

✦ REV. ALEXANDER MERCIER, O. P. ✦

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ALTHOUGH his last years were not spent amongst us Father Mercier was not forgotten and the news of his death was heard with regret by his American brethren. His labors here were many and earnest and in their vigorous prosecution he rightly won the esteem and love of his co-workers.

Father Mercier was born at Roanne in the department of the Loise, France, April 25, 1852. When still a young man he joined the Lyons province of the Order of Preachers and made his profession on the nineteenth of December, 1873. Three years afterward, December 23, 1876, he was ordained to the priesthood. Later he was stationed at the Dominican convent in Rijckholt, Holland, as a lector of sacred theology. Because of the military laws of France the novitiate and studium were transferred from Rijckholt to Sherman Park, New York, and Father Mercier was appointed Regent of studies in the new foundation.

When the province of Lyons determined to discontinue their American convent and the studium was brought back to Holland, Father Mercier, together with seven others, remained in this country and was appointed vicar-provincial. He was subsequently elected prior of the convent in Poitiers. He resigned however before his term was completed and returned to Hawthorne, New York, where he labored for many years among the Italians. Holy Rosary Church was erected during this time. When the Very Rev. Father Theissling came to America as visitor he extended to the French Fathers the privilege of joining the province of St. Joseph or of returning to Europe. The majority of them, including Father Mercier, decided to remain. For the celebration of his golden jubilee Father Mercier returned to France in 1927. He died at Lyons two years later, January 9, 1929.

Father Mercier was always devoted to the work of his divine Lord. He was the more closely united to the Master in that he was separated from family and country, for the greater part of his ministry was exercised in America. His was a life worthy of the habit which he wore. Requiescat in pace.

—Bro. Pius Holden, O. P.