

Life of Father
Richard Henle, S.V.D.

George M. Stenz, S.V.D.

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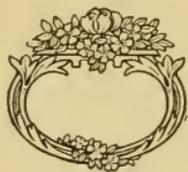
Life of Father
Richard Henle, S.V. D.

Missionary in China

ASSASSINATED NOVEMBER 1, 1897

From the German of
REV. GEORGE M. STENZ, S.V. D.

BY ELIZABETH RUF



J. G. Shields

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LIFE OF FATHER
RICHARD HENLE, S.V.D.



Introduction

ON the night of the 1st to the 2nd of November, 1897, the Fathers Francis Nies and Richard Henle were murdered in a little hamlet of China by heathen Chinese. The horrible massacre and especially its cruelty called forth at that time the indignation of the entire Christian world. Not alone Catholic but also non-Catholic newspapers and journals reported the violent death of the two missionaries.

I was to share the same lot and only by an altogether special dispensation of Divine Providence I escaped. However, I had the happiness of receiving the last look of my never-to-be-forgotten friend Father Henle, a look which I shall always remember, so full of heavenly joy and love and so full of indescribable pain. Father Nies, who died in my place, was apparently dead, at least I could not discover any flicker of life when I came to him. It naturally devolved on me to write the life of the two assassinated missionaries, in particular that of Father Henle, who was then my superior and at the same time my best friend. Together we shared for a number of years the joys and sorrows of mission life and passed some happy hours of cherished memory in the silent solitude of a small Christian mission station; I knew him better than any one else could know him. Even in this introduction I wish to acknowledge that I have always regarded, honored and loved Father Henle as a saintly man. To him, the friend. I dedicate this little book.

I also take this opportunity to thank all those who have assisted me in this work by furnishing me letters of the beloved dead, or other useful material. Besides the letters to his parents and relatives I have made use of the documents of the archives of the mission house at Steyl, and different periodicals, especially those issued at Steyl.

CHAPTER I

Father Henle's Childhood

A LONELY little hamlet in the beautiful land of Hohenzollern is the home of Father Henle. He was born on the 21 of July, 1865, in Stetten, near Haigerloch. His parents, still living, are honest, simple people, but they endeavored to give their only child a conscientious and thorough education. His father, a respected citizen of his home town, formerly was a shoemaker, but later on was employed at the Stetten salt mines. His mother, "Mother of Mercy," as she was surnamed in the place, is known throughout the entire neighborhood for her charitableness towards the sick and the poor. The family was not poor, but neither did they possess great wealth.

Father Henle's days of childhood in the midst of this small pious family, under the care of his good parents, were extremely happy and he always remembered them with great joy. In a little sketch of his "life," necessary for the purpose of his entry into the mission house, he himself gives a description of the same in a few short words.

"At the age of five," he writes, "my mother sent me daily to assist at Mass, a practice which from then on I adhered to with great regularity, and nearly always attended the Rosary devotion on Saturdays. My teacher at school was fairly well satisfied with my studies, arithmetic excepted, which was somewhat difficult for me; therefore

at one time being unable again to grasp it, I promised to lay aside ten pennies every month up to my fourteenth year, from my small salary as Mass server, for the poor heathen children, and from then on I improved considerably in this line of study. In my twelfth year I made my first Holy Communion and promised then to receive the sacraments every four or five weeks, a promise which I have faithfully kept. At confirmation, which took place last summer, I earnestly prayed to God for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and again my prayers were heard, for the progress in my work, which at times cost me some trouble, was remarkable. Companions I had but one; at last I left him also, making the promise instead, to pray a litany every Sunday in the chapel on the cemetery for the poor souls; this I observed even on the coldest Sundays of this winter. I preferred to spend my time of recreation in the midst of little children. From my boyhood I cherished the desire to become a priest. And when I observed the students who spent their vacation with us, at Mass, I always noticed that those whose studies were directed by ecclesiastics were by far more devout and assisted at Mass with more reverence than those who studied at other colleges. I therefore urged my parents to place me also somewhere with priests. At last I remembered that "Uncle Ludwig," the publisher of the "Guardian Angel," had written something about a certain mission house and accordingly wrote him for information; and now it is certainly not without the direction of God, that I have come to you, Rev. Father, and therefore earnestly pray, not to refuse to me the entry into your house. I will promise you, Rev. Father, to fulfill exactly and conscientiously all that the house will require of me, and so prove myself a

worthy pupil of the same." His pastor and his teacher of that time testify to the truth of this beautiful and childlike description of his innocent character manifested in these few lines.

Father Henle had the great happiness of possessing a good mother. With the utmost care she conducted the education of her only child.



Stetten, near Haigerloch, Birthplace of Father Henle

She knew how to bring up her son in innocence and purity and to plant into his pure heart a love for God and his neighbor. Having heard at one time in a sermon given to the Christian Mothers' Society, how many a careless mother would be shocked at hearing what her child of only nine or ten years had to confess, and, "Therefore," she said later on to a friend, "I put Richard, my only child, into a separate bedroom at an age of not quite three years. If at times he was inclined to be afraid, I reassured him by simply saying:

'You are not alone, Richard, your guardian angel is watching over you,' at which he was at once satisfied and quiet. It is self-evident that we also avoid everything else which could prove dangerous to the purity of heart of our child. For the same reason I have tried to keep Richard with me as much as possible that he might not hear, from so-called precocious children, things which might prove destructive to the child's heart. And when I was compelled to permit Richard to play with a companion now and then, it was only with the child of a friend, of whom I knew that she also had taken to heart the words of the pastor and reared her son with the same care, so that Richard was safe in his company."

With what great care this simple woman raised her child is also made evident by the following. The grandmother as well as she herself were in the habit of making a daily visit to the Blessed Sacrament in the near-by church, taking the child with them at nearly every visit, in order "to have it blessed by Jesus." They well knew that the Divine Friend of children dwelled within the tabernacle, the same who at one time gathered the children about Himself to bless them. Here in his earliest childhood, before the tabernacle, Richard learned to love and honor God so ardently; here his innocent heart was enkindled with that glowing love for his neighbor which distinguished him later on, which led him to China and a glorious martyrdom.

Prayer therefore had become a habit with the child in his earliest boyhood. Beginning with his fifth year he attended Mass daily, certainly a most praiseworthy thing in a child so young. And Sunday afternoons, unlike other boys, who spent them in open air playing and rejoicing, he was wont to go out to the quiet cemetery even in

the coldest weather to pray in the beautiful chapel for the repose of the departed. His greatest pleasure was, which is also confirmed by his pastor, to spend his time of recreation in the company of younger children, conversing with them in a child-like, pious manner about Jesus, teaching them to pray or sing sacred songs. Often he would lead the little band into church before the altar and recite the little prayers with them which he himself had learned from his mother and grandmother.

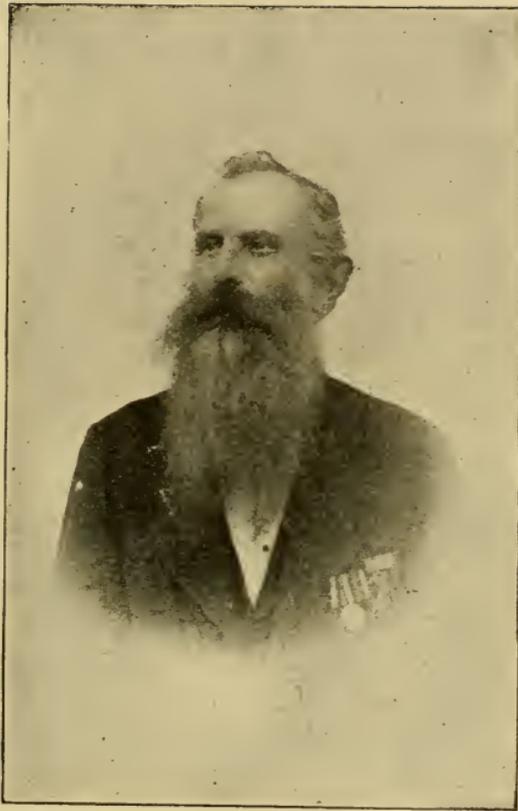
But with all this the boy was very much like other children: he had a cheerful and lively disposition, and understood well to impart his gay cheerfulness also to others.

As the only child, he was somewhat in danger of being pampered and spoiled. But whoever is acquainted with the energetic character of his mother, knows well that this danger was not very great for him. Her method was rather strict, almost severe.

Richard, for instance, was never given any sweets in his childhood, never sugar in his coffee. When his parents, for the purpose of giving some pleasure to the child, wished to bring something home with them from an occasional business trip, it would be some fruit, or if this was wanting, a small wheaten bread from the bakery. And to train him to moderation his mother would sometimes repeat these words to the child: "Child, every penny we possess is earned by the sweat of your father." His father worked in the boiling house of the salt mines and therefore had to work hard for his bread. These words always affected the child deeply and he never complained about the meals. Only on one occasion, when his mother was sick and his father had to take her place as cook, Richard remarked: "Father is a better



Mother of Father Henle



Father of Father Henle

cook than mother." His father was more generous than his mother in distributing the food.

To avoid squandering his father's money, for which he had to toil so hard, "needlessly," as he thought, he always preferred not to stop at an inn, even when they were outside of their village. He would assure his mother that he was not in need of anything and could wait until their return home, where he could then refresh himself with bread and milk. We see, the lessons of his mother had taken root in the heart of the child.

At the table at home Richard occupied a place from whence he might easily observe all that was going on out on the street. But his parents having forbidden him to look out of the window during meal times—for the purpose of training him to mortification—Richard willingly obeyed his parents.

It was by no means avarice or a natural inclination for strictness which caused his parents to treat their only child with such rigor. "Good, charitable Mother Henle," sharing her daily bread with the poor, and so joyfully supporting the sick, was not addicted to these faults. It was rather to teach the child the practice of economy and mortification, two virtues helpful to every one in daily life. For the future missionary they are indispensable. A missionary without a love for sacrifices and privations, without love for the poor, is not imaginable. Also in his later life Father Henle practiced these two virtues in a most heroic manner.

Mother Henle had also heard in the Christian Mothers' Society that parents should distribute their alms through the hands of their little ones to accustom them to compassion and charity. Richard therefore was charged to perform this act of love towards the poor who came to the

house or to others who were to be supported in their homes.

Moreover, his mother thereby satisfied one of his most ardent desires. Often he would implore her to give him some milk or the like to take it to the poor. In his letter he related of the ten pennies which he laid aside from his small salary as Mass server to bring to his pastor for the heathen children. Frequently he would help old or weak people to push their cart or carry their bags of grass and leaves and assist others whenever opportunity offered itself.

Father Henle was also trained to work and labor in his youth. He related to me that on his return from school in the afternoon he always found a note, next to his piece of bread and cup of milk, stating where to find his mother or what work to perform until her return home. In this way he learned to perform, through his mother, all house and farm work. He was able to cook and to bake, to dig and to plow, yes, even to knit and to sew. He also learned weaving when a student. This practical education stood the missionary in good stead.

But in spite of this great severity the child knew very well that his parents loved him tenderly and that he was as dear to his mother as the apple of her eye. In return for all this he cherished until his death such a love and gratitude towards his old parents as is rarely to be found. Again and again he would speak of his "good mother" and his "good father"; he wrote to them whenever time and circumstances would permit him to do so, concealing from them all sad news that he might not grieve them and it always was a day of joy when he received a few lines from his parents.

Moreover, it was not alone strictness applied by the mother in raising her child. Now and then Richard, as a reward for his good behavior, was permitted to accompany her on a pilgrimage to Weggenthal near Rottenburg or to Mt. Calvary at Hechingen, and great was his joy when the train arrived "without horses" and when it seemed to him as if, while speeding along, they carried everything with them, houses and trees, fields and meadows, hills and valleys.

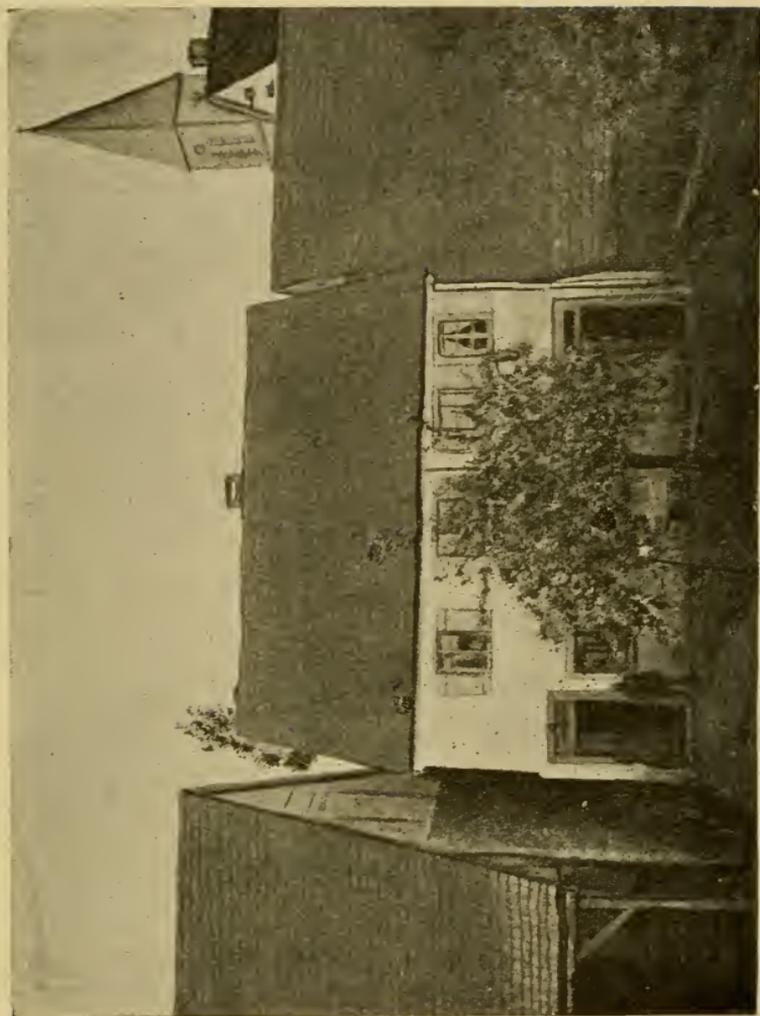
The kind reader may think from all he has heard so far: Father Henle was "a born saint," he was not like others, it therefore was not very hard for him to practice virtue.

But no, Father Henle was like the rest of us, and with his cheerful lively character was exposed to many dangers. But his parents guarded him well and this was indeed a great blessing for him.

One day being reprimanded by his mother, the rebellious spirit of youth was also aroused in him, and boldly placing himself before his mother, he asked: "But, mother, are you always in the right?" But the answer came prompt, and in a way to warn the lad not to repeat the question a second time, and it had the effect that from thenceforth her commands were observed even more punctually.

On another occasion he brought home a leather strap from a harness. But alas, his father tried the strap on the back of the little rogue and then sent the boy away at once to place the "found object" where he had taken it. From that time on Richard never touched anything anymore of which he was not quite sure that it was his own.

He also longed for a little sister to play with, but since God did not send him any he resolved to help himself. One day playing out on the



House in which Father Henle was born

street with other children, amongst them a little girl, he quickly induced her to come with him to be his little sister for the future. At home they played for a short time until the "little sister" became tired and sleepy, whereupon he took her and laid her in his own little bed and watched faithfully at her side. At the return of his mother he joyfully ran to meet her exclaiming: "Mother, now I have a little sister, come and see her." We can imagine the surprise of the mother, but this time she could not be angry with Richard. How sorry he was when his mother took his sleeping "little sister" and carried her back to her parents.

CHAPTER II

At College

RICHARD wished to study and his desire was to become a priest.—At the request of his parents his pastor complied with his wishes and began to instruct him. At first it appeared as if his studies would prove difficult to him, but his unrelenting diligence and tenacious perseverance made up for the seeming lack of talents, which later revealed themselves more and more and made him one of the best students and most prominent missionaries and linguists of the mission.

In the year 1879 Richard read a small article in the "Guardian Angel" about the mission house at Steyl. With this was an illustration representing a missionary preaching to the heathens. In speaking about this to me later on, he said: "I found myself peculiarly struck by this notice and soon was determined to become a missionary also."

A vocation in life is often indicated in early childhood by the wishes and inclination of the children.

As a child of three years Richard and his mother walked out on the field one day and ascended a small elevation. For a long while the little lad gazed over the charming valleys and high mountains, when suddenly turning to his mother, he said: "Mother, when I am big I will erect a post on this place and then wander far, far out

into the world." And when his mother, surprised at the words of the little one, asked for the purpose the post should serve, he answered: "When I come to this post again I know that I am at home."—The longing desire to wander into distant lands even then manifested itself in the youthful heart of the future missionary.

After having read the above mentioned notice in the "Guardian Angel" Richard without the knowledge of his parents wrote to the editor of this children's magazine, "Uncle Ludwig," the following letter:

"I left school last fall, but now receive two hours special instruction daily of our dear Rev. Pastor. We hope to reach the fifth class by next year. But I cannot say how it will turn out; my good mother fears our means will be insufficient to defray the expenses. I earnestly beseech you, dear Uncle, to pray very much for me that God may give me grace to discern my vocation, and for my parents that they may not lose their trust in God concerning this matter. And if all should fail, dear Uncle, I will come to you to Donauwoerth; you will then provide for my admission in the house, where boys are instructed and educated who wish to become missionaries. Whatever I am lacking in talents, *volo per diligentiam sarcire* (I will make up by diligence). I always look forward to the "Guardian Angel" and never put it aside without reading it."

This letter Uncle Ludwig sent to the superior of the mission house in Steyl and shortly after this the little student received a letter from there, stating the conditions required of a mission pupil.

Now Richard could not conceal his plan to his parents any longer and after much reflecting and praying they decided to consecrate their only child to the service of God. His father betook himself at once to the Rev. Pastor and asked him to write to Steyl regarding Richard's admission.

But not at once did the conscientious pastor consent to the wishes of his pupil; he rather put him to a trial first and called his attention to the great sacrifices and hardships of mission life. But finding Richard firm in his resolution he wrote at last to the mission house for his admission.

The testimonials forwarded for Richard by the zealous and conscientious pastor on this occasion and also later on at the time of his admission deserve to be recorded here.

In a letter dated May 10, 1880, we read: "As a preliminary description of Richard Henle's character I beg leave to report the following:

July 21, the boy will complete his fifteenth year. Together with another boy I have since last June given him instructions in Latin and Greek. He will finish the Latin grammar by October, 1880. At present we are reading Cornelius Nepos. In Greek he is up to the Verba Contracta. Since it was contemplated and respectively taken in view to place him in a "gymnasium" in Wuerttemberg he has not started with any lessons in French as yet, since this is not taken up until the fifth class. Regarding your course of studies, I beg your Reverence to inform me whether I should take up studies in French with him this summer, so that he may enter the fourth class. Regarding his character, he is unselfishness personified and just as generous. With the greatest conscientiousness his mother has guard-

ed him the last three years to keep him undefiled and she has succeeded. Richard loves to pray and has a deeply religious, innocent disposition, almost too tender. He is very lively and his appearance is healthy. But the sentimental qualities of his soul are more fully developed than the intellectual. On the other hand, the results of the above mentioned studies evidently show that he has sufficient talents; otherwise his is a practical bend of mind. The following may seem peculiar. He has formed a resolution never to associate with older companions to avoid every occasion of being spoiled. One of his chief reasons why he wishes to enter the mission house, is, as he confided to some one, that he felt certain he would not be spoiled in such an institution. One thing is clear to me now which for a long time seemed inexplicable. From his twelfth year on, when busy around the house on week days, he gathers a number of smaller boys about himself. Also on Sunday afternoons he is always surrounded by a smaller or larger band which he then entertains or leads to the cemetery or some other place. This would seem to point to his later activity among the heathen children. His mother's sister, a nun, died in the year 1871, at Koesfeld, in the service of typhoid-stricken soldiers. May these few remarks, Rev. Father, dispose you favorably towards the request of the boy and grant his permission to join you.

Most respectfully, Kuno Schmid, Pastor."

On June 1st of the same year Father Schmid wrote again: "Richard Henle, son of Ulrich Henle, resident of this village, has as long as he attended primary school, truly distinguished himself by his great purity of manners. He is entirely free of the rudeness to which boys at

this age usually are addicted. Some sins, for instance, the so-called swearing, have filled him with a certain horror. The daily attendance at Mass and the frequent reception of the sacraments is a matter of course with him. He conscientiously avoids the company of bad and rough boys. His disposition, tender to a fault, is inclined to the greatest compassion. Being the only child, it might easily be supposed that Richard, after all was spoiled to some extent, but I have no positive reasons to justify this opinion; on the contrary, I believe he is entirely free of pride, presumption, contempt of others, self-conceit and similar faults usually found with mother's pet. Finally, I wish to remark that Richard was the only boy in school who for many years has paid his 10 pennies regularly each month for the Holy Childhood."

These testimonials secured Richard's admission into the mission house and soon the news reached Stetten. For his parents it was a great sacrifice, but Richard was overjoyed and he wrote at once to the Father Rector in Steyl as follows:

"My heart urges me to write to you and to thank you. But I cannot find words enough to express my gratitude. You have helped me to obtain this great happiness. Almighty God, Who arranges all things well, will reward you, Rev. Father, if not here then surely in heaven, for all the kindness (he speaks of the tuition of which the mission house had almost completely relieved them) extended to my parents and to me. I will pray daily that God may give you health and a long life and eternal happiness in heaven. I have nothing to offer you, Rev. Father, but my good wishes, but these come from the depth of my heart."

