

are present to my 80 years, whether it be by hearsay or the witness of my own eyes. Like Pauline's father, my two maternal uncles belonged to the heroic army of the defenders of Lyon in 1793. (They were shot after the siege by those whose glorious centenary was celebrated throughout France yesterday). The name of Mr Wurtz has echoed in my years in different ways for a long time. Before going to their death, my two uncles were able to tell my grandmother, in order to console her, that they had found a *priest* in prison. Perhaps, or probably, this was Mr Wurtz, about whom *you have informed me*, sent from Rome by God for this very purpose. My aunt, my godmother, was a friend of Mile Jaricot. I suppose that like her, she was also a little worldly in her early youth, disguising herself as a soldier to go into the dungeons to save her fiance or suitor. I can also see her, when I was about five years old, dressed up for God in I don't know what kind of clothes, withdrawing from her family, going to live in a kind of attic with a common girl, the sister of a priest, the laughing stock of many people, and . . . (here is God's part), becoming *the Foundress of the Congregation of the Religious of Jesus and Mary*. I knew through a companion of Fr. Jaricot, of the great virtues of that admirable priest and of the *odious treatment* given in that hospital to poor newcomers, treatment which the most common decency forbids me even to mention, *his martyrdom*. Everything makes me say *his martyrdom*. We shall know about it one day. I considered he had been *poisoned*. How many other things, other names, other memories I find again in your interesting books! . . .

DOC. XXVI

TESTIMONIES OF THE REPUTATION FOR SANCTITY OF THE SERVANT OF GOD FROM THE YEAR 1868 UNTIL THE YEAR 1896. — *From documents mentioned below.*

In this document we have put together different pieces of evidence about the reputation of sanctity of the Servant of God, from 1868 until the publication of the *Histoire* in 1896. During this period, the first years of which correspond to the Generalate of M. St. Pothin (1867-1885), the preoccupation of the latter, shown frequently in her letters, about considering the heroic virtue of the Foundress and the outstanding religious spirit of the first generation, is seen. The anti-religious policy of France, the spread of the Congregation with the corresponding difficulty of communications at that time, made the Superioress General fear that customs would be introduced

among the religious that were different from those established by the Foundress, and that the true spirit of the Congregation, of which she herself was the vigilant depository, would be lost. She saw with sadness the disappearance of the last collaborators of the Servant of God, and at some moments the future appeared obscure. She believed she had found two means of defence against the danger which seemed to her to threaten the Congregation: to consecrate it to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to recall the virtues of the Foundress to the religious (cf. *infra.* 1, and the correspondence of M. St. Pothin, A. G. *Roma*), means which she put into execution promptly and efficaciously.

1

Extract from the Memoir of Fr. Roch de Cesinale O.F. M. Cap. on his visit to the Mission of Agra, 1868. — From the copy preserved in A. G. *Roma*.

Fr. Roch de Cesinale, secular name Roch Cocchia was born in 1830 and was clothed in the Capuchin habit in 1846. In 1861 the Minister General of the Order gave him charge of writing the history of the Missions and he travelled in Europe, Asia and Africa. He was Procurator General of the Missions from 1870-1872 and at that time he published the *History of the Capuchin Missions* in three volumes, the first in Paris in 1867 and the other two in Rome in 1872 and 1873 respectively. Regarding India, he speaks only in this work of the introduction of Christianity into that country. After being Titular Bishop of Oropo (1874) and Apostolic Delegate to the Republics of Haiti, S. Domingo and Venezuela, in 1883 he returned to Italy, and, refusing the archbishopric of Otranto, he was sent as Internuncio to Brazil. He was Bishop of Chicla from 1886, and he died there on the 19th December 1900 (cf. *Lexicon capuccinum*, Rome 1951, col. 422).

Fr. Roch de Cesinale, having finished the visit to the Mission of Agra, wrote his interesting memoir which contains much laudatory information about the apostolic works of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. In Agra he met various religious who had known the Foundress, among whom were Mothers St. Bruno, St. Paul, and St. Ambrose, who had lived with her from the foundation of the Institute, which gives their evidence a noteworthy value, as they saw and heard what they related.

Fr. Clemente de Terzorio in *Le Missioni dei Minori Cappuccini IX*, Rome, 1935, pp. 311-351, in giving detailed information on the missions in India, reproduces some paragraphs of the Memoir of Fr. Roch de Cesinale and he refers briefly to the Servant of God.

Selection from the Memoir of Rev. Fr. Rochde Cesinale, Capuchin, of the Missionary College in Rome, on a visit to Agra in March 1868, regarding the establishments of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, India.

The Institute of the Religious of Jesus and Mary originated in Lyon, the city of great works; and it may be said almost in the cradle of the Pious Work of the Propagation of the Faith.

Like the latter the Congregation was at first only a tiny mustard seed, that some pious ladies of that Association had the inspiration to sow in the Father's field. They placed their little fortune in common with this end in view. Under the direction of Fr. Coindre, a "Carthusian" Missionary in Lyon, who was known as the Father Founder, they began to gather poor children together.

Reverend Mother St. Ignatius was the first Superioress General of her Order and the Mother Foundress. She was a woman of sound judgement, of greatness of soul, of strong virtue, capable of supporting all the trials that the Lord never fails to send to works that He wants to mark as His own. This humble beginning made rapid and remarkable progress among the works of our time. It received the prompt approbation of the Church, given by Our Holy Father Pope Pius IX, on the 21st December 1847. . . .

2

Extract from an anonymous manuscript entitled " Notes detachees prises d'ici de la" composed between 1869 and 1885. — From the original preserved in A. G. Roma.

The manuscript from which we are copying this extract is an exercise book of 30 pages (30 x 20 cm). It contains a collection of anecdotes relating to the origins of the Congregation. It was used in great part by the authors of the *Histoire*.

It is not known who wrote it. The author, without following a regular order, presents it as divided into four parts respectively entitled: 1) Notes detachees prises d'ici et de la, 2) Mother St. Teresa, 3) M. l'abbe Rey, 4) Une gerbe odorante (A fragrant sheaf), comprising a total of forty paragraphs which we have numbered to facilitate quotation. According to our numbering, numbers 2-5 refer to Fr. Coindre; 6, 17-21, 23, to the Servant of

God; 7-16, 37-40, to M. St. Teresa; 24-25 to Fr. Rey, and the others to various religious. It should be noted that in many paragraphs the author makes it clear that the information came from M. St. Teresa.

Regarding the date, it is placed between 1869 and 1885, a period in which it seems that there was an intensification of the historical works begun in 1854. In any case it can be accurately stated that it was written after the death of M. St. Teresa in 1869, from whom much information originated, and before the death of M. St. Pothin in 1885.

We are copying only the episodes which concern the Servant of God and which the author had the means of collecting from contemporaries, and we present a synoptic table with the passages of the manuscript used in the *Histoire*, as has been done in the *Memorial* (Doc. XXIII).

The quotations from this manuscript are entitled "Notes detachees".

