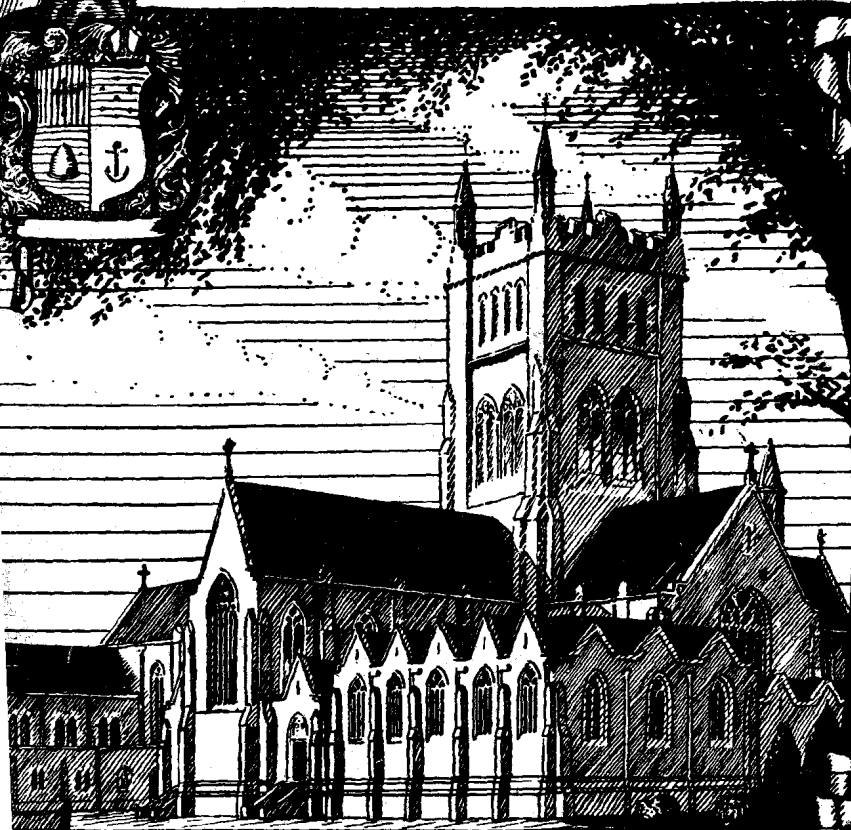


The History of Mount Melleray Abbey



BY A CISTERCIAN FATHER

THE HISTORY
OF
MOUNT MELLERAY ABBEY

By
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Chapter I.

EARLY CISTERCIANS.

MOUNT MELLERAY ABBEY, situated in Co. Waterford on the southern slopes of the Knockmealdown mountains, about four miles north-west of Cappoquin and distant no more than five or six miles from the borders of Tipperary, was founded in the year 1833.

The monks of Mount Melleray are members of the Cistercian or Trappist Order, an Order of the Benedictine family, founded at Citeaux in France in 1098. The founder was not St. Bernard, as is commonly believed, but St. Robert of Molesme, who, through his desire to observe the Holy Rule of St. Benedict more perfectly, left the monastery of which he had been Abbot, with some twenty companions, and settled at a place called Citeaux, in the diocese of Chalons-sur-Saone, to-day the diocese of Dijon, from which city it is fifteen miles distant. It is from the name Citeaux—in Latin, Cistercium—that the members of the Order have been called Cistercians. The appellation 'Trappist' is comparatively modern and seems to have originated with the celebrated reform of Abbot de Rancé in the French monastery of la Grande-Trappe in the middle of the seventeenth century. But to return to St. Robert, one year after he had established his monks at Citeaux, he was bidden by an order from the Holy See to go back to Molesme, where discipline had

deteriorated since his departure. His place at the head of the new foundation was taken by St. Alberic, who was succeeded at his death by an Englishman, St. Stephen Harding, the first legislator of the Cistercian Order. Tradition has it that Stephen, worried by dearth of vocations to his monastery and fearing that the mode of life adopted by him and his brethren was not pleasing to Providence, commanded a dying monk in the name of religious obedience to return from the world beyond with enlightenment on the difficulty. The deceased, we are told, returned some days later and encouraged the Abbot with the assurance that his manner of life was pleasing to God and that, in a little while, his patience would be crowned in a way that would surpass his most sanguine expectations. This was verified shortly afterwards when a young nobleman of twenty-two, Bernard of Fontaines, appeared at the Abbey gates at the head of thirty companions seeking admission into the noviceship.

Bernard of Fontaines, we have called him, later he would be better known as St. Bernard of Clairvaux, for four years after his admittance into religion he was sent forth by Abbot Stephen at the head of a band of monks destined to be the nucleus of a new monastery, the third established from Citeaux. A deep valley on the left bank of the Aube, known as the Valley of Wormwood, was selected as a suitable site for the monastery and Bernard changed the name of the place to Clara Vallis or Clairvaux. No other monastery in the Europe of that period, it can be safely said, was destined to have such an influence on the religious history of Ireland as the abbey of St. Bernard.

In the year 1139, Malachy O'Morgair, Bishop of Down, journeying to Rome on business connected with the reform of discipline in the Irish Church, turned aside from his route to visit Clairvaux. The monastery was then at the height of its glory, having a community of over seven hundred monks and being governed by that illustrious man who, in the words of an historian "filled the world with his fame, upheaved it with his eloquence, swayed it with his influence." So moved was Malachy by the sanctity of the holy Abbot and the fervour of the monks that, on reaching the Eternal City, he hastened to interview Pope Innocent II and humbly requested him to be allowed to resign his bishopric and to spend his remaining days in the abbey of Clairvaux. His request was not granted but Malachy resolved that, if the peace and quiet of Cistercian life could not be his, he would make it possible at least for his fellow-countrymen. Returning therefore to Bernard, he begged that four of his travelling companions be permitted to remain on at Clairvaux to be trained in monastic discipline so that eventually through them the Cistercian manner of life could be introduced into Ireland. This suggestion was adopted and Malachy returned home to make preparations for the new monastery.

The first Irish Cistercian abbey was founded on a remote spot on the banks of the river Mattock, a tributary of the Boyne, about five miles north-west of Drogheda in the modern County Louth; it was given the name, Mellifont or Honey Fountain. This happened in 1142. Founded under the direction of S.S. Bernard and Malachy, Mellifont had a history worthy of its originators. It was a success from the

beginning and became in its turn the mother-house of many monasteries throughout the country : Bective, Boyle, Nenay, Knockmoy, Assaroe, Holy Cross, Fermoy, Jerpoint, Monasterevan, Midleton and over a score of others, owed their origin, directly or indirectly, to the Abbey built on the Mattock. Thus did the Cistercian monasticism take its place in the life of the Irish people, influencing them for good and raising their standard of religious observance, until the era of persecution descended on the country, suppressing monasteries, dispersing communities, confiscating and planting the lands of the monks, destroying sacred edifices or turning them to profane use. Mellifont itself was suppressed by order of King Henry VIII, on July 23, 1539. For a time the scattered brethren remained in the vicinity of their beloved monastery clinging to the fond hope of being sooner or later reinstated. The last titular Abbot of Mellifont, Patrick Barnewall, died in September, 1644 and was interred in the church of Donore. With him ended the first phase of Cistercian history in Ireland.

Chapter II.

IRISH REVIVAL.

IN the year 1817 the venerable Abbey of Melleray situated not far from the town of Chateaubriand in Brittany, France, was restored to the Cistercian Order. Founded in 1145 from Poutrond, one of the filiations of St. Bernard's Clairvaux, it had flourished all down the ages but was suppressed at the time of the French Revolution. Now it was to be reoccupied by a community of exiled monks who had come from Val-Sainte in Switzerland in 1794 and had established themselves at Lulworth Park, Dorsetshire, but who were obliged, owing to religious intolerance and bigotry, to leave England. Through the intermediacy of influential friends, Dom Antony Beauregarde, who presided over the destinies of this Community, succeeded in repurchasing Melleray Abbey and shortly afterwards took possession of the place. Providence seemed to look with favour on the resuscitated monastery for in little more than ten years it had a brotherhood of two hundred members, of whom up to seventy were Irish.

Among the Irish, one is worthy of our attention because of the prominence of his position and his capabilities. He was Fr. Vincent Ryan, the Prior, that is, the chief assistant of the Abbot in the government of the monastery. Born at Waterford in 1788 of good Catholic parents, he was educated

in the schools of his native city. Entering the novitiate at Lulworth Park in 1810, he made his profession in due course and was ordained by Bishop Poynter, Vicar Apostolic of the London district, about the year 1815. Desiring in common with many of his Irish brethren to see Cistercian life restored to his native country, Fr. Vincent frequently broached the subject of an Irish foundation to his Abbot but without success. At length, moved in particular by the threatening nature of affairs in France, Dom Antony yielded and gave permission to his Prior to go to Ireland in search of a suitable place to make a new foundation.

Crossing to Dublin, Fr. Vincent contacted the Liberator, Mr. Daniel O'Connell, and, through his influence, became acquainted with two gentlemen, who are worthy of remembrance. The one was Mr. Robert White, a Dublin man, who insisted on having the honour of entertaining the Prior as long as he remained in the Capital; the other was Rev. Thomas Lyons, a priest of the archdiocese of Tuam, who offered to hand over to Fr. Vincent a farm of 800 acres in Co. Mayo, on the same terms on which he held it himself. The land, he thought, was reclaimable and capable of being turned into a good property and the rent was merely nominal. The Prior was filled with gratitude at what he regarded as an immediate answer to his prayers but his joy was turned into sorrow when, after a long and wearisome journey to the West, he discovered what was little more than an extensive black bog, bare of vegetation and quite open to the sea. He could not afford to be over particular; he had at any cost to provide a home for his Irish brethren in

Melleray; still he could never bring himself to establish them on this bogland, which held out so poor a hope of sustenance.

In his disappointment Fr. Vincent was encouraged by a letter he received from the Rev. Mother of the Presentation Convent, Killarney, telling him of a house and farm near Rathmore which might suit his purpose. Directing his footsteps southwards the Prior found that the house was much too small and that the farm, consisting of 150 acres of fairly good land, was subject to an exorbitant rent, with a term of tenure limited to twenty years. Nevertheless, placing his confidence in the Providence of God, he decided to rent the property and thus provide a place of refuge for his brethren in the event of their being driven out of France where the horizon was darkening. This was on June 8, 1831.

Meanwhile at Melleray the religious situation was becoming serious, for the government of France had changed hands and the enemies of the faith were loudly demanding the suppression of the monastery. In September 1831, the Sub-Prefect of Chateaubriand with a force of 600 soldiers surrounded the Abbey, formally declaring it suppressed and ordering the monks to leave. His efforts on this occasion proved futile. Returning in November with a still larger force of soldiery, he dragged the monks forth, one by one, and marched them off at the point of the bayonet to Nantes where they were cast into prison. The Irish and English subjects decided to leave the country on the advice of Mr. Newman, the British Consul at Nantes, who

demanded that the French Government should be responsible for their transportation.

Travelling then on the battle-ship *Hebé*, sixty-four Cistercian monks reached Cobh on December 1, 1831 and were accorded an enthusiastic welcome by the townsfolk. An equally hospitable reception was given them during their stay in the city of Cork, where they were obliged to remain for two or three days, while arrangements were being made by Fr. Vincent for conveying them to their new home at Rathmore. Arrived at their journey's end, they found that not only was the dwelling house entirely inadequate for their numbers, but that the farm was far from large enough to give employment to all, or anything like a hope of necessary support. Still they decided to make the most of their circumstances until something more advantageous should arise and they began at once, as far as they possibly could, to resume the regular monastic life as they had lived it at Melleray, rising at 2.0 a.m. reciting the Divine Office at the usual hours and engaging in prayer and manual labour.

