



THE PYLON

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SPRING 1965



Teaching His little ones to love and understand . . . The Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus conduct many rural primary schools in Nigeria and two large ones in Ghana. They also have a teacher training college at Oron and a new modern secondary school at Edem Ekpater. Extensive catechetical work, especially in the villages, is part of their apostolate which includes many other works of mercy as well.

• 1. *Holy Child Bursar. TO HELP IN THE TRAINING OF A HANDMAID-NOVICE.* The training of a Handmaid costs more than £ 40 (\$ 120) a year. Any sum given toward this amount will aid another African girl to dedicate herself to Christ's work.

• 2. *Our Lady's Bursar. TO HELP A GIRL AT A SECONDARY SCHOOL.* The cost of this is rising but £ 35 (\$ 100) a year will pay more than half the expense. (Several classes in our English and American schools have already pledged themselves to this amount. How many more will do the same?)

• 3. *St. Joseph's Bursar. TO KEEP A RURAL SCHOOL* — that is, the running expenses which the Sisters themselves have to meet — costs much each year. But even £ 20 (\$ 55) for this work would be greatly appreciated for one of our rural schools.

Gifts of money may be sent to:

REV. MOTHER VICAR, CONVENT H.C.J. Ifuho Box 55, Ikot Ekpene, E. Nigeria, W. Africa.
or c/o M.M. URSULA, EDITOR OF THE PYLON; or M. VIRGINIA MARY, MISSION EDITOR;
10 Via Boncompagni, Rome.

Gifts in kind to:

THE REV. MOTHER SUPERIOR, CONVENT H.C.J.

E. Nigeria, West Africa:

Box 55 Ifuho, Ikot Ekpene;
Box 36, Calabar;
Box 1, Uyo;
P.M.B. 119, Afikpo;
Box 50, Abakaliki;
Box 38, Ogoja Town.

Nigeria, West Africa:

Box 510, Lagos.

Ghana, West Africa:

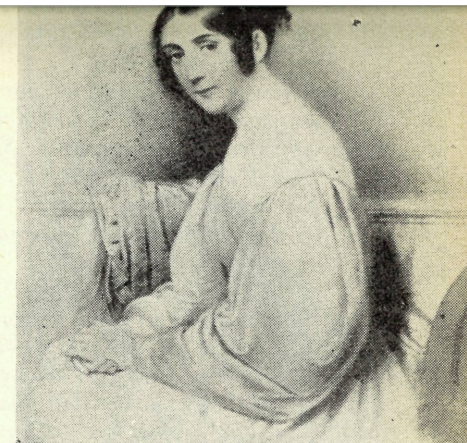
Box 203, Cape Coast;
Box 245, Takoradi.

MERTY FORGOT

The earliest extant letter of Mother Cornelia Connelly is available for our greater understanding of her character because her son, Mercer, forgot to bring his father's portmanteau from Oscott College to Stonyhurst College when he was suddenly transferred from one to the other. Pierce Connelly had fallen out with the school authorities for some reason and perhaps never liked to ask for the missing piece of luggage. The letters it contained and even his laundry bills were to find their way into the Oscott archives. What an inspired archivist!

(To her husband, the Rev. Pierce Connelly who was visiting Bishop Rosati in St Louis regarding his intended conversion.)

Whitecottage, Sep. 22. 1835.
[Natchez]



Cornelia Connelly shortly after her marriage, 1831.