	Nori-s i)iii ACHII s		HISTOIRL
1	pp. 1-2 Ayant etc ...	ad sensum	pp. 77-78 L'abbe Coindre
2	pp. 9-11 Merc Si. Xavier ...		pp. 85-88 Mais on 1828 ...
3	pp. 11-13 Monsieur l'abbe ...		pp. 102-5 Chap. XIII ...
4	pp. 11-15 La vie qu'il ...		pp. 103-16 Le venerable ...
5	pp. 13-14 En IX34 ...		P. 106 C'etait en 1834 ...
6	P. 14 11 se presente ...	q. ad lilt.	P. 107 Mr. Rev se prese ...
7	pp. 15-28 Arrives a ...	ad litteram	pp. 117-30 Arrivees a ...
8	pp. 7-8 Soeur St. Bern. ...	ad sensum	pp. 138-39 A cette meme ...
9	P. 2 Merc St. Ignace ...		P. 156 Ferine pour elle

6. Mother St. Ignatius was of irreproachable exactitude in correcting and humiliating Mother St. Teresa for the smallest faults, both in the Novitiate, and when she was still a young professed. Sister St. Anthony, one of the first companions of Mile Thevenet, who spoke in all simplicity and openness to her Superiors, said to her one day: "Reverend Mother why do you correct that Religious on every occasion?" — "It is because she will be called to govern the Congregation later on", the wise Mother replied without hesitation. "It is necessary to form her."

17. Sr. St. Bernard narrates that, after the riots of 1830,¹ the authorities of Lyon conceived the plan of constructing some fortifications at Fourviere. The site of the Angelique seemed to be the

¹This should read 1834. See *supra*. Doc. XVII, 3, d.

most convenient for placing the fort. Negotiations were begun with our Mothers about this, but there was disagreement about the price of 25,000 fr. One day the Colonel of the Engineers came to find out the final decision. Mother St. Ignatius held firm. The Officer left her saying: "You will not give up your property willingly; it will be taken from you within a year." "Well, we shall see", replied Mother St. Ignatius. They said good-bye courteously and the Officer disappeared. Then Reverend Mother turned towards me and said: "In times of revolution, one year is worth ten."

18. At the first sign of the insurrection of 1834, Mother St. Ignatius who was ordinarily so calm experienced a moment of terror and dread at the memory of the disaster of 93. One can understand how her past experience could initially exaggerate the situation for her, but her strength of character soon took the upper hand, to encourage and animate her daughters by her words and her example. She inspired everyone with confidence so that the insurgents themselves ran to her to get her advice. — "You are doing a bad thing, my friends", she told them. "You will destroy the silk trade, and you will die of hunger. Go home." Several of these workers listened with a childlike docility and went quietly home.

19. A young person was placed as a chamber maid in an excellent family of Lyon, but for a long time she had felt the call to the religious life. However she did not want to listen too attentively to it. One day in despair on account of this she presented herself at the Archbishop's House to speak to M. Barou, the Vicar General who had baptized her and given her her First Holy Communion ... She explained to him in a few words how unhappy she was and that something inside was saying to her: "Become a religious". However she had a dread of religious life. She had gone to La Ferrandiere not long before, but her repugnance on seeing that house was so strong that she had hurried home. M. Barou put several questions to her, and ended by telling her "My child, be faithful to the voice of God. You have a religious vocation, welcome it as a great grace. Go to Fourviere, present yourself to the Superioress, she is a woman with a good head, her house is in perfect order. Only lately we visited the establishment with Mgr de Pins who expressed his satisfaction with it. Go without fear. You will stay there." The person to whom he addressed these reassuring words was our Sr. St. Bernard. "As soon as I set foot in the place", said the Sister, "all my misgivings

vanished into thin air. I felt that I was *at home*. What I had been told was true." (1828)

20. "I know no Congregation that has such an apostolic spirit". These were the sentiments of a worthy ecclesiastic, M. l'abbe Bouet, uncle of Mother St. Blandine, who was herself an angel of virtue.

21. The Cure of Ars, in his turn, in speaking of the newly-founded Institute said: "It is a Congregation that is well established."

23. Recounting (The Servant of God) in a letter quoted above an occurrence which prevented the journey to Belleville, she said: "At any other moment this inconvenience would have upset me, but since this year. . . ." (Doc. XVII, 1, p. 335).

3

Extracts from some letters of M. St. Pothin, Lyon, 1879-1880.

M. St. Pothin (Doc. XVI, A, 5, *intr.* p. 282) is another contemporary of the Servant of God and lived with her. Undoubtedly the best testimonies among those preserved we owe to her. She was the fourth Superioress General, the successor of M. St. Teresa, when the latter was struck with paralysis two years before her death. She founded the houses of the Congregation in Spain, where the memory of her solid virtues lives on.

The initiative of M. St. Teresa in having some written historical information on the Congregation put together was considerably and efficiently extended by M. St. Pothin who also intervened in the correction of *the Memorial* (Doc. XXIII, p. 454), and requested from Fr. Mayet, nephew of the Servant of God, the letter reproduced in Doc. XXV, 2, p. 484, with information about the family and the life of M. St. Ignatius. Moreover, she charged a religious, M. St. Dosithee, to write a history of the Congregation (cf. *infra*, 5) used in the Additional Process in which the paragraphs which refer to the Servant of God are reproduced (cf. *Additional Process*, p. 411^l-412^v).

In 1872 M. St. Pothin consecrated the whole Congregation in a special way to the Sacred Heart, and she herself wrote the formula which she sent to all the houses to be recited on Maundy Thursday, which in that year fell on the 28th March. A statue of the Sacred Heart which still exists was placed in the garden of the house of Fourviere in memory of that consecration.

a)

Extract from a letter of M. St. Pothin to M. St. Cyril, 30th July 1879. — From the original preserved in A. G. Roma.

From this long letter of the Superioress General to M. St. Cyril, then Provincial Superioress in Canada and later in her turn, Superioress General, we have extracted some sentences which are a testimony of the veneration and esteem in which M. St. Pothin held the Servant of God. All the contents of the letter treat of the difficulties which M. St. Cyril met with in her government and the Superioress General found no better means for counselling and animating her than the memory of the virtues of the Foundress, her zeal, her charity towards the poor, her fortitude, her trust in God, her many sufferings. In the letter she refers to the difficult situation through which France was passing, and to the death of some religious, among whom were two of the first missionaries and contemporaries of the Servant of God. These losses had been a profound blow to M. St. Pothin.

M. St. Cyril (Irene Reynier) the daughter of Augustin and Madeleine Clement, was born in Le Saulce (Hautes-Alpes) on the 19th November 1823; she entered the Congregation on the 13th May, 1845, and made her Profession on the 23rd May 1847. She was successively Directress of the Boarding School of Rodez, Superioress of the house of Tarragona (Spain), Provincial Superioress in Canada and sixth Superioress General. She died in Providence (U.S.A.) on the 15th June 1904.

I can easily understand all your sufferings . . . I have seen the difficulties of our first Mothers and especially of our Mother Foundress. Besides, you have seen throughout history that all religious men and women were not saints. We must hope that we shall be sanctified by supporting our sufferings with patience and by doing our best, abandoning ourselves to Him who has placed us where we are and who supports us. How many sufferings our worthy Mother St. Ignatius endured! Her zeal made her undertake this work for poor children, and she was not discouraged, in spite of difficulties. She placed her confidence in God. He supported her and her great soul did not weaken. As M. St. Andrew said to a religious: "Let people talk and do good!"

b)

Extract from a letter of M. St. Pothin to M. St. Regis, 1880 Informative Process, p. 263^v-264^f.