October 8, 1880, was the appointed time for his arrival in Steyl and his father accompanied him thither.¹

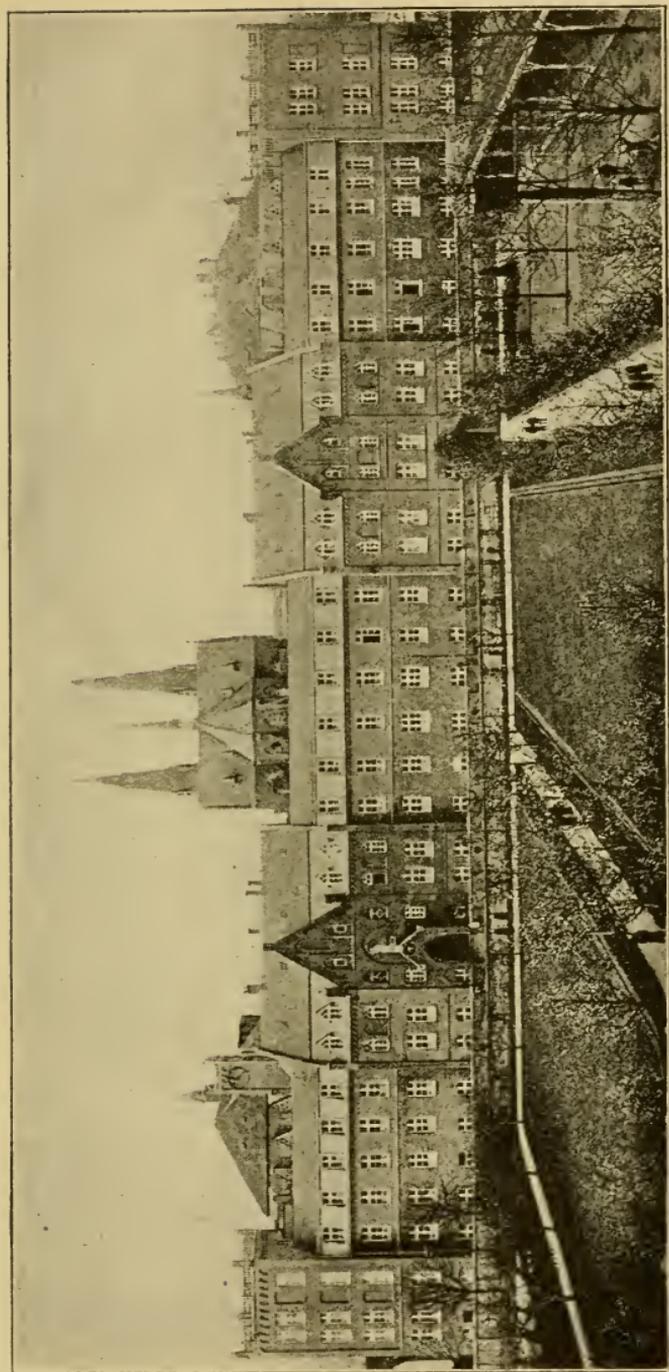
At the examination which took place the next day Richard was placed in the fourth class and succeeded by his diligence to advance a class every year. Moreover, his talents developed very nicely so that at last Richard was considered one of the best in the class.

In the mission house the noble qualities of his heart also developed in a most eminent manner. Whoever came in contact with him could not help loving and respecting him. Enemies he had none, and such with whom he could not agree were unknown to him.

“One thing particularly striking and edifying in the departed Father Henle as a pupil in Steyl,” says one of his fellow students, Father Giese, “was his exceedingly reverential demeanor at prayer. His head was slightly inclined, his body in a bolt-upright position and motionless during the whole time of prayer.” Others also bear witness to this.

With his fine talents he combined persevering diligence, which urged him to use his years of study to the best advantage. He was mild in judging his fellow students, which was striking considering his own correctness. Great was his love for order regarding his clothes, books and his room. In general his intercourse with others was modest and reserved in speech.

¹The mission house in Steyl was founded in the year 1875 by the first Superior General of the Society of the Divine Word, Father Arnold Janssen. The tiny seed developed in the course of time into a mission society with two houses in America: St. Mary's Mission House at Techny, Illinois, and the Sacred Heart Mission House at Girard, Pennsylvania, for the training and education of missionaries.



*St. Michael's Mission House at Steyl, Holland. Mother House of the Society of the Divine Word;
opened September 8, 1875*

During the last years of study his zeal for the work in the missions was very great. Despite his delicate health and other seemingly existing impediments regarding himself he trusted in Divine Providence that he would be sent to the missions without any special efforts on his part.

His Prefect at that time, Father Wegener, in speaking of him, expresses himself thus: "I found in him at all times a good pupil, ever conscious of his high aim and earnestly striving to become a pious and zealous priest and missionary. The noble inclinations of his heart and mind enabled him to advance equally from day to day in virtue and knowledge. As a student he distinguished himself especially by his piety—it was most edifying to observe him at prayer—by his kind and obliging manners in his intercourse with his fellow students, by his modest and respectful behavior towards his superiors to whom, in spite of his lively disposition, he never gave cause for any serious reproof."

I myself remember well what a favorable impression Father Henle as a novice made upon me at my entry into the mission house, by his friendly, cheerful, yet earnest and sedate manners, with his ideal features, bespeaking kindness and meekness, and with his large, keen eyes, which made him so popular later on amongst the Christians and heathens of China. This was the ideal mission candidate as I had pictured him to myself before my entry into the mission house.

But the vocation of the zealous mission candidate was almost put to question shortly before his admission to Holy Orders by a malignant illness. He began to suffer daily several times from violent nose bleeding, which wasted his strength entirely. His face and hands were almost transparent and consumption seemed inevitable. To

recover his health his superiors sent him home, but here he did not tarry long, for he realized there was no help for him there. And yet the great aim of his life was at stake. With the permission of his superiors he therefore went to Cologne to be treated by a famous specialist in St. Vincent's Hospital. The bridge of his nose being deformed inwardly, pressed upon the blood vessels, thereby causing the violent bleeding. This made an operation necessary, which was successfully performed by the physician by sawing away the bony parts on the left side of the bridge of his nose. The bleeding from this time on ceased entirely.

For Richard this time of suffering was a hard and serious trial. For his calling as a missionary was at stake. As long as he was sick he could not hope to have his most ardent desire fulfilled. He was therefore overcome by serious doubts of his vocation. Should he remain in the Society, even if the ideal which he had always aimed at could not be attained, or should he serve God as a secular priest? Finally the doctor solved his doubts by declaring that mission life would even be favorable to his health.

He always left a good impression in his home village during his sojourn there, at the time of his vacation.

Every two or three years (now every year), the mission candidates are permitted to visit their relatives, and Richard, like perhaps no other, looked forward with the greatest joy to this vacation. In Stetten and wherever he came, he edified all by his good example. His pastor, at that time Rev. K. Schmid, wrote to Steyl in 1885: "During his stay here at the time of his vacation he edified all the faithful by his humility and deep piety." On one occasion, on the feast of St.

Ann, Richard, finding St. Ann's Church overcrowded, and being unable to enter, knelt down in the open air close to the wall of the church and prayed with such wonderful recollection and fervor as to attract the attention of many. It was then that he inspired a boy with the idea to consecrate himself to the missions, who is now actually engaged in the field afar.

In the meantime, during Richard's stay in Cologne, his fellow students took their first vows in Steyl. It grieved him deeply that he could not join them and he wrote to the Master of Novices, Father Eikenbrock: "It is no small matter to me to remain behind when seemingly so near the goal, to miss my studies, to remain here alone and to cause such great expenses for my parents. But my missionary vocation demands it, and therefore I make the sacrifices, and the more I have to make, the higher I prize my vocation.

At last his time of suffering was ended and Richard returned to Steyl. A few months later, on March 18, 1888, he was given permission to take his vows, and a few days later he received the sub-deaconship at the hands of the Bishop of Roermond. On the 26 of May, 1888, he was made deacon and on the 15 of June of the same year he was ordained priest by Cardinal Fischer of Cologne.

In the following letter, written to his parents shortly after his first Mass, he gives expression to the happiness which animated him at that time: "I am actually a priest," he exclaims; "when I reflect on this word and silently ponder its meaning, how happy am I! To bring down my Savior every day, to act as mediator between God and the world, called to pray, to live, to sacrifice and to die for humanity! And whence this undeserved happiness? From the mercy of God



VERY REV. ARNOLD JANSSEN,
*Founder and First Superior General of
the "Society of the Divine Word."*

(† January 15, 1909.)

and obtained by your piety, uprightness and charity. . . . I am a priest! Daily will I implore our Divine Savior most earnestly to reward you for all your love and kindness, will pray daily that he may console, help and guide you, that, after having fought valiantly the battle of life, we may meet in heaven where there will be no more separation. Life upon earth is only a time of trials and sufferings, in heaven alone there is perfect peace and endless happiness."

These are jubilant expressions of the new priest speaking out of the abundance of his heart. No one was happier than Father Henle.

He said his first Mass in Steyl on June 26. The great distance did not prevent his good old parents to come to Holland to see "their Richard" at the altar. And the son was overjoyed to see his parents, "to whom he owed so much," again, now as a priest. These days of happy reunion at the altar, he writes later on, are full of grace, days of such heavenly joy and bliss, as can only be experienced by those who for the first time behold their son at the altar.

Only one thing he feared—that his parents might beseech his superiors not to send their son to the foreign mission fields and he implored them earnestly not to do this. "Do not believe that my love to you will die, indeed my vocation as a priest has added to its strength, but it must be ennobled, so that it may not hinder me from following the call of God. I hope you will never regret that your son has become a missionary; never try to keep me in Europe. The wrath of God would be incurred by those who through their fault lessen the number of laborers in the vineyard of the Lord."

His most ardent desire was fulfilled. Shortly after his ordination Father Henle was appointed for the mission in China.

CHAPTER III

The German Catholic Mission in South Shantung, China

Before we accompany Father Henle to the mission we will first give a short description of the same.

In 1879 the mission house founded in Steyl in 1875 sent its two first missionaries, Father Anzer and Father Freinademetz, to China. In Hongkong they inured themselves under the direction of Bishop Raimondi to the mission life until in 1882, South Shantung was assigned to them by Rome as their own field of labor.

It was a difficult and thorny field which the missionaries undertook to cultivate. There were but very few Christians and the land was derided throughout China as the classical Eldorado of bandits. The Venerable Franciscan Bishop Cosi, who formerly presided over this district, said therefore to the two young apostles: "You will soon return, but—without heads." A most peculiar farewell! But the missionaries would not be daunted and trusting in God they set forth to their work. West of the Yellow River, in the sterile region often exposed to the vicissitudes of floods, they found a small Christian village, Puoly, whose inhabitants had taken refuge here from the persecutions of former times. There were 158 souls, the first Christians of the new mission of the Steyl missionaries, South Shantung.

It is touching to read how these two brave men, whose number in the course of time was increased by others, held their place in this small Christian oasis, despite the raging storm of persecutions, of indescribable sufferings and sacrifices, in spite of sickness and privations of every kind!¹ Yea, they even sought to extend their activity and to sow the seed of the gospel in more distant fields, and had the joyful satisfaction to see it thrive and produce fruit. With the weapons of Christian love they fought along the shores of the Yellow River, against the cold, heartless paganism and in course of time won great victories. Poor Puoly became the bishop's residence in 1886 and the mother church of nearly one thousand branches. Father Anzer was made bishop. "In hoc signo vinces!"—In the cross, the sign of suffering and sacrifice, you will conquer. This has also been verified in South Shantung.

But let us return to the events that led up to this development. In 1883 Father Anzer made an attempt to open the mission at Tsouchufu. Tsouchufu, along the right hand shore of the Yellow River, is especially the land of bandits, the land where, according to the Chinese, "the robbers grow." A fine race of men inhabit these fertile plains. The genuine Tsouchufu is pictured as tall, strong and energetic, but also as cruel and savage. Curbed by Christian doctrines and Christian morals he would become a most excellent member of the human race, just as he now, as a heathen, proves his unrestrained character by his unfettered passions. Nearly

¹The Franciscan Bishop was the only European within several hundred miles.



† BISHOP JOHN BAPTIST VON ANZER
First Vicar Apostolic of South Shantung

every village has its bandits, nearly every day riots, murders, yes, even real battles, take place.

The first act of the new mandarin is, as a rule, an inquest.

Here in this part of the land Father Anzer tried to cast his net, but he almost lost his life at his very first appearance there. He was driven out of the city, and there overwhelmed with blows, until he was left for dead, as a prey to the hungry dogs. A catechist of the missionary approached him secretly at night and brought him to a kindly-disposed family, where he recovered consciousness and was saved. But through these sufferings the missionary became known throughout the land and new Christians were the fruits of the same. In a particularly flourishing condition are several congregations which have been formed amongst the staunch mountaineers of Ishui and Mungin in the utmost part of the country.

About this time the hated and much apprehended society of "the white sea rose" was again prosecuted by the government of China. The severest punishments were inflicted on its members. There were many good souls, especially amongst the country people, in this society. I might say the better class of the rural population. Men and women were united in the same. The real aim of their leader was to overthrow the government. But in China the formation of such societies is only possible on a religious basis.

The honest country people who had joined this sect were only concerned about the gratification of their religious wants. They were eager to "save their souls." They performed severe works of penance, they fasted, abstained from certain kinds of food, prayed, sacrificed, and even confessed their sins.

Individual members of the sect had already been converted to Christianity and had gone as lay missionaries to their former friends to proclaim the "joyful message of the true faith" to them.

During this time of political oppression many joined the Christian religion and became excellent Christians. Thus the number of congregations and Christians increased from day to day, and after four years of labor three thousand catechumens had been gathered.

This success of the Christian messengers of the faith, as may well be imagined, aroused the hatred and malice of Satan and he attempted by various measures to hinder their progress. All the older missionaries had to endure great hardships and sufferings. They were attacked by day and by night, they were beaten, robbed and imprisoned. By the most bitter persecutions he sought to alienate the new Christians from their faith and to instigate the heathens against the Christians. Nearly every year was marked by small persecutions in some part of the mission.

The sufferings of the Christians are most clearly depicted in a letter by a missionary at that time:

"Every neophyte" he writes, "could, with few exceptions, himself say with the Psalmist: 'Transivimus per aquam et ignem'—We have gone through water and fire." As soon as a heathen makes an attempt to become a Christian the words: "Crucifige, crucifige, crucify him, crucify him," are dinned into his ears. A legion of spies watches all his movements, all his words and actions; all his old friends leave him, his relatives disown him, and the entire village treats him as a stranger or even as an outlaw and excludes him from all further intercourse. He is forbidden to draw

water from the public well and the most hideous rumors are spread about him; if by chance his mule or cow should stray into another field, his dog or chicken appear unawares in a neighbor's yard, a torrent of curses and reproaches rains down upon him as if the house were on fire. The children of the village refuse to play with the "little devils;" they exclude them from all their amusements and tease and abuse them when and wherever they can. Should a heathen lose an implement, the Christian is at once stigmatized as the thief and must listen to the drawling of an endless litany of reproaches at the door of his house. These poor catechumens certainly need an abundance of grace, to remain steadfast under such conditions.

One can understand that, only by a miracle of grace the Chinese, despite these hardships and sacrifices, still become Christians.

And good Christians they are indeed. People having manifested such loyalty towards their religion and given such evidence of their faith as these Chinese Christians have done, must indeed be good Christians in the full sense of the word. Men who have overcome such persecutions, who exposed their possessions, their life and health for the sake of their faith must be good Christians. I have seen their houses wrapt in flames, have seen them robbed of all their possessions, yes even their houses torn down to their very foundations, and the people set before their own doors as beggars, and in spite of this they remained faithful Christians. Many of my former Christians have shed their blood for Christ and I can with all certainty venerate them as happy martyrs in heaven.

It is needless to say that amongst thousands of good Christians a traitor is found here and there.

It has been asserted by some that the Christian religion was too difficult for the Chinese to comprehend. And yet, every missionary could tell most touching examples of the lively faith in China. The Chinese understand Christianity as well as the Europeans or Americans. Consider for instance, the virtue of virginity, how it flourishes in China; in every good sized Christian village there are girls who consecrate themselves to the life of virginity.

How pure the Chinese girls enter into the state of matrimony! They may well serve in this respect as an illustrious example to their American sisters. What efforts many of them make to acquire Christian virtues! Before confession enmities are settled and scandals removed. The Christians strive to wean themselves from swearing; visiting theatres and card playing is forbidden under penalty among the Christian Chinese.

Therefore the neophytes of China have a claim to our greatest respect and deserve that the missionaries sacrifice themselves for them, and also deserve that the American Catholics come to their aid. But now to return to the history of South Shantung.

In 1886 Father Anzer was consecrated Bishop and Vicar Apostolic of South Shantung. In Puoly, the Bishop's residence, orphan asylums, schools and seminaries were founded to educate catechists and priests. Christian publications and books were printed and distributed by a European printing establishment. In the year 1890 the mission numbered 2733 neophytes and 8017 catechumens.

In 1891 Bishop Anzer returned to Europe to hand in his report in Rome. On this occasion he placed the mission, which had hitherto been

under the protection of France, under the protection of Germany. The German Emperor has manifested his great interest in the German mission.

Henceforth it was also possible to penetrate into the cities of China which up to now, without exception had been closed to the missionaries. This was the greatest advantage to the missions since the cities of China as the seat of the officials and the centres of commerce and science govern the entire land. The Bishop therefore at once removed his residence to Tsining, a commercial town along the Imperial Canal. Here he erected in the course of time a large church, houses for the missionaries and schools. At the present time there remain but two cities in South Shantung without a Catholic colony.

Far more important was the city of Yenchowfu, "The Holy City," as it is named by the Chinese, the Mecca of China, in whose vicinity the "Holy Man" of China, the great Confucius lived and lies buried. Through the mediation of Germany the Bishop effected an entrance also into this city, and today the centre of Confucianism is also the centre of the Catholic Church in South Shantung. Side by side with the crumbling temple of Confucius stands the magnificent Gothic Catholic Cathedral erected by the Chinese Government in expiation of the assassination of the two missionaries, Fathers Nies and Henle. The Mission here as everywhere also exercises its civilizing power and influence. The Bishop founded schools for the education of the young Chinese in European and Chinese science, erected orphanages in which poor foundlings are sheltered, and maintained a dispensary in which up to forty patients are nursed and treated by one of the missionaries.

The mission was progressing admirably, the number of neophytes being more than five thousand in 1898—99. But the promising work of the missionaries came to a sudden end by the last revolt of the Boxers. Like wildfire it spread from place to place sweeping away in its resistless course village after village and church after church. The missions resembled an immense heap of ruins. The flying Christians erred like beggars in the land, homeless and despised, whilst the missionaries were compelled by the government of China to leave the country. Only a few European missionaries, among them the heroic veteran of the mission, Father Freinademetz, contrived with ten native priests to remain secretly. Amidst ineffable sufferings they managed at least to some extent to hold together their dispersed flock.

Now everything is settled again. The missionaries have returned, churches and chapels have been rebuilt, and with renewed courage Christianity is awakening to new life and activity. Unfortunately there is a great lack of missionaries and means to satisfy all demands put to the missionaries at the present time. In one of his letters Father Freinademetz wrote: "More than hundred missionaries would be necessary to receive all the new Christians who now, after the persecution, ask for admission." "I need at least twenty catechists if I want to supply all the villages that have applied for one," wrote another missionary, Father Froewis. "Yes, indeed, let us pray the Lord of the harvest that He send laborers into His vineyard."

The worthy founder of the mission, the venerable Bishop Anzer, has since departed life. He died in Rome on the 24 of November, 1903, of paralysis of the brain. The rapid growth of the

mission is due to a great extent to the energetic and indefatigable labor of this man, who, although not adorned with the much coveted palm of martyrdom, may, nevertheless, bedecked with the laurels of abundant merits, resting near the tomb of St. Peter, await with confidence the day of his glorious resurrection. At the throne of God we confidently hope he will be a protector who will never cease to pray and intercede for the mission.

CHAPTER IV

On to China

Friends, farewell, and may God speed you,
And to holy combat lead you
In the far off heathen land,
Where in darkness most repelling
Teeming millions still are dwelling
|: Who await your noble band. :|

By one Father's love created,
To His image elevated,
Bought by Christ's redeeming Blood,
Yet, the enemy has swayed them
And for centuries has made them
|: Spurn their Maker, the all-good. :|

Shall he longer yet enslave them?
Hasten, brethren, forth to save them,
From the hunger and the cold.
Jesus' loving Heart is yearning
For His children late returning
|: To the shelter of His fold. :|

Though the hosts of hell impede you,
God will bid His angels lead you
In your holy enterprise.
And though sufferings await you,
Let no hardships e'er abate you;
|: Your reward is Paradise. :|

If this be our final meeting,
Take our last most loving greeting:
Fare you well for evermore!
Though on earth we be divided,
In the Sacred Heart united.
|: We shall meet at Heaven's door. :|

ON September 15, 1890, the mission house in Steyl witnessed a touching ceremony. Four young priests together with two lay brothers received the mission cross to start for China to bear the message of salvation to the poor heathens. Among these favored ones, for such we may call them, was Father Henle. According to an old custom of the mission house the six young missionaries knelt at the foot of the altar, to consecrate themselves once more by a solemn act to God, after which they made the vow of perseverance in the service of the missions. With tear-filled eyes, conscious of the great sacrifice and yet filled with inexpressible happiness at being able to make this sacrifice for their Savior, they look up to the picture of their crucified Master, standing on the altar resplendent in the light of numerous candles, a symbol of their calling; through pains and sufferings to glory. Then whilst the prayers of the Church were intoned, they kissed the cross, which had been blessed previously, expressly for this purpose, which then was hung about their neck by the Rev. Father Rector. It will henceforth be their inseparable companion.

Then after the inmates of the house were assembled in one of the large halls to extend to their departing brethren their farewell greeting in song and verse, prose and music, followed the hymn of departure. "Friends, farewell, and may God speed you—and to holy combat lead you" were the touching and inspiring words resounding through the spacious hall of the mission house.

"And though sufferings await you,
Let no hardships e'er abate you,
Your reward is Paradise."

Once more each one of the missionaries bestowed his blessing on those remaining behind, and then parted from their beloved Steyl, which had been a second home to all, parted from the peaceful convent walls to go out into the open raging sea of the world. Whilst the other missionaries were taking leave from the Fathers, Brothers and students, Father Henle was bidding farewell to his old parents. The good old people were weeping, for Richard, their only son, was departing from them perhaps forever in this world. But Father Henle could not look on these tears and hastily tearing himself away from his parents, without a farewell, he rushed to the carriage, and away they went out into the "wide world," never to meet again.

Their journey—Father Henle himself has related very little of it—took them through Switzerland to Genoa where they took passage on board the "Sachsen" which brought them within thirty-six days to Shanghai, on the coast of China.

Some of his brethren and traveling companions have given a more detailed description of this voyage; and for the purpose of giving a more complete picture of our beloved friend we will here give an account of the same.

"We started," Brother Herman writes, "from Genoa on September 30, at three o'clock in the afternoon. Our passage at first was quiet and beautiful. Towards five o'clock, however, black volumes of clouds overspread the sky, rent asunder by flashes of lightning, whilst the thunders bellowed over the sea, and soon the rain poured down in torrents. The sea remained calm. Toward half past six in the evening the sky seemed to clear up and a bright tract of light, like the setting of the sun, gleamed in the west; it was the silvery light of the moon

peering through the dark clouds, a picture of peace and rest, but this time only for a moment. Suddenly a whistling sound swept through the rigging and the next moment the storm was raging, lashing the sea into tremendous confusion, overthrowing chairs and all other light objects on deck, whilst the monstrous ship staggered and plunged along at the mercy of the waves.

This frightful gale lasted all night with equal force until noon the next day; in the afternoon it gradually subsided and from then to Port Said we had a comparatively quiet passage. Port Said impresses one at once as a city of the Orient by the form of its houses as well as by its people. The bustle and traffic in and along the harbor resembles a bee hive. Orientals of every description in their fantastic attire hurry along by day and by night for the sake of money as if they were destined to remain upon earth through all eternity.

Towards nine o'clock Monday morning, on October 7, we sailed from Port Said through the Suez canal into the Red Sea. The canal extends along the broad side of the Sir desert; on either side as far as the eye reaches there is nothing but sand. At intervals small colonies may be seen inhabited partly by the officers of the canal, partly by Arabs. We also had occasion to observe several caravans traveling along the shores of the canal or directing their course into the interior of the desert.