Dear love my more than life what a baby I am. I can cry better than write. Your long and anxiously looked for letter I received about an hour since. O my love I have wished to be a Catholic in my acts of love but I am afraid in truth and spirit have been but a discontented protestant — but you have now taken me as far as Memphis and until I hear from or see you again I must rest satisfied with your dear letter and keep it as the good Catholic does his Agnus Dei. I sent you two letters of introduction from Dr. Mercer the day after you left us and wrote you a few lines in the envelope but they were so gloomy that I tore it up and sent you a blank sheet: the truth was I wandered about the house & looked over your desk & in your drawers for three or four days until Ady got sick & I was obliged to give her a dose of Cal. She had scarcely recovered before dear little Mercer was taken with fever which continued nearly a week — I did not send for the Doctor until I had administered the second dose of calomel & discovered that he was salivated — the Dr. assured me there was no cause for uneasiness & that the salivation was in consequence of the change in the weather. He has not eaten anything for a week until today when he took some bread & milk. He has looked very well for the last two or three days & I trust his health ultimately, will be benefitted by it. Mrs Chotard has been several times to see us — Major C. & some of the children were a little unwell yesterday but nothing more. She brought Mercer a pr of shoes — they show the warmest feelings towards you. Dr. Mercer stopped on his way up yesterday. I showed him one of the letters I received for you . . . It was from Mr. Biddle on church affairs . . . If I did wrong you must never allow me to open your letters again but I think & hope love that you will say it is all right. You have a letter from the Rev. C. Newell respecting the Woodville parish and one from Mother in answer to the one you wrote on ambition &c. She seems to have the true protestant idea of humility — that is she endeavours to clothe you with it forgetting she is naked herself, all the while. Speaking of your brothers she says "you put too much stress upon what you have done for them remember that the same father and mother that raised you raised them though your advantages was [sic] much greater than theirs. Your pleasures & pursuits were totally different you got your knowledge from books & the fashionable world Harry from men & manners &c. &c. John and George lost their father when they most needed

him *ēc. ēc.* "men *ē* manners!!!! if she can be the mother of such a mind as yours I think we indulge strong hopes for Mercer. *I* is, however, more affectionate than usual. She says at the end of the letter "dear P. write to me soon I was going to say I command you but I hope I need not." She seems pushed for money I think . . . "As to the interest I leave that to yourself I have a good deal of difficulty in getting along for the last 18 mo. there is no mistake about it being 6 per cent."

Last Friday 18th. G. was very much pleased with our lands but does not think he will go there this winter. Oh my love you can turn him round your finger. I think he is ready to be a catholic (if some few were to back him) . . . Dr. M. is your true friend — always moderate — but always true. Mrs. C. told me that he told Major C. that though he had always had a high opinion of you that it was still higher now Major C. was in the room when he [Dr. Mercer] first saw the books you sent him *ē* he says he never saw him so much affected . . . There has been a Mr. Keene out to see you; a warm catholic; is just from N. O. has travelled considerably — France *ē* Spain — his wife is a spanish lady — passing the winter in Havana. I was thinking the day before he came out that it would be the best place we could pass the winter in by a little management we could live as cheaply there as here — there is a village abt three miles off where we could rent rooms and find our own fare — take P. (hoebe) *ē* S. (ally) with us. From there Havana there is a line of packets to Cadiz *ē* from Cadiz we could take any point in the *Med^m*. Would it not be an excellent thing to have a catholic establishment on our river lands, at the ferry of the town *ē* send over a few hundred emigrants, Catholics. From all accounts the country must be worse than barbarous — wicked. . . . Mr. Bishop was at the warf when the Chester arrived — 11 o'clock at night — *ē* we have heard of you above the mouth of the Ohio — My own dear life it seems almost as if you were with me again to send me your 'thoughts'. Dearest love I hope *ē* trust that you will be with us by the time this reaches St. Louis. *ē* dearest do not distress yourself about the alienation of any of your family — if you should rise they will be ready enough to bow down to you — some specimen already — if you do not you have that within which they can neither give nor take. G. was never more kind *ē* amiable *ē* I do not think I ever saw him show more pride in you than at the present moment . . . Oh may love haste back. It seems a year that you have been gone . . .

Sept. 23 A Roman Missal was sent to you the day you left us with an excellent letter from a pious Catholic Lady who had heard you preach on Sunday. I have no other letters than those I have mentioned to you. Ada has two teeth through. Mercer sends you love and kisses *ē* expects you to bring him some candy. "Next time me go with fartre in team boat". I would advise the Catholics to tear out that odious picture which they have put in Dr. England's Missal. If they were to exchange it for the church of Calvary, for instance, how much better would be the effect. I have written you too much — but not enough yet — my own life ever forever your devoted love.