M. St. Regis was Superioress of the house of St. Gervais (Qu6bei) III Canada, and M. St. Pothin, writing to her, in giving her advice recommended her to recall the *heroic virtues* of our Mother Foundress, above all her *great humility* and her *sublime charity* for God and souls. This is one of the most explicit pieces of evidence of an eyewitness.

May your religious family in your little mission of St. Gervais be faithful in keeping our Holy Rule.

Let them often recall the heroic virtues of our Mother Foundress, above all her great humility, her sublime charity for God and souls.

Be very united so that the religious spirit may reign among you; in this way all will correspond with the desires of our Reverend Mother Foundress, who has left us the living memory of all the religious virtues.

4

Extracts from the manuscript "Biographies diverses", anonymous (1880). — From the copy preserved in A. G. Roma.

This is a small exercise book (14 x 10 cm) containing 80 pages, of which only 49 are written on; it is in French, notwithstanding its Spanish origin, proved by the mark of the stationery shop in Barcelona, and it contains various biographical notes in this order: *Biographic de la Reverende Mere Saint-Ignace, fondatrice des Religieuses de Jesus-Marie*, pp. 1-14; *Notice biographique sur M. St. Andre, 2^e superieure generate*, pp. 15-25; *Notice sur Mere St-Gonzague*, pp. 26-30; *Appendice a la biographic de la M. St-Ignace*, pp. 31-49.

The manuscript is a copy made, as can be seen from the spelling and from the short prayer written in Spanish at the top, by a Spanish religious, probably around 1880. The information contained in it is not all from the same period or by the same author. The *Biographic* of the Servant of God was written before 1878, date of the letter of ftu. Mayet (cf. Doc. XXV, 2, p. 485); in fact the author was ignorant of some of the facts contained in it and falls into error regarding the Thevenet family.

It seems evident that the author has used the *Memorial* for what refers to the foundation of Monistrol and the death of Fr. Coindre, although she gives

this in summary. All the above mentioned errors are corrected in *Appendice a la biographie de la M. St. Ignace* for the composition of which she evidently had before her eyes the letter noted above, and she was also able to obtain from the family of the Servant of God details which are not found in Fr. Mayet's letter, in the *Biographie* or even in the *Memorial*.

The author of this *Biographie*, if she did not live with the Servant of God, undoubtedly lived with many of the religious who knew her, and her writing reflects very well the concept of sanctity in which the Foundress was held by her contemporaries.

The *Biographie* and above all *Appendice* were used by the authors of the *Histoire* who transcribed the second almost whole and entire and word for word (Doc. XXVII, notes). Here we reproduce some extracts only, which refer more directly to the Servant of God, and which were not used, or were modified very much, in the document quoted.

We also present a synoptic table with the passages of the manuscript used in the *Histoire*, as was done for the *Memorial* (Doc. XXIII, *intr.*, pp. 457-459). The quotations from this manuscript are given under the title *Petit Manuscrit*.

		PETIT MANUSCRIT		HISTOIRE-
24	p.	8 Cc Tut en 1822 ...	ad sensum	p. 36 Pour sc dedomm ...
25	p.	10 Puis Dieu	pp. 35-36 Plusieurs fois ...
26	p.	9 Sur les 148 ...		p. 47 De 148 sujets ...
27	p.	9 Un pensionnat		P. 48 Quelques mois ...
28	pp.	10-11 Monsieur l'Abbe ...		P. 52 Peu apres ...
29	p.	9 La bonne Mere ...		P. 61 l'attachement ...
30	p.	11 Mais les cons ...		pp. 77-81 L'evêque de Blois ...
31	p.	10 La bonne Mere	P. 84 Mais en 1828 ...
32	p.	10 Un instant ...	ad litteram	P. 88 Un instant ...
33	pp.	11-12 En 1830 ...	ad sensum	pp. 89-91 Cependant ...
34	p.	12 Lorsque la ir ...	q. ad litt.	P. 102 Des que la calme ...
35	pp.	12-13 En 1834 ...	ad sensum	pp. 106s C'était en 1834 ...
36	p.	13 Deja Tannec ...		P. 144 Au mois d'octob ...
37	pp.	13-14 A la fin de ...		P. 146 Le dimanche 29 ...
38	p.	7 Ferme et severe ...		P. 153 Aussi Mere St. Ig ...
39	p.	8 Le respect et ...		P. 156 toujours egale ...
40	p.	7 On Pa vuc ...	ad litteram	pp. 156-7 On la vue ...
41	p.	7 On l'eniendait	q. ad litt.	P. 157 Avait-elle ...
42	pp.	15-20 Mile Victoire ...		pp. 165-71 M. St. Andre ...

	PI-TIT MANUSCRIT		HISTOIRI
1	p. I En 1777 alors ...	ad sensum	p. 2 Mile Thevenet ...
2	P. 31 Marie Claudine ...	ad litteram	pp. 2-3 Marie Claudine ...
3	pp. 1-2 Aucun detail ...	ad sensum	p. 3 Bien que tres peu ...
4	pp. 32-33 Quelques annees ...	q. ad litt.	pp. 3-4 A l'epoq de ...
5	pp. 33-35 On emit en ...	q. ad litt.	pp. 4-5 Adolescente. Cl. ...
6	pp. 36-37 Apres la reddi ...	q. ad litt.	pp. 5-6 Apres la reddi ...
7	pp. 38-41 5 Janvier 1794 ...	ad litteram	pp. 7-9 16 nivoxe ...
8	pp. 2-3 Mais un jour ...	ad sensum	P. 9 Ignorant que ...
9	pp. 42-44 Le 5 Janvier ...		pp. 9-11 " "
10	pp. 44-45 Huit jours ap	q. ad litt.	pp. 11-12 Huit jours apres ...
11	P. 3 Le coeur de ...	ad sensum	P. 13 Retiree avec ...
12	pp. 47-48 Les belles am ...		P. 13
13	p. 45 Ces mortes ...		P. 11 Toute sa vie ...
14	pp. 45-46 M. et Mme The	pp. 11-12 Apres la Terreur ...
15	pp. 3-4 Lille entendil ...		P. 14 Un bon p ret re ...
16	p. 48 Ce saint p ret re ...		P. 14
17	p. 4 En 1816 ...		pp. 16-17 Parmi les Ames ...
18	p. 4 Son saint dir ...		pp. 20-21 Ce mandat ...
19	p. 5 C'est en 1818 ...		P. 21 La nouvelle com ...
20	p. 5 Qui dira les ...		pp. 23-24 Cependant Mile ...
21	pp. 5-6 Deux annees ...		pp. 26-27 Dans cc ictus ...
22	pp. 5-6 Elle transport ...	" "	P. 30 Ainsi pensaient ...
23	P. 8 La benediction ...		P. 34 Bientol le nomb ...

In 1774, at the time when Society, shaken even to its foundations was about to see its religious institutions overthrown by the revolutionary flood, a child was born who would have a mission of regenerating and contributing to the good of a great number of souls ..