At last, after sailing twenty-six hours, we landed in Suez. We did not cast anchor here, and taking in the mail the ship sailed again carrying us across the Red Sea to the city of Aden. Here also they anchored only at a great distance from land, but a great number of traders and ferrymen, fine strong forms, of bronze complexion, came on board.

After the ship had taken in the necessary supply of coal, it sailed again in the evening of the same day towards nine o'clock for Ceylon. During the passage of the Indian Ocean, the sea was agitated, the ship rocked to and fro and kept our heads in a constant whirl¹ during the entire voyage. Saturday, October 19, we cast anchor in the harbor of Colombo.

To provide for some mass wine, but at the same time also to take a closer view of the beautiful sceneries in Ceylon we disembarked at once. Colombo is truly wonderful, a real paradise. Entire forests of beautiful giant palm trees encircle the coast. The city of Colombo is very extensive, the streets are beautiful and wide and also clean. The houses, however, are very small and according to the custom of the Orient open towards the front, which allows a good view of the interior from the street. The people seem to live by commerce and the bustle and hurry is as great there as in one of our large cities. Workmen, as shoemakers, carpenters, tinkers, watchmakers, etc. all have their workshops out in the open street, and this variegated picture is entirely surrounded by nature's beauty. Between and back of the houses are beautiful gardens and woods of banana and palm trees and various shrubs and flowers. Here all is green and blooming throughout the entire year.

Colombo also has numerous Catholics, who may easily be distinguished from the other inhabitants by their modest dress and behavior. They also made themselves known to us on the street by their friendly smiles and greetings. The city of Colombo is also the seat of a Catholic bishop.

¹In consequence of seasickness

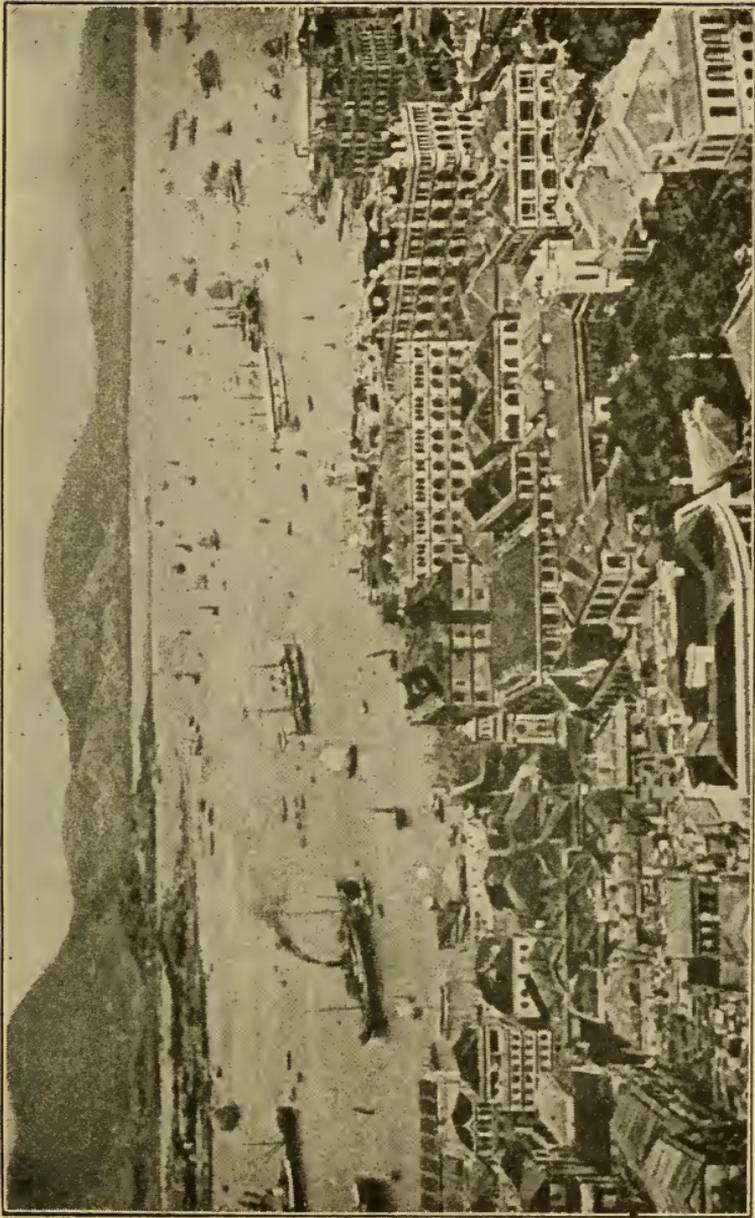
About 11 o'clock the ship sailed towards Singapore, the coast of Ceylon remaining visible for some time and very soon we gained sight of the coast of India. On the 26th of October the ship landed at the harbor of Singapore. This is a splendid country, its vegetation even richer than in Ceylon, everything was fresh and green as in the spring time of the year. The inhabitants seem to consist mostly of Chinese.

Two hundred of these accompanied us to Hongkong, thus giving the missionaries an opportunity to observe their habits and customs more closely. Father Henle already at that time made an attempt to converse with them by means of signs and the English language. On the 30th of October the "Sachsen" landed safely in Hongkong."

Their first visit in this pretty English colony was paid to Bishop Raimondi, a friend of the mission house in Steyl, who received them with great kindness and hospitality.

"In the afternoon we embarked again", writes Father Volpert, another traveling companion. "The Chinese Sea is held in bad repute and not without reason as we were soon taught by experience. With full steam power the ship was hardly able to proceed against the tide and wind, and many again became seasick.

We arrived at Shanghai at noon on the 5th of November, and again went on board an English-Chinese vessel the following morning. The sea was restless and agitated; it turned cold and the wind blew rain and hail into our faces. At last, on November 9, we landed in Tientsin and went to the convent of the Lazarists, where we were compelled to wait seven days for the messenger from Puoly.



Harbor of Hongkong

The coast of Shantung, the province assigned to the missionaries as their field of labor and which the ship had to pass by, was rather beautiful. Numerous rocks projected high above the water. The mountain range along the coast is also very steep and high but consists mainly of bare rocks. The passage here must indeed be dangerous on account of the continuous strong winds. Here Father Henle's fine hat was carried away by the wind. The Ven. Vicar Apostolic from Honan, Msgr. Scarella, out of compassion, first lent him his Chinese hat and then his little velvet cap, at which the Chinese accompanying us laughed heartily. We also were greatly amused at the Chinese with their mantles of sheep skin, their double trousers, and their enormous belts to which were fastened, fan, pipe, tobacco bag, etc. One of these sons of the "Celestial Empire" was especially conspicuous for his Chinese politeness. We met him at meal time. At once he offered to us his rice wine, his bread and fruits; I had to partake of everything. Later on we met him on deck, and immediately he drew forth his snuff box. According to our rule I wished to refrain from this pleasure and showed him my heavily gloved hand. But the good Chinaman would not be daunted, he quickly took a dose from his box with his own fingers, and rubbed my nose with his really excellent tobacco."

Saturday, November 16th, Brother Augustine came with another Christian to conduct the new missionaries to the mission of South Shantung. The following day they embarked on a Chinese junk, a miserable vessel, which sheltered them for the next thirteen days. Here for the first time the missionaries before leaving Tientsin dressed *à la Chinoise*, i. e., they donned, as is customary with the Chinese missionaries, the Chinese clothing.

Father Henle, unable to wait with this metamorphosis until the time of departure and after having scrutinized the inhabitants regarding their dress, appeared one morning in the little chapel dressed in the Chinese costume. Unfortunately a few of the necessary articles of the costume were missing, yet Father Henle resolved to do without them. The Venerable Bishop, Msgr. Scarella, seeing him thus in the pew ahead, could not refrain from smiling and Father Henle was obliged speedily to change his attire. But the good Bishop recognizing in the young priest the future zealous missionary, who wanted to become all to all, patted him on the shoulder, saying, "Ha fatto bene, Well done, my son."

On the junk the young missionaries experienced for the first time the discomforts and hardships of mission life. "The space was hardly large enough to sleep in. We had neither kettle, spoon nor fork. But urged by necessity we contrived to find means and thus in spite of all we did not suffer want." During daytime most of them walked along the shore of the canal, Father Henle all the while practicing the Chinese language.

One night our travellers stopped at a Chinese inn. "We were", Father Volpert writes, "distinguished guests and therefore treated according to our dignity. The salon was at the same time a donkey stable which was betrayed by its appearance and odor. The waiter came to sweep the table with a broom and then brought a few logs to serve as chairs. Then the meal was served and whilst we were eating what was set before us the inhabitants of the entire village stared at us at the door and window and made their remarks about the "barbarians of the West."

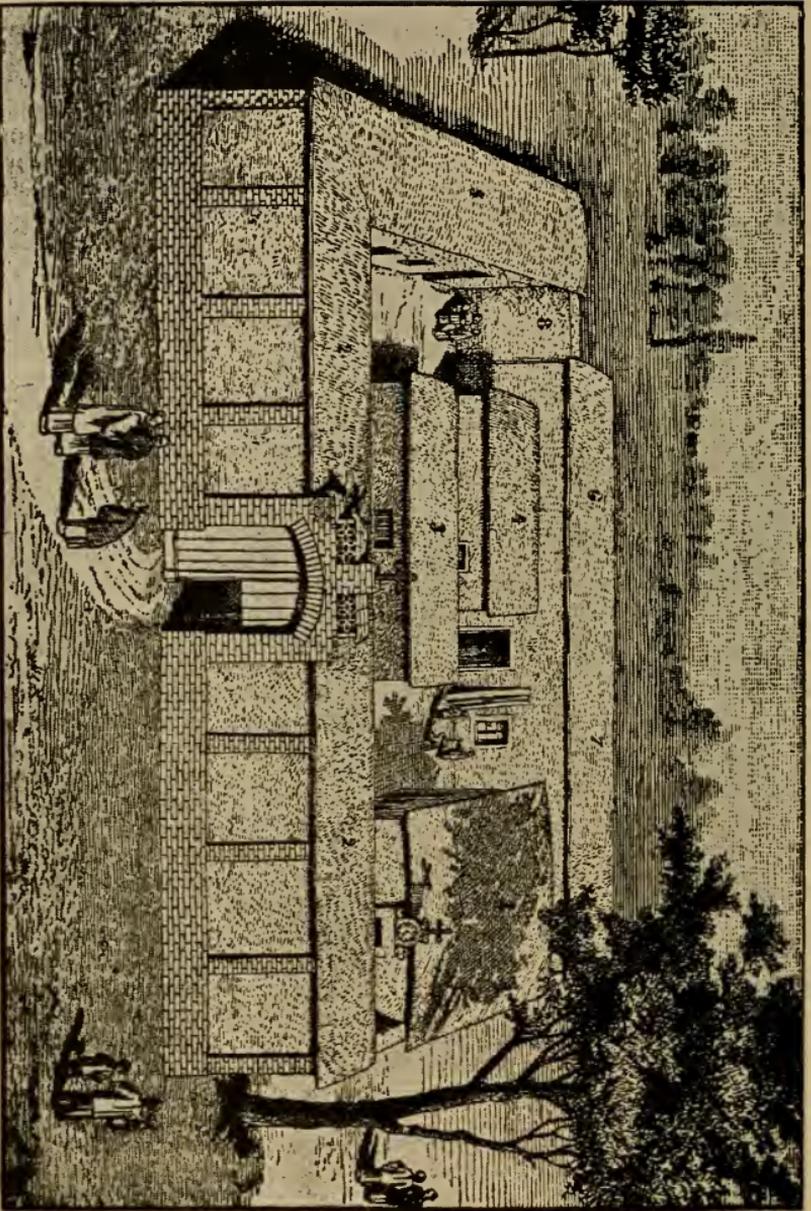
In the large city of Lientsing along the Imperial canal the voyage on the river ended. From thence it was not very far to Puoly, the Bishop's residence, at that time, and they were to travel the rest of their journey on cart.

This last part of their journey was related to me by Father Henle himself. He wished to buy a pair of glasses and thought he knew enough of the Chinese language to make himself understood without the help of Brother Augustine, but the catechist who had accompanied the wagon from Puoly was to go with him to show him the way later on. One horse was left for him and thus he hoped to overtake his travelling companions, who had again set out on their journey, in about an hour. But they were detained longer than they had expected and the two had to make haste in the pursuit of their companions. After having traveled along the way for a while, Father Henle on horse back, the catechist on foot, the latter noticed that they had strayed from the right road and informed Father Henle of this by signs and motions. Without any further questioning they crossed the field, but without being able to find the road leading to Puoly again.

Twilight came and Father Henle pitied the poor catechist, who had been on foot all the way; he therefore alighted and compelled him to mount the horse. Father Henle took pleasure in spurring the horse to a faster trot, until the animal made a sudden leap and dashed away in a mad gallop so that the rider was unable to bridle it. Night closed in and Father Henle was now entirely alone in the midst of an open field without knowing the language and without a cent of money. But his good humor gained the upper hand and quickly realizing his situation he briskly followed the track of the horse. At last, after half an hour's

time, he heard the clattering of a horse's hoof in the distance and soon the catechist also appeared, happy to have found his master again. Father Henle now had to mount his horse again, and cheerfully they set out into the night. Deep silence reigned, broken only by the inquiries of the catechist, at villages, regarding the direction. Shortly after midnight the catechist suddenly called out, "Puoly, Puoly." Father Henle understood quite well that they were nearing their destination. And, as if the horse also understood what was said, it started at once on a lively trot; the catechist now remained behind. Father Henle rode into a village and thought this was Puoly but the horse did not stop, but galloped along even more speedily. Again they arrived at a village and presently the horse halted at a large gate, the dogs barked in the courtyard and a voice from within asked in the Chinese language who was there. Father Henle answered in German that he was there, at which the gate was opened at once and Father Henle found himself at last at Puoly. The catechist arrived an hour later and the other missionaries not until the following day at noon.

Divine Providence had designated the day of the Apostle St. Andrew as the day of their arrival. "Salve, crux pretiosa! Hail, precious cross!" the Church sings on this day.



The first Residence of the Missionaries at Puolgy in 1885

CHAPTER V

At Puoly

PUOLY is the mother congregation of the entire South Shantung mission. This little hamlet, which has become so popular through the missionaries of Steyl, is situated in the outermost west of the Province of Shantung at a distance of a few miles from the Hoangho, or the Yellow River. When Bishop Anzer arrived there in 1882 he found only one hundred and fifty Christians, who for generations possessed the gift of the true faith and had endured many sufferings and persecutions for their Christian name. Formerly, according to the words of an old man, they were wont to invite a missionary from Macao, who at that time could only travel at night and in full disguise and required several months for this journey. But how happy these good people were to have an opportunity again to receive the sacraments and to assist at mass several times. Like a flourishing oasis this little hamlet, with half its inhabitants Christian, is situated in the midst of desolate heathen surroundings. We may well imagine how happy these Christians were when Fathers Anzer and Freinademetz arrived as their permanent pastors. The first days the people were continuously lingering around the missionaries and could not be induced to withdraw from them.

On his arrival at Puoly Father Anzer found nothing where he could establish himself and lived

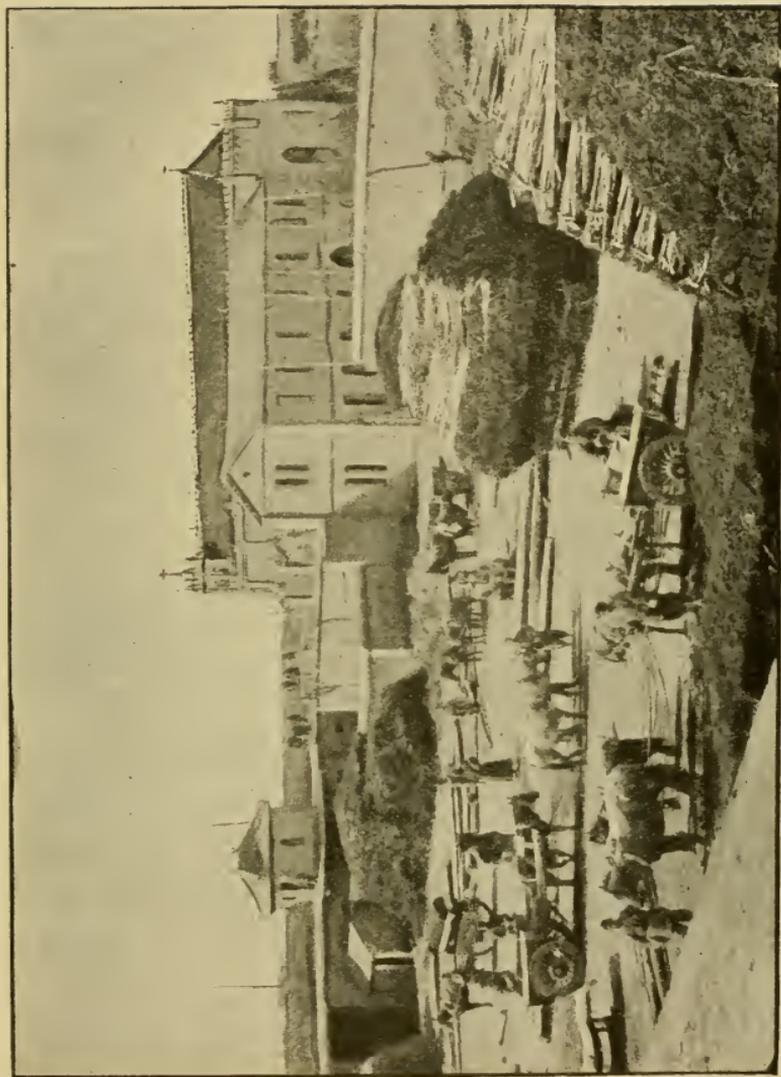
for a long time with a Christian family. At last he had erected a clay hut for himself and also a place of worship for the Christians. These two miserable hovels, which collapsed at the first heavy rain, were the origin of the present large residence with its orphan houses and agricultural buildings. A beautiful Gothic church erected by a European benefactor now takes the place of the former little clay hut. Also for the missionaries, who formerly assembled here to be educated and instructed, more convenient dwellings have been erected. Nevertheless there is still great poverty everywhere. Father Volpert, the traveling companion of Father Henle, describes his first impressions: "The houses are practical and although somewhat according to the Chinese style, they nevertheless afford shelter against the cold and rain. Also windows with glass panes may be seen here and there. Father Henle's door is without lock or bolt; the roof is flat and covered with earth."

The two orphan houses for boys and girls erected by the Society of the Holy Childhood are simple but extensive buildings. Besides these the well known Father Pieper founded a home for the aged here.

To protect themselves against the bandits, who are very numerous in this vicinity and had on several occasions assailed the house, the entire residence has now been surrounded by high walls, so that it almost has the appearance of a large castle.

This, then, was the place where Father Henle arrived and where for the present he was to prepare himself for the future work in the mission proper.

The first difficulty to overcome by the missionary in China is the study of the Chinese



Church and Residence at Puoly in 1894

language, which is one of the most perplexed in the world.

Father Henle having, while yet in Europe, occupied himself with the Chinese language and especially during his voyage on the river, devoted himself now with his usual energy to that study. Only by acquiring a full knowledge of the language could he hope to have his ardent wish fulfilled, to "accomplish much, very much," as he wrote to a pastor of his home country. Also after he controlled the language as few others, he would rise, though completely exhausted by his mission work and long rides, often even shortly after midnight, to study the Chinese characters.

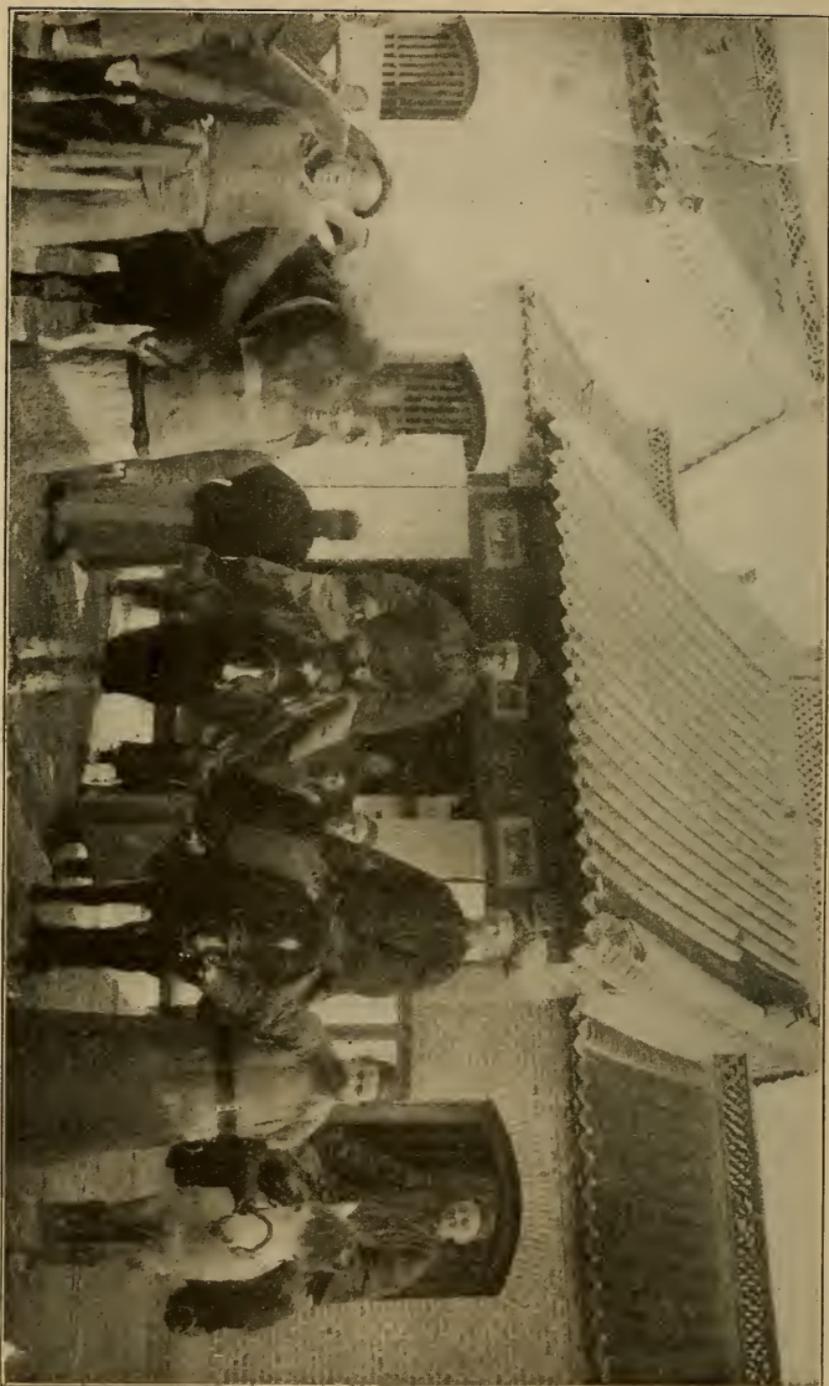
It is of great importance with the Chinese language to possess a good vocabulary and for want of a better means the young missionaries at that time learned their Chinese from a French-Chinese dictionary. It was jestingly said later on of Father Henle, on account of his great assiduity in this study, that he had actually devoured this book. In order to enable him to study wherever he was, he sundered the book into separate leaves, which he carried about himself wherever he went. Also later on I often observed him drawing forth some of these separate pages from his vest pocket to study them while riding on his horse.