Chapter III.

SCRAHAN.

WITH his brethren in such uncongenial circumstances, Fr. Vincent felt unable to rest until he succeeded in procuring for them a home, where they could live their monastic life with less inconvenience and with a more well-grounded hope of adequate support. He had already heard through Rev. Patrick Fogarty, C.C. Dungarvan, of an offer of mountain land made to the community by Sir Richard Keane of Cappoquin. Taught by bitter experience, he was at first inclined to give no consideration whatever to this offer, but after due deliberation and consultation with his brethren, he sent a lay-brother privately to Dungarvan for the purpose of discovering all he could about the proposed tract of land and forwarding his information to Rathmore as quickly as possible. In the course of a few days he received two communications, one from the lay-brother, the other from Fr. Fogarty—both of them giving such accounts of the land and surroundings as led him to decide on seeing the place for himself.

It was on a wintry day in February, 1832, that the Prior first laid eyes on the place destined to be the scene of his labours during the remaining years of his life. The impression it made on him can hardly be described as favourable. There were 600 acres of land in the tract, it is true, but it was

mountain land in the strictest sense of the term, rough and uneven in surface, covered with a thick dark growth of heather, furze and rushes; there were patches, too, where the heavy rains or the mighty force of mountain stream had washed away the thin surface of the peat and left nothing but the naked rock. Not a tree was to be seen over the whole extent of the area, nor a ditch nor a fence nor even a building of any kind except for a dilapidated gamekeeper's lodge at the southern extremity of the estate. "Scrahan" or "the coarse land" it was called and rarely was a name better suited to the reality.

Discouraged but not despairing, Fr. Vincent returned to Cappoquin where Sir Richard Keane was anxiously awaiting him, eager to discover what impression the mountain tract had made on his prospective tenant. When he found out that the Prior, though far from being impressed by what he had seen, was still disposed to consider the matter, he gave him in brief an outline of the conditions on which the land would be let; the lease was to be for ninety-nine years at an annual rent of one shilling per acre for the first twenty years, to be increased to a half-crown for the remainder of the term. Still undecided, the Prior returned to Rathmore where he gave the community as perfect a description as he possibly could of Scrahan and its surroundings, adding at the same time the conditions proposed by the landlord. The brethren, after lengthy reflection and fervent prayer about the matter on hand, unanimously decided in favour of acceptance.

Towards the end of the following month, Fr. Vincent was present at a conference of the clergy at Dungarvan presided over by Dr. Wm. Abraham, then Bishop of Waterford and Lismore. Having addressed the assembly at some length on the proposed establishment of a Cistercian monastery within the diocese and on his sincere desire for its prosperity and success, His Lordship requested Dr. Foran, Vicar-General and P.P. of Dungarvan, to read for the clergy the landlord's conditions, which appeared to all to be very just and reasonable. On the next day the Prior again interviewed Sir Richard Keane at Cappoquin, and, on the suggestion of the baronet, both of them rode out together to Scrahan where they dismounted and strolled leisurly over the property. Arriving at the place where the present porter's Lodge of Mount Melleray Abbey stands, Sir Richard abruptly halted and addressing his companion, said: "Here now is Scrahan; take it or leave it! I seek no pecuniary advantage from you or your community, yet I believe my property will be improved by your establishment, because many will be induced by your example to take a share of my waste land, and the morals of the people will be improved, if a place of worship is erected here." Fr. Vincent feeling, as he later related, an extraordinary and unaccountable conviction that this was the place the Lord had chosen, unhesitatingly replied: "I am satisfied; let us consider the matter concluded." It was decided that the Abbey should be built on the spot where the agreement had been made, and having duly marked the place with a stone, the landlord and his tenant went back to Cappoquin.

Chapter IV.

BETHLEHEM.

HAVING completed his contract, Fr. Vincent hastened to Rathmore to announce to the community there the glad tidings. It was on May 30, that he returned to Scrahan to take up his abode in the gamekeeper's lodge which, as we have said, was the only building on the estate. Arriving at the cottage, he unlocked the door saying aloud the words: "In nomine Domini!" and entering, he sat down, weary and footsore, to deliberate. Surely he had food enough for thought here on the side of an uncultivated mountain, without money, without aid or influence, with the gigantic task before him of reclaiming a vast tract of barren land and providing for a community of some seventy members. But in God had he placed his trust and in Him he would not be confounded.

On the next morning, which happened to be the feast of the Ascension, the Prior celebrated Mass in the cottage in the presence of several of the neighbours. He then announced that for the future the cottage should be known as Bethlehem—a name which it retains to the present day—and Scrahan he changed to Mount Melleray, in memory no doubt, of the mother-house in Brittany. On that very day Fr. Vincent received a cheque for £100 from the Duke of Devonshire of Lismore Castle—a most acceptable gift, which was expended in erecting a

temporary wooden chapel and some indispensable out-offices.

The brethren appointed to come from Rathmore began to arrive in batches until at length the number of twenty-one was reached. As far as possible the monastic horarium was observed from the outset. At one o'clock on Sunday mornings and at two on ordinary days, the monks rose and followed throughout the day the accustomed round of duties retiring to rest at seven or eight, according to the season. There were at Bethlehem only four choir religious, and amongst these only one priest—the Prior himself. Yet every day they assembled in their little oratory to recite or chant the Divine Office, that "Work of God" which holds an all important place in the life of every true observer of the Holy Rule of St. Benedict. During the summer season two community meals were allowed by the Constitutions, one at midday, the other at six in the evening, and, although meat, fish and eggs were forbidden, except to the sick; milk, fruit and vegetables might be freely made use of. The Irish monks, it would seem, always took a collation in the morning, and, for the most part, efforts made by some to fast until the midday meal invariably turned out a failure. As for the brethren at Bethlehem, they could ill afford to be selective in the matter of food; their usual diet at all meals consisted of sour milk and potatoes, with some bread occasionally, when they could manage to procure it.

The work of enclosing their farm round about with an unbroken line of fence was the first task that engaged the attention of the monks. It was

hard work and made severe demands on their strength but they were healthy and in good spirits, happy in the consciousness of the fact that all they were doing was being done for the glory of God. In the course of that first summer on the mountain-side they had to put up with great inconveniences arising from lack of space and the consequent evils of excessive warmth and unhealthy air. The winter brought no alleviation, for the walls and roof of their poor cottage were no proof against the rain and snow. Some of the brethren who slept in a hayloft over the stable, were often drenched on their couches and at times they had reason to fear, when a storm swept down from the mountains, that the entire building which provided them with shelter, would be dashed to pieces in the fury of the tempest. Hardly less comfortless was the wooden chapel where the religious remained in prayer through the long dreary hours of those winter mornings. And yet these men were contented, really contented in the realisation that all they were doing and suffering was for Him alone Whom they served.

When the news spread abroad that the monks were busily engaged in fencing in their land, the people of the locality shook their heads sceptically and wondered how soon they would grow tired of it. But doubt changed into admiration when they were convinced of the intrepid spirit of the brethren and led to a manifestation of charity which has few parallels in Catholic history.

The parish of Modeligo was the first to show practical approval in action of the work of the

monks. On Monday, July 17, 1832, under the leadership of Rev. T. Queally, C.C. of the parish, 400 men with spades on their shoulders set out for Scrahan, marching four abreast to the music of a band. When they reached their destination, they joined the brethren at the work of raising the fences and kept at their task until a late hour in the evening. Their example was followed on the 24th of the same month by the parishioners of Cappoquin who sent 800 helpers and again another week later Fr. Queally returned at the head of a contingent of almost the same number. Not so long after the priests and people of Cappoquin, regarding themselves as under a special obligation, since the monks belonged to their parish, to render assistance, sent labourers to the number of 1,500 and these were followed on August 20, by 200 men from Lismore led by their curate, Fr. Power. Assistance was also rendered on different occasions by men from Knockanore, from Newcastle in Co. Tipperary and from Clashmore, which is twelve miles from the monastery. One example remains on record even of men who came from outside the diocese when 150 men from Ballynoe in Co. Cork, leaving home at midnight, were ready to begin their labours at four o'clock in the morning. At first reading perhaps, the numbers of those men who came to give help seems to be exaggerated, but those were the days, be it remembered, before the famine and its consequent evils robbed our country of half its population.

Chapter V.

MOUNT MELLERAY.

RENEWED in hope by this manifestation of public interest and forced by the necessity of providing more ample accommodation for his brethren, Fr. Vincent decided on embarking on a building enterprise. Before setting out on a journey he had to make to Rathmore late in the summer, he bade the community to make a commencement on the work near the site already decided upon for the future monastery. Fearful through lack of means, they considered that a building thirty feet long by sixteen wide would be as large a structure as they could risk. But the Prior, on his return, seeing the small proportions of the house which the monks were working at, exhorted them to greater confidence in the Providence of God and had the side walls extended to a length of 120 feet. The building, called for convenience the "preparatory house," was finished by mid-November, at least to the extent that it was slated and floored. Much more would need to be done before it was quite ready for occupation. Nevertheless some of the brethren, deeming that it would provide better quarters in adverse weather than Bethlehem, begged permission from their Superior to change thither before the winter set in. Fully realising the risks the monks would run on account of the damp and unfinished state of the new building, Fr. Vincent

hesitated as to what he should do and at length gave a reluctant permission for the change. First, however, in order to draw down the blessing of God on the house and its occupiers, he celebrated there, on November 19, a solemn High Mass and had all the canonical hours of the Divine Office said there on that day. It was on January 19 following that the Prior himself and the rest of the community came to live permanently at Mount Melleray, after which the cottage at Bethlehem was finally abandoned.

Meanwhile one of the priests from the Rathmore community, Fr. Norbert Woolfrey, an Englishman, had been sent across channel by the Prior to collect money from the Catholics of Britain, so that the building operations could be continued. As a collector, Fr. Norbert proved a great success. In the course of his journeyings, he chanced to call on Mr. Ambrose Phillipps of Grace Dieu Manor, Leicestershire, who spoke to him of a subject very dear to his heart, namely, that Cistercian life should be brought back to England. He assured Fr. Norbert that if the Prior of Mount Melleray would be willing to make a foundation in England, he could count upon the zealous co-operation of the owner of Grace-Dieu. This was yet another sacrifice that Fr. Vincent was called upon to make and he made it on the understanding that the new community should consist mainly of those English religious who had been expelled from Melleray and who were still awaiting apparently their opportunity for repatriation. A small estate of 227 acres, mostly forest land, was then purchased by Mr. Phillipps and handed over to the monks. Fr. Odillo Woolfrey, brother to Fr. Norbert, was appointed

first Superior of the new foundation which was named Mount St. Bernard. This English abbey has always been regarded as Mount Melleray's first filiation; it is a flourishing monastery to-day with a fervent community of over eighty members.

In the spring of 1833 began at Mount Melleray a work that has been continued down through the years, even to the present day—the work namely, of reclaiming the mountain land and rendering it capable of cultivation. To succeed with this task the monks had first to free the soil from the innumerable rocks and stones that lay imbedded in its depths. With these removed or collected together in heaps, the land was subsoiled, that is, the black or peaty surface was placed underneath and the red clay left on top. This red clay of itself had very little productive power until treated by the monks with top-dress or manure. In recent times it is considered more scientific to remove the black sods from each section of land that is being reclaimed, clear it of stones and boulders, dig the red clay without removing it and cover it again with the black soil.

Another work undertaken by the community around this time was the planting of trees—the whole estate was surrounded, almost without a break, with a shelter-belt of trees, principally pine and larch. It is estimated that, during their first years on the Mount, the brethren planted no fewer than 17,000 young trees. It is to the foresight and labour of these early pioneers that we of the present day owe the verdant groves which add so much to the beauty of our surroundings and make such a lasting impression on visitors.