No details about the childhood of Mile Claudine Thevenet have been preserved, but we see her, in 1793 at the age of 19 years, giving proof of energy and great self sacrifice. Two of her brothers, zealous defenders of the good cause, had been taken prisoner during the siege of Lyon and were suffering in dungeons where they were subjected to all kinds of privations. Their sufferings deeply grieved the heart of their sister; she resolved at all cost to see them and bring them help. She dressed herself up in a servant's garb and made her way towards the prison where she arrived, not without some difficulty, because it was the first time she had gone omjnnaccompanied. Mile Thevenet requested the favour of seeing her brothers. "We shall grant it", exclaimed a patriot, "if you will drink to our health", and he presented a glass to her. The young girl hesitated, her sense of decency in revolt, but thinking of her brothers she put the glass to her lips and drank the

remains left by these horrid men. A guard felt moved with admiration and from then on he made it easy for her to enter the prison. How her heart was broken to see the suffering of her brothers! However, she knew how to find words of consolation, of encouragement and hope, and the unhappy prisoners, forgetting for the moment that they were condemned to die, found a moment of pleasure when they could embrace their sister . . .

She followed them from afar, keeping back her tears and choking her sobs. The noise of the deadly weapons penetrated right to the depths of her heart, but she fought against her grief and wished to see what had become of the remains of her unfortunate brothers. The troops had withdrawn. She went near, then, to her surprise, she saw some of the victims move or get up and flee into hiding. She recognised her two brothers. But alas! it was noticed that they had escaped death . . . they were followed... they were battered to death by blows with the butt of a rifle.

This horrible scene left her with an ineffaceable memory of sadness and grief. Her health was affected and a nervous tremor of the head, recalled until the end of her days the trials of her youth.

The heart of Mile Thevenet had suffered too much for her to seek consolation except in God, so, as soon as order and religious liberty were re-established in France, she gave herself totally to piety and works of zeal. To do good, above all to the poor, had become her need.

The impulse of grace was strongly felt by Mile Thevenet; she wanted to respond fully; but fearing to go astray by following her own ideas, she resolved to confide herself to the spiritual direction of an enlightened guide who could help her avoid illusion and conduct her surely in the practice of zeal and virtue. She had heard people speaking about Father Coindre, a "Carthusian" missionary, and she addressed herself to him, hoping she would herself experience some of the immense good which he was doing for souls. Father Coindre soon recognised Claudine Thevenet's outstanding qualities; this discerning man, of such upright judgement, secretly admired her energetic character, her greatness of soul, her perfect tact, her total honesty, her virile determination, her lively faith, her uncalculating generosity in the face of sacrifice; in a word, that ensemble of gifts that it pleases

Heaven to pour out on those whom it destines to found a great religious family.

The wise director carefully cultivated this soul already so beautiful and meeting whom enabled him to glimpse the possibility of carrying out a project which he had cherished for a long time. He animated and supported her zeal, and gently and skilfully prepared her to fulfil the designs of Providence.

In 1816 Mile Thevenet was authorised to form, with some young ladies of the city, a kind of Society each member of which was to provide funds for the upkeep of poor young girls. At first these children were confided to the supervision of two Sisters of St. Joseph, but Mile Thevenet regretted that she was unable to devote herself to their instruction. She was sorry to leave to others this meritorious work of such value in the eyes of God: to form souls for Heaven by a truly Christian education.

Her saintly director understood her. Moreover an interior light showed him the needs of society and indicated to him that the hour had come when he too must devote himself to the work which he had in mind. He revealed his projects to Mile Thevenet, then aged 42 years, and he said to her with that tone of authority which reveals inspiration from on high: "Heaven has chosen you, answer the call."

The humility of our worthy Mother had a hard struggle with her zeal; but the will of God, revealed through the priest to whom she had promised obedience, overcame all fears. "Daughters of Jesus and Mary, religious yet unborn, thrill with joy, your family has been created!"

In the year 1818 in Pierres Plantees, near the gates of the Croix Rousse, Mile Thevenet assembled her little orphans, and she formed, with several young ladies who were members of the Association and some other ladies of Lyon sent by Heaven, the Religious Society of which she strove from then on to become the mother and model.

What can be said of the virtues, the rare qualities of that angel on earth! What confidence in God! What steadfastness in the pursuit of her work, in spite of countless difficulties which arose on all sides.

At first, her family were opposed to the kind of life she had chosen and they sought to turn her from it by pointing out to her the difficulties, the obstacles, the sacrifices involved. The devil did not lose

the opportunity of adding to the uneasiness that these thoughts aroused in her soul. For a moment our poor Mother even hesitated but she entrusted her suffering to her divine Master. She begged Him to restore calm to her soul, and to prove to her in this way that He was the Author of the work which she was undertaking. Peace followed agitation, the storm ceased, and the sun of confidence burst through in all its brightness.

Two years had elapsed when Mile Thevenet thought of buying a property. The personnel which had already increased to forty rendered a change indispensable.

Assuredly the Blessed Virgin wanted the newly-formed Community to settle in the shadow of her holy shrine, so that her maternal protection might be more sensibly felt and might move them to have more complete confidence in her, for after much searching, and not finding anything suitable in the district of Chartreux, Mile Thevenet decided to buy a house and extensive garden on the hill of Fourviere, in July 1820.

She moved her little family into the new house, after praying with the most ardent trust to Our Lady of Fourviere to be her hope, her Mother and Protectress, and resolving in the depths of her heart to consecrate her entire life to the glory of Her Son and of Herself. It was to this Divine Mother that she confided all her sufferings; for often, when human means failed her, the pious Foundress had no other hope for the perpetuity of her work than in the help of Heaven.

However, she was able to find courage and consolation in the fervour of her daughters who supported with quiet joy the privations to which the lack of resources sometimes subjected them. It is true that Mile Thevenet endeavoured to make them less painful. She was often seen depriving herself, taking off her own clothes to give them to those who needed them; she also arranged pleasant surprises for them, surrounding them with delicate attentions. But she demanded a prompt obedience, a scrupulous care in the accomplishment of their duty, a continual vigilance to avoid all that could wound charity even in the slightest degree.

She was often heard saying to young ladies who presented themselves as prospective postulants: "My child, remember that you

must be disposed to suffer everything from your Sisters, but that you must take the greatest care not to be the cause of suffering to them."

Firm and severe with herself, she was also strict with others, especially with those whom she considered more suitable to become the foundation stones of the building, and to reach a higher degree of religious perfection. A slight oversight, a small inaccuracy, a lack of dedication to duty, were sharply reprimanded, and often punished by the deprivation of Holy Communion, a privation that one had to bear without showing one's feelings. However she knew how to be very indulgent towards the weak. She was even seen following with tears and lamentations one of her daughters who was avoiding her entreaties and was refusing to listen to her counsel and follow her advice. It was only after exhausting all the resources of zeal and charity that she decided to expel her from the Society, in which she wanted obedience above all. She appeared cold and imposing to those approaching her. Her searching eye seized with phenomenal precision the fine and delicate shades which reveal character.

Respect and veneration surrounded the Reverend Mother; she was feared but loved; she was just but kind, and those who were most strongly attached to their duties, to the religious spirit, found in her all that the heart could desire. Her conversation, although serious, was very interesting, with a lively and keen wit which charmed everyone.

In individual conversations she put aside, so to speak, all superiority, and acted with an informality which was a relief to her and won all hearts. Her informal manner called forth confidence and it was given without reserve, and so perfect relationships among all the members of this newly-formed family were established.

In 1822 Mile Thevenet and her companions relinquished their family name to assume a religious one.¹

Heaven's blessing descended on the newly-founded work. Good Mother St. Ignatius saw new collaborators gathering around her. Numerous poor children were assembled in a large property and they received there, as well as truly maternal care, a solid Christian education. They were taught writing, arithmetic and especially work

¹ Fr. Coindre. in a letter dated the 10th November 1821, preserved in the archives of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart, Rome, already called her "M. Ignatius*".

with their hands which could later provide them with a means of existence. A well organised boarding school was already giving excellent results. They were called to Belleville, then to Monistrol, from there to Le Puy, and they had the satisfaction of responding to the confidence of the families and of doing good.

