, in Ireland, and one which followed it in the spring of 1851, Ignatius preached 170 sermons to the Irish people on the conversion of England, ‘besides a number past reckoning,’ he adds, ‘of addresses to convents and schools, and private conversation to the same intent’.” (Life p172) As his biographer notes, “Ireland loomed larger than England in the mind of this scion of England’s aristocracy who had given up all things for Christ and his Church. Ireland ‘loomed larger’ in the mind of Ignatius because to him she was larger and deeper supernaturally than England. English to the backbone, he was intensely national, as was fitting, but more intensely Catholic: and in Ireland he found what he loved – a land where the people, in spite of human failure and weakness, had clung for ages, unshaken and unshakeable, to life’s absolute values, to God, the soul, and the Catholic Church, and in which those values are the supreme concern. English and a convert, he saw the essential Ireland and what it stood for – the Resurrection and the Life. Shall these ‘dry bones’ live, cried Ignatius as he looked out upon smug Victorian England and its Church ‘as by law established.’ Yes – and the Sanctification of Ireland, England’s Catholic neighbour, was, in his idea, to be a prime factor in the great transformation.” (Life, p222.) Since such were his ideas and hopes, it is strange that Ignatius gave no thought and made no effort towards the establishment of a foundation in Ireland. Indeed, as far as can be ascertained, such a thought seems never to have been seriously entertained by the first superiors of the English Province. When the idea was mooted by Fr. Amadeus, Fr. Dominic showed himself definitely opposed to the proposal. “I hear that Fr. Amadeus has written you about some project of founding a House in Ireland, accompanied by Fr. Augustine,” he wrote to the General in a letter dated Feast of the Presentation, 1845, “The latter seems to know nothing of the idea, which, in any case, is impracticable at present.” (Ven Dom in England, p145)

FIRST EFFORTS TOWARDS AN IRISH FOUNDATION.

It was Fr. Vincent (Grotti) who first realised the possibilities of an Irish Foundation, and was ultimately and mainly responsible for bringing the Passionists to this country. Although an Italian, this good priest was a great lover of Ireland, and from the very beginning set his heart on obtaining a House of the Order in the country, and by preference in or around Dublin. A few weeks after his mission at Birr, in September 1851, he made application to the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Cullen, for permission to establish a house in the archdiocese. His Grace seemed pleased enough with the proposal, and even promised to use his influence to secure a suitable site. Whether this promise was prompted by his enthusiasm for the speedy

consummation of the project, or was simply a diplomatic strategy to shelve it, it is impossible to say; but the fact is that nothing more was heard of the matter for nearly three years. In the meantime, Fr. Vincent had been frequently in Ireland on missionary work, and had used every opportunity that presented itself of pressing forward his project; but although he received much encouragement on all sides, his efforts had no practical results. In 1854, he was appointed by the Visitor-General to the office of Vice-Provincial, and from that time, events moved swiftly. He at once contrived to remind Dr. Murray of his promise, and had a letter from his Grace in April 1855, acquainting him with his inability to find a suitable place, and giving him the necessary permission to set about finding one for himself. In the course of the same year, two offers of sites for a foundation were made to him, one near Nenagh by Dr. Vaughan, Bishop of Killaloe, the other in the neighbourhood of Belfast, both of which Fr. Vincent considered to be unsuitable. The truth is that he had evidently set himself to make a foundation in or near Dublin, and in the end it was a chance meeting that put him in the way of finding a site such as he desired. While staying in Dublin for some days, after concluding a series of missions in country parts of Ireland, he was introduced to the Rev. Matthew Collier, at that time a curate in Rathmines. During the course of the subsequent conversation, Fr. Collier expressed his surprise that the Passionists had no house of their Order in Ireland. On being told by Fr. Vincent how matters stood, he immediately offered to find a suitable site, and finally suggested a place called Mount Argos, situated in the parish of Rathmines. The property belonged to a Mrs Byrne, who, he thought, would be willing to dispose of it. They set immediately for Mount Argos, but found that Mrs Byrne was from home. Fr. Vincent, however, was much taken by the situation, and at once made up his mind to have it, if at all possible; but as he had to leave for England, he instructed Fr. Collier to make enquiries of the proprietress on his behalf, and to communicate to him the result of the interview. (Diary of Fr. Ignatius under date August 16th, 1855: Called at Mr Collier's. Then to Rathmines by Bus. Mr. Collier took us to see a house at Harold's Cross which might suit us. Life p225) Fr Ignatius was not much taken, considered the house by no means a 'commodious residence'. This was on the 16th August, 1855. More than six months passed without any word

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