By his diligence and great natural talent for the study of languages he advanced so rapidly, that within a few months he could attempt to preach a short sermon. In consequence we also find him shortly after this out in the mission.

In a letter written on July 1, 1890, in reply to a joint letter from friends in Stetten he acquaints us with his first difficulties in Puoly. "I am troubled only by one thing", he writes, "the desire to learn as quickly as possible the language

of this country. This language it would seem to me, is not so hard to learn. The main thing is the hearing. Cases, as in our European languages, do not exist. We say: The rose is beautiful; the Chinese, mei-hua hao k'en—Rose beautiful to see; plural: Roses are beautiful, is expressed the same in the Chinese language. I-uo, thou-ni, he-ta, mine-uo-ti, thine-ni-ti his-ta-ti, we-uo-men, you-minen, she-tamen. Present, past, etc. has no meaning in the connection of words. The sentence, for instance: Where have you been yesterday? is expressed thus: Ie li ni ze nali—yesterday you where?

This is not so hard to read, but the Chinaman murmurs everything between his teeth and with such laziness that it is well-nigh impossible to distinguish anything but a hotchpotch of sounds and tones. But the hardest is the manifold meaning of the same word according to its pitch. To this must be added that the Chinese in scolding possess an insurpassable dexterity in the use of vile and corrupt language and one must use utmost precaution to avoid giving the worst meaning to a word by a false pitch. He closed his letter assuring them that he was happy and contented in the "Celestial Empire." This was the refrain of nearly all his letters. In Puoly Han-shinfu—this was his name in China—, at all times cheerful and friendly, was always held in favorable remembrance.



Ready for a Missionary Trip

CHAPTER VI

The First Mission Trip

AT the time of Father Henle's arrival, there were few missionaries in Shantung, and after only a short sojourn in Puoly, the "new Fathers" were sent to their various mission districts. Father Henle was placed with Father Henninghaus, who was laboring in the "wild" Tsouchufu district.

Easter of 1890 was solemnly celebrated in Puoly. Several missionaries had been summoned to a council by the bishop, among them the future superior of Father Henle, Father Henninghaus. Wednesday following the feast the missionaries returned to their districts and Father Henle accompanied the caravan on a mule. The mission they wished to reach on the first day was the station of Father Nies, about 20 miles from Puoly, where "the hospitable confrère lodged both men and beasts."

The company represented a most variegated spectacle. "Father Pro-vicar was in possession of an old cart with an old decrepit mule and a white horse of doubtful age. Father Volpert was seated on a shaft of the wagon, whilst the driver was guiding it on the other, and Father Pro-vicar was hiding among the baggage in the narrow wagon, like Diogenes in the barrel. Father Henninghaus was riding a white horse and Fathers Vilstermann and Henle their mules."

In the evening after sunset the guests arrived, one after the other, at long intervals. One of the new missionaries, Father Volpert, who had given up his seat on the wagon and mounted the "mule's back", had even lost his way and only with great difficulty found it again.

The second day was to bring the missionaries to Father Buecker, 40 miles farther. "The weather was fine, the country beautiful, the wheat fields luxuriant; the way was bordered by blooming violets and even the sweet forget-me-not opened its blue little eyes, awakening numerous memories and recollections in my soul." As often as the travellers passed through a village the whole population turned out to stare at them.

At noon they arrived at the Yellow River and after a frugal meal they crossed the stream on a small ferry-boat. It was four o'clock when they reached the opposite shore, but it was now too late to reach Lianshan, the station of Father Buecker. The wagon could not make any headway in the loose sand, and towards sunset it began to rain. "Night was closing in", writes Father Volpert, "and here we were sitting on our animals with a bedsheet thrown over our shoulders, in deep silence, broken only by a signal given now and then to keep us together, for neither could see the one riding ahead nor the track of the wagon in the darkness. As this region also was much infested by robbers, we preferred, at nine o'clock in the evening, to stop at a wayside inn."

"Wet and tired the travellers alighted," Father Volpert continues. "We could not sit down, because there were no chairs at hand. The table had to be swept first with a broom and then cleaned with a cloth. After this straw mats were



† REV. FATHER BUECKER, S. V. D.
in the costume of a Chinese mandarin

laid on the floor, upon which the bed sheets were spread to serve as beds for the night."

They continued their journey at daybreak in order to reach Lianshan, a distance of 3 miles, in time to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of Mass. "With the birds we said our morning prayer on our journey through the green wheat fields and prepared ourselves in the solemn silence of nature for the Holy Sacrifice."

Lianshan, a large market town, is situated at the foot of two vast mountains, the tops of which are covered by high walls of huge stones to fortify the town against robbers and rebels. The Christian congregation is one of the oldest of the mission. Magnificent heathen temples are erected in the shade of ancient cypress trees, in which great numbers of Chinese idols are sheltered.

The missionaries ascended the mountain in the afternoon to recite their office. In such places it is not very difficult for the missionary and Catholic priest to find suitable subject for meditation.

This day was one of recreation for the travelers as well as for Father Buecker, especially since here also the separation of the various parties was to take place. Mission life is full of sacrifices and lays high claim to the physical and moral power of man. Especially trying is the continuous separation from their own countrymen, in particular of their confrères. Formerly, when the missionaries in Shantung were still few in number, weeks and months passed before they would see each other again. And yet how often the need of comfort and encouragement, the advice of a good friend, was felt.



Chinese Mother and Baby

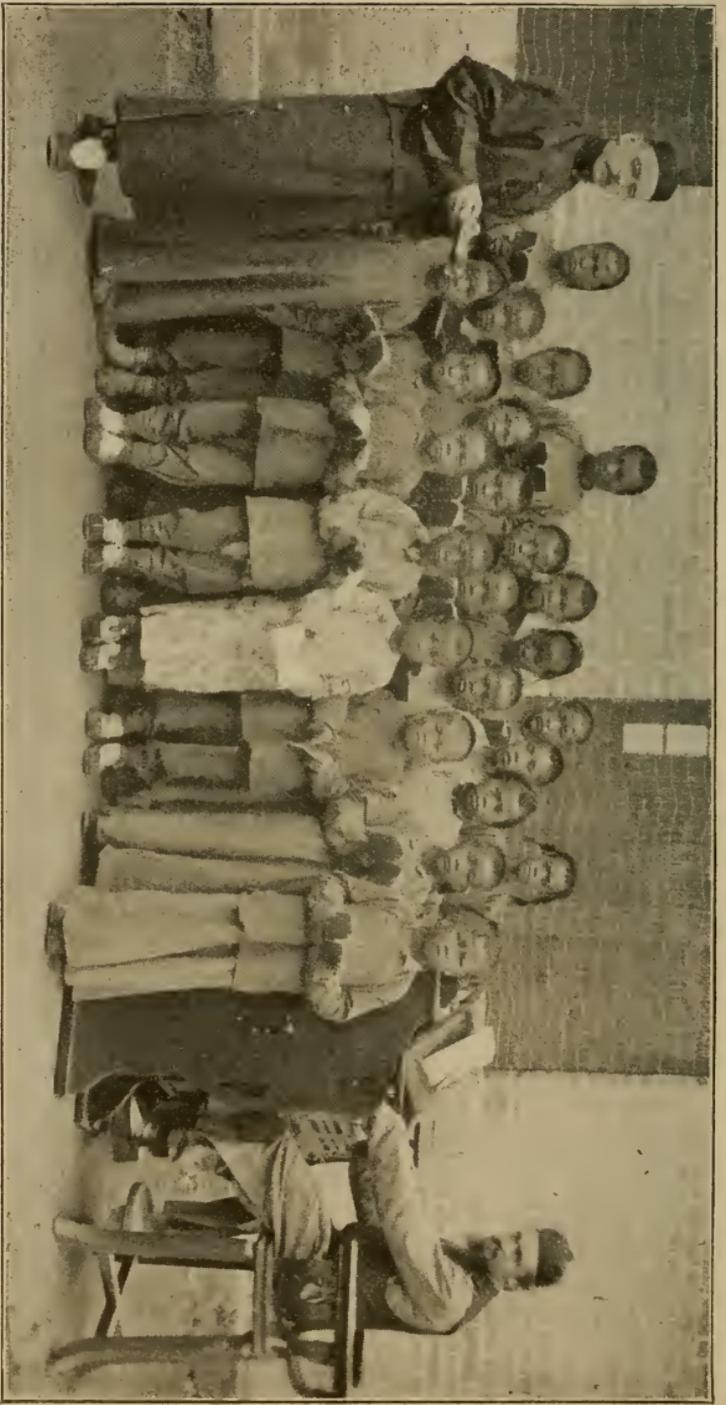
At these assemblies Father Henle always distinguished himself by his cheerfulness and gayety. By his splendid talent for narrating and often by his merry songs he cheered up the entire company. On the other hand, he also tried to profit by these meetings, by asking good advice and gathering useful information. For instance, when I travelled with him later on in the residence of Tsining he never spoke a word during the first hour on our way home. He would then reconsider what he had seen and heard and draw useful conclusions for his practice in the mission.

The following day Father Henninghaus and Father Henle started very early, in order to reach Tshantyachuang, their mission station, in time to celebrate Mass on Sunday. This journey, comprising about 70 miles, leads through rich and fertile regions, which, however, at that time numbered only a few Christians. For a novice in riding such trips are not very pleasant, but Father Henle did not complain. So also when at noon he could not partake of the Chinese dishes and was compelled to satisfy his hunger as best he could with a few macaronis boiled in water, no word of complaint or dissatisfaction was uttered by him. In the evening, "to banish his hunger," he sang all the songs he knew.

Father Henninghaus from this very first day learned to esteem and love his new co-worker and they were from then until death riveted in close friendship.

Late in the evening the two travellers arrived at their station. Father Henle no doubt had no presentiment that this station, where he later on labored so much, would also be the place of his violent death. A small room, poor and humble, worthy of an apostolic missionary, served as

a lodging for both Fathers. It could boast of only one window pasted over with a piece of paper; the floor was the bare ground, and the roof of straw. The entire furniture consisted of two cots placed in the corners of the room, covered with straw mats to serve as beds, a table, and two chairs. From here he wrote a little later to his parents: "I am so happy here in the "Celestial Empire" that I have cried repeatedly in my sleep, because, as I dreamt, I was not permitted to come here from Europe. And oh! what joy when I awoke."



Choir Practice in China

CHAPTER VII

**First Weeks in the Mission—Joys and Sorrows
of Mission Life—Love for His Vocation**

THE mission district entrusted to Father Henle's care comprised the large triangle between the Yellow River and the Imperial Canal and included, besides the Main Prefecture of Tsiningchu, also a large part of the Main Prefecture Tsouchufu and without doubt numbered more than 2½ million inhabitants. His district was more than 150 miles in diameter.

Only a few Christian communities had been established, but nevertheless everywhere individual men and women had already embraced the Christian faith. The main station of the entire district was Tshantyachuang, the village of the family Tshan, where he later was assassinated.

The mission district of Father Henle, especially the Prefecture of Tsouchufu, is *notorious* in China. It is the land where "the bandits grow," where hardly a day passes without open warfare either among individuals or entire villages. It has also been at several times the center of large rebellions and revolutions. But what is most peculiar is the fact, that side by side, with the most profligate of men, very many excellent and honest people may be found in this land of robbers. Upon the whole, the Tsaufuan is more firm of character, braver, and less cunning than the rest, but on the other hand, also more coarse and rough. The good amongst them are very

good and therefore well disposed for the grace of Christianity. After they have once accepted the Christian faith they will cling to it at any price and strive to become good Christians. They are greatly devoted to the missionary and are ready to go through fire for him.

The mission of Tsouchufu is therefore at once difficult and consoling. It is especially difficult on account of the continuous danger threatened by bandits. The missionaries who have hitherto labored there have, one and all, been assailed, robbed, and maltreated, first of all, the bishop, as related above. But the mission is also consoling, since it shows the greatest number of conversions, and because the Christians in general are very good and zealous.

Tsouchufu, then, was the vineyard in which Father Henle was to labor until death.

After Father Henninghaus, with whom Father Henle had departed from Puoly, had just installed his confrère in the mission, he was transferred by the bishop, and Father Henle was now left alone. It was a great act of confidence on the part of the bishop towards the young missionary, entrusting this important district to his care.

From the first period of his sojourn in Tsouchufu dates the following letter written to the venerable Father Superior General.

“Dear Rev. Father Superior :

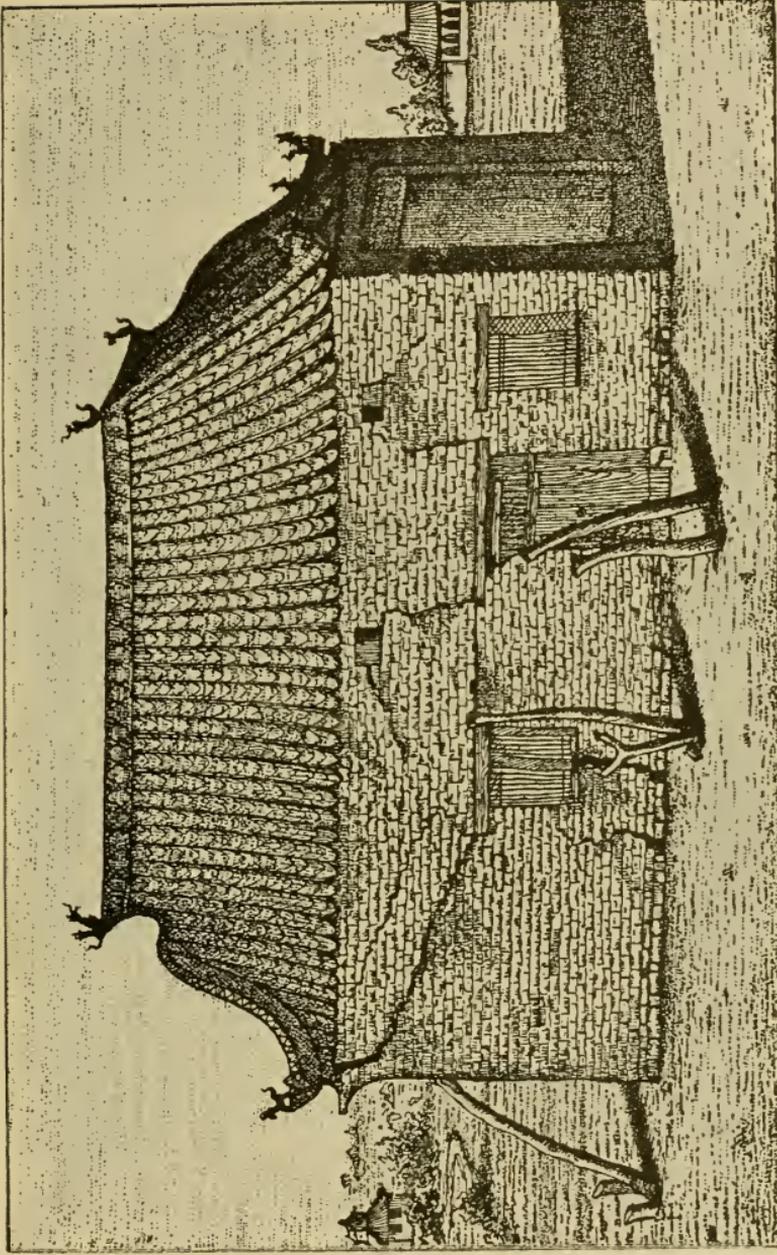
Now I, the *minus inter fratres*, will also trouble you, Rev. Father, with a few lines. I am sitting here in Tshāntyachuang, a distance of about 90 miles from Puoly. This village belongs to the district over which up to Easter the dear Rev. Father Henninghaus presided.

About three weeks ago a letter from His Grace, the bishop, recalled me from Puoly. Easter was as yet celebrated in Puoly. The Easter celebration in the pagan lands is truly elevating. The Chinese sing their Alleluja loud enough almost to stun one's hearing. Joyful and sad at once I left Puoly; joyful, that now the desire of my heart would be fulfilled, sad, because the Rev. Father Henninghaus was to remain with me only until he had completed his annual report. He worked himself almost to death during these ten days. Writing and figuring day and night, then again mounting the horse and hurriedly galloping away to make notes and memorandums or to settle matters here and put things right there etc. At last his strength gave way and he was seized by a fever. In spite of this he would not spare himself and was determined not to wait a day longer than necessary. Both Christians and heathens entreated him to remain, the latter even invited him to a zuo-si, banquet, but he would not remain. Rain was threatening the next morning. To start on a journey in rainy weather is, apart from everything else, against the custom of the country. With the high fever, he took to his bed and I did not neglect to inform the Christians outside that Father Henninghaus would surely not leave to-day. But he called out every moment: "How is the weather? As soon as the sun comes out, I will leave." Seeing all was of no avail, for the sun had really come out, although all agreed in saying: "T'ien duo bu hao, the sky is not clear," I finally told him the truth, but gave him, as a little remembrance, a vigorous water application, which made him scream out loud. But hurrah for the Kneipp cure, it was successful, and thus, followed by the Christians and the "J lu p'ing ngan", "an entire way full of

peace" of the heathens, he departed from dear Hotyatan, a station in the vicinity of Tshantya-chuang.

Since then I have lived alone in Hotyatan, and have spoken the Chinese language so correctly that they often were at a loss to know what I wanted. It really is not very pleasant to be placed in the midst of twenty or thirty curious Chinese, large and small, young and old, Christian and heathen. One inquires whether the food of which I am partaking at that moment and the name of which I don't know myself, can also be had in Europe; another one repeats half a dozen times: "Hanshinfu, Hanshinfu." What do you want?" I ask. "Tyi uo ko nyen tshu"—Give me a rosary. "You have more than I, for I have no more, you have taken them all; besides, you are wearing one around your neck." "Eya na shi ko zie-le-ti"—Yes, the little rogue answers, but it is a borrowed one. Finally the lads come to beg for European paper; if you satisfy them to-day, they will be sure to come in multiplied numbers tomorrow; and by giving some to one the others claim the same right.

For the novice the Chinese language is somewhat difficult. I found a French-Chinese lexicon in the library and started to study according to the common rule, substantive, adjective, verb, and adverb, and then formed entire sentences. Then I asked the tailor, smith, or miller, or the next best Chinaman that could be found just then, whether he could understand what I was reciting; with a look of compassion he generally answered: "bu tung ti"—I cannot understand it. I then asked one of the older missionaries and was told: "It is correct but the Chinese do not say so," or: "the pronunciation is wrong!" I had only been speaking German and Latin with



First Church at Hotyatan

Chinese words. The greatest difficulty, furthermore, is the hearing, i. e., the distinction of the pitch. It is such a confusion of sounds and tones that it often is impossible to catch where one word starts and an other ends.—But with the grace of God I hope to succeed, and then we will have a good chat.

At different times I have been out to a sermon with Father Wewel and other Fathers in the vicinity of Puoly. After one is seated before a heathen temple, all come streaming to see the “yan-kui-tze,” the foreign devil” (general designation of foreigners). They listen for a while, find one or the other thing strange, make their remarks, smoke their pipe, offer some tea, ask how old one is, and why one wears a beard at an age of not quite thirty, whether the parents are still living etc., etc.

My dear confrères have all, as far as I have seen them, edified me. Regarding my humble self, I am indebted, next to God, to you, Rev. Father Superior, for the happiness of laboring here for the salvation of souls. Truly, I owe much to you, and indeed, if I am able to contribute something for the missions, I owe this also to you. I am cheerful, contented, and happy in my vocation, and should any cross come, I know: “God will help me onward!” I entreat you, Rev. Father, for your prayers and blessing—.”

We see by this letter that Father Henle was a true missionary. He wished to become all to all, hence his great patience with these “curious Chinese.” He was likewise cheerful and happy amidst crosses and sufferings. This cheerfulness seldom failed him, even in the most trying situations of life. He had found true happiness in his vocation and often testifies to this in his letters: “I am happy and contented,” he writes

in the above letter. "I am faring well," he writes at another time. "How happy I am in China!" "It is a beautiful life, to labor as a missionary." "I am always healthy and happy," thus he expresses his enthusiasm for his vocation.

To his parents, concerned about his welfare, he wrote: "Do not be troubled about me, I am so happy in the "Celestial Empire" (China) that I have cried repeatedly in my sleep, dreaming I was refused to come here from Europe, and when I awoke, what joy! Here in this country the missionary experiences something new every day. One must simply keep up courage in all kinds of weather. As a matter of fact, I am totally indifferent to dangers. God helps us always and everywhere. It is almost midnight now and I must chase up the scorpions in my room yet. The day before yesterday I was stung by one in my knee, which made me dance around the room with pain. This morning I caught another one. You see, China is a rich country, simply everything is to be had here."

That Father Henle was not insensible to trials and sufferings and deeply felt corporal and spiritual sufferings, I can testify. It was extremely hard for this noble man, with a soul burning with love, who sacrificed himself entirely for others, to experience disappointments and ungratefulness; but it could not deprive him of his happiness. At one time he wrote me: "The day before yesterday I returned from Puoly, a journey of four days, including the passage of the Yellow River. In Puoly I celebrated solemn High Mass and recalled to mind how you at one time, bound in chains, sang so enthusiastically the "Sit nomen Domini Benedictum." At this I was cheered and gladdened and thanked the good Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for having made me so

happy. You see, there are hours of sadness but also some happy, even mirthful ones." For Father Henle, the most mirthful hours were those spent in the company of his confrères after a long separation sometimes of several months. "But," he continues, "not long ago I have also wept on account of the ungratefulness of the Christians (he is speaking of some neophytes in the station of Hotyatan). We have seen hard times recently. The heathens have beaten a Christian, burned a church, slander of the worst kind has been spread about me, I have been abused and laughed at, and once I was even in danger of being killed, but the most bitter pain is, to see the blindness of the Christians in this place, who openly opposed me, because I wished to execute a command of my superiors. But now it has passed as all things pass by."

The last words refer to an order of the bishop to change the plan of the church which was then being erected. The Christians on this account felt deeply humiliated, and a Tsaufuan would die for his honor. The leader of the discontented band later on died in a very sad condition.

Love for his vocation greatly facilitated his manifold sufferings and sacrifices. By this he won the love and respect of all hearts. Christians and heathens alike loved him and especially the former were greatly attached to him. But the heathens also he gained over in great numbers for they saw his unselfish and sacrificing love which cared for them all.

"God will help onward," was Father Henle's watchword.