While engaged in these tasks so much in keeping with the spirit of their state, the community aimed at regularity in all things. Depending so much on Providence for all their needs, they felt that fidelity to all their monastic duties was the best means they could adopt to draw the divine blessings upon them. Of their number only six were choir religious, yet they never failed to rise at the appointed hour to recite the Matins and Lauds of the Blessed Virgin which was followed by meditation and the Canonical Office of the day. No work was ever so pressing that it could exempt them from singing or reciting the Divine Office together in choir. Though the religious habit was worn from the beginning at Rathmore, probably because of the remoteness of the place, the brethren at Mount Melleray had not as yet ventured to do so through fear of the penal laws, which could still be enforced against them, monks being excluded from the benefits of the Emancipation Act of 1829.

Chapter VI.

MOUNT MELLERAY AN ABBEY.

ENCOURAGED by success beyond their expectations Fr. Vincent and his brethren decided that they would at least make a start at the building of a regular monastery. With their Bishop's consent, the community resolved to confer the honour of laying the foundation stone on their landlord, Sir Richard Keane, and the date was fixed for August 20, the feast of St. Bernard.

On the appointed day, a multitude of up to 20,000 persons including about thirty priests is said to have assembled at the proposed site of the monastery. Bishop Abraham presided at the High Mass sung by Fr. P. Fogarty, and the brethren appeared in their monastic dress for the first time. At the end of the Mass, a procession formed and proceeded to the spot where the first stone of the monastery was to be laid. The stone, suspended on a crane, was placed in position by the baronet, after a relic of the true Cross sent from Rome had been reverently laid under it, and then the Bishop solemnly blessed it and the whole area which was to be occupied by the projected monastery. On the stone itself in deeply cut characters was the following inscription in Latin: "Gregorio XVI. Pont. Max; Gulielmo Abraham, S.T.D., R.C.E. W. et L.; R.P. Vincentio S. R. Keane, E.S.S.; Die 20 Augusti, 1833." The ceremony closed with an eloquent sermon

in Irish by Rev. F. Murphy, C.C. Aglish, in which he made a touching appeal to the charity of the assembled people on behalf of the penniless monks.

The foundation-stone of the monastery having been laid, the brother masons, of whom it seems there were three, set themselves to the work of building under the direction of Mr. Nicholas Murphy, a skilful architect of Wexford; he offered his services gratis and subsequently joined the community himself as a choir-brother. At first the progress was slow owing to want of help and lack of funds so that at the commencement of February, 1834, the walls of the quadrangle had scarcely risen three feet from the ground. Some financial help received about that time enabled Fr. Vincent to take on three secular masons to hasten the progress of the work. Still it was an uphill struggle all the time since the only source of capital for the monks was the charity of the faithful.

“The community,” wrote the Prior, “were literally in a state of indigence, but confidence in the Divine Goodness was their support. The building operations, interrupted for a space, recommenced with renewed vigour on February 10th and continued steadily throughout the year. In a little more than ten months the four wings were finished, which is a thing so extraordinary that, all the circumstances being considered, we may justly pronounce it unexampled in monastic history. There was no quarry to furnish stones; the material was sought and found in the land under preparation for tillage, not in any one place, but here and there over the entire area. There was no lime, no sand; the

former had to be brought a distance of four miles, and the latter was procured in the bed of the stream which bounds the Abbey lands to the south and conveyed thence to the scene of operations with incredible labour since no roads had yet been constructed."

The new buildings, now ready for roofing, had been erected according to tradition in their general disposition and form, having the church on the southern side of the quadrangle, the refectory with dormitory overhead on the northern side, the guest-house on the west and the chapter-house with upper storey reserved for the library on the eastern side. As for definite architectural style of any kind, the brethren were too much intent on economy and haste to concern themselves about that. In fact, except for its lancet windows and the small square Gothic church tower, the buildings can scarcely be said to have any special architectural form.

Having succeeded so far in the undertakings the the community at Mount Melleray now deliberated on a new project; it was, to make petition to the Holy See for certain necessary privileges. In the first place, they desired to obtain the Sovereign Pontiff's approval of their effort to revive Cistercian monasticism in Ireland as also to procure modification in the severe rule of fasting of the la Trappe regime and secondly, they wished to petition the Pope to raise Mount Melleray to the dignity of an abbey with their beloved Fr. Vincent, canonically elected, as first Abbot. These petitions, duly drawn up, were forwarded to Cardinal Weld and shortly afterwards an inquiry from the Congregation of

Propaganda, directed to Bishop Abraham sought to find out from his Lordship how far, in his judgment the strict observance of La Trappe could be expected to succeed in Ireland; what were his views respecting Mount Melleray and its future and whether in short, it had his approval. The good Bishop, with his wonted kindness, replied at once, giving excellent testimony to the reputation of the community. Within a short period after this, the papal brief arrived with a full grant of what had been requested. Mount Melleray was elevated to the status of an abbey and the election of Fr. Vincent acknowledged as canonical; the modifications of the Trappist regime were sanctioned; permission was granted to admit novices and all the rights and privileges enjoyed by other Cistercian abbeys were extended to the monastery.

For further confirmation of Dom Vincent in his office of Abbot, application was made to the Abbot-General of the Cistercians. This Superior, resident in Rome, was recognised as the nominal head of the whole Cistercian Order but each of the different observances had its own Vicar-General by whom it was actually governed. According to a decree of the General Chapter of 1628, the blessing of abbots was reserved to the Abbot-General or his delegate; hence the need for applying to him for due authorization. Besides it was necessary for the monks of Mount Melleray at this precise period that their monastery, as affiliated to the Trappist Congregation, should be recognised as belonging to a branch of the great Cistercian family.

Through the kind services of Cardinal Weld, this petition was made, and in February 1835, a letter directed to the Abbot-elect from Dom Sextus Benigni, Abbot-General of the Cistercians, conferred on him all the privileges and honours, powers and prerogatives, possessed by the other abbots of the Order, as well as the plenitude of abbatial jurisdiction, and delegated Dr. Abraham, Bishop of the diocese, to perform the solemn ceremony of the blessing. A second letter from the same Superior-General was addressed to the community and conveyed in terms of affection the assurance of their Venerable Father's care and solicitude in their regard, his sympathy with his sons in their manifold sufferings, of which he had heard, his felicitations on the victory of their patience and perseverance, and his earnest desire that they would continue faithful to the Holy Rule and loyal to the abbot whom God had given them.

The abbatial benediction of Dom Vincent Ryan was then fixed for May 14, the feast of St. Carthage of Lismore, and it was to take place publicly in the Cathedral at Waterford. Opportunity was to be drawn from the occasion to collect funds for the still roofless monastery, and the rite of the abbatial blessing, translated into English, was published in pamphlet form, to be sold with tickets of admission to the multitudes of the faithful who were expected to be present at the function. All these arrangements had the full approval of Bishop Abraham and several members of the Hierarchy promised to attend, as well as a large representation of the clergy. But man proposes and God disposes! On Saturday May 9, the Abbot-elect went to Waterford to make

final arrangements with the Bishop. His Lordship received him with his wonted cordiality, and, after a brief preliminary discussion on ordinary topics, he informed Dom Vincent that he had bad news to communicate. The Bishop produced two letters from Archbishop Murray of Dublin, warning him, and through him, the Abbot-elect, that the enemies of religion were on the alert and intended to make use of the forthcoming ceremony for the destruction of Mount Melleray; and the writer concluded with the recommendation that the Bishop should arrange with Abbot Vincent for the carrying out of the abbatial benediction in private.

This was a heavy disappointment for Dom Vincent and his community to bear, but, accustomed as they were to adversity, they accepted it simply as another manifestation of the Will of Providence in their regard. On May 17, in the Bishop's private chapel, the Abbot of Mount Melleray—the first abbot in the country since the raising of the penal laws—was solemnly blessed and received all the pontifical insignia at the hands of Dr. Abraham. On his return to the monastery he was received with great joy and gladness by the whole community, who, headed by Fr. Palladius, the Prior, came forth to meet him in solemn procession, as laid down in the Cistercian Ritual. Arriving at the Oratory, a solemn Te Deum of thanksgiving was sung, at the end of which the Abbot delivered an inspiring address exhorting his brethren to an ever-increasing confidence in the goodness of God.

Chapter VII.

VISIT OF O'CONNELL.

THOUGH raised to the dignity of an abbey with all the rights and privileges of a monastery of the Cistercian Order, Mount Melleray had not yet finished with its struggle against poverty. Not infrequently did the Abbot himself go out on the humiliating, yet very necessary business of collecting funds. Often he was seen in his own native city of Waterford begging alms from door to door. Large sums rarely came his way but many a widow's mite; he has left it on record that it is mainly due to the offerings of the poor that the monastery owes its existence and it was this meagre but gladly given help that, more than once, saved the monks from absolute want. Far from forgetting or concealing this fact, the community at Mount Melleray has retained it in ever-enduring remembrance.

During the summer of 1835 Dom Vincent, anxious to have his monastic buildings roofed before winter set in, had recourse to an expedient which showed his strong faith and confidence in God. Addressing a letter to Mr Richard Keating, a timber merchant of Dungarvan, he ordered a large amount of timber, candidly acknowledging at the same time that he was without means at the moment, but would pay the debt according as Providence, on which he wholly depended, would provide him. The goods were supplied according to order, the merchant not

even making reference to the price. By great stinting in the matter of food for the community, the Abbot was able to pay a few pounds every month to his generous creditor. But when even this became impossible because of a lessening in alms received, Dom Vincent raised a loan of £100 in the banks and forwarded the money to Mr. Keating. Discovering the extreme poverty of the monks, the kind-hearted merchant, touched with compassion, promptly sent a receipt for the balance—no less a sum than £900.

Meanwhile the work of roofing was progressing with rapidity and as soon as the monastery was slated, the Abbot decided that a tower and steeple should be added to the church. The tower, destined to stand for a century, was solidly built of brick and stone; the steeple, being merely provisional, was constructed of strong planks, sheeted over with copper. This was towards the close of 1836.

In the spring of 1837, Mr. McDonough, the gentleman, who four years before had so liberally placed his farm at the disposal of the monks, expressed a desire to have it back. Had he been aware of the difficult situation in which his request would place the monks, he would certainly have granted them a respite; but they, feeling they already owed him so much, could not think of representing matters to him and prepared to depart. By the end of summer Rathmore was abandoned and the monks, leaving behind them in the little cemetery the mortal remains of five of their brethren, took up their abode at Mount Melleray. They brought with them from Co. Kerry whatever they had in the way of cattle and sheep; but, since the mountain property provided as yet very little by

way of shelter, all the sheep perished during the winter. The cattle, however, were preserved and the monks were no longer under the necessity of purchasing their milk.

Bishop Abraham, the kindly father and faithful friend of the monks since their arrival in his territory, died at the beginning of 1837. He was succeeded in office by Dr. Nicholas Foran, P.P. of Dungarvan and formerly Vicar-General of the diocese. Recent historical research has discovered some interesting facts regarding the appointment of Dr. Abraham. That the Catholic Emancipation Act had been granted without giving the English Government a right to veto episcopal appointments in this country, was regarded as a personal triumph for the Liberator. Nevertheless, six months had not passed before the Duke of Wellington, then Prime Minister of England, made an attempt at exercising the veto through diplomatic representations to Rome, even going so far as to suggest his own nominee for the diocese of Waterford and Lismore which had become vacant by the death of Bishop Patrick Kelly in October, 1829. His choice, strange to relate, was none other than Bishop (later Cardinal) Thomas Weld, whom he opposed to Dr. Foran, the Vicar Capitular, elected as dignissimus or most worthy of the three candidates presented for the vacant see by the diocesan clergy. Rome, unwilling to offend the British Premier and fully aware at the same time how hurtful to the natural feelings of the clergy and laity of Waterford and Lismore, would be the appointment of an English prelate to rule over them, made a compromise by nominating Rev. Wm. Abraham, President of St.