C. C.

In margin: You had better destroy this letter when you have done with it.

(But Pierce did not destroy it. If he read it again after seven or eight years he must have marvelled at the spiritual and moral development of her who could say "Yes, Lord," and "Yes, Pierce," when asked by her husband to become a nun so that he could be ordained a priest. The letter was already lost by the time she had to say "No, Pierce," to his final request.)

(see page 37)

A series of articles on the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales.

'IT'S THE MASS THAT MATTERS'

V.

Bl. Robert Southwell — The Poet Martyr

by CLEMENCIA CALBURN

"The metal in this furnace wrought
Are men's defiled souls;
For which as now on fire I am
To work them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath,
To wash them in my blood."

(From: *The Burning Babe*.)



When Robert Southwell wrote these verses, he was not anticipating his own martyrdom. The poem, he tells us describes a vision of Christmas day, as he "stood shivering in the snow;" the words proceed from the Holy Child — "a pretty babe all burning bright." Yet in so far as they refer to the Sacrifice of the Mass, they serve to illuminate that other sacrifice, which Robert Southwell in fulfillment of his priestly duties, would be called upon to make.

The persecution of the Catholics by Queen Elizabeth's Council was not the only threat to the survival of the Faith in England. With the passing of an older generation of priests, and the lack of young ones to take their place, it could have died out. The Jesuit Fathers, aware of this potential danger, had made provision. Robert South-

well left England at the age of fourteen by means of a highly organized system, which sent young men to the continent to receive a Catholic education and later, if desired, a full training for the priesthood. Thus, Robert studied first at the College in Douai, then for a short while in Paris, and finally at the English College in Rome. Two years after his ordination in 1584, he and Father Garnet were selected for the English Mission: "like two arrows shot at the same mark," was his gay allusion to this journey together.

Robert Southwell has been described by his contemporaries as having auburn hair, a pleasing countenance and upright figure. His disposition was both gay and gentle. Above all he was tremendously courageous. He had, too, the Elizabethan poet's sensitivity

he lived in solitary confinement, seeing no one but the keeper of the Tower, who referred to him as "that saint". The Bible, his Breviary, and the works of St. Bernard were his only spiritual comfort, and in fact the only reading allowed him.

After these long months of loneliness and suffering, he was, finally, transferred to the Newgate prison, known as "limbo". Here, also the keeper seems to have succumbed to the gentle influence of this prisoner. For Father Garnet writes that his cell was "fitted with a bed, a fire and a constant supply of candles... he was greeted with a cup of wine which he accepted saying that it was the first he had drunk for two years and more".

Three days later, Father Southwell was taken from Newgate prison to his trial. The hearing before a crowded court, despite Topcliffe's frequent and malevolent interruptions, was not entirely one-

sided; opinion, like a compass needle, swayed, as the public listened to the conventional charge of treason, then turned to observe the prisoner, whose quiet and saintly demeanour seemed proof enough that his only fault had been his priesthood. "Neither," as Father Southwell declared, "can any law make it treason to be a priest".

Among the crowds lining the route to Tyburn on that 21st February 1595 were many of his Catholic friends. Yet, even those others, who had come to witness the death of a traitor on the scaffold, remained strangely silent. When, at the last, Father Robert turned to them "with a countenance most lovely", heads were bared in awe.