CHAPTER VIII

At Yenchowfu, "the Holy City"

THE Province of Shantung, especially South Shantung, where Father Henle labored, is famous not alone for its numerous bandits and rebellions, but also for Confucius, a man idolized, almost worshipped, by the entire Chinese nation. For South Shantung is the birth and burial place of the "Great Holy Man."

Bishop Anzer realized at once, that should the work of the Propagation of the Faith be lasting in Shantung it would be necessary above all to establish himself near the sanctuary of China in the so-called Chinese Mecca and his endeavors from the very beginning were directed to settle permanently in the "Holy City," Yenchowfu.

But all his efforts were in vain. The city remained closed to him, and the French government, under whose protection the German missionaries were at that time, formed, without the knowledge of the Bishop, an agreement with the Chinese government, which even to-day may be seen inscribed on a large stone monument outside of the city, to the effect, that for many years no foreigner would dare to settle within its walls.

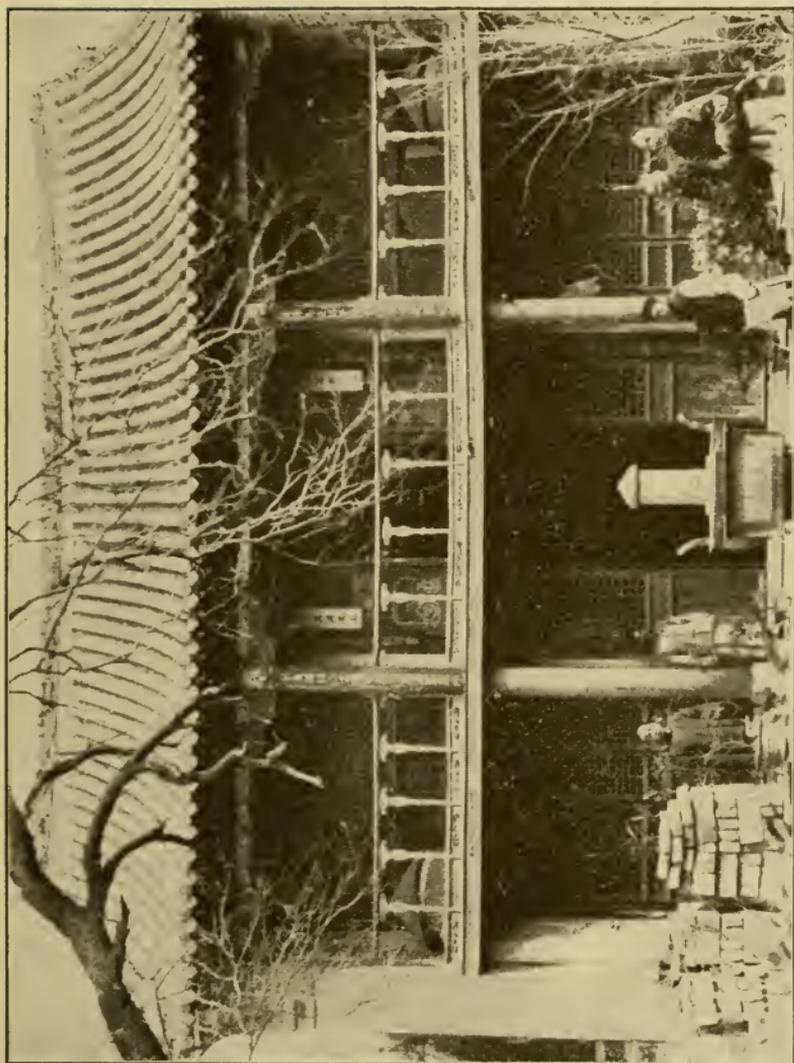
In 1890 the bishop undertook the prescribed journey to Rome and on this occasion placed his mission under the protection of Germany. The German Empire gave at once a decided proof of its protectorate and its first act consisted in send-

ing Count von Seckendorf as consul to Shantung to regulate the affairs in Yenchowfu.

Count von Seckendorf was a man of great experience and thorough education and at the same time mastered the Chinese language perfectly. The beginning of his journey through the Province of Shantung was not very promising. The representative of the German Empire was not even admitted to the governor of Shantung until the former simply rode into the palace and forced the governor to receive him.

Father Freinademetz was at that time administrator of the mission during the absence of the bishop. On hearing of the consul's journey, he naturally hastened to meet him and on his way there asked Father Henle to join him. Their way led them through Yenchowfu and they managed to escape discovery by passing through the city in an entirely closed wagon covered with a cloth. But their servant, who followed at a short distance, was recognized as a "Bastard-Chinese," held back and brought into court. At a distance of 70 li, (about 24 miles) from Yenchowfu, they met the consul and on the same day returned to the "Holy City."

The news of the coming of the German Consul had reached the city long before his arrival and the portals were closed to prevent his entrance. But without any ceremonies Count von Seckendorf opened the gate himself and entered with his companions, riding through the main street of the city. The next thing was to look for a lodging, but all hotels were closed. The Consul at last tired of searching, ordered one of his men to crawl below the portals of an inn and open from within. Thus they were able to alight. The people remained perfectly quiet. They were kept in check by a few soldiers given as an escort



SIMATI
The Temple of Confucius at Yenchowfu

to the Consul by the governor. Then after the magistrate of the city at last had provided for another lodging, the Consul proceeded to pay his visits, and the mandarins with the greatest solemnity also their return visits. But then the negotiations and consultations began, and the Consul demanded with the greatest firmness the reinstatement of the missionaries in the rights warranted to them by various agreements. But the mandarins under the feigned pretexts that the people did not want the "foreigners" greatly prolonged the negotiations.

Then one fine morning the entire city was overspread with red placards. "We, the magistrates of the entire city," the libel read, "have fixed the 15th of this twelfth month as the day on which the foreign devils are to be beaten and driven out of the city; meeting place: Simati."

But we will leave it to Father Freinademetz to describe the event. The 15th came and vast multitudes thronged the streets of the city, rushing to and fro in wild confusion like the storm-tossed waves of the sea. Simati¹ resembled a wasps' nest rudely disturbed. It was the place where the arms were distributed and where the plots and schemes were formed. But we may get some idea of the bravery and lion-heartedness of these multitudes when we consider that, as we learnt later on, each of the forty-eight sections required five hundred warriors. Twelve o'clock was the appointed time to open up the fight. Exactly at noon a wild roaring was heard in the distance, which gradually grew nearer and nearer. Wild hurrahs and shouts filled the air and amidst the tymbals' sound and beating of the drum the tumultuous mob was about to storm the portals

¹ A heathen temple.

of the hotel, which shortly before had been closed by the city authorities. A guard of about thirty men, which in the course of the morning had been sent for our protection by the various mandarins, a harmless band with not a weapon of any kind, propped themselves like so many logs against the portals of the inn to hinder the mob from entering.

Suddenly the old prefect in his sedan, as the *deus ex machina* of the entire comedy, appeared on the scene of action. The portals opened and whilst the multitude waited outside, he entered, calmed us, and assured the Consul, the mob would first have to kill him before he would permit the Consul to be hurt. But the Consul, on the other hand, also assured the mandarin, with revolver in hand, he would shoot down the first six of the mob who dared to enter, and then bearing the flag of his country in hand he would be ready to die for his emperor; but he expressed his regret that the old prefect and the entire Chinese Empire would have to pay dearly for the funeral celebration of the Consul of the German Empire. After a discourse of about half an hour the prefect returned to the crowd waiting outside, quieted them with good words and many ceremonies, and since the whole affair was planned by the authorities themselves and by no means plotted by the people, all now returned home.

As soon as the multitude had dispersed the mandarins hastened to express their regret and their hope that the Consul was convinced now that the people did not want the foreigners. But the Consul was not slow in detecting the artifices and the cunning of the officers and held them responsible for everything. The next day he left to attend personally to the affair with the German Government. Before their departure Father

Henle, with a sharp pencil, wrote upon the wall of the room "We depart, but will return." Their situation in Yenchowfu was, after all, not as harmless as the above description seems to indicate. Whoever is conversant with the conditions in China, will know that these mock-maneuvers often turn to be fearfully serious so that the mandarins are often incapable to check and control the wild passions of the mobs gathered on such occasions. So here, also, the situation at first seemed to prove dangerous. The consul as well as the missionaries prepared for death. Father Freinademetz told later on that he greatly admired the calmness and composure of Father Henle at that time.

The words written by Father Henle have long since been fulfilled. In 1897 the bishop established himself in Yenchowfu and a large Gothic church—the expiation church of the assassinated Fathers Henle and Nies—is now erected there. The people are quiet and well disposed towards the missionaries, and within the city and its vicinity numerous Christians may be found.

CHAPTER IX

Father Henle's Activity in Tsouchufu

FATHER HENLE, as stated above, at first had but a few congregations in his large mission district. Although the deficient knowledge of the Chinese language hindered him as yet to labor much in the vineyard, he nevertheless did not remain inactive.

For the Chinese mission men and women catechists are of great importance. The men are generally better educated Christian Chinese, who act as the missionaries' substitutes in the new parishes. During the day they instruct the children and the newly converted, in the evening they preach. As a rule they are the first to approach their heathen neighbors, thus becoming the forerunners of the missionaries. Much, therefore, depends upon their zeal and labor.

As long as Father Henle himself could not yet accomplish much by preaching, he endeavored to keep a close watch over his catechists. Quite suddenly and unexpectedly he would appear in their midst at school or attend their sermons. Sometimes in summer he would arrive at the school at five o'clock in the morning, and woe to the catechist if he was still found on his cot. (Father Henle by this time often had travelled four hours already.) It is customary in China for the Christians to say their morning prayers in common in the church, the same as they do in the evening to say their night prayers, with

the catechist to lead. Sometimes after Father Henle had left a parish, and the catechist now believing himself free to take a few days vacation, without the knowledge of the missionary, he would suddenly appear again at the same place.

No matter how kind and amiable Father Henle was otherwise towards his catechists, in regard to duty he exercised great rigor.

Whenever the catechists came to him he would instruct and examine them regarding their duties, and would inquire about their work. Thus he filled them with greater zeal, which naturally resulted in more numerous conversions.

After a short time of labor new Christians presented themselves everywhere in his district, among these also some larger towns.

In his report of 1892 he mentions twelve villages in which new congregations had been formed or the existing ones greatly extended since his arrival. Moreover, it was not long before he was able himself to preach and exercise his zeal personally.

His successors are now in the best position to testify to the success of Father Henle's labors in this district. One part of his district was assigned to me in 1894 and another in 1896, and in both places I reaped the harvest which he had sown.

With the increase of Christians difficulties also increased.

Those embracing the faith in China are nearly always exposed to suffering from their relatives, friends, and others. The convert is treated as an outlaw, sometimes for months; they neither buy from him nor sell him anything. Often even he is driven from his house and home or falsely accused of the worst crimes and brought before



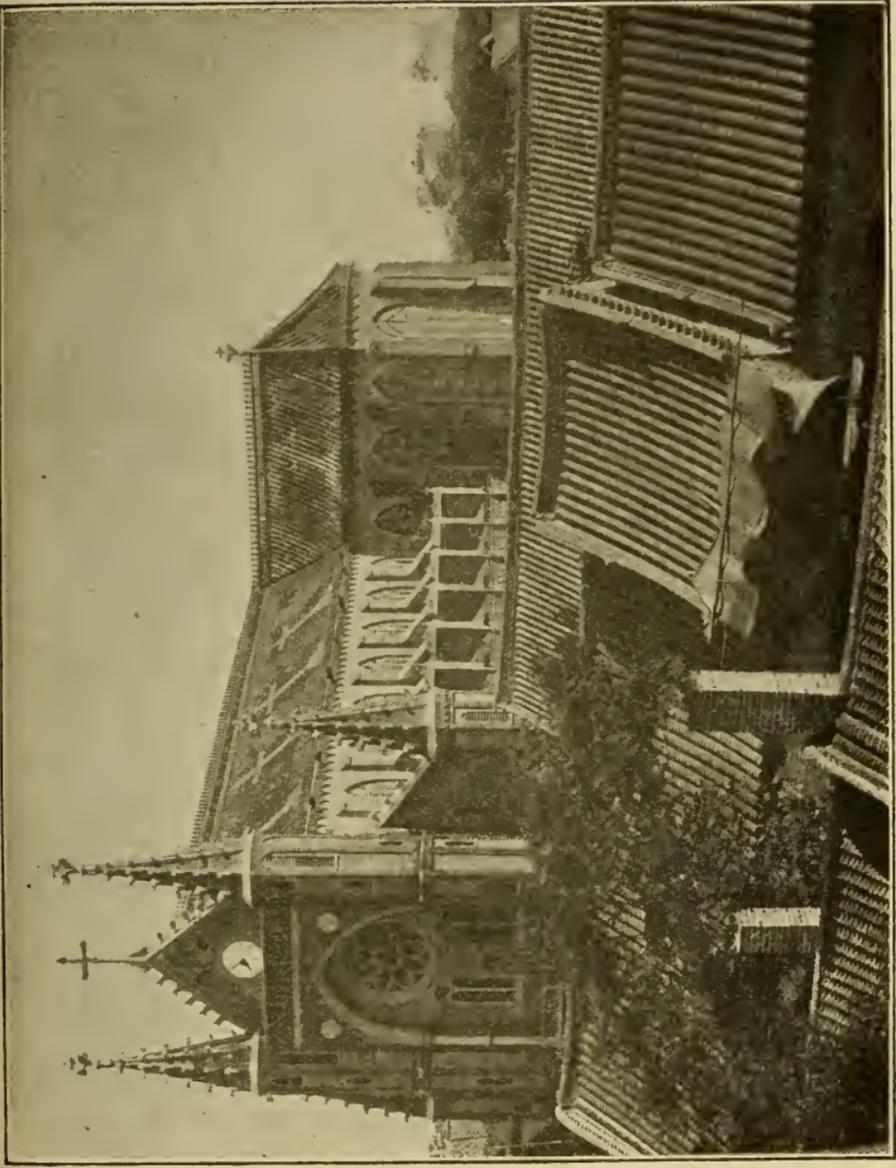
*Front View of the Church at Yenchowfu
built by the Chinese Government
in reparation of the murder of the two missionaries*

court. There is no justice in China, as long as gold and silver are the chief or only arguments, and often enough the poor, innocent Christians were stretched on the rack or even condemned to death.

Father Henle, therefore, tried to be on good terms with the officers and the rich and learned men, and often contrived to induce these "friends" to pronounce a just sentence. Even the most cunning mandarin could not resist his amiable manner and in regard to shrewdness Father Henle was equal to any mandarin. He became known throughout the entire mission for his prudence. For the same reason he had also studied the laws and morals and customs of the Chinese to the smallest point.

But more than once even his kindness could not prevail over the hatred of a few malignant enemies, which caused Father Henle, with his "golden, tender heart," indescribable pain and anguish. At one time one of his Christians, although innocent was accused of robbery and condemned to death, another was secretly poisoned in prison as an incendiary, several were kept in most hideous dungeons and tortured, and once the mandarin Li, of Tyasian, sentenced one of the Christians to one hundred bamboo lashes on his bare body, and after these were imparted, one more to take along for the "European devil, his spiritual Father."

It is a remarkable fact that these sworn enemies of the Church nearly all were visited by great misfortunes. The mandarin Li, for instance, shortly after was assailed by bandits and robbed of his entire possessions, while his daughter at the same time was crucified at the entrance of the city. To-day he is living as a beggar in Tsining.



Side View of the Church at Yenchowfu,

1894 and 1895 were years of great excitement and trouble for Father Henle. At this time the bandits had become particularly numerous and in large gangs assailed, in bright daylight, farms and villages. The catechists especially were frequently visited by them, because they expected the missionary to pay the ransom for them. In consequence several of them were taken prisoners.

The catechists therefore could hardly be persuaded to venture into dangerous districts, and Father Henle saw his flourishing parishes in great peril. At last he decided to place two together at the most dangerous stations, one to watch during the daytime, the other during the night.

Nevertheless, one catechist was horribly wounded, whilst a boy who slept in the same room with him was killed. The child's skull was split with a sword.

In 1895 there was open rebellion. Several villages in Father Henle's districts had been taken and fortified with ramparts by the bandits. But Father Henle remained with his Christians. At one time he was decoyed into a trap which would have proved dangerous to him, had not the Christians and heathens of Hotyatan united their forces and rescued him from the midst of more than one thousand robbers.

Thus his life at that time was in constant danger. However, he always succeeded in extricating himself from the numerous dangers and difficulties. He was fearless and often traversed the most dangerous districts at night.

Only once, in 1896, he was captured and badly maltreated. Although he wrote to his parents and fellow-brethren that he received only a "few blows" and "a thrashing," it evidently was more

than this. The bruises and bumps from the blows were visible for a good many days.

But here, as always, his good humor stood him in good stead. "God be praised," he said to me later on, "that I also had my share for once, and can speak from experience."

Of the full particulars regarding this adventure I will speak later on.

The work in Father Henle's district had increased to such an extent that it was impossible to master it alone any longer, although several larger divisions had been separated from it. In the fall of the year 1896 I was appointed his assistant and had a Chinese prefecture assigned to me as my field of labor.

As my neighbor he had proved himself a dear friend, often giving advice and consolation: likewise he remained a friend also when he became my superior. It was a pleasure to work under his guidance. Another assistant in the person of † Father Horstmann was appointed to his district; and we worked together in peace and harmony, like one heart and one soul, sharing with one another the joys and sorrows of mission life.

About Easter, 1897, we had upwards of eighty larger and smaller stations in our district. This number is of greater significance because of the fact, that a violent persecution was raging in the neighboring district to the south in 1896—1897. But Father Henle's prudence contrived to keep it almost entirely out of his district. His friendly intercourse with the rich and the mandarins proved of great advantage to him in this respect and a great benefit for the extension of Christianity. His activity during these perilous times was truly marvelous. Day and night he was traveling, to console or encourage, to settle dis-

putes and quarrels. By his great love and dauntless spirit he set a beautiful example to the Christians. In China, at that time a land without telegraph or mail, rumors are considered very important. For instance, reports were spread to the effect that the persecutors were in the neighborhood, that they committed horrible crimes, that within the next days this or that station would be assailed, etc. Father Henle was well informed regarding the persecution and wherever he made his appearance, the good Christians were greatly relieved and looked forward to the future with new courage and hope.

For us younger missionaries the great zeal and activity of our superior was an inspiration.

In the summer of 1897 Father Henle was obliged to go to Taetya, about 65 miles away from the center of his district, to enter the noviciate as a preparation for his perpetual vows. Towards the middle of July, he returned to his mission, and worked, since Father Horstmann had been transferred in the meantime, with new energy and zeal until death overtook him so suddenly.

A peculiar melancholy mood seemed to have taken possession of his soul during the last days. He foresaw the coming horrors of a fresh persecution and with his sharp intellect scanned the coming events, and was deeply pained at the terrible sufferings awaiting his Christians. He made the same impression on Father Henninghaus, who had met him at the end of the retreat. "The last time," he writes, "I saw my friend on the occasion of the bishop's name's day. He came to me once more, after having taken leave before, to press my hand another time. I was saying my office. He gave me his hand and gave me a long and penetrating look, as though something was preying on his heart. I was strangely af-

fectured by this and was haunted by the impression all evening."

One part of Father Henle's activity I have not yet mentioned is the churches, or rather, the chapels erected by him. When he first took charge of his district he found only two "churches," built of clay and in a most lamentable condition; in all other places the houses of Christians or miserable hovels, worse than the poorest stables in America, served as dwelling place for a missionary. Often enough he was compelled to share his room with his faithful horse, whilst his servant, a most affectionate man, slept on the ground at his door "to protect his priest." Often enough this same place had to serve as chapel in the morning, whereby the unhinged door placed over the small table represented the altar. At one time when the storm and rain had softened the roof of clay we took shelter together for the night under one umbrella, in the corner of the room. It was a crying need, therefore, to provide for better lodgings. But how to accomplish this was a question of great concern to Father Henle. Nevertheless he succeeded in erecting at least a few stronger and better buildings in which to hold divine service on holydays and to which he could retire for a few days after his long and strenuous missionary journeys.

Small wonder, then, that in consequence of such activity, the mission made astonishing progress. Besides this he made good use of his eloquence and fluency of speech by preaching at least once, often twice and three times, a day. All Christians received the sacraments at least four times a year.

"His life was one of hardest toil," writes Father Henninghaus, his first teacher and superior in the mission, "which the young missionary led

in Tsouchufu: restlessly journeying from place to place, from station to station, from village to village, wherever the welfare of the souls entrusted to his care was concerned, he was at hand. His door was open to all, for like St. Paul, he wished to become all to all, to gain all for Christ. And his labors were abundantly blessed. He succeeded in giving to the mission a better foundation or a greater extension. The few stations which he found at his arrival increased through his and his co-workers' activity to nearly one hundred new Christian congregations. God alone knows what sacrifices and care every new station demanded of the missionaries."

It is little to be wondered at, then, that the Venerable Bishop von Anzer, when speaking of the deceased, extolled "his rich talents and burning zeal" and the missionaries, as well as the Christians and heathens, deeply mourned the death of their dear confrère and priest. It almost seemed as though the loss was irreparable.

Yet, by his death, as we shall presently see, he effected by far more for the missions than he could ever have accomplished in life. Surely the old saying remains true: "Sanguis martyrum est semen Christianorum," that the blood of martyrs is the seed of new Christians.

CHAPTER X

The Assault at Yentyachuang

IT has been related above that Father Henle's missionary activity in Tsouchufu, his mission district, was rendered extremely difficult by the continuous danger threatened by robbers. The missionary was in constant danger of death. In the spring of 1896 Father Henle laid the foundation for a new chapel. The building was placed under the supervision of a catechist. One day the missionary repaired to the place to look after the work personally, and to bring a few pieces of silver to the superintendent to defray the expenses of the building. Towards evening he went to a neighboring parish, as prudence warned him not to remain at said place over night. Thoroughly exhausted by the fatigues of his journey, as also by his uninterrupted speaking and preaching, he lay down on his cot late in the evening and sank into a deep sleep. The catechist and two young Christians slept in the same room with him.