Good Mother Foundress certainly attached great importance to the success of the establishments destined for children from upper class society, but one could not fail to recognize that her special attraction made her prefer poor children. One of her great consolations was to be in the midst of these children who lacked the goods of this world, and were often abandoned by their family. She showed herself to be their true Mother, desiring not only that they should want for nothing, but also that from time to time they be given some little treat, some goodies. She often visited them, encouraged them, even caressed them, gave them good advice and interested herself in all that concerned them. It was evident that she was happy when she did something good for them. The good conduct of her children, their good spirit, consoled her a little in her trials.

Premature deaths, defections came alternately to sadden the pious Foundress. . . .

But consolations and peace are short lived in this world; three years later the Congregation was mourning the premature death of the man of God who had been its visible Providence until then. . . .

In 1830 a new and different kind of trial came: the workers revolted, taking over the advantageous position of Fourviere, and held it for several days. The troops came to drive out the insurgents. The house was found to be between two firing lines. Bullets, and shells ploughed through the gardens, crossed the house; the soldiers broke into the buildings and fired on the Square from the windows. The workmen defended themselves furiously. There were wounded men on all sides. The religious dressed their wounds and took care of them, and the Reverend Mother by her coolness and calm maintained order and confidence among her daughters and the children.

When calm was restored in Lyon, the good Mother thought of building a chapel, for until then they had been satisfied with a little oratory established in one of the rooms of the house . . .

In 1834 the building of the chapel was interrupted by a m \\
insurrection which was much worse than the first. God preserved till numerous family of Fourviere from all harm, although it was again between two firing lines as in 1830.

Mother St. Ignatius came and went around the house to supp m i
and reassure her daughters and the children. Her calmness, her great
confidence in God and in the Blessed Virgin influenced all in the house,
and to the sentinels who called out "Who goes there?" we replied: "A
religious" almost as naturally as we replied "Amen" when a
companion in passing said: "Praised for ever be Jesus and Mary" . . .

Already during the preceding year the worthy Foundress felt her
strength failing through illness, worry and the sorrows that had
marked her life, and she put her affairs in order, and settled all her
accounts in October 1836. From then on she never lost sight of the
thought of her approaching death. At the end of the following January
the headaches became more frequent, there were signs of paralysis,
and on the 29th the worthy Mother received the Last Sacraments.
There was extreme sadness when the news of the undoubted gravity of
her state spread through the house. Prayers and supplications were
doubled. Heaven was invoked to prolong such a precious life. But
heaven was deaf; it wished to reward such generous virtue, and to
imprint the seal of the Cross on the Congregation which would one day
bear the beautiful name of Jesus and Mary. A lethargic sleep overcame
the poor patient; for a moment she recovered a little and spoke in a
feeble voice but with accents of love these words: "Ah! How good God
is!"

On February the 3rd, a Friday, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, the
Venerable Foundress died at the age of 63 years. She left this earth to
go to Heaven to watch over her work, to continue to direct and bless it.

*[The "Appendix" is reproduced almost literally and almost entirely in Chapter I of the
"Histoire" (Doc. XXVII, pp. 532-539). We have copied only some paragraphs, towards the end,
which are unpublished.]*

These successive deaths and the circumstances which accompanied them left an indelible impression on the soul of Mile Thevenet. Her health was badly affected and a nervous tremor of the head reminded her until the end of her life of the terrible trials of her youth.

M. and Mme Thevenet, crushed by the death of their sons, turned to their dear Claudine for consolation and she became more than ever the angel of their home. Always courageous, she had to leave her mother, whom she knew to be extremely sensitive, ignorant of the heart-rending scenes of which she had been the witness. But she often repeated to her parents the last wishes of her brothers, and the words they had pronounced as they went to their death. To act in accordance with these wishes and satisfy this desire the Thevenet family did not consider taking vengeance for this treacherous denunciation, although they knew the person who had betrayed Louis and Francois to the revolutionary tribunal. They generously forgave him whom they could have accused, the man who had deprived the family of sons, and Glady played a major part in this pardon which was nobly granted.

Beautiful souls attract and understand one another. There are divine perfumes which are sensed and perceived from afar, like the scent of those fragrant flowers which is borne to one on the sweet-smelling breeze before one gets near them and has asked their name.

The perfume of the virtues of Mile Thevenet had crossed the threshold of her home. Many young ladies who became her friends, had been drawn to her by the same aspirations, the same thirst to devote themselves to the salvation of souls. Little by little intimate and powerful bonds were formed among them to do good. Together they had visited some families of workers who had neither work nor resources. Their compassion grew when they saw close at hand all their material and spiritual poverty. The sight of those children to whom no one ever spoke of God and of the salvation of their souls aroused their self-sacrifice and their desire to consecrate themselves to this work of zeal and regeneration of the poor through the Christian instruction of children.

After leaving the attic or the workroom, Mile Thevenet and her companions had often discussed the means to be taken to reach their objective and satisfy this thirst for self-sacrifice, for which they were as eager as other young girls are to enjoy the pleasures of the world and its

approval. For a long time they had been praying that God would bless their generous aspirations, when by common consent they resolved to speak to Fr. Coindre about it. . . .

5

Extract from the historical note written by M. St. Dosithee, Blaise Germain, .. . "Essai sur l'Histoire dela Congregation" about 1885.
— From the original preserved in A. G. Roma.

Towards the end of the Generalate of M. St. Pothin (1885), M. St. Dosithee finished writing this historical essay, prepared when she was in Bombay (India) at the request of M. St. Xavier, the Provincial Superioress (1812-1887), doubtless in response to a request of the Superioress General.

The extracts which we are reproducing are important in that they testify to the concept of sanctity in which the Foundress was held in India, until 1885. As a historical document, it has a relative value since the author, not having had at her disposal either documents or books for consultation, fell into some errors regarding dates and names when writing of events at which she was not present. Her sources could only have been personal memories of information gathered from contemporaries of the Servant of God, with whom she had been in contact in France, and from that group of religious who died in India between 1854 and 1888: M. St. Bruno 1879, M. St. Ambrose 1856, M. St. Elisabeth, 1867, M. St. Paul, 1879, M. St. Augustine 1879, M. St. Chantal, 1856, M. St. Leon, 1888, M. St. Helen, 1874, all of whom had lived with the Foundress for a minimum of two years and a maximum of twenty.

After a first revision of this historical information, the Superioress sent it back to the author requesting her to make a second copy with some modifications. One of these manuscripts remained in India and the other was sent to Lyon. In the Additional Process, are found some extracts sent from India; in giving information about the author it fell into error by confusing the dates of two religious who successively bore the name of St. Dosithee: Marie Victoire Delphine Bergonhoux, born in Le Puy in 1821, entered the Congregation in 1837 and died in Lyon in 1854; and the true author, Blaise Germain, born in Thiers (Puy-de-Dome) in 1830, entered the Congregation in 1858 and died in Bombay (India) in 1896.

The manuscript is contained in an exercise book of 124 pages (34 x 22 cm). It has many corrections, some made by the author herself and some indicated in pencil by successive readers.

