

“To Defend the Cross”

By BRO. ANSELM McCABE, O. P.



THE spread of the Catholic Faith in the past has been due in no small measure to the wonderful work of evangelization carried on by European nations. The pages of history show that the colonizing and civilizing of new territory has always been accompanied by Old World missionaries carrying the gospel of Christ to those dwelling in darkness. The peoples of European nations have ever been ready, at no little sacrifice to themselves, to place at the disposal of Holy Mother Church men and means necessary in the propagation of the Faith. Because of the World War the old countries have been forced to curtail their faith-propagating activities for which they are so well known. The destruction following in the wake of this world-wide struggle threatened not only the material world, but at the same time endangered the extension of God's kingdom on earth.

These people who have ever been so ready to assist others, could no longer continue their aid owing to the demands of war on their finances as well as manpower. Thus, the requirements of war not only cut off resources which were the sole hope of future development in missionary endeavor, but also reduced these people to such circumstances that in many cases they were themselves in dire need of assistance. Years must necessarily elapse before the European nations will be once more able to take the offensive in the cause of Christ; but in the meantime, lest the good already accomplished be abandoned, someone must be found to fill this gap in the ranks of Christian knight-hood. The work of the propagation of the Faith must continue regardless of all obstacles, for Christ's command to His Church extends not only to an uninterrupted endurance, but to an endurance that will penetrate every part of the world. The work must continue, and the eyes of the Old World are turned toward Young America. The emergency finds her willing, enthusiastic and not without preparation for the work ahead.

America, herself, has been until recent years a mission



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country. Her efforts in the propagation of the Faith were, naturally, concentrated upon her own vast territory. But her efforts and her methods have been typically American. As early as 1840, the "Society for the Propagation of the Faith," international in scope and universal in appeal, was established in this country. In 1858, the "Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle," devoted especially to the conversion of non-Catholics, had its origin. The spreading of Catholic Truth among the colored people was greatly advanced by the establishment of "St. Joseph's Society for Colored Missions." Three years later the "Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions" came into being to protect and promote the Catholic Indian mission interests in the United States. Two societies, the "Catholic Truth" founded in 1900, and the "Church Extension" opened in 1905, have done much to advance the Catholic cause in this country. The former purposed to answer inquiries on doctrine, to supply literature, and to correct erroneous and misleading statements. A stirring letter by the now Bishop Francis C. Kelley published in a 1905 issue of the "Ecclesiastical Review," resulted in the "Church Extension Society" which has espoused the cause of the needy missions in this country.

All these home activities have so engrossed us that it has only been of late that the Catholics of the country have actively interested themselves in the Foreign Missions. Nevertheless these preparations at home have been splendid training for the larger field of endeavor which is now occupying such an important place in American Catholic life. It was in 1910 that the first purely American society for foreign mission work was established, and became known to the Catholics of this country under the name of the "Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America." The war has done much to further the movement then set on foot by bringing us into closer relationship with other countries. As a result, today, we have Franciscans, Dominicans, Passionists, Vincentians, Marists, Jesuits, Maryknollers, as well as many other communities, engaged in foreign mission work, where, a few years ago, Catholic Foreign missionaries from America were unknown. So rapidly have we taken hold in this work that already a number of foreign mission seminaries are established, others are in the process of development, and still more contemplated. The wave of enthusiasm for the foreign missions

is rapidly rising in our country and it is resulting in many vocations for these missions,—a special gift which God vouchsafes to many devoted sons and daughters.

The Catholic Students Mission Crusade has arisen to help meet the present emergency. Now more than ever before, owing to the vastness of the work, there is need of a lay-apostolate. The clergy have always been dependent upon the assistance of the faithful in sustaining and spreading the Faith and now more than ever our people must take an even more active and cooperative part, if we would keep abreast of the times. To continue the progress of the Faith, help must be found among the American Catholic people. And in this age of intellectualism, our greatest hope is the Catholic student body. Divine Providence



View from Crusade Castle, Cincinnati, Ohio

seems to have selected this time for the students of Catholic institutions throughout the country to concern themselves with missionary activity, and by their achievements, to give an example to their fellow-students of other countries.