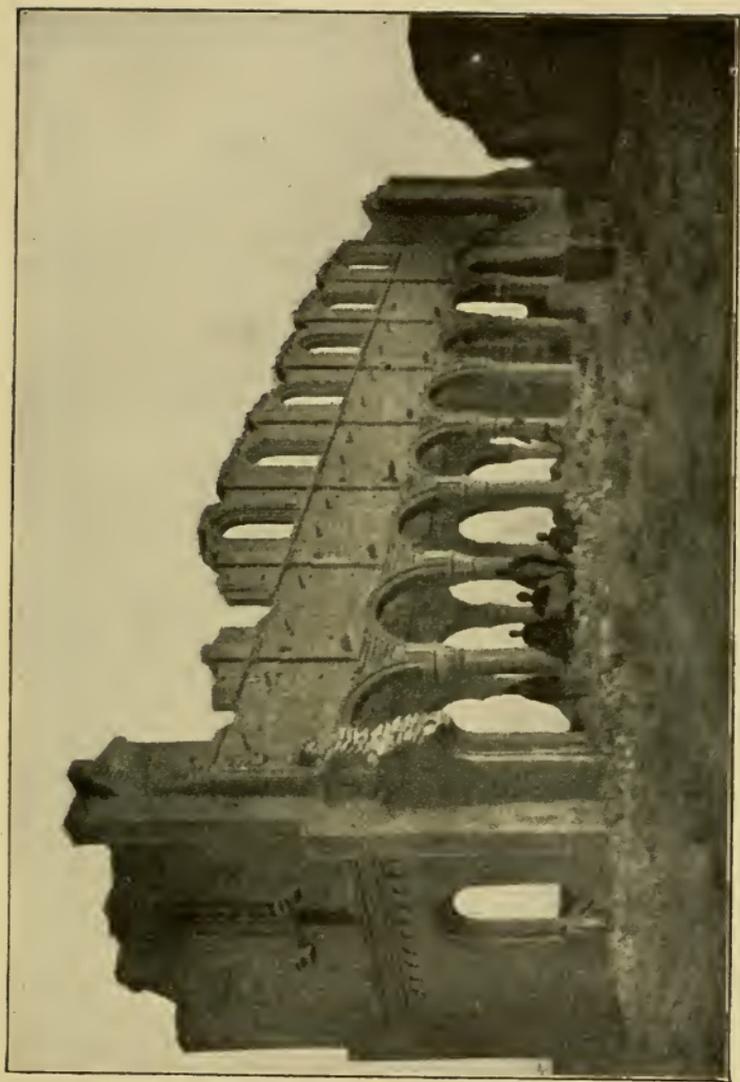
The catechist locked the door and was just on the point of going to rest, when suddenly a number of shots and heavy blows against the door from without disturbed the peace and silence of the night. The catechist realizing at once the meaning of this noise, dragged the drowsy, tired priest from his bed and placed himself against the wall to escape the bullets coming through the window. At first Father Henle stood behind the

door, which yielded so far to the blows as to permit the enemy to force through their lances. Urged by the catechist he ascended a ladder to hide himself under the beams of the roof. The two boys crawled under the beds.

Hardly had Father Henle reached the top of the ladder when the door gave way. The bandits being quite numerous, and armed doubly with knives and rifles, stormed into the room, seized the catechist, and, while searching for the silver, cruelly overwhelmed him with blows. Every article, the chalice, clothes, blankets, a purse with paper money, the revolver under the pillow of the priest, immediately disappeared. Not a word was uttered by the robbers, only their leader gave a few short and precise commands. By the light of their gloomy flickering torches of Korean paper they searched every corner but could not find the missionary. At last Father Henle, unable to listen to the wailing of the catechist any longer, called down from his hiding place: "My honored guests,¹ take with you whatever you find suitable, but refrain from torturing my people. This man has not harmed you, therefore cease abusing him." Astonished, one of them held up his torch and discovered the missionary. "Come down," he called, "we are only looking for you." "Very well," Father Henle replied, "I shall come down, but do not torture that man any longer." At once the catechist was released.

The missionary had hardly touched the floor with his feet, when he, seized at once by his cue, softly slid down backwards to the ground. Whilst one held him down by his cue, another pointed his knife and a third one a gun at his breast. To the question where the silver was

¹ General way of addressing guests.



Church at Tsouchufu, Demolished by the Boxers in 1900

concealed the missionary could answer in all truth, that three pieces of silver had been in his possession in the morning, but that he had used them to defray the building expenses and had received the balance in paper money, which they could take from his purse. Of the silver only a small piece was left which he also handed to them. The disappointed bandits began to beat the missionary, but he assured them that even if they would kill him, he could not offer them any more. Upon this they again maltreated the catechist. But the missionary, who up to now had only in a friendly manner called the bandits "brethren" and "friends,"¹ lost patience and called out to them: "It is wrong to treat my innocent people in this manner." But in answer to this one of the bandits carefully placed the sharp point of a knife between his teeth, which hindered him from saying anything more.

In the meantime everything had been pocketed. Suddenly a shot was heard from without, coming from the Christians, who by this time had arrived to the rescue. This startled the robbers. With a friendly bow they took leave of their victim and disappeared as quietly as they had come. To cover their retreat they carried one of the Christians off with them, abusing him the while to cause him to lament and scream aloud, to hinder forcible persecution by the Christians. The entire assault only lasted a few minutes. Quickly, yet without haste, in mysterious silence the whole affair was executed, like a play long since drilled and practiced.

As soon as the fright and danger had passed, the priest was surrounded by the Christians and heathens of the village. Now, that the danger

¹ Chinese form of etiquette.

was obviated, in true Chinese fashion they gave full vent to their indignation and tried to prove their courage. Now all offered to watch. One even came screaming and howling with a bleeding head. In the attempt to throw stones over the wall at the robbers, but without striking, he was himself struck by the latter with a stone on his forehead. Now, also, the Christian dragged along by the bandits returned and plaintively showed his wounds. The catechist above all had been badly maltreated. Father Henle's pains also were very acute. He suffered from the cold, since he had been robbed of nearly all his clothes and blankets. He was obliged to content himself with the clothes of the peasants brought to him by the Christians. In his good humor, which never failed him, he consoled the people, and after a lengthy chat he dismissed them to enjoy the rest of the night in sleep. To the Bishop, Father Henle announced the event in the following words: "I have lost everything with the exception of my good humor."

The next morning the persecution of the robbers began. At a short distance a pagoda was situated in an open field. This pagoda, the clever Father Henle concluded, was the place where the plunder was divided. At the head of his Christians he set out, following the traces of his mule, which also had been taken by the robbers. At first it was difficult to follow the footprints, as they led in zigzag turns into the field, but finally they led straightway to the pagoda. Only a few worthless things were found. Furthermore, a cartridge case of Chinese paper was found with the name inscribed upon it, which rendered further inferences possible. From the pagoda the footprints of the mule could easily be traced to a village and then to the gate of a rich farmer.

This was sufficient. A few remained to keep watch at the door whilst a messenger hastened to the next mandarin, who on investigation really found the mule in the house of the farmer. After this the assault was reported to the district mandarin and thus they succeeded in receiving a compensation which at least to some extent approached the amount of the stolen articles. Some of the bandits also were caught.

Father Henle, for the purpose of recreating a little, set out for one of his older Christian stations and thence, in response to my invitation, also paid a visit to me. He was greatly exhausted after all the ill-treatment received. Nevertheless he retained his good spirits and cheerfulness and after a few days had passed he could not remain any longer. He must return to "his robbers," and, as though nothing had happened, he labored again in his vineyard in spite of dangers and sufferings.

CHAPTER XI

Father Henle's Rule of Day

FATHER HENLE arose very early in the morning. Besides his morning prayers and a half hour's meditation he usually had recited his entire morning office before offering the Holy Sacrifice of Mass. Often also the rosary or the way of the cross. Mass in the mission is said in summer at half past three or four o'clock, in winter nearly always at six.

Since the clock in the mission often fails, it frequently happened that Father Henle, thinking it was morning, would ring the bell to call the Christians to Mass shortly after midnight. At one time after Mass he had even traversed from Tshantyachuang to Tsining, a distance of 30 miles, and found on his arrival that the Christians there had just started their morning prayers. "On my way," he said to some one later on, "I was somewhat alarmed at the delay of dawn, and I believe I said Mass before midnight."

Father Henle celebrated Mass with great devotion and reverence. Just as he formerly distinguished himself in Steyl by his edifying attitude at prayer, so also later on in celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

After thanksgiving he took his breakfast, which like all his meals, was very simple, almost too poor. I often remarked to him that it was incomprehensible to me how he managed to exist in partaking only of such poor and insufficient nourishment. In winter he took only two meals

a day. When alone he observed Wednesday and Saturday as fast days but in the presence of other confrères with whom he was not so well acquainted he refrained from fasting to avoid drawing attention. He would then, on the contrary, be ingenious at table to make their sojourn a pleasant one and a real recreation. Such visits usually took place every few months.

Also regarding his clothes he was extremely moderate but was particular regarding cleanliness and etiquette. As the superior of the mission district he was often obliged to visit the mandarins and other men of high rank, occasions on which strict rules in regard to dress must be observed in China, for the Chinese lay great stress on ceremonies. Father Henle therefore took pains to appear in the proper apparel on such occasions, even though he had to borrow it from the heathens.

After breakfast he admitted the people, who came from all sides, to listen to their requests and wants. With marvelous patience he devoted himself to all who had recourse to him in every possible want and need. He settled disputes amongst the Christians; Tshantyachuang, for instance, since its conversion had not had a law suit within eighteen years; here he would help with good advice, there consoling and encouraging others. Twenty, and more, messengers from the various parts of his mission district I have seen at Father Henle's in one morning.

If any time remained, he would examine the children of the place or take council with the catechists regarding the Christians or the prospect of new converts. The course of the afternoon was similar to that of the forenoon.

In the evening after the night prayers of the Christians he would preach or give instructions,



FATHER HENLE
in Chinese costume

after which he gathered the men about himself reading to them some of the last happenings of one or the other parish, or the like. Father Henle had a fine talent for narrating and the people would listen to him for hours. At last he would dismiss the Christians late in the evening and then he often spent a long time in praying before he took a much needed rest. In prayer he gathered his strength and courage, there also he explored the rich blessings. His intimate intercourse with God always again restored the cheerfulness of heart to him. Therefore, also, his constantly recurring entreaties for prayers in his letters.

But particularly when preserving the Blessed Sacrament in one of his little churches, he was wont to spend a long time in the evening praying before the altar. "Those," he writes to his parents, "are precious hours late in the evening before the tabernacle when all is quiet. Then I also remember you in my distant home country, who for the love of God have made such great sacrifices."

A bed is unknown to the missionary in Shantung. As a rule, a cot, often only the bare floor, serves as resting place for the night. Father Henle likewise accustomed himself to the habit of the moderate Chinese by taking a stone or a piece of wood for his pillow at night. But when visiting others, his clothes served as a support for his head.

Here again his spirit of sacrifice was manifested. The daily privations and sacrifices of the mission were not sufficient for him. By prayer and mortification Father Henle strove to sanctify his daily work. Small wonder then that his labors were blessed with such abundant fruit.

CHAPTER XII

Father Henle's Love of God and of His Neighbor

LOVE of God must be the foundation of all other virtues. Without love of God it would be impossible to take upon oneself, spontaneously, all the sacrifices required of the religious and mission life. Without love of God none would be found to leave home and their good parents to devote themselves in a strange land, without friends and relatives, to the great work and numerous sufferings with the view of an untimely death and no other reward save that of heaven.

Love of God was also the great motive of Father Henle's unrelenting activity. Filled with rare love and tenderness towards his parents he nevertheless remembered the words: "Whosoever loveth his father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me," and thus he went as a laborer of God into the vineyard of the Lord.

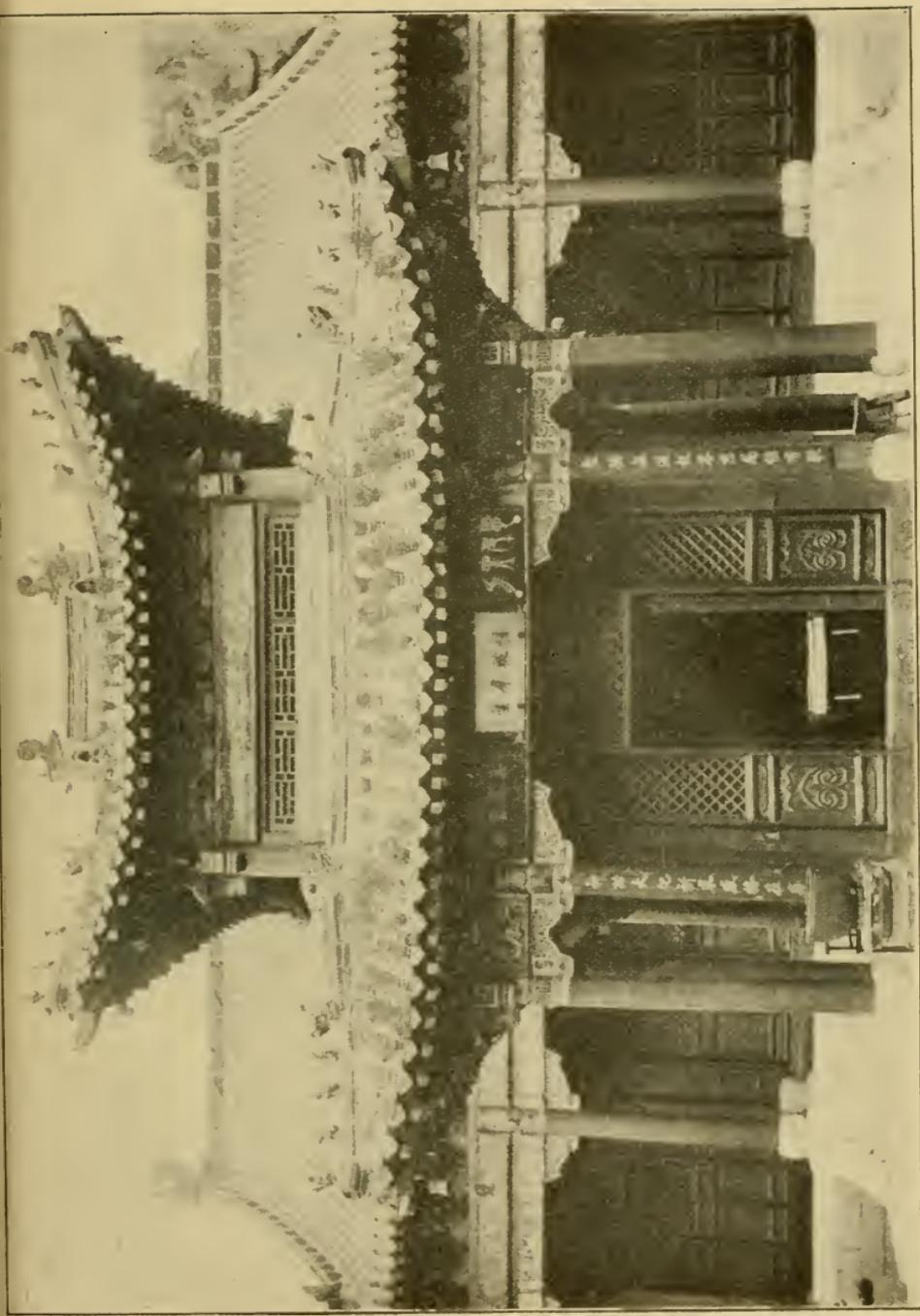
When his mother before his entry into the mission house spoke of the difficulties of his vocation and predicted a cruel and untimely death to him, the child answered: "Mother, who is standing at the foot of the cross? Mother, have you never heard of the Maccabean brethren and their mother? Surely, that was something by far greater. She was forced to witness the tortures of her sons; you will not be present in case I should be martyred." To this his good, pious

mother had no answer, and gave her consent to the vocation of her son.

Some of his letters also bear witness to his love of God. Thus he wishes his mother on her name day (Magdalen) the same glowing love of St. Magdalen. "A soul who truly loves God always lives in peace, for nothing is capable of destroying perfect resignation to His Holy Will, which is riveted with true love of God."

Another time, on the same occasion, he wrote to his mother: "Since I love you tenderly, dearest Mother, and earnestly desire to wish you only that which is best and most beautiful, I know of nothing better to implore for you from the good God than that which made St. Magdalen so pleasing in His eyes: The holy love of God. Ah, Mother! If I could but attain this for you in the same measure as St. Magdalen possessed it, I would be happy, most happy. To pray for health and a long life is well, but only when adding: Lord, if it be Thy Will. But one who prays for the love of God must not, nay, even may not, put a condition, but must ask directly: Lord, I desire to love Thee; Thou must give me Thy love. But since the fountain of this holy love is hidden in the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, I wish to you in the second place, and will pray for this most earnestly at Holy Communion, a great joy and desire to receive very often this Holy Sacrament, which is truly an invention of the glowing love of the Divine Heart of Jesus. May St. Magdalen, dearest Mother, implore for you a large measure of this divine love of God, which raised her to such heights of sanctity. This is the heart-felt wish of your loving Richard."

His great love of God also was the source of his wonderful spirit of prayer, and even his ex-



Chinese Pagoda

terior manifested, as we have seen before, that he was conscious of the presence of God. His soul was always in communication with God, so that he on different occasions even prayed aloud in his sleep at night, sang sacred songs, and intoned the Alleluja so joyfully as to arouse the entire dormitory at Steyl.

The missionary's love of God manifested itself, above all, in his heroic love of his neighbor, especially towards his parents, to whom he extended the most rare and tender love and gratitude. Often, and with sincere gladness, he wrote to them, "to have a little chat with them", to console and encourage them, and to express his gratefulness for favors and benefits received, and to inflame them to a still greater love of God and their neighbor. With the utmost care he strove to conceal all sad news from them that he might not cause them any care or pain.

When, for instance, his life was in danger in Yenchowfu, he wrote to his parents: "I am still well and happy and in good spirits. No doubt you have learned through the papers that the German consul von Seckendorf has visited us and that he was nearly beaten in Yenchowfu and that two Catholic missionaries were with him. These two were the Rev. Father Provincial Freinademetz and myself. At that time we were earnestly preparing for death. But who would think of writing home about anything like this, when one only has a sick father and mother at home who would then be greatly troubled and worried about it." (His parents had been complaining about his long silence.) "Surely, Richard cannot write that he almost was drowned in trying to rescue a fellow brother, neither that he was seized by the fever last fall. In fact, many things have happened to Richard about which he cannot very

well write; besides this, he is daring and loath to listen to the warnings of his mamma, therefore he does not write about everything. Otherwise Richard is not like formerly—he is by far more lively and gay, but also cried at one time when ungrateful Christians, to whom he had been extremely kind, revolted against him. At first he cried, but then called the rascals to account. You see, this is the life of your Richard. Therefore be unconcerned about him, but pray very much that his piety may increase. I also pray for you every hour of the day.” Thus he also writes regarding the assault at Yentyachuang: “In the enclosed letter there is mention of an assault and robbery. But do not worry, nothing has happened to me, but that I received a few blows. I am happy and well. To be frank, I must admit that I was not afraid and really did not have any time for it. Do not be troubled, God is with us and will protect us.” Love forbids him to write full particulars of the dangerous adventure.

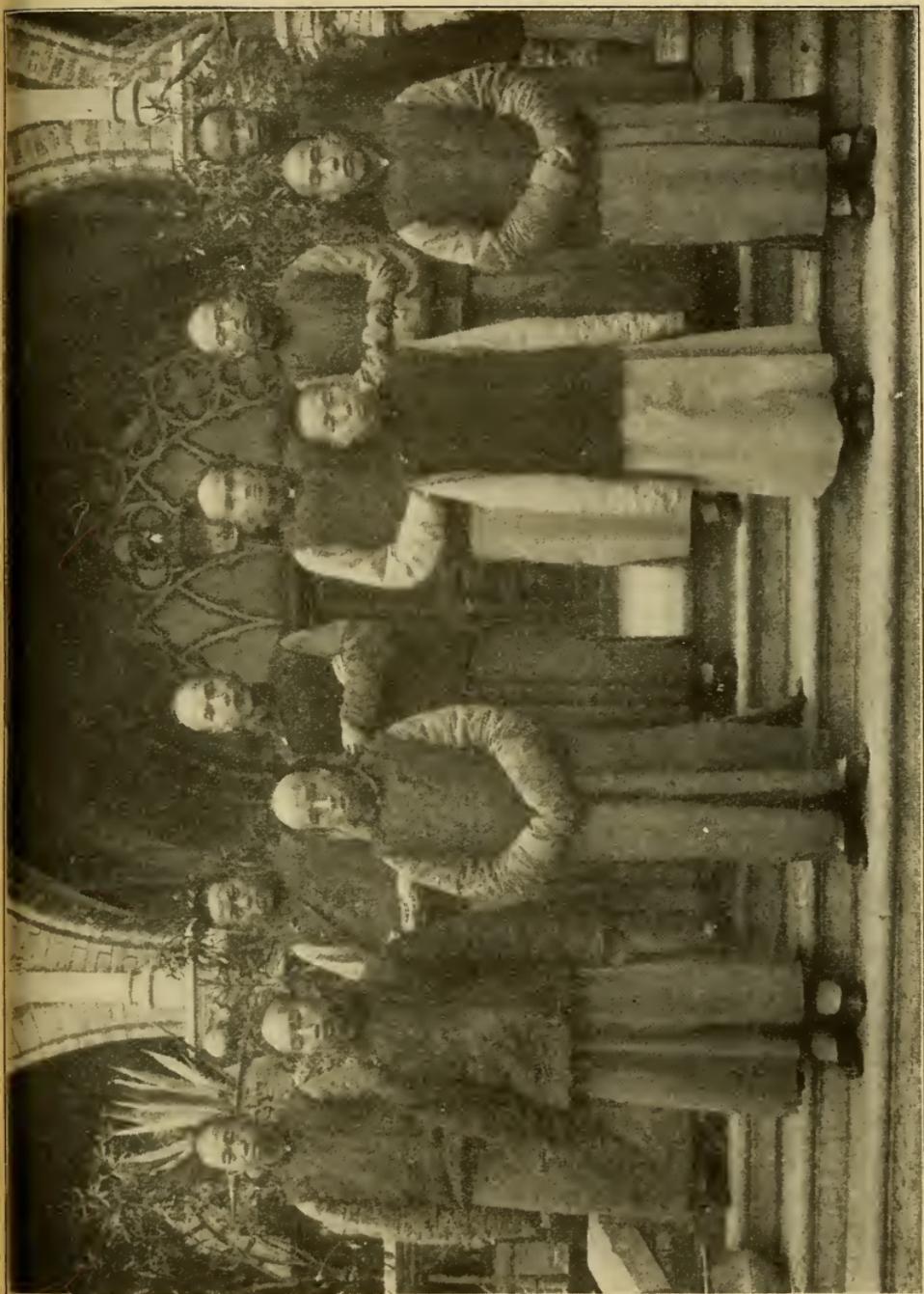
Gratefulness especially was the source of his tender love towards his parents. “Beloved Parents!” he writes at one time on receiving some money from them in Steyl, “I have received your valuable present today, and, though I rejoiced over it, I was also pained to have wrested such a large sum from you at one time. You have labored for it in the sweat of your brow, and I take it from you without being able to give you anything else in return but a fervent “God bless you a thousand times;” but, dear parents, it comes from a heart overflowing with tenderness and love for you, and ascends to the God who loves you still more, and this grants the consolation to me not to use your gift entirely without a recompense.”

"How happy," he writes before receiving minor orders, "how happy I would be if it were granted me to give you the great pleasure of remunerating to you, at least to some extent, the great love and numberless benefits bestowed upon me, or at least, to prove that I would be happy, extremely happy to see you happy, or, if I dare say so, to make you happy. Good God, I will thank Thee through all eternity for the happiness at last prepared for me to give to my parents, who are next to Thee my greatest benefactors, the first fruits of their prayers and wishes, their labors, sufferings, and self-denials."