John's College, Waterford, to the vacant diocese in January 1830 and by conferring, not long afterwards, the cardinalate on Bishop Weld. After Dr. Abraham's death in 1837, as we have said, Bishop Foran succeeded and he became, as Wellington had feared he would, an active supporter of Repeal. All three prelates were kind friends of Mount Melleray towards whom the monks feel they owe an everlasting debt of gratitude.

With the growth of his community by the addition of the brethren from Rathmore, Abbot Vincent was enabled to dismiss the hired tradesmen and to increase the progress of his undertakings both within and outside of the monastery. We have alluded to the sacrifice that had of necessity to be made by the abandonment of Rathmore because though there was sufficiency of buildings at Mount Melleray they were not yet ready for occupancy. The Church was far from finished interiorly and the dormitory could not be availed of for quite a long time yet, so there was nothing left for the new arrivals from Kerry but to crowd themselves into the preparatory house with the rest of the brethren. The result was that a fever of a virulent nature broke out and within a few days almost half the community was affected. Due to the prompt action of the Prior, Fr. Palladius, who governed the monastery while Dom Vincent was absent through illness, the sick brethren and those in charge of them were isolated in the preparatory house and in a short time the fever abated without leaving any serious traces.

On August 20, 1838, the Abbot and his brethren had the proud privilege of welcoming the great

Daniel O'Connell to Mount Melleray. It had been the intention of this illustrious patriot to come during the year 1837, but circumstances and his manifold engagements had prevented him. When at length a definite date had been fixed for the arrival of the distinguished visitor, the brethren spared no pains in making what they considered due preparations. As soon as the carriage bearing the Liberator and his secretary, Mr. O'Neill Daunt, was seen approaching the Abbey gates, the bell rang out its peals of welcome and the entire community issued forth from the monastery in processional order to meet the guests. Evidently the rite prescribed in the Cistercian Ritual for the reception of persons of eminence was followed. Leading Mr. O'Connell to the Chapter-room, as the unfinished church was still in the hands of the tradesmen, the Abbot intoned the Te Deum which was taken up by the brethren and sung with great feelings of joy and fervour. At the end of the ritual prayers, an address of welcome on behalf of the community was read to the Liberator by one of the priests.

On rising to reply, O'Connell was overcome with emotion. Regaining his self-control in a few moments, he held up his hands and said: "My friends, these hands are stained with blood!" alluding obviously to the unhappy ending of his duel with D'Esterre. Then thanking the brethren for their kindly reception of one so undeserving, and humbly begging a remembrance in their prayers during the days of retreat he proposed to spend amongst them, he retired to the quarters reserved for his use and spent a full week in recollection and prayer. Again on the morning that he left to return to Dublin, the

Liberator delivered a touching address to the whole community assembled to listen to the charm of his words. Expressing his gratitude for the kind attention shown him during his stay, he praised the brethren highly for the wonderful progress they had made during the four years they had lived on the mountainside. Going back then into the history of the Irish Church during the recent centuries, he referred to it as a mighty victory of Ireland's faith over the Evil One. Exhorting the monks to revive among themselves the spirit of ancient Irish monasticism and recommending himself and his country's interests to their prayers, he promised to repeat his visit annually. This promise he did not fulfil. Distance from the Capital, as well as innumerable engagements in the service of his country and of others, prevented O'Connell ever from returning. But the memory of him has never left the place and will be proudly retained as long as Cistercians dwell in Mount Melleray.

As the church was regarded as finished towards the end of autumn, the Abbot decided that it should be made available for the use of the community, and, on October 22, 1838, he celebrated there a pontifical High Mass of thanksgiving. But this did not mean an end of their trouble for the monks because in that very season the evil effects of the potato blight were manifesting themselves everywhere and the crop on the monastic lands was badly damaged by the disease. In January of the following year, the brethren were in great straits and were again obliged to send out a monk to make an appeal to the charity

of the faithful. Thanks to the good-will of the neighbouring clergy and the big-hearted generosity of their flocks, the community at Mount Melleray was once more preserved from disaster.

Chapter VIII.

DEATH OF THE FOUNDER.

MUCH suffering was experienced by the monks and their neighbours by the continued failure of the potato crop in 1839 and the year following. As far as they possibly could, the brethren contributed generously towards the alleviation of the starving people. It is related that on one occasion when he was about to set out for England, to make the regular visitation at Mount St. Bernard, the Abbot procured a quantity of meal and potatoes for the use of the community. Before departing he gave instructions to the almoner of the monastery that no person in need should be sent away unaided as long as there was a morsel of food in the house. His orders were religiously carried out and great was his astonishment when he returned home to find that the supplies he had purchased three months previously were not only not exhausted, but seemed to have suffered little or no diminution. All during that summer on an average of between seventy and eighty needy persons were fed daily at the Abbey gates and still the store of provisions seemed to remain unchanged in quantity. There is reliable testimony to the truth of this extraordinary occurrence and the bin in which the meal was kept is still to be seen at Mount Melleray.

Early in January, 1841, at the invitation of Charles Albert, King of Sardinia, Dom Vincent,

accompanied by a priest of the community and two lay-brothers, set out for Turin to enter into negotiations with the civil authorities there, regarding a proposed Cistercian foundation in Sardinia. At Turin, the Abbot was well received by the Premier and later was admitted to an audience with Charles Albert himself, who unhesitatingly gave him permission to pick out a suitable property for a monastery from the royal demesnes in Sardinia and he and his councillors would do everything by way of preparation for the coming of the monks, even to the sending of a vessel to convey them to their new home. Overjoyed at the magnanimity of the Sovereign, Dom Vincent and his companions set out without delay for Sardinia, whither they arrived about the middle of February. But they were doomed to disappointment, for much of the crown territory was of the poorest quality available, and the one stretch of land, which they did select as suitable, was, they were informed, on applying to the authorities, too valuable to the King to be handed over. But this was not all. The Abbot was told also that owing to a depression in finances, the government found it impossible to give any financial aid to the building of a church or monastery, did he succeed in discovering another site, or to provide means for bringing the monks from Ireland, but that he might travel with his companions at the expense of the State, if he wished to return immediately to his home-land. Weary and frustrated in their hopes, the good religious shook the dust of Sardinia off their feet at the end of May and arrived at Mount Melleray on June 29, the feast of SS. Peter and Paul.

On October 20, of this year, Most Rev. Dr. Crolly, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate, accompanied by Rev. Dr. P. Fogarty, now P.P. at Lismore, honoured the monastery with a visit. A current account of the event relates that, having been received with due honour, His Grace visited the church, sacristy, dormitories and every part of the establishment, and expressed his delight at all he saw. Before his departure, he addressed the community in the Chapter-room, eloquently expressing his gratification at the regularity and order which appeared everywhere and exhorting the religious to persevere in their happy course.

An organ, later valued at 700 Guineas, was presented to the community at the end of this year, the donor being a Mr. Jones from Dublin whom ill-health had obliged to leave the noviceship at Mount Melleray. Built by the firm of Telford and Telford, the organ was set up on the tribune at the western end of the church. At such a distance from the choir and choir stalls, it is not easy to imagine that the new instrument could be of great utility to the brethren. However, we must remember that in those days the use of harmonium or organ was barely tolerated in Cistercian churches.

The first school, directed by the monks at Mount Melleray, was opened for boys in one of the out-offices of the farmyard in 1843, under the direction of Fr. Clement Smythe and Brother Xavier Melville. It was an institute that, in a short time, became very popular and the monks, ever on the lookout for the promotion of good, began to give lessons in Latin and Greek to the more promising of their pupils. As the number on the rolls began to increase, the

Abbot was petitioned for the erection of a more commodious building to meet with the needs of the gradually growing attendance. Dom Vincent, fully aware of the need of his country in the matter of centres of education and quite as anxious as his brethren to forward the interests of his neighbours, who had been so helpful to him in past difficulties, gave the matter his deepest consideration. As a result the first stone of the classical school, as it was called, was laid by him on June 19, 1845.

In the year 1844, a large bell was cast for the monastery by Mr. John Murphy of the Irish Bell Foundry, Copper and Brass Works, James's St., Dublin. Writing to Mr. Murphy in October of that year, the Abbot apologises because illness had prevented him from expressing his gratitude earlier for the bell which, "for beauty of form, solidity of construction, power and sweetness of tone, continues to give universal satisfaction and is an object of admiration to our numerous visitors who declare it cannot be excelled by any bell of its size or weight in this country." This bell, which hung in the tower erected in Dom Vincent's time, was suspended in the bell-chamber of the tower in the new church on March 21, 1938. The smaller bell, purchased in 1938, came from the firm of Messrs. J. Sheridan & Sons, Dublin. It was recast at the beginning of 1955 and was sent to New Zealand in the Spring of that year to be used in the monastery lately established there.

Mention has been made in the last paragraph of the illness of Abbot Vincent. Never of a very strong constitution, he was an invalid almost continuously during the last two years of his life. His sufferings were exceedingly painful at times and

little could be done to afford him relief. Lack of appetite and loss of sleep made his maladies harder to endure. Still he was perfectly calm and patient, accepting all from the hands of Providence and expressing gratitude for every little service rendered him. He was quite conscious up to the end, and, on the very day of his passing, he spoke to his attendants on the esteem he had always retained for his religious vocation. Dom Vincent died in the afternoon of Tuesday, December 9, 1845, being fifty-seven years of age; he had been a religious for thirty-four years and Abbot of Mount Melleray for ten. We quote briefly from an account given of him in a religious publication shortly after his death. "Dr. Ryan was a religious of no ordinary mould. He was cast by God for the noble purpose of restoring the monastic life to Ireland in a time and under circumstances of no ordinary difficulty. Great was his faith and confidence in God, even to the removing of mountains! Pure and burning his charity towards God and man! First in every duty, vigilant in prayer, constant as his frequent sickness would permit him in labour, singular in humility, he was a faithful illustration of the religious, painted in his own excellent work on the duties of the monastic state."

Bishop Foran presided at the Office and solemn Mass of Requiem for Dom Vincent on December 11, being assisted at the throne by Very Rev. J. Hally, P.P., Dungarvan and Very Rev. P. Fogarty, P.P., Lismore. An ancient account of the funeral relates that the deceased prelate, vested in all the insignia of a mitred abbot of old, was borne by the monks themselves to the graveside, the coffin being open.

Four hundred boys attending the monastery schools led the procession, these were followed by the community, the secular clergy and the Bishop, while thousands of people of all ranks brought up the rear.

During the short time that elapsed between the passing of Dom Vincent and the election of a new superior, the monastery was in charge of Fr. Palladius, the Prior. On January 15, 1846, when the community assembled, under the presidency of Bishop Foran, to register their votes, their choice fell on Fr. Mary Joseph Ryan, who then held the offices of Subprior and Father-Master of the Lay-brethren. A native of Clonmel, where he was born in 1801, the Abbot-Elect had the same family name but was not related to his illustrious predecessor. Called to the service of God early in life, Fr. Mary Joseph entered an ecclesiastical college and was ordained in due course for the English mission. Believing that he had a vocation to greater perfection in the divine service, he entered the novitiate at Mount Melleray in 1839 and subsequently made his profession.