The plan to awaken an apostolic spirit in our colleges and universities was first proposed by Father Clifford King, a member of the Society of the Divine Word, who had consecrated his life to labor for the extension of the Faith. Being under obedience, Father King had to await the long and careful deliberation of his superiors before he received leave to act. Consequently, only in May, 1917, after a lapse of more than two years, was the first appeal made for the formation of the student crusade. However, it was not until July, 1918, when the first convention was held at Techny, Illinois, that the initial results of this entreaty appeared. The convention was attended by approximately one hundred delegates, both clerical and lay, representing thirty colleges and universities, eight religious communities, and five so-

cieties devoted to the propagation of the Faith. This convention served to focus the attention of the Catholic public upon one of the main objects of the Mission Crusade, namely, to make the students of our Catholic colleges of America a missionary force whose influence for good will be felt throughout the entire world. This objective is concerned not only with the meeting of the present obligations in the foreign mission field, so insistently demanding our help because the World War has taken away all other; but it is likewise concerned with the preparation for any possible future contingency by mobilizing our Catholic student body into a vast army for the propagation of the Faith. This vision of the future embraces both home and foreign mission interests. The Crusade aims to do even more than create this missionary spirit; it means to utilize it by binding all students together, so that their united efforts may be more productive of good and of more assistance to those already enlisted under the Crusader's banner. It is the awakening of the Catholic youth; the shouldering of our share of the burden unwillingly relinquished by the tired nations of Europe.

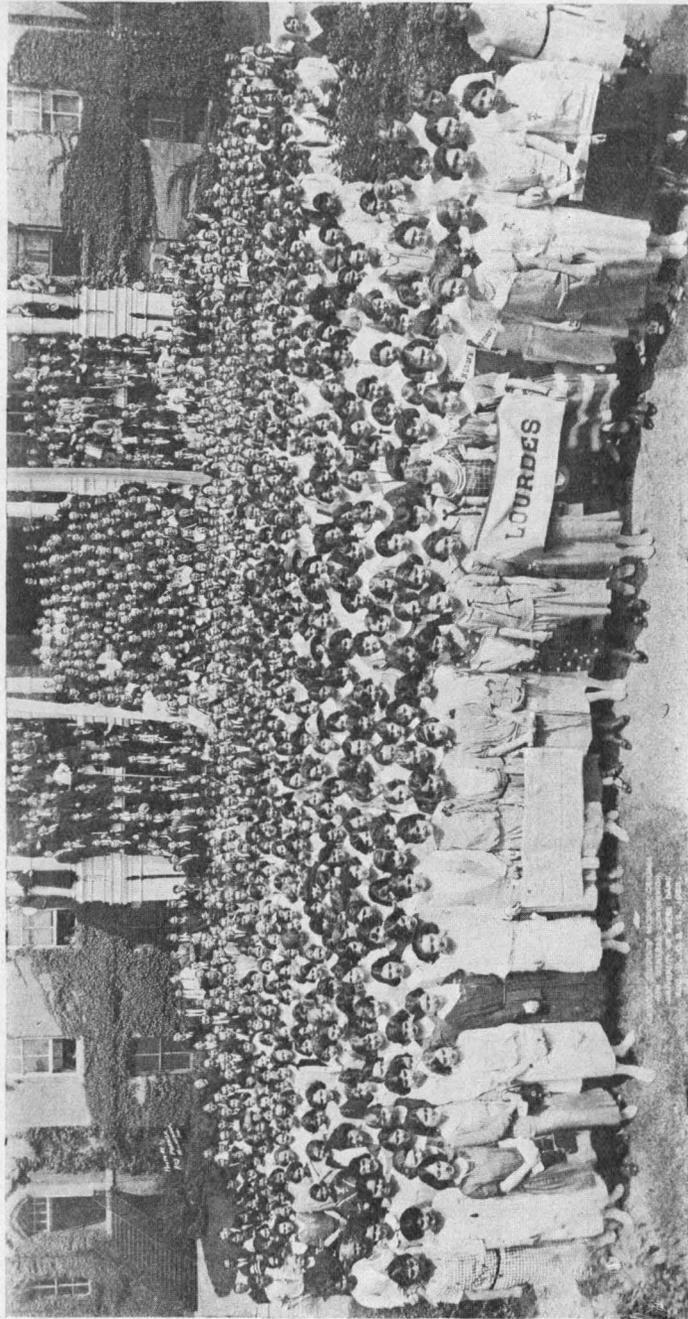
The present condition of affairs places the burdens, both spiritual and temporal, which the war-ravaged countries can no longer bear, upon the Catholics of this nation. If our Catholic people are to rise to the occasion, they must first be made to realize this tremendous responsibility which has fallen to their lot. This does not necessarily mean that previous to this American Catholics were not bound to do their share in forwarding the claims of the Church; but it does show that there is now greater reason for their participation. It is the duty of one and all especially of our students to answer this call.

