

Very Rev. A. L. McMahon, O. P., S. T. M.,
Provincial of the Province of the Holy Name

HOLY NAME PROVINCE

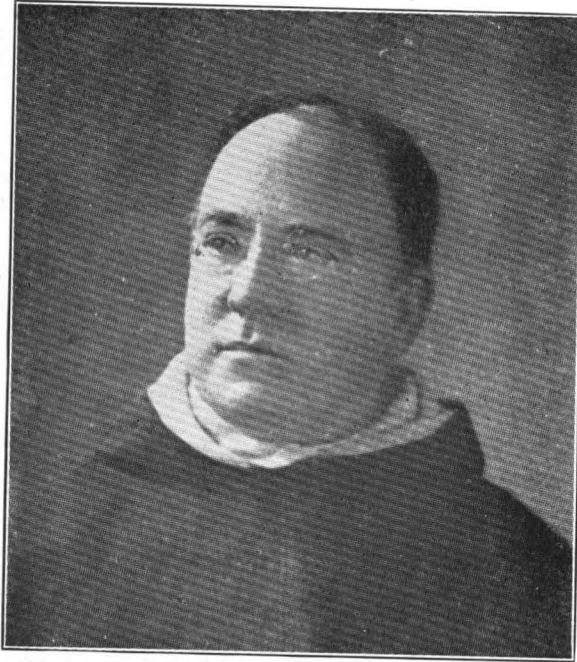
MORE than any other part of the United States, more, perhaps, than any other country in the world, the story of California has been the story of the Catholic Church," writes a priest-historian of California. And this fact has been brought strikingly to our minds during the past year. For in the Queen City of the West, San Francisco, there has been successfully staged a great exposition which has served well not only its chief purpose, that of celebrating in a fitting manner the opening of the Panama Canal, but has also revived a lively interest in the history of the State. And such investigation has revealed in a measure California's debt to the Catholic Church.

With care have the names and deeds of her discoverers been reviewed; the triumphs and successes of her early missionaries, the Franciscan Padres; the toils and sufferings of the pathfinders who blazed their weary and toilsome way over the vast stretch of the western continent; the fortunes of the gold seekers; agricultural wealth unfolded by the early settlers who opened up fields of untold richness; all these have received their due praise. And shall we, the sons of Saint Dominic, in this year of our rejoicing, pass over in silence the hardships and triumphs of the Friars Preachers who have left their imprint on the pages of California's history?

It seems to be characteristic of the Dominican to enter a field of labor as pioneer and then, after giving his entire energy to his mission, to retire and leave the harvest to other laborers of the Lord. Witness the marvelous changes wrought in the Empire City of America. Just one hundred years have elapsed since Bishop Connelly, O. P., set foot in New York. On his arrival he found but four priests. Undaunted by such a handicap, he soon set on foot vast plans for the future of the diocese, only to be called to his reward in 1825 when his projects were beginning to be realized. Turn to another section of the country, to the Middle West, and here we see a Dominican, as first Bishop of Cincinnati, the Rt. Rev. Edward Fenwick, O. P. For ten years he labored unceasingly, until his strength spent, he fell a victim of the cholera. Again, Nashville, Tenn., claims a son of St. Dominic, Richard Pius Miles, O. P., as its first Bishop. His successor was likewise a Dominican, Bishop James Whalen, O. P., and one of the first Bishops of St. Paul, Minn., was the Rt. Rev. Thomas Grace, O. P. These men struggled valiantly, planned nobly, and thus attained success.