Dom Mary Joseph retained the office of first Superior for a little less than two years. Not long after he took over administration, an excellent farm, at Shanbalard, near Clonmel, was presented to the community by a Mr. Scully and the Abbot sent one of his priests, Fr. James O'Gorman, to take charge of it. During this period also good progress was made in the cultivation of the mountain land and the buildings of out-offices, but Dom Mary Joseph, finding the burdens and preoccupations of office a distraction to him, retired on October 28, 1847. He died in 1856.

Chapter IX.

AN AMERICAN FOUNDATION.

BEFORE the next election, which was fixed for April 4, the brethren with full approval of Dr. Foran, presented a petition to the Holy See, requesting for Mount Melleray the same privileges as were enjoyed by other houses of their Congregation, that is, exemption from episcopal jurisdiction and the right to be ruled over by the General Chapter of La Trappe. This petition was granted at once and without formality.

Bishop Foran presided at the election on the day appointed and the choice of the voters fell upon Fr. Bruno Fitzpatrick. The Abbot-elect, who was a son of Dr. Fitzpatrick of Trim, Co. Meath, was born at Boardstown, Mullingar, three or four months after the untimely death of his father. When he had finished his primary school course, he was sent to la Petite Communauté de St. Sulpice at Paris to study the classics in 1827. Forced by the revolutionary outbreak of 1830 to leave France, the youthful student returned to the Irish College, Paris, when peace had been restored, and there finished his divinity studies in 1835. Being still too young for ordination, he returned to Ireland and was appointed professor of philosophy in Carlow College, where he remained until his ordination in December 1836 for service in the archdiocese of Dublin. Having passed a number of years as curate in different

Dublin parishes, Fr. Bruno joined the novitiate at Mount Melleray in May, 1843 and made first profession in June of the following year.

The abbatial blessing of Abbot Bruno took place in the monastery church on September 14, 1848, the diocesan Bishop officiating. At the end of the solemn ceremony the Papal Brief was read aloud to the congregation, by the Vicar General of the diocese, declaring Mount Melleray exempt for the future from episcopal jurisdiction and subject only to the authority of the Cistercian General Chapter. As a logical consequence of this change over, a regular visitation of the monastery began to be made at stated periods by the abbot of Melleray in France and this practice, carried out in accordance with the Constitutions of the Order, obtains even to the present day.

Shortly after his installation and even before he was blessed, Dom Bruno communicated to his brethren his idea of making a foundation in America. His community, numbering over a hundred members at the time, seems to have made no objection to the project and on July 25, 1848, Fr. Bernard McCaffery, who had been the Master of Novices when Abbot Bruno entered religion, set out for the United States in quest of a site suitable for a new foundation. At first Fr. Bernard met with little success and was, it appears, on the point of returning home, when he was detained by a letter from Very Rev. T. Heyden, Vicar General of Pittsburgh, inviting him to come and see a tract of land not far from Bedford, Pennsylvania. This visit resulted in a report to his Abbot who, as a consequence, sent

out Fr. Clement Smyth and Br. Ambrose Byrne to help Fr. Bernard in coming to a decision as to the suitability of the place. After due investigation they decided against taking over. Meanwhile Bishop Phelan of Kingston, Canada, made the brethren a promising offer of land within his territory and Bishop Loras of Dubuque, who had been to Mount Melleray in 1848, purchased five hundred acres of prairie and woodland about twelve miles south-west of his episcopal city, to have a suitable site to offer for a Cistercian monastery. His offer was eventually accepted. In May 1849, Abbot Bruno crossed to America accompanied by Fr. James O'Gorman and a few lay brothers. He immediately directed his footsteps to Kingston in Canada but the intense heat and annoyance of the insects, we are told, made an unfavourable impression on him and to make matters worse he took seriously ill, due, it was said, to the unhealthy surroundings of the proposed site.

When Dom Bruno got well again, he set out for Dubuque, Iowa, to see what Bishop Loras had to offer, arriving there on July 10. On the very next day he journeyed out to see the land, and, so pleased was he with the excellence of its quality, the picturesque meadows and valleys and the woodlands, that he decided there and then to accept the Bishop's offer. A small frame-house about fifteen feet square was the temporary dwelling provided for the first monks. Abbot Bruno decided to call the place, New Melleray, and named Fr. James O'Gorman temporary superior of the house. He immediately sent home orders for members to form the new establishment and a group of sixteen reli-

gious, led by Fr. Patrick Mohan, left Ireland on September 10, 1849. Reaching New Orleans without mishap on November 6, they boarded the steamboat "Constitution" for St. Louis on the next day. They were not far advanced on this final stage of their journey when cholera broke out amongst them, carrying off six of their number in a few days. The survivors arrived at Dubuque on November 27, 1849. Meanwhile the Abbot had gone back to Ireland at the end of August to send out a further contingent as soon as possible. On January 17, of the following year a group of twenty-four religious, under Fr. Francis Walsh, formerly Prior at Mount Melleray, embarked for America arriving at their journey's end on April 12. Fr. Francis became the regular superior and retained office till December 1852, when Fr. Clement Smyth was elected titular Prior of the monastery. Five years later, on May 3, 1857, Fr. Clement was consecrated titular Bishop of Thanasis and Coadjutor with the right of succession to the Bishop of Dubuque. His successor in office at New Melleray, Fr. James O'Gorman, was appointed, two years later, titular Bishop of Raphanea and Vicar-Apostolic of Nebraska. New Melleray was raised to the dignity of an Abbey in 1862; it is to-day a progressive monastery with a membership of 140 and has a branch house, dedicated to Our Lady of the Assumption, at Osarks in Missouri.

Back in Ireland when Dom Bruno came into office the country was passing through one of its severest crisis. Famine, due to the failure of the potato crop, brought pestilence in its wake, and, in parts of the country, people died by the wayside through sheer want of care and proper nourishment.

Crowds flocked daily to the Abbey gates and were grateful to receive the coarse meal and potatoes which were all the monks could offer. How the community was able to keep up supplies, is not so easy to explain, for it is said that an average of 500 needy folk received daily relief at the monastery. The organ, already referred to, was sold, and later, the farm at Shanbalard, partly for the purpose of rendering assistance to the famine-stricken and partly to provide means for making the foundation in America.

In August 1851, the Abbot of Mount Melleray assisted at the National Synod of Thurles, presided over by the Primate, Most Rev. Paul Cullen, who later became Cardinal-Archbishop of Dublin. In an account of the assembly, Dom Bruno is described as taking part in the procession of prelates on the opening day in red cope and linen mitre. Another account relates that he was invited to address the prelates on the obligations of their exalted office and that his distinguished audience was profoundly impressed by the eloquence of his words.

When Fr. Francis relinquished the position of Prior of Mount Melleray to become Superior of the American foundation, he was succeeded in office by Fr. Paul Cahill. Born in Co. Leix in 1812, Thomas Cahill, as he was known in secular life, seems to have been a late vocation. He was educated for the priesthood at St. Patrick's College, Carlow and subsequently at Maynooth where he was ordained at the age of twenty-nine, by Archbishop Murray of Dublin. Having spent three years as a curate in the diocese of Kildare and Leighlin, he entered the Mount

Melleray novitiate in July 1844, and, after his profession, was appointed confessor in the secular church. Becoming Prior in 1850, he was also entrusted with the responsible office of Master of Novices and both these offices he held for eight years till he was sent to Mount St. Bernard Abbey, which at that time was suffering from a shortage of priests. But Fr. Paul was not destined to remain long in England. Returning after a year, he resumed his work in the confessional where he gained a widespread reputation for his virtue and his prudence as a spiritual director. He died at the age of eighty-two on January 12, 1894.

Chapter X.

THE SEMINARY.

IN yet another important department at Mount Melleray did the American exodus bring about a noteworthy change. Fr. Clement, as has been remarked, was the first principal of the classical school and director also of the primary school for the boys of the locality. After his departure to the States, his position as President was assigned to Br. Xavier Melville, a choir religious not in sacred orders. Under the direction of its new manager, the classical school continued to progress, and as far as can be ascertained, it was during this period that it took on the title of Seminary—a name, which indicates its *raison d'être*, because it was established, or rather it developed from the primary school for the express purpose of fostering vocations to the priesthood. At the time when Br. Xavier took charge of the Seminary, the number of classical students averaged about fifty and the staff included four religious and one or two secular professors. Students, not from the near neighbourhood, had to stay in houses of the district—those only being selected which were approved of by the President. As is evident, under a regime of this kind, discipline of a strict nature could not be well enforced outside of school hours. Much had to be left to the boys' own judgement and sense of honour but they seemed to realise that God had conferred a favour on them in giving them opportunities of gleaning knowledge denied to their forebears and they resolved to make the most of it. There must have been many hardships to put up with in the way of

not having a place for quiet study, for example, in their mountain lodging houses, and good light and wholesome food, and yet they struggled manfully on and became, most of them, excellent priests and lay men at home or beyond the seas. Br. Xavier was a native speaker of Irish, and Gaelic was in common use in the districts surrounding the monastery but the national tongue seems to have no place—at least, no place of prominence—in the curriculum of the Seminary. The study of Latin and Greek was continued with the usual enthusiasm, mathematics were treated with less earnestness but the President made a special effort to promote interest in music and elocution. It was in his time, we are told, that the first piano—or was a spinet?—made its appearance in the college, and Br. Xavier was responsible too for making a start at the teaching of singing. Training in elocution, he looked upon as almost essential as classical lore, and, to promote correctness of diction and accuracy of expression, he obliged the students in their turn to deliver a piece of declamation in the presence of the whole college assembled to hear them.

So well did the Seminary progress under the direction of Br. Xavier that, in 1854, he found it necessary to seek permission for an extension of his school building. The one-storeyed house erected in Abbot Vincent's days was added to on the east side until it was about twice its original length and thus additional room was acquired.

In the early months of 1856, Dom Bruno left Mount Melleray to make the first canonical visitation of his American filiation. He must have been pleased with what he saw, for many advances had been made

under the capable direction of Fr. Clement. Five hundred acres of land had been added to the existing farm so that the monastery possessed eighteen hundred acres in all, the stock was increased, workshops, a bakery and a library erected. One thing alone displeased the Fr. Visitor, the absence of a regular monastic church, and even that was put up, at least as a temporary building in the summer of the same year. It was on the occasion of this visit that Abbot Bruno heard about the project, long developing itself in the mind of the venerable Bishop Loras, of asking the Holy See to nominate Fr. Clement, Smyth, coadjutor bishop of Dubuque. When the project was realised by the appointment of Dr. Smyth in the following February, Dom Bruno returned to be present at the consecration ceremony in the cathedral of St. Louis on May 3, 1857.

In the year following, when Fr. Paul was sent to England, a new claustral Prior was appointed in the person of Fr. Ephrem MacDonnell. A claustral Prior, it might be well to explain, is the first official in a monastery taking rank immediately after the Abbot and having full responsibility for discipline whenever the Superior is absent on business. A titular Prior, among Cistercians, is a superior possessing ordinary jurisdiction and ruling over an independent house which has not yet been raised to the rank of an Abbey. Fr. Ephrem did not retain the position of prior for many years, being sent to New Melleray in 1862 where he was shortly afterwards elected as first abbot of that monastery.

Early in 1859, John Delaney entered the choir novitiate at Mount Melleray and was received on June 2, taking the name Br. Carthage. Ordained in

1861, he was destined to be Prior for thirty years under Abbot Bruno and to be elected Abbot of two different communities. By consenting to the second election he became successor to Dom Bruno and fourth Abbot of Mount Melleray. In November of the same year, Timothy O'Keeffe from the parish of Doneraile. Co. Cork, who had been educated at the Seminary, joined the ranks of the choir novices taking the name of Br. Aloysius. Ordained priest in 1870, he is worthy of remembrance because of the care and assiduity with which he preserved the annals of the monastery up to the time of his death in 1919, after sixty years in religion.