The needs of the Catholic Church in this country certainly have a claim upon the resources of the Crusade. The desolate missions of this country are deserving of our support. Catholics dwelling in well-populated districts, where the comforts of religion are easily had, little realize the pitiable condition of their brethren settled in poorer and less-inhabited sections. These rural people, living without the consolations of religion, or where they are seldom to be had and then only at the cost of great sacrifice, soon become indifferent to the Faith, and not unfrequently turn to some of the Protestant sects in an effort to satisfy their natural desires for religion. Not only does the

Crusade hope to assist these unfortunate Catholics, but also seeks to extend the solace, which only religion can give, to the white, black and red men who are not yet of the fold. So far we have done very little in comparison to Protestants in evangelizing the negroes of the South. The same may be said of our efforts in behalf of the Indians, which efforts are on a far smaller scale than one would be led to expect. Our deficiencies in missionary enterprise are due in great part to the lack of cooperation on the part of our Catholic people. This failing, however, is principally due to the fact that the people have not received the proper information to inspire their generosity. The Crusade, feeling confident that much could be done to better these unfortunate conditions if our more fortunate brethren were made aware of them, has taken upon itself the task of making these hardships better known, and in the meantime it is lending itself, with the limited means at its disposal, to the alleviation of such circumstances.

Although most Catholics concede our need of home missions when they are brought face to face with the facts, yet many good Catholics object to our taking part in foreign mission activity on the ground that we have more than enough to do right at home. Although it is indisputable that we have more than a saint's task right at hand, we should not lose sight of the fact that the work of the Church is the work of God. It is not unreasonable to confidently hope that God will not only bless our efforts abroad in His behalf, but will also, in return for our devotion to so noble a cause, shower many graces upon our labors at home. Moreover, Christ Himself answered this objection while at the same time setting us an example. When establishing His Church on earth, He did not wait until all were converted in the neighboring districts, but straightway sent His Apostles to teach all nations. It is such an apostolic spirit that stimulates the activities of the Crusade.

Perhaps the greatest barrier to be overcome in our efforts to obtain adequate assistance for the improvement of the missionary situation is the ignorance of the people concerning the missions. To the majority of those who are in a position to give a helping hand, little or nothing at all is known about the handicap under which the Church is compelled to labor in many places. All efforts to quicken the interest of the people in an unknown



A Group of Delegates
Fourth General Convention of the Crusade, University of Notre Dame, August, 1923

proposition must be unfruitful. As a consequence, the first weapon with which every crusader must be equipped, and for this no one is better fitted than the student, is knowledge. It is the duty of every crusader to familiarize those with whom he comes in contact with the needs of the missions. To fit himself for this task, he should steep himself in the mission question. This reading to be beneficial, should not be sporadic, but persistent and enduring. To satisfy this requirement, there are besides "The Shield" the official organ of the Mission Crusade, many periodicals and books treating on this subject. There is the "Extension Magazine" devoted to the needs of the Church in this country. Among those devoted to the cause of making the foreign missions better known are "The Field Afar," "The Far East," "The Torch," "The Vineyard of the East," as well as many others.