But the filial love of Father Henle was, even though yet so fond and tender, nevertheless, also paired with firmness and manliness, which shows clearly that the love of his neighbor was founded on his love of God. On the 23 of January, 1890, shortly after his arrival in the mission, he wrote to them: "A few days ago I received your letter. It contained much joyful news for me, as it is a long time since I heard from you last. Of a truth, it was written at a time when your hearts were still bleeding, but it is composed and full of resignation. God be praised for it!"

Shortly after his ordination he had written: "The love to you has not diminished in my heart, it has rather been increased since my ordination, but it must be supernatural to that effect that it may not hinder me when God calls me."

His good parents did not wish to detain their son in the fulfilment of his heart's desire, on the contrary, their blessing and prayers accompanied him into the mission and in all dangers. At prayer the parents and their child were daily united, "every day and every hour" Father Henle thinks of his parents, and the only thing liable to cause him concern before making perpetual vows,—



Chinese Seminarians

“if I had no confidence in God, are my dear old parents.” In his last letter he requested them to send their photographs to him, but they did not reach him anymore. On the same day when the telegram of his death reached Steyl, the photographs of his parents also arrived there, to be forwarded to China.

Happy the parents who have reared such a son. For many a child Father Henle may serve as an example in the practice of respect and love due to their parents. Naturally, his love was not only extended to his parents alone. His pastor already had testified of the little student: “His extremely tender disposition is inclined to the greatest possible compassion.”

We have already seen how this inclination of the child was fostered and ennobled by his mother. In Steyl he continued and intensified his love and charity still more and was one of the most zealous in distributing alms.

In the mission house at Steyl it was customary for the students to visit the poor and destitute in the vicinity and at the portals of the monastery and to distribute the alms to them. Father Henle assisted when and wherever he could, and his compassion was so great that he did not shrink from appealing for help for his poor to his by no means wealthy parents. “Here in this neighborhood”, he wrote one day, “there are some extremely poor people, so poor that it is almost impossible to comprehend. I know a family where the father has been sick for the last five months. There are seven children to be supported and these are destitute of even the most necessary clothing. Their home is a miserable little hovel with the wind whistling through the cracks and joints; I have seen it with my own eyes; daily at noon a little boy comes with a cart to call for their dinner,

as otherwise they would not have anything. The parish is so poor that it cannot even raise the doctor's fee.

"If I did not fear to annoy you, I would tell the Christ Child to remember the cold bleak night when He lay shivering with the cold in His manger, and that, after all, it is very hard to see poor innocent children crying because of the cold; therefore I would have Him tell my mother to send a few pieces of goods for garments and some linen cloth for shirts." Most of his own shirts he had already given away to the poor, and thus he also had to beg for himself in his letter.

The practice of Christian charity was one of the greatest joys for the young religious. "With great emotion and joy I remember", he says in one of his letters to his parents, admonishing them in the cold winter of 1886 to be mindful of the poor, "how at one time when returning home from school at ten o'clock I found a workman in the room eating with apparent pleasure a good piece of bread; mother had just finished baking but at noon one loaf was missing. Mother! when I take compassion on the poor heathens in China, I will say to the good God: I give Thee thanks, O heavenly Father, for having blessed me with such a good mother, she has taught it to me."

That this man later on also practiced Christian charity in the mission is self-evident. He truly wished to become all to all. In fact, he may even have been misunderstood by some when he often cheered and enlivened the entire company by his cheerfulness and gaiety. Although naturally inclined to be serious, he often uttered a joke, perhaps merely for the sake of a fellow brother whom he saw sad and melancholy or

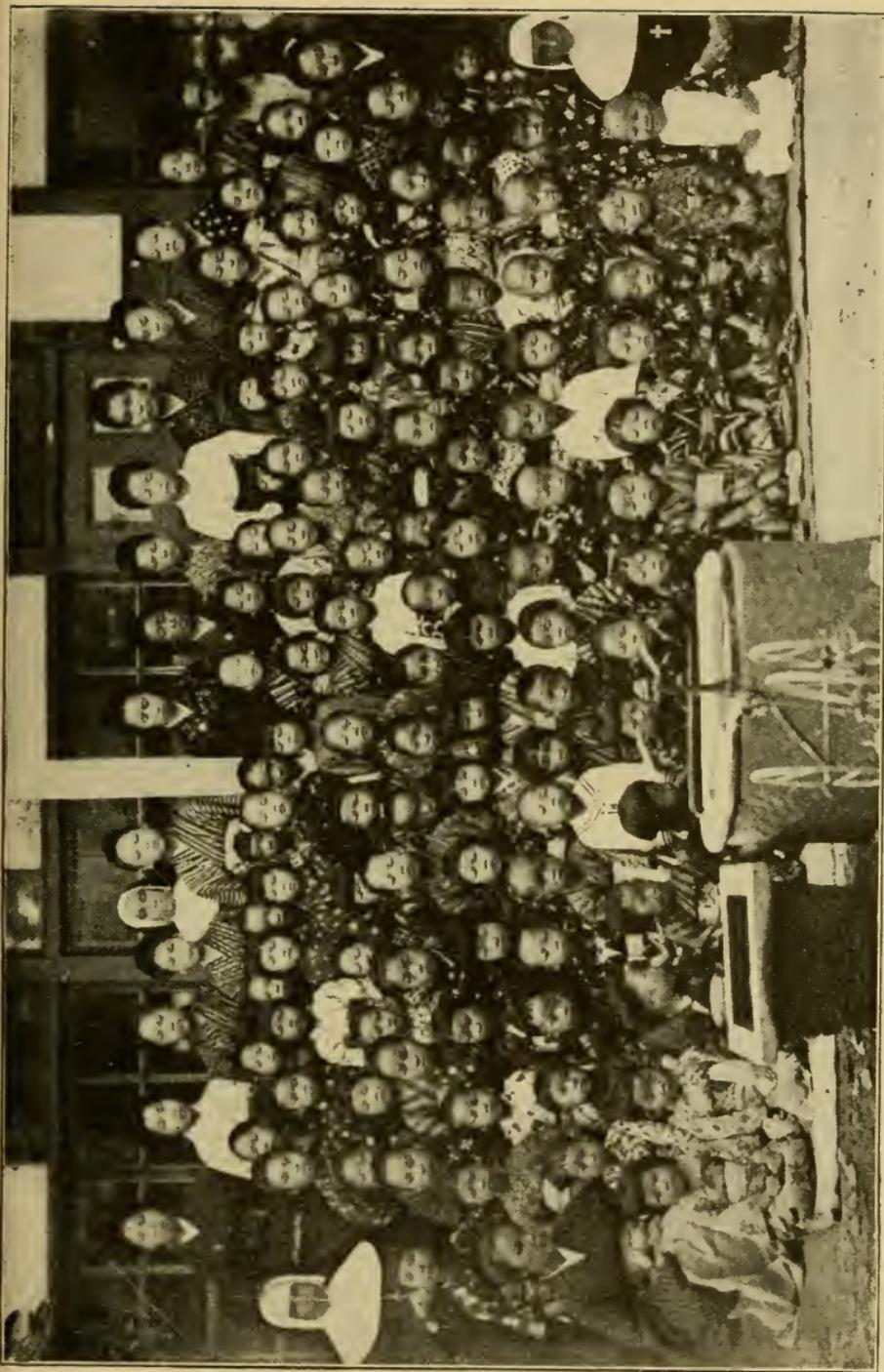
suffering some trial.—How well he could also console and encourage. Sadness and dejectedness soon passed away in his company.

I often traversed the mission with him. Although my superior, he took the part of a servant, so that I often was greatly embarrassed. Everywhere he tried to facilitate my work and to make the often greatly fatiguing labors more pleasant. When I first came to the mission, for instance, I was in the possession of a very poor horse. When galloping I was shaken up in such a manner that I could hardly endure it. When Father Henle noticed this he offered his good horse to me. Naturally, I declined his offer, particularly as I knew that he himself was not quite well yet. But several times he contrived some means suddenly to grasp my horse and vault into the saddle. Thus nothing was left to me but to ride his horse.

Sick calls he answered at all hours, no matter how great the distance or how bad the roads. I myself have been nursed by him several times during times of sickness, with the tenderness of a mother.

He was extremely kind and sympathetic to the sick, and alleviated much sorrow and pain in the huts of the poor Christians. This also explains the unbounded faithfulness and confidence with which they were attached to him. The Christians said when anyone was sick it was only necessary to call Father Henle. Those to whom he administered the sacraments would, as a rule, become well again.

With a poor Christian afflicted with leprosy he would often remain for hours together to console and encourage him, and several times a year he would read Holy Mass in his poor little hovel despite the strong odor, to give him Holy Com-



Sisters with Orphans

munion and an opportunity for the grace of participating in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

It filled his heart with sadness when I now and then expressed my doubts whether I should receive some more orphan children, since I was lacking the necessary means to support them. "Never mind," he would say then, "receive all that come to you, God will not forsake us." He would not refuse shelter to a single one of these poor little creatures.

His Christian charity also stood forth when assailed by the robbers at Yentyachuang. He had found a hiding place for himself, but when he noticed that his servant was beaten because he had no money it was impossible for him to remain longer, although he was then bound and beaten himself. And he was so pained when the bandits, after they had maltreated him, tried nevertheless to force his servant to deliver up some money to them that he reprimanded them while stretched on the floor until a knife was put between his teeth to silence him.

How many people came to Father Henle in their trials and wants! He helped and assisted them whenever he could. And whenever I was in trouble myself and surrounded by difficulties it was sufficient to write a few lines to him, to bring him to me at once.

Regarding himself, he was very moderate. At meals he was satisfied with anything and was content to take his rest in any little nook or corner. We also heard that he fasted several times a week, but never in the presence of other Fathers, on the contrary, he then always contrived to offer them something extraordinary. At one time, when visiting him with another, he gave his only room and bed to us, saying he would find some good little spot for himself somewhere else.

When I later on, being unable to sleep, entered the chapel for the purpose of saying my office, I found Father Henle at the foot of the altar, sleeping.

Often he said to me, he was making his meditations at this time about the love of his neighbor. At prayer, in the close union with God, he tried to examine and implore his virtues.

Small wonder, then, that Father Henle had no enemies and was beloved by all. After his death the men of rank and learning of the entire neighborhood came to me and many cried. All acknowledged again and again the goodness and kindness of Father Henle to everyone, how he would stop to converse even with the most lowly, and how he always alighted from his horse in the village, (a sign of great courtesy), etc. All deeply mourned his death. Father Henle wished to become all to all. Therefore his glowing enthusiasm for his vocation, his great zeal for souls, therefore his fatiguing labors and journeys, therefore his continued study of the language, therefore also, his death. To assist me in the confessional he came with me to Tshantyachuang and there found his death.

In conclusion, the testimony of two other fellow brethren, his former superior, Father Henninghaus, and Father Freinademetz, may prove to us the universal opinion of the missionaries regarding the dearly beloved dead. Father Henle was a noble, most amiable soul, such as is rarely found.

I shall never forget the love he extended to me during our sojourn in Tsouchufu. When going on a journey he would accompany me for many miles for the sole reason of giving me pleasure, and again if he knew the time of my arrival, would come to meet me.

With an insatiable desire to learn everything, to enable him to work with even greater success at the salvation of souls, he combined invincible cheerfulness. Even when cares and trials closed in from all sides, he soon contrived to disperse the clouds of sorrow by his warm brotherly love and cheerful conversation.

Father Freinademetz, the Provicar of the mission, wrote to his parents after his death: "Your son died the death of the righteous, yes, even that of a martyr. He was an excellent and talented man of true virtue and solid piety; I assure you he was a missionary in the full sense of the word, and has saved many souls. May this be a consolation to you."

CHAPTER XIII

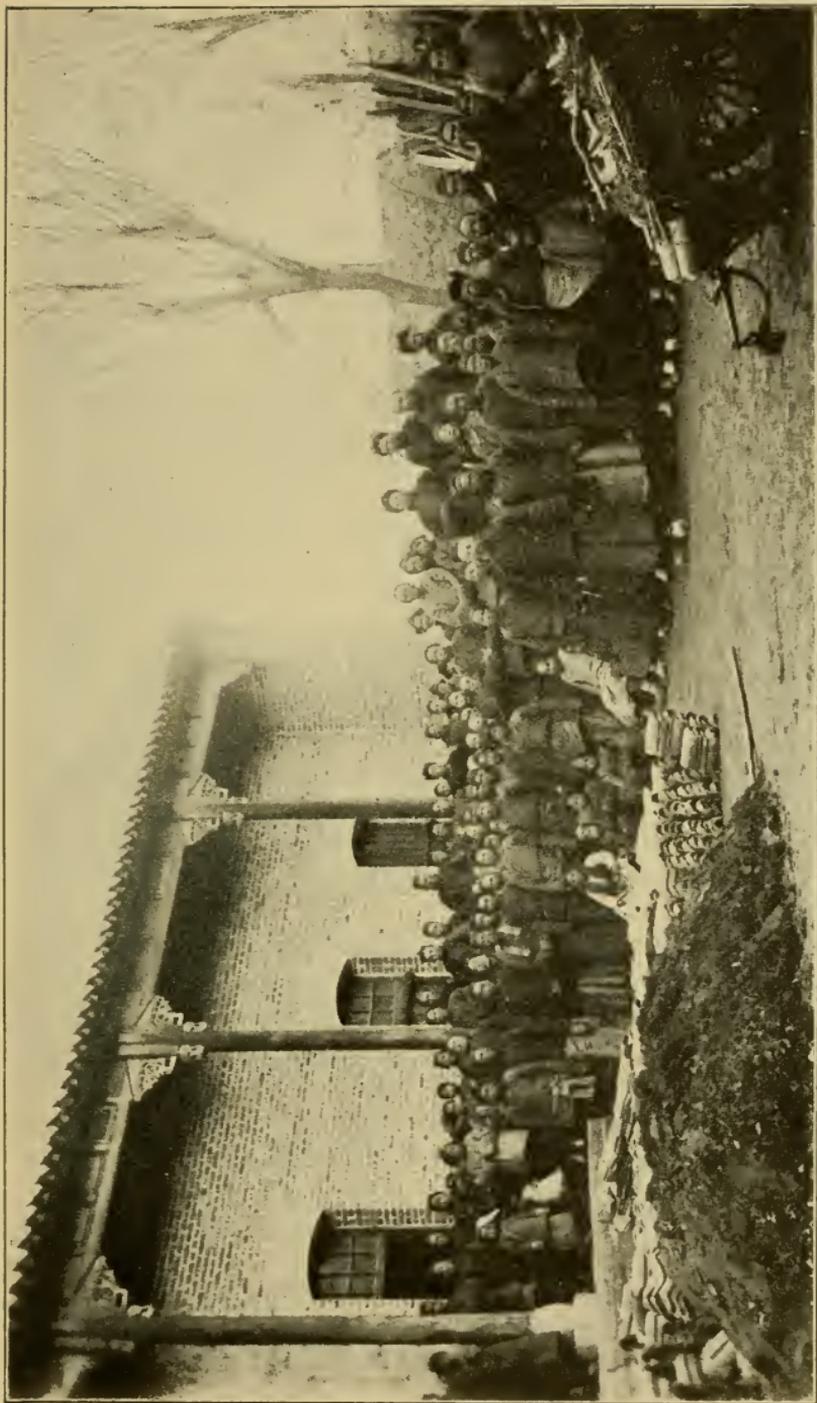
Father Henle's Death

AS HAS been related in the course of this biography, the missionaries lived for the greater part of the year alone among their Christians in the district assigned to them by their bishop. On a mission trip I met Father Henle in the city of Tyuye, where he was waiting for Father Nies, who had come on business to Father Peulen. Father Henle was exceptionally sad and earnest. After having related a few instances about his mission district, he dwelled long upon his shortly before completed novitiate. In the Society of the Divine Word it was customary formerly for the Fathers to make profession for nine years, followed by a short novitiate, after which they made their perpetual vows. Father Henle with a number of other Fathers had anticipated the joys of this happy and care-free time. But unfortunately he continually received sad tidings of persecution and oppression of the Christians from his mission. The times were agitated and unquiet. Everything indicated a coming storm. It was therefore no small sacrifice for the zealous priest, who at the same time was the founder of the mission and the Father of his Christians, to be separated from them during this dangerous period. But in spite of all his care and anxiety he did not complain, on the contrary, he ever remained the same kind person, who knew so well how to impart cheerfulness and joy in the hours of recreation to his fellow brethren, who were more

or less in the same situation. On July 14 he made his perpetual vows, together with the rest of the Fathers, amongst these also his companion in death, Father Nies. The following day he returned to his mission. I was at a great distance from him at that time and thus it came about that we first met each other again in October.

We had much to relate to one another, and I asked and received many a good advice from Father Henle yet. He predicted a very sad future for the mission. In the novitiate he had met with missionaries from all parts of the mission, and from their accounts he had drawn his conclusions for the future. The past few years have verified the same. To distract his mind somewhat I invited him to come with me to Tshantya-chuang where I intended to celebrate the feast of All Souls. Whilst he absolutely refused to come at first, he finally yielded, under the condition that I return the visit on the 8th of December, the patron feast of his mission, to preach the sermon.

When we reached Tshantya-chuang Father Nies also arrived there, and I begged him also to remain with us until the following day; besides this, it was raining, which rendered further traveling almost impossible. In the afternoon I made a short business trip with Father Henle to the neighboring village Hotyatan. Night was closing in when we returned. It was a long time also since I had seen Father Nies last, and thus we conversed with one another until a late hour at night. He had recently been attacked and wounded by robbers, and he related his adventure to us, whereby he asked me whether it was dangerous at the present time in Tsouchufu,—it was the first time he traversed the "Land of Ban-



After the Sunday Services

mits"—but I assured him of the contrary. For some time everything had been quiet and peaceful.

Towards midnight, before going to rest, we practiced the Requiem Mass for the following Poor Souls Day, ending with the beautiful *Misere-mini mei, saltem vos amici mei*: it was their last song, their own Requiem.

I had only one living room at this station, and, as was natural, left this to my guests. I took shelter for the night in the small porter's room near the gate, which was almost in direct connection with the room occupied by the Fathers. Since the district was quiet, we neglected all precautions. I even left the door of my room unlocked. I was enjoying my first slumber when I was roused suddenly by a shot directly at my window. The robbers then had already entered the premises. For the moment it did not occur to me that they could be others than robbers. I ran at once to the door to lock it, but noticed by the conversation held without that they were under the impression the porter's room was occupied by the porter. A strong guard was therefore placed at the door to hinder his coming to the aid of the Fathers.

Meanwhile the adjoining room was stormed. With heavy beams and stones they pushed against the door and windows, whilst continuous shots were heard. My room was entirely illuminated by the torches from without.

There, suddenly the door of the next room gave way, the windows rattled, and amidst frightful screaming the murderous gang forced its way into the room. At first a dreadful silence ensued, then suddenly Father Henle called out: "Scha liao jin—one has been killed;" no doubt, this was meant as a warning to myself and the Christians. At once a number of the murderers left the room in search

of me. The church, sacristy, storeroom, and kitchen, every place was searched, several times they passed the porter's room, scolding and cursing because they could not find me. Meanwhile the Christians arrived to the rescue and to avoid danger of being caught, the robbers fled.

As soon as the guard had left the door, I hastened out, and a hollow, terrible rattling coming from the adjoining room struck my ear. I had hardly reached the courtyard when the murderers tried to force their way once more into the interior, but were hindered by the Christians.

I now entered the room of my fellow brethren. Good God! what a sight: the floor a pool of blood! The two Fathers were lying on one bed.—The one, F. Nies, had evidently in his distress hastened to the other.—F. Nies, cringed together, was lying on his face, with one hand stretched out. Father Henle was lying on his back, with his feet touching the floor. I first of all examined the wounds. F. Nies apparently was dead when I entered the room. F. Henle was still living, but unable to speak. His large eyes were opened wide. When I called to him he recognized my voice and a faint smile passed over his beautiful features; it was the parting farewell of a beloved friend. A short time after I had given him general absolution and administered extreme unction, F. Henle was also dead. It was shortly before midnight, on November 1, 1897.

After having celebrated All Saints Day in the Church Militant, they, as we confidently hope, may, eternally happy themselves, enjoy their own triumph with all the saints in the Church Triumphant.

The result of the coroner's inquest proved that F. Nies had received seven large wounds: 1) on his left temple, 4cm. long, 1cm. wide; 2) on

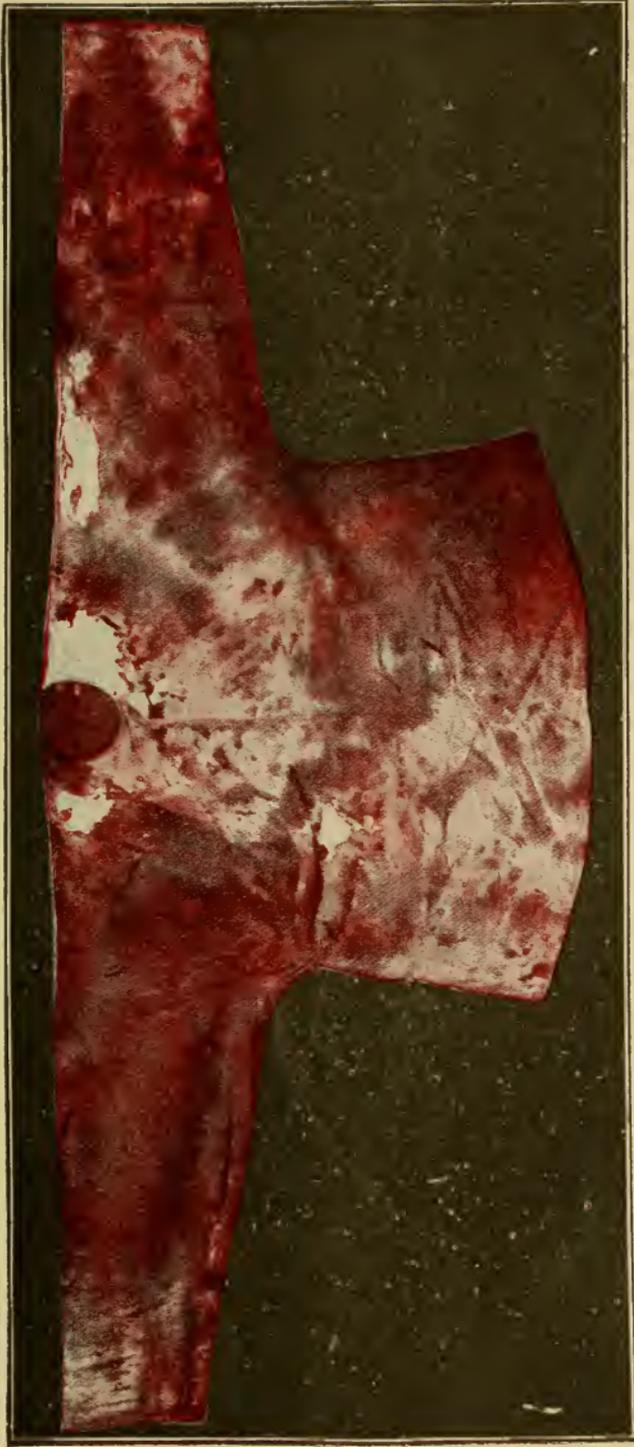
the shoulder, $2\frac{1}{2}$ cm. long, $1\frac{1}{2}$ cm. wide; 3) between the shoulder and the elbow, 3cm. long, $1\frac{1}{2}$ cm. wide; this wound extended from the arm into the lung, and a large piece of flesh was torn away; 4) on the elbow, 1.7cm. long, .9cm. wide; 5) on the left side, $3\frac{1}{2}$ cm. long, 1.2cm. wide; 6) on the right side, 3.4cm. long, 1.2cm. wide; 7) in the abdomen, $3\frac{1}{2}$ cm. long, 1.2 cm. wide. Furthermore, he had received six smaller wounds, on the right temple, on the throat, on the right leg, on the left leg, lastly, a cut in the shoulder blade, and a bruise on the breast.