During the fifties and after, whenever there was extraordinary work to be done at a distance from the house, it was quite a common thing for the healthy and active members of the community of Mount Melleray to recite the day hours of the office in the fields or at the place of work, the choral obligation being fulfilled at the monastery by the ancients and infirm. On such occasions, the daily High Mass was sung at an earlier hour than usual and then, led by the Superior, the brethren went forth to work in single file. The entire day was spent at the work on hand, an interval being given at stated times for the Office and for the midday meal of bread, cheese and milk. The horarium was followed particularly when the brethren were engaged in cutting and saving turf, a large tent being erected in a convenient site to protect them from weather conditions, often so uncertain on the mountain side.

These years were years of progress, spiritually and materially, for the monastery. Dom Bruno,

himself a truly spiritual man, was all anxiety to promote the spiritual well-being of the souls entrusted to his care. He realised to the full that self-sanctification was the primary purpose of all religious life and that a monk, who had lost sight of this fundamental fact, was a failure, no matter how useful he might chance to be in other spheres of monastic activity. Therefore in his private talks with his sons and in public conferences delivered in the chapter-room, Abbot Bruno never ceased, in season or out of season, to exhort his hearers to fervour and the practice of virtue. Another spiritual trait of the third Abbot of Mount Melleray was his glowing charity. At the time when he first became Superior, poor Ireland was suffering severely from the effects of the terrible famine, and, as we have seen, no one in need was ever allowed to be driven from the Abbey gates unaided, as long as the brethren had anything to give. Later, when some of the wiser monks thought, or perhaps knew for certain, that Dom Bruno was being deceived by the recipients of his charities, the Abbot said to them: "I would rather be deceived ninety-nine times than once to be found wanting in charity." His strong spirit of faith had long since convinced him that the cup of cold water given—no matter to whom—in Christ's name would not be without its reward. And reward it had in Mount Melleray, for hand-in-hand with generosity towards the needy went temporal success. The tract of land under cultivation grew yearly more extensive, cattle and horses increased in number, potatoes and root crops grew more plentifully and the need of appealing for assistance from the public gradually disappeared.

Chapter XI.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE.

NEW MELLERAY was again without a Superior at the opening of 1859, when Fr. James O'Gorman became Vicar-Apostolic of Nebraska. In the following year Dom Bruno crossed the Atlantic once more, bringing with him Fr. Ignatius Foley as the new Superior, but God had other designs for Fr. Ignatius, and, in six months or so, he was back in Ireland. Not long afterwards Fr. Ephrem became Superior and was later elected, as we have said, abbot of the American branch-house.

In 1861, Sir John Keane, successor to the first landlord of the monks, gave the community a new lease, by which their land was to be held in fee-farm for ever, the rent being settled at £100, per annum. For this lease, Sir John is said to have received the sum of £950. At this same period, two farmers, who had holdings to the extent of about 150 acres bordering on the Abbey lands at the south, sold their properties to the monastery and emigrated to U.S.A. Their farms are still familiarly known to the monks as Downey's and Coffey's though all other traces of the original owners seem to be lost. Another small farm in the same locality belonging to Thomas Heelan was acquired by the monks in 1903. All these lands were included in the lease of 1861 and the extent of the monastic estate was declared at that time to be 613 statute acres.

An effort made in the early sixties to introduce or rather to reintroduce Cistercian nuns into Ireland proved abortive. Mr. Welpley, a County Cork gentleman, in comfortable circumstances, whose daughter, Sister M. Benedicta, was a novice in the Cistercian Convent of Vaise in France, proposed to provide a suitable place for an establishment of Trappistine nuns in Ireland. With episcopal authorisation and the approval of the Abbot of Mount Melleray, he purchased a farm of sixty acres of good land, at Ballinatona, near Skibbereen, and made a promise that he would pay the first Superioress of the proposed Convent an annual pension of £100 during her lifetime. Fr. Hilarion O'Donnell with another priest and three lay-brothers were sent by Dom Bruno to take possession of the property on behalf of the Order and to make what preparations they could for the coming of the nuns.

But God had ordained otherwise. Sister M. Benedicta, on whom so much depended, did not live to see the day of her profession. Mr. Welpley, who was apparently the originator of the whole idea, far from changing his mind, renewed his generous offer, only requiring now as an additional condition that the remains of his daughter should be brought from France and re-buried at Ballinatona, and that she should be regarded as the foundress of the Convent. The authorities of the Order, however, for reasons of their own, did not see their way to adopt his suggestions and the monks from Mount Melleray, having restored his property to Mr. Welpley, returned home.

In 1862 was built the present reception Lodge where dwells the porter of the monastery, an official for whom St. Benedict composed a special chapter, the sixty-sixth of his Holy Rule. The Lodge was built for the reception of casual visitors and for the entertainment of ladies who come to the monastery for spiritual retreat or to visit relatives among the members of the community. Not until later years was there any provision made for the night accommodation of ladies, who had perforce to put up in Cappoquin or in the houses of the neighbourhood. At the same period a primary school for the boys of the locality was built not far from the classical school and in a line with it towards the east. Up to 1932 this school was managed entirely by the monks, one of whom, usually a priest, acting as principal. A bishop, and quite a number of secular priests, who have shed lustre on the Church in America and Australia, laid the first foundations of their education in the primary school at Mount Melleray. In 1932, the school passed from the hands of the religious and was placed under the National Board; it continued to function until October 1949, when it was closed by order of the Ministry, through lack of the necessary average and was amalgamated with the girls' school outside the entrance gate. The 'mixed' primary school is under the management of the parochial clergy.

Fr. Ignatius Foley, already referred to in regard to his brief connection with New Melleray, was appointed President of the Seminary in 1863; a post he was destined to retain for forty-five years. A native of Co. Waterford, Fr. Ignatius spent about four years in the classical school before joining the

community. Directly after profession he became a member of the teaching staff and continued at that work till 1858 when he was made guest-master. Two years later he accompanied Dom Bruno to America, but, as we have seen, his sojourn in the States was short. Returning to his beloved Mount, he became Vice-President of the Seminary under Br. Xavier and when poor health obliged the latter to retire in 1863, Fr. Ignatius took his place. Seeing clearly the advantages that would be derived by the students, by living in the college, the new President set himself at once to the gigantic task of building a house of residence. Little help could be hoped for from the community by way of pecuniary assistance but Fr. Ignatius, nothing daunted, resolved to make appeal to the Catholics of Ireland and outside. His efforts were not in vain. From the Society for the Propagation of the Faith he received liberal aid, in acknowledgment seemingly, of the good services rendered by priests from Mount Melleray in the interests of souls. From Mr. Richard Devereux of Wexford, a sincere friend and constant benefactor of the monks, he also obtained a generous sum of money.

It was 1867 before Fr. Ignatius was ready to start building. He was his own architect and erected the houses in proportion to the means he had at hand. Externally the buildings lack any idea of regular planning, internally they are spacious, airy and adequate to meet with all the ordinary needs of the students. After the houses of residence were completed, all pupils, with the exception of a small number from the district, were obliged to live in. Better discipline was thus established and better

care taken of health and development of the boys. Much of the food consumed at the college was produced in the monastery, namely, dairy produce, vegetables and bread, and, from about the year 1870, the meat—mutton, beef and bacon—was fattened and killed in the farmyard.

Men who were acquainted with Fr. Ignatius by personal contact never weary of singing his praises for the singular gifts of nature and grace which fitted him admirably for the position of President. Filled with unlimited energy, with love for God and the salvation of souls, clear of intellect and strong in will, he was a born leader of men. Joined to these traits was his deep spirituality that revealed itself in his devotion to the Real Presence and to Our Lady and that manifested itself in a special manner to the students in the admirable lectures on religious subjects, which he was wont to deliver to them in the Aula Maxima, every Sunday and holiday, after the High Mass. He had a wonderful influence over the boys; he was gifted with special understanding as to how to deal with them, and for long years after his death and even to the present day, priests and laymen, who were students of the Seminary under him, express their gratitude for what they owe to him.

A request made by Archbishop Gould of Melbourne for a colony of monks to found a Cistercian monastery in his archdiocese had to be refused by Dom Bruno in 1868. The reason alleged was shortage of men, but probably it was the cost of conveying a number of religious to such a far-distant land that influenced the Abbot more than anything else. Petitions of a like manner made by

other members of the Australian hierarchy at the same time were negatived for a similar reason.

During the French revolution, on account of the uncertainty of the times, the right to make solemn vows was withdrawn from the Cistercians by the Holy See. Consequently at Mount Melleray from the beginning, a novice, who was ordinarily admitted to profession after probation of a single year, made vows, which though final and perpetual, were not solemn. In 1868, yielding to a petition of the members of the Order, Pope Pius IX. restored the solemn vows but required in future a novitiate of two complete years; at the end of the probationary period, a novice might be allowed to make simple vows in perpetuity and make solemn profession after a further three years in the monastery. This legislation was slightly changed by the promulgation of the Codex of Canon Law in 1918, which ordains that at the completion of the two years novitiate, simple temporary vows are made for three years, if the candidate is deemed suitable, and then solemn vows for life. Most of the monks of Mount Melleray, who had only simple vows, gladly availed of the favour of Pius IX. by taking solemn vows, as soon as the permission was granted them.

Chapter XII.

FIRST IRISH OFF-SHOOT.

IN the summer of 1872, Richard O'Phelan, a youth of nineteen years of age, entered the choir novitiate from the Seminary, taking the name of Br. Maurus on the occasion of his reception of the habit; he was destined to live almost sixty years in the monastery and to become its fifth Abbot. In July of the following year, Joseph A. Beardwood became a choir novice, with the religious name of Br. Camillus; he was elected first Abbot of Mount St. Joseph in 1887.

Somewhere around the middle seventies, Mr. Arthur Moore, M.P., Mooresfort, Co. Tipperary, came to Mount Melleray with the suggestion that a second Cistercian monastery should be established within the boundaries of Ireland. He offered to provide the site, if Dom Bruno would provide the men, and his proposal was accepted. Hearing of the sale of a commodious house and farm of 300 acres near Kilmallock, Co. Limerick, Mr. Moore acquainted Mount Melleray of the fact and offered to purchase the place for the proposed foundation. The Abbot, after consultation, agreed to the offer. But when the necessary permission was sought from the diocesan bishop, Dr. Butler of Limerick, it was granted under such conditions as the community could not consent to accept.

Nothing daunted by his first failure, Count Moore, as he was later to become by favour of the Apostolic See, began to look around for another suitable place, nor was his search a long one. Early in the year 1878, he purchased an estate of a little more than 600 acres at a place called Mount Heaton, two miles north-west of Roscrea town, and munificently donated it to the Mount Melleray community as a fitting site for a new foundation on March 1, 1878. In honour of the holy foster-father of Our Lord, in whose month the property came into their possession, the Cistercians called the place Mount St. Joseph. Situated on the borders of Munster and Leinster, the buildings of the modern monastery are in Offaly, while portion of the lands extends into Co. Tipperary. In ancient days all the country round about was known as the territory of Ely O'Carroll, and the district where the monastery now stands went by the name of Ballyskenach. About the year 1640, an English settler, named Heaton, seized the land from its Irish owners and soon after the place was given the title of Mount Heaton. From 1641 to 1878, nine generations of the ascendancy are said to have retained the patrimony of the O'Carrolls.