The knowledge of the crusader gained through mission reading will, it is hoped, enkindle in the crusader the desire to do something for the cause, and awaken in him that latent spirit of love and sacrifice which seems to be a consequence of such study. This knowledge will be passed on to those with whom those devoted to the cause of the missions come in contact, and thus arouse the students not already active in this campaign to a fuller realization of what the Church expects from those who can in any way assist the propagation of the Faith. Countless numbers have been led by a book, a sermon and in diverse other ways, to consecrate their lives to the service of God. Such, of course, is not the experience of all, but it is hopefully expected, that learning from the sacrifices of others, the Crusaders and those with whom they come in contact may also be filled with the desire to emulate the example of others at least in some small degree, and so do their part to further this work. As an outlet for this self-sacrificing love, the Crusade arms her youthful army for combat either at home or in distant lands with the three edged sword of prayer, financial aid and cooperation.

The conversion of the pagan is in a special manner dependent upon God. For no matter how earnestly we may labor not a single person can be converted if God withholds the gift of Faith. For this reason alone prayer is most essential. But besides this consideration, there is an equally important reason for the necessity of prayer, and that is our duty toward those

who have dedicated themselves to this work. Their vocation is one calling for special help in the performance of the multiplicity of tasks which fall to their lot. And since the bestowing of these indispensable requirements rests entirely with God, prayer is the one great means by which they may be obtained, a means within the reach of all.

But as long as human being remains, as Myles Connolly calls him, "that little man clinging like a grub to that little



**Entrance to
Castle**

earth," we must be content to realize that the material must ever play an important part in all his works and undertakings. Knowing this full well, the Crusade appeals to its supporters for financial aid, not however as a subject of charity—since it personally desires only what is necessary to carry on its work—but rather as a follower of Christ striving to awaken in the people a fuller realization of their duty toward the missions. The economic disinterestedness of the Crusade's cause is manifested from the very fact that its objective is not the gathering of funds for some favorite



**A Corner of the
Crusade Castle**

enterprise, but the larger purview of stimulating the practice of mission assistance among the people,—not for this or that mission, but for every place that knows the prayers and the sighs of a Catholic missionary.

Along with prayers and monetary contributions, the Catholic Students Mission Crusade asks for active personal service. Besides encouraging the missionary by obtaining prayers and money for him, the Crusade aims to encourage him by securing vocations either by offering their own services to the missions or by fostering the missionary spirit in those with whom they come in contact.

The national and local conventions and meetings of the Crusade are barometers of the marvelous and supernatural enthusiasm of the movement. At the national convention at-

tended by delegates from every unit, the methods employed by different groups in the development of their work are explained; the zeal of the crusaders is spurred on by addresses by Missionaries, Priests, Brothers and Sisters, who have come to the convention knowing the work and qualified to plead and instruct. Again, these national conventions define the plan of action for the entire Crusade during the subsequent period, so that all the units of the organization may work along common lines.

The local meetings of members represent a group of units in a certain territory. These local gatherings are somewhat similar to the national conventions, having as their aim the discussion and solution of mission problems and the direction of the local crusaders' activities along the lines of the general plans of the national convention. There is also the monthly meeting of the unit composed of the individual members. It purposes to foster the spirit of cooperation and to guide the activities of the members that they may not deviate from the intention of the Crusade. In the monthly meetings, mission topics are discussed, papers are read, and any progress made by other groups commented upon, thus keeping alive that friendly spirit of rivalry so beneficial in such work. Each of the individual groups is obliged to submit a quarterly report, detailing its work to the Crusade headquarters, thereby insuring coordination and unity of purpose.

In this utilitarian age progress is measured, often unfairly, by material advancement. Even if the Crusade is measured by such standards, it is already a success. No one competent to judge will deny that great strides have been made toward a country-wide lay-apostolate in student ranks. Figures for 1924, show that there are 2069 units in the Crusade, representing 686 institutions of higher learning and 1383 elementary schools. These units have a total membership of approximately 389,240 members. One would hardly recognize in these figures the little society which made so humble a beginning in 1917, and which could count at its first convention only one hundred delegates.