F. Henle received five large wounds: 1) in the calf of the left leg; 2) in the abdomen; 3) on the left side, above the stomach; 4) on left side of the breast; 5) on the left arm. In addition to these he had four smaller wounds and his hands cut up. In all probability his hands were so terribly wounded in trying to ward off the lance which struck him in the abdomen.

The aged father of the beloved assassinated missionary was haunted by a strange dream in the night from the 1st to the 2nd of November, which seemed so striking that he inquired at Steyl about his son on the following day.

He dreamt that he saw, upon stepping into the door of his home, Richard standing there in a white habit with a red girdle, surrounded by a pool of blood, next to the corpse of one that had been murdered. He told his father a murder had taken place. His father asked: "Why, Richard, are you now wearing a white habit?" And he received the answer: "Henceforth we will always wear this."

The old man was so frightened by this dream that he bade his wife quickly light the lamp.



UNDERGARMENT OF REV. F. NIES

The undergarment of Rev. F. Nies (cut according to the Chinese pattern, very wide, and sleeves extending over the hands) was entirely saturated with blood; the darker spots on this picture indicate blood and have in the course of time in reality turned brown.

Does not this recall the words of the Apocalypse, 7, 13 and 14: "These that are clothed in white robes, who are they? and whence came they? These are they who are come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the lamb."

The telegram with the intelligence of the death of the two missionaries reached Steyl on the 4th of November, and thence had to be forwarded in answer to the inquiry of Father Henle's parents: "NIES, HENLE, ASSASSINATED."

CHAPTER XIV

Motives and Consequences of the Murder

IN 1895—96 a persecution had raged with great violence in the southern part of Shantung, especially in the Prefecture Shenchien, conspired by the new sect "of the big knife," "Ta-tao-hui," also known by the name of the Boxers. This society, under the feigned pretext of aiming at exterminating the robbers, was under the protection of the Chinese Government, and thus developed very strongly. Certain mysterious practices gave them the appearance of the marvelous in the eyes of the people. It was the general belief among other things that Satan made its members secure against shot and lance and imparted to them a wonderful power.

Having become strong and powerful, they manifested their true character, for, like all secret sects in China, it was founded to overthrow the reigning dynasty.

To accomplish their aim, they devised a most diabolical plan. They tried to raise difficulties for their government by persecuting the European missionaries and the Christians.

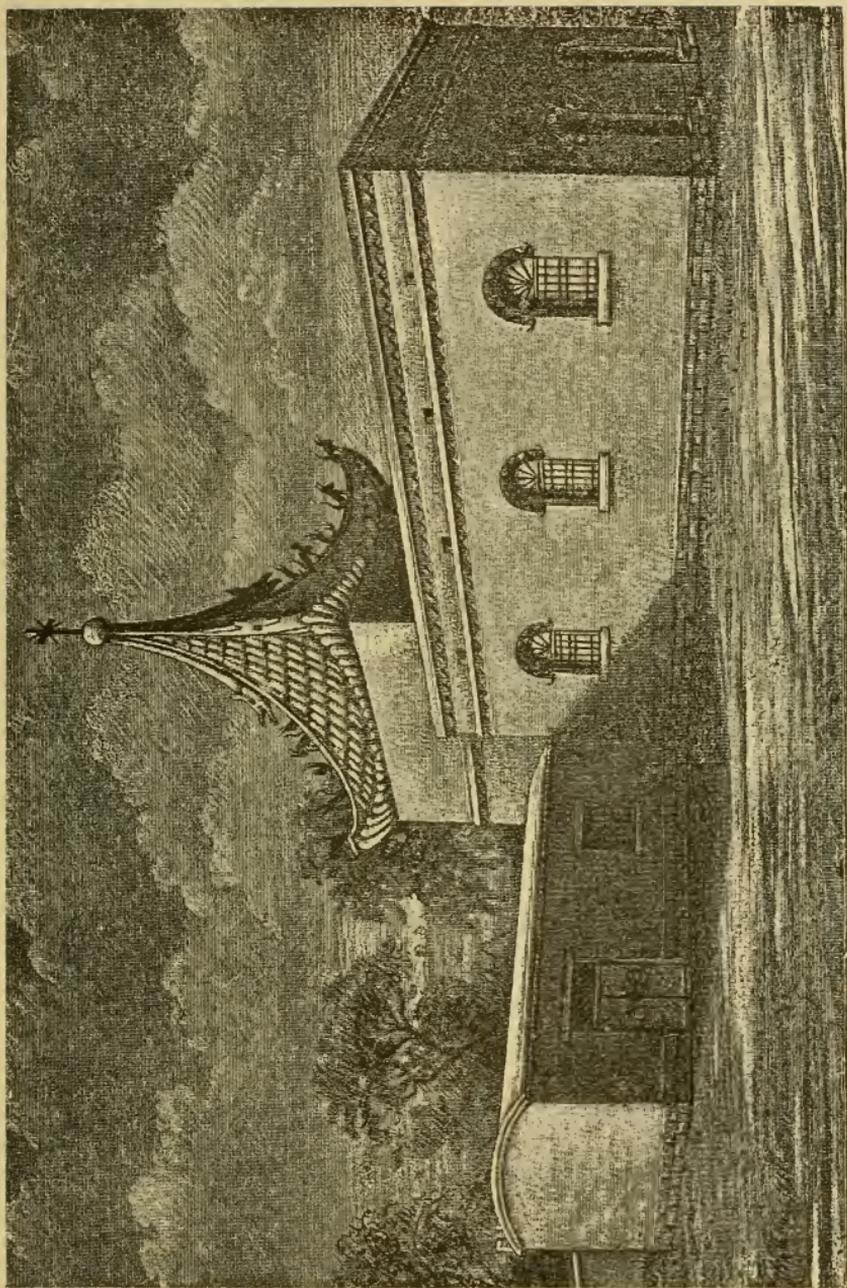
The first persecution, which originated in the mission of the French Jesuits of the Province Kiangnan, and spread along South Shantung, however, proved unfavorable for the Boxers. It gradually assumed the character of a general revolution, which compelled the Chinese Government to send soldiers into the disquieted regions.

After a few battles they treacherously captured two of the leaders and beheaded them. Besides this, the participation in the sect was strictly prohibited and the general, the later so notorious Yue Chien, reported to his government that the sect was destroyed.

But this was by no means the case. After a short time it began to stir again and spread with mysterious rapidity. The situation became quite serious and alarming, both for the missionaries and for the Christians. Every personal enemy of the Christians now joined the Ta-tao-hui for the purpose of taking revenge. Our remonstrances to the Chinese officers received no attention. The Boxers were "destroyed," the general was advanced to one of the highest offices, and therefore no Boxers were permitted to exist.

Besides this, the hatred on the part of the Boxers towards the Christians had in the course of time developed into actual hatred of religion. To renounce Christianity, therefore, was equivalent to freedom from persecution. In opposition to the divine service of the Christians they practiced idolatry, whereby they sacrificed, practiced austerities, etc.

In 1897 a new parish had formed, about 6 miles south of Tshantyachuang, by the name of Tsaotyachuang. The Christians were very wealthy, whilst the heathens of the village were poor. The Christians had, therefore, formerly always defrayed the cost of the Temple feasts, which now, as Christians, they were not permitted to do. This greatly exasperated the heathens. The warden of the village, a relative of the Christians, but reduced to poverty by his evil life, was besides this, as long as he refused to make amendment for a certain public scandal, also excluded from the community of the Christians.



Mission Chapel and Priest's Residence at Tshantyuachuang

To take revenge for this, he, with the remaining non-Christians in the village, joined the Boxers.

The latter now had decided to kill a few Europeans, and amongst these Father Henle and myself were those nearest to them. The warden of the village was charged with the execution of the plan.

Thus Father Nies actually died in my place.

The next consequence of the terrible murder was that the mandarin of the circuit arrested all persons of bad repute who at any time of their life had been guilty of some fault or crime. But no Boxers were arrested. At first no one thought of these.

But a few days later rumors were spread more and more that not robbers but Boxers had killed the missionaries. A few of my garments, which had been robbed and were found in the vicinity of Tsaotyachuang, as well as other signs, distinctly prognosticated the true murderers. However, not one of them was arrested by the mandarin, for—he could not,—the great Yue Chien, whose position was at stake, forbid him to do so.

On the 14 of November German ships took possession of the present colony Tsingtao (or Kiauchau) along the coast of Shantung. The German Emperor insisted that atonement be made for the murder of his subjects and demanded strict propitiation from the Chinese Government.

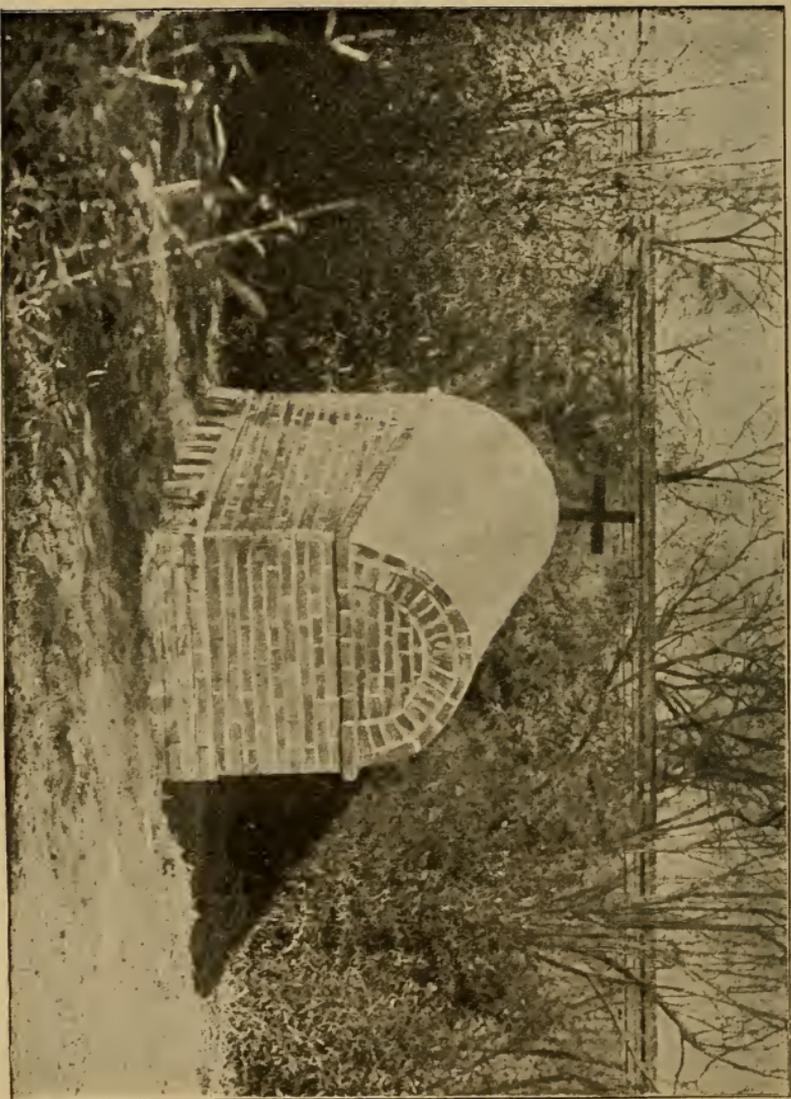
Yue Chien therefore came in person from Tsinanfu, the capital of the province, to carry on the negotiations himself. Now quickly seven men were arrested and tortured so long until they confessed themselves guilty.

Two of these were sentenced to death and five of them to imprisonment for life. But all were

innocent and in no connection whatever with the murder.

The Chinese Government agreed upon the conditions made by the German Government—the deposition of certain officers, known as Christian-haters, and the erection of three expiation churches—but the actual murderers were free. Once more, in 1900, they made terrible havoc amongst the poor Christians.

Another consequence of the death of the two Fathers was an extraordinary increase of Christians. The mission progressed in a most unexpected manner. I became the successor of Father Henle and was obliged to manage his entire mission district in connection with my own. The heathens, begging to be taken into the Church, poured in on me in such numbers that it was impossible to receive them all. I was lacking catechists and means. It soon was the same throughout the entire mission, and this movement spread from place to place till to the very utmost parts of the immense kingdom. Thus also the blood of these two martyrs was again the seed from which sprang numberless new Christians.



Grave of Father Henle

CHAPTER XV

The Funeral

ALREADY during the night of the murder I had sent a messenger to Tsining (about 26 miles) to the Rev. Provicar, Father Freinademetz, who at that time was in charge of the mission during the absence of the bishop. The messenger reached the city in the morning, and Father Freinademetz in company with several other missionaries repaired at once to Tshantyachuang, where they arrived late in the evening.

Since the official inquest on part of the circuit mandarin had taken place during the day, we were permitted to bury our beloved dead. After having clothed them with the priestly vestments we laid them into the large Chinese coffins. Father Henle appeared in his coffin as though still living. His cheeks were slightly flushed, whilst the friendly smile seemed to be still hovering about his lips. The face of Father Nies was somewhat disfigured by the cut in the temple.

It was decided that the burial should take place on one of our estates in the vicinity of Tsining, and the deceased were conveyed thither under a strong honorary escort of Christians and soldiers. But to enable a greater number of missionaries to assist at the actual funeral services, the same were postponed for twenty days. Nearly all the missionaries had, therefore, hastened to Taetyachuang to pay their last tribute of respect to their beloved fellow brethren. Once more the coffin was opened, and Father Henle

was found to be entirely undecayed. It was the last time we gazed upon them here upon earth, but with the fond hope of meeting again in heaven.

The funeral celebration was beautiful. Very many Christians had come to attend the same, and also heathen friends of the dear departed had sent their mourning gifts.

The coffins are, as yet, interred in two vaults above ground. Many have since then wandered thither to implore help and peace and consolation. For it is the unanimous belief that the two missionaries had shed their blood for God as confessors of their faith and now triumph as martyrs in heaven.

I have also frequently visited the graves. Solemn peace reigns in the little bamboo grove where the departed are slumbering in their tombs, surrounded by a mass of flowers. Here they are lying where I should have been laid. Ah! in the presence of these graves it is so easy to pray. Here one acquires fresh courage and enthusiasm for the arduous mission vocation, here the love for our holy Catholic faith is quickened, the faith which inflames to such sacrifices and to such a death. They have left all, home and country, and all their earthly possessions, to wander into the distant foreign lands for the love of God and in quest of the immortal souls of their fellow men. Father Henle had also left his good old parents to whom he was attached with such tender, child-like affection and whom he was never again to meet here upon earth. God will reward his faithful servants.

CHAPTER XVI

FATHER NIES

Father Henle's Companion in Death

THE sketch of Father Henle's life would seem incomplete without a few words regarding his dear companion in death. They were intimate friends and had consecrated themselves to God on one and the same day by their perpetual vows in the Society of the Divine Word, and died in the same bed, under the blows of the furious Christian-haters. Besides this, Father Nies was in reality murdered in my place.

Although I must leave a more complete description of his life to one of his more intimate friends I beg leave, nevertheless, to give a short sketch of the same.

Father Nies was a quiet, unassuming soul, without ostentation, but he was a "perfect man," and faithful to his vocation.

He was born on June 11, 1859, at Rehringhausen (Circuit Olpe) in the Diocese of Paderborn. I am not in possession of any written information regarding his youth, since he entered at Steyl in mature years, after almost having completed his gymnasial studies. But he also was of a cheerful disposition in the days of his youth. Often in later years, when he came to me on a visit for a day to recreate from the strenuous labor of the mission life, he joyfully recalled to mind many a prank played in his youth in the days of his college life.

In the midst of the merry days at college the hand of God rapped at his easily accessible heart, and without hesitation he followed the call and directed his course to the newly erected mission house at Steyl. The Rev. Father Superior was not prepared for his coming and seemed to doubt whether this jovial student was suitable for a future missionary, and thus in answer to his request for admittance told him to return to his hotel for the present. But the mission student candidate did not return to his hotel; instead he entered the cozy little chapel of the old mission house, where he remained the entire day before the Blessed Sacrament until the Rev. Father Superior finally called him and gave permission for his entry into the mission house on May 7, 1879. It was a hard struggle for the deceased at the beginning, as he often related later, but he remained true to his vocation and I know that he also was happy in it.

On the 7 of June, 1884, he was ordained and received the Sacrament at the hands of the venerable Bishop of Roermond, Msgr. Paredis. During the first few months he was active as professor in the mission house. Finally his superiors fulfilled his most ardent desire in sending him to China, in January of the following year.

Father Nies was overjoyed. "I had resigned myself," he writes later on, "to my lot as a simple teacher of grammar in the midst of my pupils, and had no presentiment of the happiness that was to be mine, to employ my weak abilities directly in the service of the propagation of the faith, when the command of my superiors called me to our distant vineyard. Various thoughts crowded to my mind, dwelling at one time on the dear brethren from whom I had just parted, then again turning to my home country, and again



FATHER FRANCIS NIES, S. V. D.
*Assassinated by Boxers at Tshantyachuang (S. Shantung),
on the night of November 1 to November 2, 1897*

to the distant China. My heart was overwhelmed with emotions which I cannot describe here. A glance at the crucifix now resting on my breast, and which shall henceforth be my guide in all dangers and trials of life, and the constant remembrance of the sweet words of the Divine Master: 'Every one that hath left father and mother for My name's sake shall receive an hundred fold' inspired my soul with courage to follow the high vocation of bearing the joyful message of salvation to the heathens, and to guide them into the way of peace and happiness. I now said my office in thanksgiving for the great grace imparted to me on the first day of this year."

Father Nies was a quiet, recollected character, with deep sensibilities and deep piety, but he contrived to hide both under the mantle of deep simplicity and hearty cheerfulness. This is the unanimous description of all who ever knew him. "Kind Frank" was loved and esteemed by all his fellow brethren.

How simple and yet how beautiful he writes, for instance, when he had the happiness to preserve the Blessed Sacrament for the first time in the mission. "I will remain here during the month of October because I can preserve the Holy Eucharist here. For the first time in my life I have the happiness to keep our dear Savior under my care and protection day and night. But whether He is pleased to stay with me I cannot say. For my part, I will do all in my power to give Him pleasure. To be sure, I am totally unworthy. I always make good resolutions but seldom put them into execution. But this month, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, I hope to advance a step on the way to perfection."

When Father Nies came to Shantung the mission was, as it were, still in its infancy. Only at a few points Christianity had taken root in this desolate zone. Mission life, therefore, in Shantung, was at the same time hard and arduous pioneer life. There was no thought of comfort or convenience. Food and lodging offered sufficient opportunities to the lover of mortification for the daily practice of virtue. Everywhere new beginnings had to be made to cultivate and clear this wild and desolate land.

After having acquired the language to some extent Father Nies was sent out into the missions. Tancheng, a small but easily agitated country, was assigned to him as his field of labor. His first Christmas was celebrated in a small hut blackened by smoke in the midst of a savage heathen mass of humanity.

At first it seemed as though God would bless his labors, but soon the storm swept over the mission. The heathens, to all appearances instigated by the learned, rose up and the missionary had to flee.

His next field of labor was the district Yangku in the vicinity of Puoly. The mission founded there formerly progressed famously under his direction. With indefatigable energy this zealous priest journeyed from place to place preaching, administering the sacraments, and doing good when and wherever he could. But here also sufferings were not wanting. The Christians were sorely oppressed by one of the mandarins, one of their churches was burned without the missionary being able to find justice.

In January, 1892, Father Nies was to be transferred to Shenchien, the dangerous "Bandit district." But on the way the wagon was upset, whereby he fell under the wheels and suffered a

painful fracture of the arm. Not less than seventy days he was compelled to suffer the rough treatment of a Chinese surgeon until his arm was fairly well healed. Meanwhile the vacancy in his mission district had been filled by another missionary, and thus the extensive district Wenshang was assigned to him. The time spent here by Father Nies were years of quiet, blessed activity. In the summer of 1897 he entered the novitiate, together with Father Henle, to prepare for his perpetual vows. And, as though this period was to be the last link of the long chain of sufferings which had begun with his entry at the mission house, he was attacked and wounded by robbers on his way home. At the same time he was robbed of all his possessions. And a few weeks later, as has been related above, he met in Tshantya-chuang a cruel and painful death.

Twelve years he had labored in the mission, and God alone knows what sufferings, sacrifices, and apostolic zeal they have demanded of the assassinated missionary. His merits were great and lasting.

"More than once," he wrote to the Rev. Father Superior General of the Society, "I have prayed to God for the grace of martyrdom, but most likely it will not be granted to me. My blood is not deemed red enough by God, and is still mingled with the dust of this earth. The blood of martyrs does not flow in my veins. But God has been extremely good to me and when I view the past, I cannot but exclaim, "How mysterious are Thy ways, O Lord!" But pray for me, dear Father, that I may obtain the grace to share at least to some extent the burdens of my fellow brethren, even if I then may not be found worthy of the martyr's crown. Perhaps I may thereby partly atone for my sins."



FATHER NIES
in Chinese costume

God in his infinite love looked down upon his humility and granted him the death for which he had prayed so often and so ardently.

A "For-get-me-not," planted for the departed by a good and sincere friend, Father Henninghaus, may form the conclusion of this short sketch of his life.

"Father Nies was a simple Westphalian character. Vainglory was unknown to him. With truly childlike simplicity he would beg advice of the youngest fellow brother or of the simplest catechist. Thereby he by no means lacked apostolic prudence. He was quick to detect the artifices of the Chinese and warded them off with the greatest calmness. He was one of those rare men who are esteemed by all. His fellow brethren, all without exception, loved him as a true friend, his Christians and catechists were attached to him with childlike affection. He was at all times obedient to the wishes and commands of his superiors, and endeavored to fulfill the rules of the mission regulations with the greatest punctuality. He labored quietly, without ostentation, but surely with so much more merit before the eyes of God."

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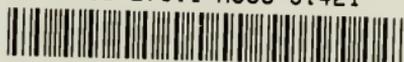
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