As soon as the monks came into possession of the new property, Abbot Bruno sent two priests and a few brothers to make preparations for the arrival of the community proper. On St. Patrick's Day, thirty-two religious, eight of whom were priests, were chosen as the pioneers of the new establishment and the formal opening of the monastery took place on March 21, feast of St. Benedict, with Fr. Athanasius Donovan as Superior. As in

the case of the majority of Cistercian foundations, the early days of Mount St. Joseph were filled with trial and hardship. The ancient mansion with its grey turrets, which occupies such a prominent position in the monastic pile of today, was standing, but roofless and altogether out of repair. The gardens were neglected and the out-offices almost in ruins. Much had to be done to cultivate the soil and free it from briar and brushwood. But experience in the mountainland of Scrahan and Moonvee was a help to the pioneers and they worked with steady determination. Their efforts met with success. Mount St. Joseph was raised to an abbey at the end of 1885 and had for its first abbot, Dom Camillus Beardwood, formerly bursar at Mount Melleray. During the seventy odd years of its existence, Mount St. Joseph has made continuous progress, spiritually and temporally.

Not long after World War II, a colony of monks from Roscrea established themselves in the archdiocese of St. Andrew and Edinburgh, at the foot of the Lammermuir Hills, eight miles from Haddington, East Lothian, at a place called Nunraw. The new monastery, named Sancta Maria, became an abbey in September, 1947, and promises to revive in Scotland the ancient glory of the Order of Citeaux. Towards the end of 1954 another foundation was made from Roscrea in far distant Australia, in the archdiocese of Melbourne, ruled over by the patriotic Irishman, Archbishop Daniel Mannix, the monastery, known as "Our Lady of Terrawarra," is established in a splendid situation and is making good progress.

In the summer of 1881, Mount Melleray was favoured with a visit from the well known author of "Knockagow," Charles J. Kickam; he stayed in the guest-house for a few days. His visit was followed sometime later by one from the celebrated Irish poet, Aubrey de Vere, who remained only a day or two but won the hearts of all by his kindness and genial disposition.

Dom Ephram McDonnell, who had been Abbot at New Melleray for twenty years, resigned and returned to the house of his profession in 1883, and continued to live there a life of retirement and prayer till his holy death in the spring of 1898. As the authorities did not consider that an election should be held—at least for a time—at Dubuque, Fr. Alberic Dunlea was sent out from Ireland as Superior in September 1883, and held the position till 1889, when Fr. Louis Carew succeeded him. Not until 1897 did an election take place and then on June 7, Fr. Alberic was chosen to be second Abbot of New Melleray.

Among the choir novices who joined in 1884, is numbered Br. Stanislaus Hickey, who became subsequently Prior and Definitor in Rome; he was Abbot for a short term of eighteen months. Another, who entered a little later, was Br. Bruno Ryan, destined afterwards to be Superior and eventually third Abbot of the monastery in Iowa, U.S.A. Before the end of this decade information was brought to Mount Melleray that Mr. John Nagle Ryan, an Australian, had left to the monastery, at Galong N.S.W., a splendid property consisting of an excellent house and 800 acres of fertile land. It was left

to the monks conditionally, that is, on the understanding that they should establish a monastery of their institute there; should they be unable to do this, for any reason, the property was to be offered to the Redemptorists. Bishop Wm. Lanigan, then Bishop of Goulburn, where the land was situated, was very keen on having a Cistercian foundation in his territory. But Dom Bruno, because his community had been weakened by the recent foundation at Roscrea, did not feel in a position to accept the offer, at least for a time. The matter was then referred to the Redemptorists who also refused to accept, on the grounds that the place was not central enough to be of use to active religious. By an arrangement made with the executors of Mr. Ryan, it was agreed that the monks should retain possession of the house and land until such time as they should find it possible to carry out the wishes of their benefactor with regard to the foundation. However, in the year 1910, since Mount Melleray still lacked the personnel necessary for forming a new establishment, the Australian property was handed over to the Redemptorists at the special request of the diocesan bishop, Dr. John Gallagher. It became ultimately the juvenate or preparatory college of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer for Australia and New Zealand.

Chapter XIII.

DEATH OF DOM BRUNO.

ABBOT BRUNO was present at the consecration of Dr. John Egan as bishop of Waterford and Lismore in January, 1890. It was one of the last, if not the last, occasion that he appeared at a public ceremony. Bishop Egan had been a priest of the diocese of Killaloe and president of St. Flannan's College, Ennis, and was a kind friend to the monks when first they went to live at Roscrea; he was destined to rule over his new diocese for just a year and a half. His successor, Bishop Richard A. Sheehan was consecrated at the beginning of 1892, but failing health prevented Dom Bruno from attending the function nor was he present at the diocesan synod held at Waterford in the midsummer of that year.

Next year, a serious calamity threatened to disturb the peaceful and tranquil lives of the monks of Mount Melleray. Desirous of establishing an artillery and rifle range in the south of Ireland, Sir Garnet Wolsey, then military chief in this country, began to look about for suitable ground. The southern slopes of the Knockmealdowns with their wide stretches of moorland were suggested to him as being exactly what he needed, and he despatched Major General Davis with one or two other officers to make an inspection of the place. Their decision was favourable; but Dom Bruno managed to contact them before they reported to headquarters, and in his diplomatic way, he explained to them how difficult, if not impossible, it would be for his community to carry out properly the duties of their profession at

close quarters to a military encampment. His words were not in vain and the officers, realising the truth of the Abbot's statements, promised to do their utmost to prevent any inconvenience to him or his brethren. It was with feelings of relief that the monks learned later of the establishment of the shooting range at Kilworth, near Fermoy.

Many unsuccessful attempts had been made to bring about the fusion of the three Congregations of Trappists during the nineteenth century. In 1891, the eight centenary of the birth of St. Bernard was celebrated at Fontains-les-Dijon by a large assembly of Cistercian abbots, representing all the different observances. This gathering gave final impetus to the movement towards reunion, and the three Trappist Congregations petitioned the Holy See to this end. By order of the reigning Pontiff, Leo XIII, a General Chapter was convoked to be held in Rome in October 1892, under the presidency of Cardinal Mazella. Fifty-five superiors were present, thirty-two being Abbots, and during eleven sessions the questions at issue were freely and calmly debated. At the end of the Chapter by a big majority of votes, the Congregations of la Grande Trappe, Sept-Fons and Westmalle agreed to unite into a single Order, under the title of "Order of Reformed Cistercians of Our Lady of la Trappe." An election for an Abbot-General was immediately held and Dom Sebastian Wyart of Sept-Fons was chosen. By decree of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, dated December 8, 1892, the acts of this Chapter were confirmed. Constitutions and Usages were drawn up, conforming as nearly as possible to the primitive practices of Citeaux, with the excep-

tion of the rules of fasting, which, at the express wish of Leo XIII, underwent some modification, so as to bring them more into harmony with modern conditions of health.

Great joy was manifested throughout the whole Order when in 1898 the task of reunion was crowned by the restoration to its rightful owners of the ancient abbey of Cîteaux, secularized since the days of the Revolution. Had it not been the cradle of the Order, the home of its holy founders SS. Robert, Alberic and Stephen? Was it not the identical place in which Bernard of Clairvaux received his monastic training and from which he went out with his band of followers to found the abbey that was to have so potent an influence on the Europe of his day? And now it was to be restored again to its former position as Mother-house of the entire Order, and each successive Abbot-General, though residing in Rome, would be also Abbot of Cîteaux, and every year the Superiors would assemble within its walls to debate on matters that would be for the glory of God and the welfare of the Order. Surely it was a cause for rejoicing, a visible indication that divine Providence looked down with pleasure on the Cistercian Order and wished that its noble work, carried on for so many centuries, should endure!

But Cîteaux had not yet come back to the Order before Dom Bruno passed to his reward. In the early winter of 1893 an epidemic of influenza visited the Mount, beginning, as is almost invariably the case, at the College and extending itself to the monastery. The Abbot himself, who was in failing health for some time, was among the earliest victims and soon complications set in. His condition became serious, additional medical aid was called in, the

brethren redoubled their petitions to heaven for him who had guided them for so long. But all in vain, the patient grew daily weaker and it was deemed advisable to administer to him the last Sacraments. At length the end came and on December 4, the third Abbot of Mount Melleray, being in the eighty-first year of his age, of which fifty were spent in the monastery, slept in the Lord.

Bishop A. Brownrigg of Ossory, presided at the Requiem Mass for Abbot Bruno and officiated at the graveside. The celebrant of the Mass was Right Rev. Mgr. B. Fitzpatrick, P.P. V.G., Rathgar, a nephew of the deceased prelate. Notwithstanding the severe weather, the number of people present was very large and there were over fifty secular priests as well as representatives of the different religious Orders. The month's mind took place on January 4. On that day, we are told in an account of the event, the weather was most inclement, snow falling heavily during the forenoon and all during the day in the bleak mountaineous district in which Mount Melleray is situated, but this did not prevent the clergy and laity of the diocese from turning up in great numbers to pay the last tribute of respect to the memory of the monk who had done so much to make the Abbey famous the world over as a home of piety and ecclesiastical learning. It had been announced that the panegyric would be preached by Very Rev. A. Keane, O.P., but it was found at the last moment that the distinguished Dominican was prevented from being present by indisposition. The Bishop of the diocese, Most Rev. Dr. Sheehan, then volunteered to supply, and, though he had only a few hours to prepare, his Lordship's tribute to the memory of the illustrious Abbot was most eloquent

and touching. The Abbot of Roscrea was celebrant of the solemn Mass of Requiem at the month's mind, Mgr. Fitzpatrick acting as Master of Ceremonies.

Dom Bruno is dead but the memory of him lives on in the monastery, which owes him so much by way of gratitude. Feeling the call to a life of closer union with God after a few years in the ministry, he resolved to turn his back on the comparatively easy life of a city curate and direct his footsteps to the Cistercian monastery recently established at Mount Melleray. Here the monks had little to offer him save poverty, austerity and hard work, and though constitutionally delicate, he accepted all with equal good-will. He was not quite four years professed when the votes of his brethren selected him to be Abbot, in other words, to take upon his shoulders the whole responsibility, spiritual and temporal, of the monastery and its community. He hesitated, he shrunk back from a burden, that, in his humility, he regarded as far beyond his strength and would never have accepted, but for the persistence of Bishop Foran. That the hand of God was in the choice of the monks of 1848, is quite obvious to their successors of later days. Dom Bruno was the instrument in the designs of Providence for carrying on and bringing to completion, the work so nobly and so heroically begun by the Founder. With little experience in the administration of temporal affairs before he came into office, he began at once to take an interest in every department of the monastery, to adopt every means for the amelioration of the conditions of his brethren, and, while seeing after their temporal welfare, he endeavoured never to lose sight of their spiritual. When he came to die, he did so with the consciousness that Mount

Melleray was now a well-established religious house filled with the spirit of St. Bernard and the early monks of Citeaux.

At the election for a successor to Dom Bruno, held on January 15, 1894, the choice of the voters fell on Fr. Carthage Delaney who had been Prior for thirty years. It was the first occasion in the history of Mount Melleray on which a representative of the General Chapter presided, in the person of Dom Eugene Vachette, Abbot of the French Melleray, at an election. The Abbot-elect was born at Cashel, Co. Longford in May, 1836 and studied classics at the Seminary, before he joined the community in 1859. After his ordination, he was Master of Novices for a few years, and, for the remaining part of his monastic career, he had filled the duties of Prior. The solemn abbatial blessing took place on April 29, feast of St. Robert of Molesme, in the Cistercian Calendar, with Bishop Sheehan as officiant, assisted by Dom Wilfrid Hipwood of Mount St. Bernard Abbey and Dom Camillus Beardwood of Roscrea. Dom Carthage was no stranger to the community he was called to rule. For many years the brethren had contact with him as Dom Bruno's chief assistant and they knew him to be a truly exemplary monk, holy, mortified and humble, with little interest in worldly matters, little attraction for administrative work. They looked to him to be their guide, counsellor and friend in the ways of the spirit; they did not expect great achievements from him in the way of temporal progress but they were sure that, as long as he retained the responsibility of office, he would always aim at doing what he considered to be for the glory of God and the good of souls.