But it is not alone in numbers and the amount of money collected that the Crusade movement has grown. An ever increasing volume of spiritual contributions marks the growth of the movement and it is primarily by prayer that the Saviour commands that His harvest be reaped. Father J. P. Donovan,

C. M., reports in an article in an issue of the "Ecclesiastical Review"; "Behold the spiritual report of an ordinary Crusade grade school of seven hundred pupils for the year 1922-23: 12,000 Communion offered for the mission; 18,000 Masses heard for the missions; 14,000 acts of self-denial performed for the conversion of the world; and 7,000 hours of silence sent on the wings of prayer for the succor of dying souls." Add to this one example the prayers and offerings, the Masses and Communion of the many Junior and Senior units, of the priests, missionaries and nuns throughout the country and some vague idea may be obtained of the constant intercession for God's Kingdom on earth that ascends daily to His Throne in Heaven.



View from upper balcony, Crusade Castle

Mention must needs be made of the not unimportant part which the elementary schools have played in this movement. In the beginning, it seemed best to limit membership in the Crusade to those enrolled in our colleges and universities, but later on, to allow those in the lower grades to share in this spreading of the Faith, the Crusade opened its ranks to the grade school children and enrolled them in what is known as the Junior Crusade. Already this action on the part of the Crusade has been more than justified; for these junior members not only brought to the cause their prayers and small offerings, but best of all, they brought that enthusiasm of youth which is of inestimable value in spreading the spirit of the missions. In the passage of time as these little ones advance in their studies, they will eventually pass into the senior group and so not only

will the younger society be an inspiration for its older brother, but it will likewise act as a feeder for it.

If space permitted we would delight in detailing the enthusiasm for the Crusade effected by the numerous pageants given throughout the country by the Crusaders; the message brought to thousands by the motion picture of the National Convention held at Notre Dame; the untiring work of Monsignor Francis J. Beckman during all the trials of the new organization, as well as his continued interest as Bishop Beckman, Chairman of the Executive Board; the cooperation of the Advisory Board; the untiring labors of the Field Secretaries; the active contributions of Father Frank A. Thill, Secretary-Treasurer and his staff of assistants at the Crusade Castle in Cincinnati—but all this must remain unrecounted except to observe that it gives great promise for the future of the Crusade movement.

All these influences are contributing their portion toward the great mission field. They will inspire cooperation and help from our generous and willing Catholic people. To the movement, the Dominican influences in our country are adding their support and encouragement. Home and foreign missions are not new ventures to the Friar Preachers. For over seven hundred years this has been their appointed work. Here in the United States, at Johnson City, Tennessee and elsewhere the Dominican Fathers are maintaining missions among the scattered faithful. The foreign mission territory of Kienning-Fu in China has recently been assigned to St. Joseph's Province of the Dominican Fathers. Already six young priests and two lay-brothers are laboring zealously in that district. Each year they will call for more laborers. The urge for Sisters, schools, orphanages and churches is insistent. The call must be answered. It is our portion of this great work. We shall not fail, but alone we cannot succeed.



The Flag Pole, Crusade Castle

Our great hope is the prayers and sacrifices of the great body of Catholic students and their devoted teachers. Dotting our great country are numerous Catholic schools, academies and colleges under the direction of the Dominican Sisters. It is to this great potential force for the mission cause that their Brothers in St. Dominic look for encouragement. All these schools, if instilled with the spirit of the Mission Crusade, can be made a wonderful asset for assisting us in our work. As these Dominican Sisters, already filled with the mission spirit, convey the spark of enthusiasm to their pupils, organize Crusade Units, acquaint their children with the needs and obligations of supporting the foreign missions, just so will those missionaries in distant lands take new heart in their work, render more efficient service, and receive their only reward on this earth—knowledge of the fact that those back home are united with them in the great Mission Crusade.