Mile Thevenet, Foundress of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, was a pious young lady of Lyon who was full of zeal for the

salvation of souls; above all she loved the poor. As her director she had Rev. Fr. Coindre of the "Carthusians", Missionary of the diocese. This good priest, known for his holiness and apostolic zeal, resolved with her to found an institute destined especially for the education of the poor. . . .

The little community began to increase; the Rev. Father gave some Rules. The Foundress and her first companions made their vows in 1818.' . . .

After some years our Institute had already expanded greatly. As the boarding school had many pupils our Mothers were able to receive many poor children. They then thought of giving Our Lord a more suitable dwelling, for until that time they had been obliged to be satisfied with a small room where they heard Mass and carried out all the ceremonies . . .

Our good Mother Foundress had the happiness of seeing the walls of the much-desired chapel, where Our Lord in His infinite goodness would come to dwell among His spouses, being built. But alas! she did not have the consolation of seeing this sacred edifice finished. She was already ripe for heaven and the Lord hastened to call her to Himself to reward her for the sufferings that she had endured in His service and for her sublime virtues. He would give her the joys of eternal glory. Her precious remains were exposed for the veneration of her Sisters in this chapel for which she had made so many sacrifices, and the funeral service took place in the little chapel. All the Religious were given permission to accompany their much loved Mother to her last resting place . . .

It is greatly to be regretted that details are lacking about the life and actions of those who from all eternity had been chosen by God to be foundation stones of the building of our Congregation. God weighs and measures all, and are we not led to judge the solidity and depth of their virtues by the dimensions that their work assumed little by little, and that it continues to assume in our days . . .

Our Mother Foundress, for her part, presents herself to us as an example of what God can do for a soul whom He has called to consecrate herself to His service in this world and who has faithfully

¹This should read 1823. See *supra*. Doc. XI, p. 250.

made a start, by establishing in her own soul the foundation of the work laid upon her. During the few years of her religious life she was a model of regularity and fidelity to the obligations which she had undertaken by her vows and by the Rules.

The secret inclinations of her great soul are partially revealed by the choice she made of the name and patronage of St. Ignatius, founder of the Company of Jesus, when she was clothed in the religious habit. . . .

At the beginning, the Religious pronounced a fourth vow after ten years of religious life. This vow was called the vow of stability. Only then did she receive the cross. The cross differed from that which is worn in our days; in place of the letters J.M. there was a heart with the inscription: *Sicut lilium inter spinas*. A little later there were two hearts interlaced without the inscription but always with the crown of thorns. For a third time the design of the cross was changed when the name of our Congregation was changed. . . .

God had great designs on our Institute; He had given our holy Founders a vocation suited to these great designs. It is to be regretted that their too short life did not leave them time to continue to make use of the graces and lights of their sublime vocation during the marvellous development that He was pleased to grant to their work. . . .

The ardent prayers and burning zeal of the Apostolic heart of our holy Founder had obtained from the Father of Mercies the excellent grace of a call to the foreign missions for a great number of his daughters, and Our Mother Foundress had at least the merit and the glory of forming in religious virtues and cultivating the interior spirit of the one whom God had destined to lead and direct our first five missionary Mothers and Sisters and to found our first establishment in India.

6

Extract from the poem "Noces d'or de la chapelle" composed by M. St. Joachim, Marie Creuzet, 1887. — From the original preserved in A. G. Roma.

From a long poem written by M. St. Joachim (Doc. XXVII, //?//., p. 523) for the fiftieth anniversary of the inauguration of the chapel of Fourviere, we

have taken the verses which refer to the Servant of God and which are a clear testimony of her reputation of sanctity among her contemporaries and the religious of the second generation.

The poem is contained in an exercise book 22 cm x 28 cm in which the author transcribed her compositions, beginning from the 5th October 1893.

M. St. Joachim, Marie Creuzet, daughter of Michel and Antoinette Dupuy, was born in Lyon on the 8th June 1845. She entered the novitiate on the 29th March 1867 and made her profession on the 19th March 1869. She died in Rome on the 3rd August 1904. Even before entering religion she had already been in contact with the religious of the first period, as she was the niece of another M. St. Joachim who formed part of the first expedition to India in 1842 (cf. *Histoire* p. 653; note 5). As a religious she successively filled the employments of Mistress of Novices in Lyon, Superioress in Ipswich and then in Willesden, London (England), and in Montreux (Switzerland). She was a General Councillor at the same time as M. Aloysia with whom she collaborated in compiling the *Histoire*.

Today we name you most humble Foundress,
 We pay you the homage of our love which is your due:
 Your zeal created our Congregation;
 Your virtues are the object of our imitation;
 You offered Jesus this sanctuary,
 Fifty years have passed, on this anniversary;
 But it was already from heaven; Oh touching memory!
 That you saw it blessed for the first time;
 For if your work was immense,
 You have received for it a prompt recompense;
 You sowed with an energetic hand
 Fertile seed in the field of the Lord.
 Your work has prospered. For Jesus and Mary,
 Your children have left their home, their country,
 To continue your holy mission,
 And to prepare the fruits of the harvest.

With you too, we greet in glory
 Mothers whose memory we recall with love.
 We remember Mother St. Andrew, with her great heart,
 Her generosity, goodness, and fervour . . .

Extract from "Vie du Pere Andre Coindre", Lyon 1888, pp. 65-67.

The biography of Fr. Coindre, published anonymously in 1888, was in reality written by two religious, Brother Eugene (Henri Bardol) and Brother Daniel (Jean Poble) of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart, who began the work at the beginning of 1880. Neither of the two had known the Servant of God, but both had lived with more than thirty Brothers who could have known her. Fourteen of them were still alive at the time when the work was written. It is obvious that some among all these Brothers had been in contact with M. St. Ignatius, because we find their signatures as witnesses of the ceremonies of profession both in Monistrol and Fourviere. (Information provided by the General Secretariat of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart; cf. Registers of Profession I and IV of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary, A. G. Roma).

It was in 1818 that he realised his plan. At the same time, in agreement with Mile Thevenet, his spiritual daughter, who received the name of Sister Saint Ignatius, he founded the Congregation of the Religious of the Sacred Heart, later Religious of Jesus and Mary, in Pierres Plantees, near the gates of the Croix Rousse. Sister Saint Ignatius was the first Superioress of the new Congregation.

Fr. Coindre had directed this chosen soul in the ways of holiness and when he saw the propitious time had come, he revealed his plans to her and said with that tone of authority which reveals inspiration and a divine mission: "My daughter, heaven has chosen you to lead this work to a successful conclusion. Respond to its call." She responded fully to his hopes. Consumed with thirst for self-sacrifice and the desire to practise works of charity, she used all her influence to gather around her some helpers capable of aiding her in these zealous undertakings. God blessed her efforts. Encouraged and sustained by the advice and active assistance of Fr. Coindre, she was soon able to establish a *Providence* where orphans and poor children, many of whom had been abandoned by their parents, were admitted.

Having become the object of real motherly care, surrounded by vigilance and the numerous attentions which holy affection and solid virtues suggested, these children were happy to experience comfort and innocent joys, tasted under the gaze of friends and protectors, alter the privations of poverty and the cruel desertion into which destitution or culpable indifference had plunged them. Along with the benefits of a solid Christian education, they also received instruction

proportionate to their age. They were occupied especially in manual work which would enable them to earn their living later on.