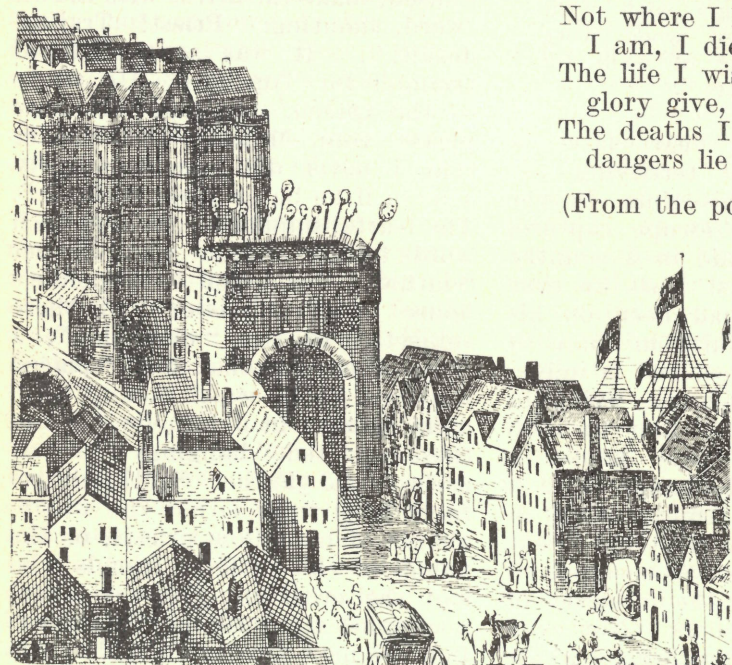
Father Robert Southwell was only thirty-three at the time of his execution. Yet, already, several years before, he seems to have known and understood his death:

"Not where I breathe, but
where I love, I live;
Not where I love, but where
I am, I die;
The life I wish, must future
glory give,
The deaths I feel in present
dangers lie".

(From the poem: *I Die Alive*).

Credits:

The portrait of Bl. R. Southwell is from the British Museum. The two sketches are from the most interesting biography by Fr. Christopher Devlin. London, Longmans, 21s.



Pylon Philatelic Association

The issue on March 16th of Vatican commemorative stamps for the Canonization of the UGANDA MARTYRS makes philatelic history. There are six values: 15, 20, 30, 75, 100 and 160 Lire, which reproduce 'portraits' by the miniaturist, Casimira Dabrowska. These are surrounded by symbols relative to the tribe of the saint and the martyrdom he suffered.

Many subscribers will be pleased to see that Vatican stamps once more appear on the envelopes. We

earnestly request all who can to spare these stamps to help the Mission Fund financed by the PYLON PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION. Organizer, Mother Mary Josephine, Convent H.C.J., Harrogate, Yorks, England. It's this way: We stand in a long, long queue to buy them — perhaps all morning, *our friends of Girls-town* help us to stick them on, you detach them with a margin and send them to Harrogate. Isn't that a conveyor-belt act of mission charity?

CORNELIA CONNELLY — *A STUDY IN FIDELITY* by Mother Marie Thérèse, S.H.C.J. is available on both sides of the Atlantic. (Burns, Oates: 35s; Newman: \$5.75). Your bookstore has it, or will get it. Ask Public Libraries to add it to their accession lists.

THE LAUDAMUS CLUB — FURTHER EVENTS

VIA BONCOMPAGNI, 10

Liturgy and Art Club for the English-speaking Catholic laity

TUESDAYS

March 23, 8.45 a.m. Sung Mass at Casamari Abbey, visits to Alatri and Anagni.

March 30, 8.15 p.m. Illustrated lecture: *The Easter Vigil* by Fr. Claver Smith, O. Carm.

April 6, 11 a.m. Discussion on the Paschal Liturgy.

April 27, 8.15 p.m. Illustrated lecture: *Baptism and Ecumenism* by Fr. Julian Walter, A.A.

May 11, 6.45 p.m. HOLY MASS at St Patrick's, Via Boncompagni. Homily, *The People of God* by Fr. Ambrose Engel, O.S.B. ALL WELCOME.

May 18, 8 p.m. OPENING of the LITURGICAL ART EXHIBITION. *The Layman looks at Modern Church Architecture* by Mother Mary Ursula, S.H.C.J.

(The exhibition will be on view 11 a.m. - 12, 5-7 p.m. each day till Sunday 23 inclusive.)

SUNDAY

May 16, 8.45 a.m. Visit to Subiaco.

(Non-members may apply.)

Telephone:

The Club Secretary, 465.527