The discovery of gold in California in 1848 opened a new field in the West to emigration. Catholics, in large numbers, were among those who hurried after the wealth which would make easier the hard struggle of life. With the arrival of the settlers, there was to be found a young Dominican who had been lately consecrated the first Archbishop of San Francisco. He was Joseph Sadoc Alemany. He lived up to the traditions that where pioneers are found there, too, is the Dominican. The newly appointed Bishop at once set to work in the stretch of land assigned to him, a country where formerly the faith was nour-

ished by the prayers and penances of a saintly Serra, but where now Christ Jesus was but poorly known. Endowed with a courage, zeal and strong determination of a Dominic, this young prelate accomplished

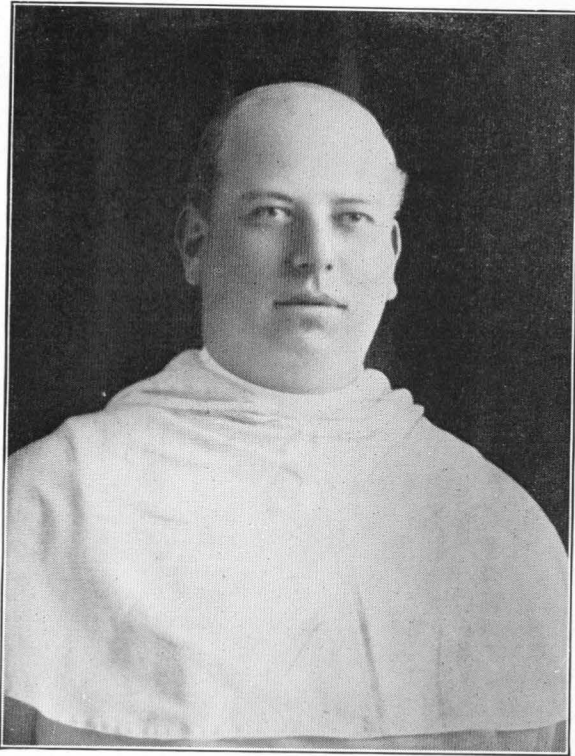


Very Rev. J. P. Murphy, O. P.

wonders in a short space of time and in the face of opposition and countless hardships. Charles B. Turril, in a lecture on "Foundations in California," among many inspiring passages, has paid the following tribute to the beloved first Archbishop of San Francisco: "The work of Archbishop Alemany was greater than has been laid on the shoulders of any man in California since the days of his prototype, Father Serra. * * * Years did nothing to lighten the labors of the man who came here in the full active vitality of youth. Thus for more than thirty years did he, who came as Bishop and in less than four years was made Archbishop, labor alone. * * * On December 28, 1884, he resigned and retired * * * to a monastery in the land of his birth. Having faithfully labored in the heat of the day, he rested there in holy contemplation, again wearing the snowy habit of his Order, awaiting the end of his useful and peaceful life."

Together with the Bishop, there came to the new mission a man after the Bishop's own heart, a brother of his by his religious profession, the Very Rev. Francis Sadoc Villarrasa. It was he who was destined by Providence to plant a new branch of Dominic's tree in the Golden State. Handicapped from the start, with a dearth of co-laborers and

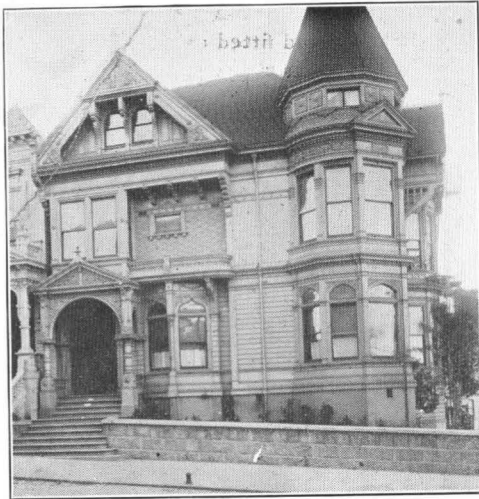
a lack of available funds, his courage was in no wise daunted. Gifted with an unusual personality, he drew to himself, in a short while, the hearty assistance of all. Soon there was opened in the city of Monterey a house for the Fathers and a convent school for girls. A change in the seat of the government of the State made it advisable to move the novitiate to Benicia, a place which nature had fitted out as an ideal spot for a home of religious training. There was a crying need of priests. Special appeals were made to the Dominicans. So Archbishop Alemany, on a visit to his native land, induced five students to return with him to the land of such promising harvest. Soon Benicia became the Prouille of the young foundation. The Fathers were attending two parishes in San Francisco, Saint Francis' and Saint Brigid's. Churches were started at Vallejo, Antioch, Martinez, Crockett and Concord. When the number of the secular clergy increased, the Fathers, as true Dominican