In the month of July 1820, Sister Saint Ignatius acquired a property on the hill of Fourviere. It was there, opposite the entrance of the Sanctuary of Mary, that a huge building was seen rising, which became the Mother House of the Congregation of the Religious of Jesus and Mary. The *Providence* founded in Croix-Rousse was transferred there. These ladies soon established a boarding school there also. The brilliant success they obtained soon showed their knowledge, their virtues, and their complete dedication to youth. Since then they have seen their Society grow and spread not only in France, but in several foreign countries.

After having organised and governed the Congregation with much wisdom and dedication, Mother St. Ignatius whose life was embellished with all the virtues died in Lyon on the 3rd February 1837. She was 63 years of age.

8

Extract from "Histoire de la vie et des oeuvres du R. P. Joseph Rey"
written by Rev. Rene Garraud, Citeaux 1891, pp. 49-50, 54-55.

The Rev. Rene Garraud, parish priest of Premieux, in preparing to write this work, consulted some religious of Jesus and Mary, who had lived with the Servant of God and had known the protagonist. Therefore the author is a witness *de auditu a videntibus* [of what he heard from eye-witnesses].

The facts which the biography of Fr. Rey provides, even though they do not add new details to what is already known about the Servant of God, reflect her reputation of sanctity.

"Memorable times suited to arouse in me the most lively feelings of love, gratitude and confidence in God, as well as the most profound feelings of humility at the sight of my misery.

1. The day on which my father and mother received the nuptial blessing ... 14. The day I was appointed chaplain of *Wz Providence* of Our Lady of Fourviere ... 13th March 1830 . . ."

This house was founded in 1818 by a Miss Thcvenin (=Thévenet) the daughter of a rich family of Lyon who for a long time had formed a plan to open a shelter for dissolute young girls of Lyon. During the ill-fated days of the Terror, this charitable young woman saw two of her brothers arrested in virtue of the law of suspects. They were added to the victims of the Revolution. From that time on, she thought only of consecrating herself to good works, got devout ladies to join her, obtained authorisation from the ecclesiastical superiors, and founded a Congregation under the title of Jesus and Mary,¹ in which she herself took the name in religion of Sister Saint Ignatius. It was to this hour still in its early stages and of which the two Coindre brothers, priests of Lyon, had been the first chaplains, that Fr. Rey was sent . . .

I remember that the religious sisters of the Minor Seminary of Verrieres never understood the character of Joseph Rey and were mistaken about his state of health. The prejudices he had against them arose also, we must admit, from his great distrust of women in general

But let us hasten to add that they quickly collapsed, as far as religious sisters are concerned, when he saw these saintly women at work, so dedicated to their neighbour and so completely devoted to the austere duties of their holy vocation. Moreover, he still had great need of their care, which did not fail him . . .

In this new Mission, which he entered upon so generously, the future founder of modern Citeaux was to find his truly providential way, without suspecting it. . . .

v

9

Testimony of Jenny Rouiller, 1882, presented by Fr. Pierre Pousset. —
From the original preserved in A. G. Roma. i

Fr. Pierre Pousset, "Carthusian" missionary, was the nephew of another priest of the same name, who was parish priest of St. Bruno's at the time of the Servant of God. After the publication of the *Histoire*, some readers believed that the chaplain Pousset, of whom mention is made in the work, was the

¹As is said elsewhere, this was not the primitive title of the Congregation, cf. *supra*, p. 182.

former parish priest of St. Bruno's and they made comments to the missionary Pousset about the supposed attitude of his uncle towards M. St. Ignatius. His desire to clear up the misunderstanding put him in touch with the Religious of Jesus and Mary of Lyon, and later he presented a written request asking that in future publications the good relations between Pierre Pousset, parish priest of St. Bruno's, Fr. Andre Coindre, and the Servant of God should be made clear. (Letter preserved in A. G. Roma.) Moreover, he sent the evidence of which we give a copy. It is typed because of a tremor brought on by advanced age which prevented him from writing, but it is signed in his own hand.

Besides the evidence of Jenny Rouiller which is that of an eye-witness, P. Pousset's is interesting as a witness *de auditu a videntibus* (heard from eye-witnesses).

Pierre Pousset, son of Pierre and of Augustine Simonin, was born on the 27th December 1867, in Cordelle (Loire). In 1892 he was ordained priest and entered the society of the "Carthusian" Missionaries making the vow of stability there in 1896. He was professor in the private school of St. Bruno's (1892-1897), curate (1898-1908) and then parish priest (1908-1939) of the same parish. In 1935 he was appointed canon. He died in 1963.

The French Revolution of 1789 and the events which followed left the religious situation in a sad predicament. After the Imperial wars, the great pre-occupation of the religious elite was to create movements of restoration, especially among the youth. Historians of Lyon society have pointed out, rightly, the considerable number of works originating from the house of the "Carthusian" missionary priests at that difficult period. To mention only some of them: Fr. Coindre founded the Sisters of Jesus and Mary and the Brothers of the Sacred Heart; Fr. Fournion the Sisters of the Sacred Heart; Fr. Pousset, parish priest of St. Bruno's, the Sisters of the Holy Family; Fr. Crevat the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, etc. What must not be forgotten is the very active co-operation of the ladies, married and single, who were, some promoters, and others generous helpers in the movement of the apostolate of restoration around the Church of St. Bruno in Lyon.

Among all these chosen souls was Claudine Thevenet. She had suffered greatly in her family — a maternal uncle and her brothers Louis and Francois had been shot at the Brotteaux, the other was guillotined in the Place des Terreaux. After the storm of the revolution, an enthusiasm for the apostolate drew her to dedicate herself to religious restoration, above all among the youth. As the house of the

"Carthusians" was an active centre for missions and retreats, she met Fr. Coindre there. This missionary as well as his confreres were struck by the number of young girls who had been left without the protection of their families as a result of religious troubles, and, still more, of the war. It was decided that young girls who had been abandoned would be collected together into one house situated in "Allee des Cerisiers" (today No. 10, Rue Maisiat). It was there that Mile Thevenet found the fulfilment of her ardent desire for self-sacrifice. She was helped by some friends who were attracted by her zeal, Miles Catherine Laporte, Pauline Marie Jaricot, Clotilde Revel, Sophie Blanc, Jenny Rouiller, and they organised a genuine centre for education, and undertook to find resources. Mile Jenny Rouiller, a floral artist, was a most generous person and is the last known member of this admirable phalanx. When more than eighty years old in 1892, she still spoke enthusiastically about the work for the young girls of the *Allee des Cerisiers* directed by Mile Thevenet, who came herself to the weekly or monthly notes, and placed her beautiful, firm and regular signature in the register of observations made by the supervisors or teachers. I myself have seen that signature that we venerated, in a register of scholastic notes. This register was lent for display to an exhibition of works of Lyon in 1911, and it was not, unfortunately, returned to the Providence of St. Bruno where it was kept.

The priest Fr. F. X. Pousset who was the chaplain of Mile Thevenet did not belong to the diocese of Lyon. He came from Franche Comte and they say he was an ex-Jesuit and had sought refuge in Lyon. He was neither curate of St. Bruno's nor did he belong to the "Carthusian" missionaries. The differences between his point of view and that of Mile Thevenet are explained, according to tradition, by the fact that this priest, F. X. Pousset, guided by some religious, wanted the life of the community to be more contemplative, while Mile Thevenet held on to her primitive spirit of apostolic zeal.

Fr. Pierre Pousset was parish priest of St. Bruno's from 1825-1853, and had nothing in common with this Fr. F. X. Pousset. Fr. Pierre Pousset, parish priest and canon, personally supported Mile Thevenet and her newly-formed work and her spirit.

P. Pousset
Ch. S. B.

Mother Claudine Thevenet, Foundress of the Institute of Jesus and Mary.
Taken from "Revista Popular", 24, Vol. 47 (1894), pp. 165, 172-175.

We reproduce here an article published anonymously in *Revista Popular*, a Catholic Weekly, published in Barcelona by Rev. Felice Sarda y Salvany. A portrait of the Servant of God is reproduced on page 165, and a summary of the life and work of M. St. Ignatius appears on pages 172-174. She was already well known in Spain where the first house of the Congregation was founded in 1850. For eight years this was the residence of M. St. Pothin who has already been frequently mentioned, and it was visited by M. St. Andrew, M. St. Teresa and other religious who left in Spain the memory of the virtues of the Servant of God, a memory still very much alive.

Among these shining lilies of the Church there came into being at that time, hidden, obscure, and almost unknown, the humble Congregation of Jesus and Mary.

Claudine Thevenet, its venerable Foundress, was born in Lyon in 1774. Daughter of a respected and rich business family, she inherited from her parents, together with a refined and solid piety, great strength of soul, and that heavenly fortitude, that precious seed that remains hidden in time of prosperity, but germinates, grows, and develops into a vigorous plant under the violent storms of misfortune.

Claudine was nineteen years old when, converted into an apostle of charity, she found a way to enter the prison and encourage two of her brothers who had the good fortune to give their life for their noble sentiments and religious beliefs. The last words of these fervent Catholics were words of pardon for their enemies, and Claudine always used them to staunch the blood which flowed from her broken heart at the memory of such horrors.

Her zeal for the glory of God was efficaciously supported by Fr. Coindre.

This worthy priest was a member of a society of virtuous missionaries, who contributed to the renewal of Christian France by their indefatigable zeal. Mons. Donnet, Archbishop of Bordeaux, said of him that he was a man worthy of everlasting memory.

In his apostolic journeys he had come to understand the urgent need to provide instruction for the new generation of society. To cultivate the hearts of children, to awaken in innocent souls the love of

virtue, to raise youthful minds to the knowledge of Jesus and Mary, these were the sentiments which arose simultaneously in his mind and heart.

In the rare qualities of Claudine the prudent director saw signs of the will of God. He admired the energy of her character, her greatness of soul, her tact in business matters, her complete detachment, and her sincere humility. Persuaded that God had been preparing the victim for forty years, waiting only for the moment of sacrifice, Fr. Coindre told her one day in that tone of authority which reveals divine inspiration: "Heaven has chosen you, be faithful to its call." Her spirit was troubled and a hard struggle took place in her soul. But what had begun through zeal for the glory of God ended in obedience and submission.

Other young ladies, animated by similar ideals, associated themselves with the work of Claudine. The Blessed Virgin welcomed them under the shadow of her sanctuary of Fourviere, where the first house of the newly-born Congregation was established. It was on the 6th October 1818, feast of St. Bruno, that Mile Thevenet and her six companions found themselves surrounded by twelve little orphan girls, the cherished object of their care and attention.

On that day, which the Congregation always remembers as one of the most memorable, the first Mothers could intone the song of the Sovereign Virgin and say with her: *My soul glorifies the Lord... He has regarded the humility of His handmaid.*

When these fervent souls consecrated themselves to God they dedicated themselves with special care to the practice of solid virtues, taking as their Rule that of St. Augustine, and modelling their spirit on that of St. Ignatius. Obedience and poverty together with simplicity and fraternal charity were the distinctive characteristics of the Institute, and these precious gems, which shone forth brightly in Mile Thevenet and her first daughters, were handed down as a family treasure to the religious who came after them and were to follow in their venerable footsteps.

They were allowed to pronounce the vows of religion, and when they put on the livery of Christ M. Foundress wished each one to change her name, so that they would be really transformed into members of a single family, forgetting what they had been in the world.

The reverend Mother chose the name Mary of St. Ignatius for herself, as if to draw down upon the new Institute of Jesus and Mary the inspiration which the founder of the renowned Company of Jesus knew how to communicate to his sons. In imitation of the holy Founder she also wanted to ask for her daughters a sign of predilection, but, perhaps because she feared the weakness of women, she did not dare to ask for the gift of persecutions. In her profound humility she asked Our Lord to give her Institute the inestimable grace of remaining hidden, in order to be more like its divine models, Jesus and Mary.

Meanwhile the new religious family was expanding, opening its first boarding school in 1822. The perfume of the virtues bestowed by the Heart of Jesus on these new virgins of the Church was spreading. In a short time their holiness became widely known, and the Bishop of Le Puy, established the second house of the Congregation in his diocese.

But if the sun of prosperity shone, it was only to prepare these courageous souls for the new battle that lay in store for them. The scarcity of their means and contradictions of all kinds filled the heart of M. St. Ignatius with bitterness more than once; but all these trials were of slight importance in comparison with the sad loss sustained by the Congregation in the death of Fr. Coindre. With the loss of this priest, all human support was taken away, and from that moment, the heart of the Reverend Mother turned in confidence to the Divine Master, trusting only in Him, and she put her daughters under His protection and guidance alone. Her hope was not in vain. Our Lord showed proof that he had made himself the support and guide of his spouses when eleven years later He called the saintly Foundress to Himself, and after this severe trial, gave the Congregation its greatest expansion. . . .

DOC. XXVII

HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATION OF JESUS AND MARY, entitled: *Histoire de la Congregation des Religieuses de Jesus-Marie d'apres les temoignages des contemporains*, Lyon 1896.

In 1894 a brief biographical account of the Servant of God was published in "Revista Popular" (Doc. XXVI, 10). It does not appear that there were other publications in this respect before 1896, the year of the edition of the *Histoire* which we give in this document, and which contains the first printed biography of the Servant of God. To facilitate its study, we are giving a brief introduction, divided into the following sections:

1. Genesis and elaboration of the work.
2. The author.
3. The sources.
4. Use of the sources.
5. Historical value of the work.
6. Our edition.

1 — Genesis and elaboration of the work

Some letters dating from the end of the last century and other documents of that period (*A. G. Roma*) make known to us the mentality of the first generation of religious regarding the publication of biographies of the members of the Congregation. But the evidence that we consider most important and convincing is that of the minutes of the meeting of the General Council of the Congregation on the 21st September 1899 (cf. Doc. XXII, 2, p. 450). The minutes explain sufficiently well the late appearance of the *Histoire*.

But the fact that it was decided not to publish biographies of the religious because "it is better for us to preserve the customs that our first Mothers have left us and not to make public the memories of our mothers and sisters", does not mean that they had not thought of collecting biographical data of the Servant of God, of her first collaborators and of the origins of the Congregation. These biographies had as their aim to edify the religious who had not known the Foundresses.

With the documents preserved, of those used by the authors of the *Histoire*, we are able to establish a chronology which, although incomplete, reveals the genesis of the idea and the elaboration of this work.

1854 - Completion of the *Memorial*, the oldest essay that we know on the History of the Congregation and the biography of the Servant of God (cf. Doc. XXIII).