**Very Rev. J. S. Rice, O. P., S. T. L.,
Prior of St. Dominic's Church, San Francisco**

pioneers, gladly relinquished the two parishes of Saint Francis and Saint Brigid. Then they directed their footsteps over the sand dunes to a few scattered families in the western outskirts of the city. Here they

started their present parish of Saint Dominic. On June 20, 1873, the beloved Archbishop opened to the service of God a neat wooden church under the patronage of Saint Dominic. The parish grew rapidly and



**Exterior of Working Boys' Club,
San Francisco, Cal.**

it became necessary to supplant the wooden structure with a new and larger edifice, which was completed in 1887. This beautiful church was lost to the Fathers in the earthquake of 1906. At present, a substantial and spacious hall supplies the needs of the ever growing parish.

It was not until 1893 that we see the Congregation extending the limits of its administrations. In that year, at the repeated invitation of Archbishop Gross, C. S. R., the Fathers opened the Church of the Holy Rosary at Portland, Oregon. From this station missionaries go forth to the

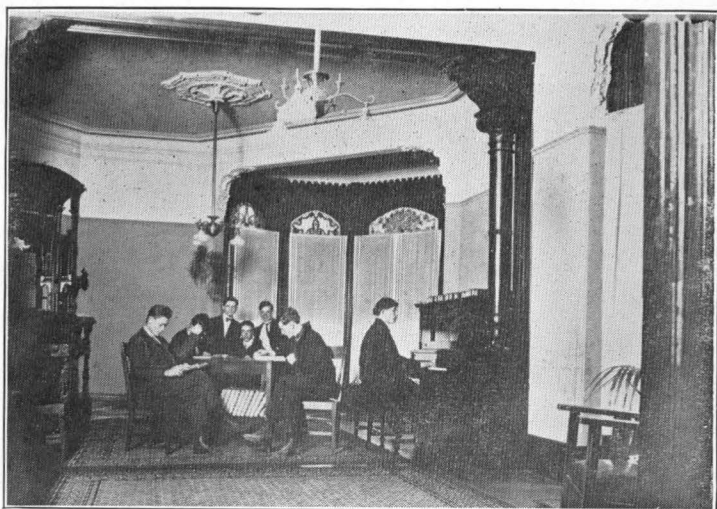
scattered flocks of Idaho, Montana and Washington, preaching missions to many who would otherwise be denied the words of salvation. Keeping pace with their increasing numbers, the Fathers in 1908 entered the diocese of Seattle, establishing a parish in the episcopal city under the patronage of the Most Blessed Sacrament. And thus have they made the whole Coast of the Pacific the scene of their sacred ministry.

Since 1912 the Fathers have been enjoying all the privileges of a canonically erected Province. For the Master General, the Very Rev. Hyacinth M. Cormier, O. P., recognizing the great strides of progress made, especially in the last ten years, by letters dated November 9, 1912, formally raised the Congregation into a Province, under the title of the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus. At the same time he instituted the Very Rev. A. L. McMahon, O. P., S. T. M., its Provincial, who succeeded Very Rev. J. P. Murphy as Vicar-General of the Congregation. The first provincial chapter of the new Province was held in San Francisco, on June 13, 1913. And during the same year the Province was represented for the first time at a general chapter. The Very Reginald Newell, O. P., S. T. L., was the definator, with the Very Rev. J. S. Rice, O. P., S. T. L., as his socius. Along such humble lines was the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus established.

Here in one of the youngest Provinces of the Order is to be found a great love of all those things for which the word Dominican stands.

Here in the West, far from the cradle of the Order, we find all the Dominican devotions and ceremonies carried out in their every detail. Chapters of Tertiaries have been established in every parish. The Rosary Confraternities are in a flourishing condition and have extended their influence far beyond the limits of Dominican parishes. From the early years of the Province, the spread of the devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus has been actively carried on by the Fathers. In each one of the parishes there is an active and well organized branch of the society. And the missionaries are frequently called upon to erect new societies wherever they have conducted missions. It will suffice to say here that this Province, erected under the invocation of the Holy Name, is giving its best efforts to promote the love and devotion of the Name of Christ.

During the past few years the Dominican missionaries have been very active. Calls for missions have come from all corners of the Province. To meet this pressing demand, other Provinces of the Order were asked for aid. Saint Joseph's Province gladly offered its best. Fathers Thuente, Brockbank, Moran and Lawler have at different times labored in California. The German and Italian Provinces also responded to the call. At the present time two sons of the Irish Province are actively engaged in the mission work, Fathers Dalton and Barrett, the latter famed throughout Ireland and Canada for his exceptional eloquence. If it is true that the one way of gauging the future is by the past, what glorious prospects for mission activity lies before the sons of Saint Dominic of the Province of the Holy Name of Jesus.



Interior of Working Boys' Club, San Francisco, Cal.

The Visitator General to America, the Very Rev. Louis Theissing, O. P., arrived on the Coast about March 1st. After a careful inspection of the status of the Province, he expressed to the Fathers his great de-

light at the excellent condition in which he found everything connected with our churches. It was on the occasion of his visitation in San Francisco that the degree of Master in Sacred Theology was conferred upon the Very Rev. Provincial. The Visitor attested that not only the Master General had recognized in the Very Rev. Provincial the necessary qualities meriting such an honor, but also the whole Order attested to this fact when, assembled in General Chapter at Venlo, Holland, it solemnly conferred on him this much coveted title.

The Catholics of San Francisco now possess a home for working boys, the opening of which was made possible through the untiring efforts of Father Ignatius Townley, O. P., of Saint Dominic's Priory, San Francisco. The Home is modeled after the well-known Newsboys' Home of St. Louis, founded and still managed by Father Dunne. But San Francisco Boys' Home will answer an even wider need. It will afford a clean, respectable home for young men who have been deprived of the protection and happiness of their own fireside. Everything possible has been done to make the Home cheerful. Pleasant sleeping rooms have been fitted out; a reading-room where wholesome literature can be had and a billiard hall form part of the general plan. Fr. Townley personally superintends the Home. He is ably assisted by Mr. W. J. Wallace, whose long experience with the probation court has given him a keen insight into the character of young men. A year's work has proved that the Home has filled a want that was badly needed; and, moreover, it has proven that Fr. Townley's Boys' Home has come to stay.

At the present time the Province has twenty-nine young men pursuing their higher studies. Upon their return as priests, it is the plan of the Father to extend still further the field of Dominican activities.

During the past year the following elections and appointments have taken place: The Very Rev. E. S. Olsen, O. P., S. T. L., was chosen Prior of the Convent of the Most Holy Rosary, Portland, Ore., succeeding the Rev. H. H. Kelly, O. P. Rev. C. V. Lamb, O. P., became Prior of Saint Dominic's, Benicia, Cal. The Rev. J. D. O'Brien, O. P., was made pastor of Vallejo, Cal.

In the history of the Province this year is but a day. But the accomplishments of even a day are sometimes great. The future of the Holy Name Province is bright. And even as the past year demonstrated the wonderful resources and giant achievements of the West and promised even greater things to come, so, too, the deeds and triumphs, humble though they be, of the Friars Preachers, augur great prospects for this young Province of the Dominican Order. May the seed planted by Alemany, nurtured by Villarrasa, and blessed by God, grow as the orange tree planted seven centuries ago by Saint Dominic at Santa Sabina.

—**Brother Stephen, O. P.**