Chapter XIV.

A NEW CENTURY.

IT was in the beginning of Abbot Carthage's term of office that the Rosary Confraternity was introduced into the monastery. Rev. Dr. Keane, O.P., was mainly instrumental in bringing this about and preached at the inaugural ceremony. In addition to the sermon there were hymns, prayers and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and at the end, by special favour of the Master-General of the Dominicans, it was declared that a branch of the Confraternity had been officially established at Mount Melleray with authority to admit members. The Abbot and his successors were appointed as local directors and the October devotions, prescribed by Leo XIII, were taken up and have been practised ever since, each evening of the month after the office of Compline.

Notice of the progress made by the monks on the slopes of the Knockmealdowns having been brought to the representatives of British rule in Dublin, Lord Haughton, the Viceroy, paid a semi-official visit to Mount Melleray in June, 1895. He arrived by train at Cappoquin station and came with his suite to the Guest-House, remaining overnight and inspecting the land, cattle and farm-yard. In the autumn of the following year, his successor, Lord Cadogan, who was holidaying at Lismore Castle, called one evening in company with the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire.

Dom Carthage paid his first visit to America in 1897, when on June 7, he presided over the election which made Fr. Alberic Dunlea, second Abbot of New Melleray. In compliance with a command from Dom Sebastian Wyart, he proceeded from New Melleray to Gethsemani, where, in conjunction with the Father-Immediate of that monastery, he made the canonical visitation. It has been said that Dom Carthage, by the calmness and gentleness of his disposition, played no small part in making this visitation a genuine success.

In the first year of the new century addition was made to the Mount Melleray estate by the acquisition of an excellent farm of seventy acres at Garrycloyne, in the parish of Tallow, which was presented to the community by Mrs. Cronin of Killeagh, Co. Cork. This farm has been retained to the present day and has been found to be very suitable land for the fattening of cattle. As apples grow only with difficulty on the mountainside, an extensive orchard was planted at Garrycloyne about ten years ago and yields annually a splendid crop of fruit.

Extensive improvements were made in 1901 to the college, which had been built in the days of the Founder and enlarged by Abbot Bruno. In the first place it was raised an additional storey, providing six large and airy class-halls on the first floor, as well as a number of smaller rooms and a library to be used as a rest room for the professors during the intervals. On the ground floor, in addition to the Aula Maxima, the original building raised by Dom Vincent, there are three class-halls like in dimen-

sions to those upstairs. Another wing was added a little later at right angles to the main building consisting of a physics-hall on the ground floor and overhead, a chemical laboratory and a well-appointed art-room for drawing classes. The entire building was floored with pitch-pine blocks and a central-heating system installed so as to make the place comfortable during the winter months. A change was also made in the curriculum of studies because the college ceased at this time to be a mere privately directed institution and was placed under the Board of Education so that students for the future would be subject to regular inspection and be enabled to sit for the intermediate examinations.

In August 1902, Dom Carthage assisted at the National Synod at Maynooth presided over by his Eminence Michael Cardinal Logue. In the same year, a priest of Mount Melleray, Fr. Stanislaus Hickey, published his first volume of his philosophical works. The complete series, in three volumes, now well-known as the *Summula Philosophiae Scholasticae*, were originally compiled as class-manuals for the students of the Seminary who would sit for the Arts examinations of the Royal University, but later the author was persuaded to publish the books for circulation outside.

Within the monastery also Dom Carthage added to the buildings, erecting a dairy and bakery in the western side of the court-yard and a spacious and well-ventilated apartment on the upper storey which he assigned to the use of the choir-novices. About the same time he had an extra room built on to the library, mainly for book-binding purposes. In a

monastery, choir books, missals, breviaries, class books, being in constant use, have need of repairs from time to time and the Abbot considered that the religious engaged in this work should have a special work-room for the purpose. It was Abbot Carthage too who purchased the stained-glass window, made by Messrs. Mayer & Co. of Munich, which stood for thirty odd years behind the high altar of the original Abbey church. It was re-erected in 1938 at the rere of the principal altar in St. Philomena's church. The central theme in the upper section of this window is a fac-simile of Murillo's "Immaculate Conception" flanked by angels on either side. In the lower section there are four panels, the two in the centre depicting St. Bernard's welcome to St. Malachy at Clairvaux, while the outer panels represent our national patrons, SS. Patrick and Brigid.

In 1904 died Dom Sebastian Wyart first Abbot-General of the Cistercians after the re-union. Early in his career he had been a papal Zouave fighting under Lamoriciere against the Piedmontese in defence of Pope Pius IX. Later he took part in the Franco-Prussian war and received the cross of the Legion of Honour for bravery. When peace was restored, he entered the Cistercian Abbey of Sept-Fons in France and was Abbot there at the time of his election to the Generalate. His successor as Abbot-General was Dom Augustine Marre, titular Bishop of Constance and Abbot of Igny.

At the end of March, 1908, Dom Carthage, now in the seventy-second year of his age and feeling no longer equal to the burdens of his office, got per-

mission from higher superiors to resign. Abbot Eugene Vachette again presided at the election for a new Abbot held on May 8, and Fr. Maurus O'Phelan, who had been Prior since 1894, received the majority of the votes. Born in the parish of Kilrossanty, Co. Waterford on December 8, 1853, the Abbot-elect, as has been already mentioned, made his studies at the Seminary and entered religion at the age of nineteen. Solemnly professed on January 1, 1878, he was raised to the priesthood in June of the same year. A native speaker in Irish, Dom Maurus was ever a promoter of the national tongue; he taught it in the Seminary even before his ordination and continued his Irish classes there when his duties as Prior left little time at his disposal, and, in an effort to keep alive the Gaelic among the people of the district, he preached an Irish sermon every Sunday. His tender affection for the prayers of the Gael led to the publication of his *Leabhar Úrnaighe* by Abbot Maurus, a prayer book that was very widely circulated during many years. After ordination Fr. Maurus was appointed professor of mental philosophy at the Seminary; he also fulfilled the positions of Master of Novices, Guest-Master and Bursar at various periods during his career so that he had had experience in many departments of the monastic hive when he was chosen to become head of the house.

Chapter XV.

IMPROVEMENTS.

THE abbatial blessing of Dom Maurus took place at Mount Melleray on August 15, 1908, in the presence of a large concourse of people. Bishop Sheehan of Waterford and Lismore performed the solemn ceremony, assisted by Abbot Carthage Delaney and Abbot Camillus Beardwood. On January 15, following, Dom Carthage went to his reward after an illness of short duration.

In the year 1909 the community kitchen was improved and a new infirmary kitchen built. Just before World War II Dom Celsus O'Connell installed a refrigerator and had modern cookers put into both kitchens. In the summer of the same year (1909), it is recorded that the first reaper and binder used at Mount Melleray was acquired, and, later in the season, a potato-digger and a hay-elevator. It was at this period also that Dom Maurus planned and erected the buildings of the upper farm yard with spacious cattle-sheds, stables and other out-offices. At the beginning of 1912 an electric-lighting system was installed to take the place of the kerosene lamps used extensively in the monastery since its inception. A machine laundry was introduced in the same year.

During the year 1911, two distinguished members of the Cistercian Order passed away, who had received their early religious training at Mount

Melleray. In January, Dom Stanislaus White, who began his monastic life here in 1860 and became later Procurator-General of the Order at Rome, died. He was chosen Abbot at the first election at Roscrea in April 1886, but refused to accept. An appeal was made to the Holy See that Fr. Stanislaus should be commanded to take office and the reply 'non expedit' was given to the petition. Afterwards Pope Leo XIII. by motu proprio appointed him Abbot of a Cistercian house of the Congregation of Casamari in Italy. On July 12, died Dom Camillus Beardwood, first Abbot of Mount St. Joseph, who joined here a little previous to Dom Stanislaus and became Abbot in 1897.

Early in May of this year Abbot Maurus made his first journey to U.S.A. visiting New Melleray, and, by special delegation, the Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky. In July the annual retreat at Mount Melleray was preached by Dom Colum'ba Marmion, O.S.B., an Irishman, who was superior of the Belgian Abbey of Maredsous. At the General Chapter, Dom Stephen Salasc, Abbot of La Grande Trappe, resigned from office and took up his abode here, where he died in August 1921. In October, Abbot Edmund Obrecht of Gethsemani, U.S.A. and Prior John M. Murphy of Valley Falls, spent a few days at the Guest-House. Early in the spring of 1914, influenza was rampant at Mount Melleray carrying off amongst its victims from the community, Fr. Eugene Aherne, who had been Prior since Dom Maurus became head of the monastery. Fr. Eugene had been a teacher at the college in his early religious life, becoming later Master of Novices. His death came as a great personal loss to the Abbot and

he was deeply mourned by all his brethren. During World War I, Abbot Maurus always showed the greatest solicitude for the religious life of his community and endeavoured that his monks should be distracted as little as possible by the turmoil that was doing so much to upset the peace and tranquillity of the world. As in the case of his saintly predecessors he strove always to remind the brethren that their spiritual advancement must be placed before everything and that whatever was an obstacle to this was to be avoided.

In the Autumn of 1914, the Cistercian nuns, of Holy Cross Convent, Stapehill, Dorsetshire, with leave from their Ordinary, applied to Rome for permission to be placed under the authority of the General. By rescript of April 29, 1915, their petition was granted and the Abbot of Mount Melleray was appointed Custodian of the Convent.

Cardinal Logue, Primate and Archbishop of Armagh, honoured the monastery with a visit in August 1919, when he stayed overnight. His Eminence, who was accompanied by the Bishops of Cloyne, Clogher and Kilmore, addressed an interesting lecture to the community. About the same time, Bishop O'Donnell of Raphoe, destined later to be Cardinal and Primate, came to see Mount Melleray. On December 8, 1924, Abbot Maurus celebrated the golden jubilee of his profession and was recipient of the Apostolic Benediction with a message of congratulation from the Holy Father and an illuminated address presented by the students of the Seminary.

It has already been recorded that a futile attempt was made to bring back the Cistercian nuns

to Ireland in the middle of the last century; it was Dom Maurus however, who was to be the instrument in the hands of Providence, in bringing this to pass eventually, though he had gone to his reward before the Sisters actually arrived. He purchased in 1926, a mansion and farm of 150 acres, known as Glencairn Abbey, situated on the banks of the Blackwater about four miles west of Lismore, and presented it to the Abbess and community at Stapehill. After a chapel had been built and a new wing added to the house and when the approval of the Bishop of Waterford and Lismore had been obtained, a colony of fifteen nuns with Rev. Mother Maura, Abbess of Stapehill, took possession of Glencairn on March 10, 1932. The Convent has been a great success and in 1949, it was able to send out a colony of fourteen sisters to make a foundation in Boston in answer to pressing invitations from Cardinal Cushing.

It was at this time also that Dom Maurus purchased Mitchelstown Castle, built of excellently cut lime-stone capable of being utilized for building a monastic church such as the Abbot visualized would one day be erected. He also bought the chapel of the ruined military barracks at Fermoy and had it re-erected as a college chapel for the students. This chapel was opened on August 20, 1932, a year after the death of Dom Maurus. A beautiful altar and sanctuary in marble, by Earleys, were added to the college chapel in 1944, as a gift from Mr. James MacVey of Dublin. The altar was consecrated by Dom Celsus and dedicated in honour of Our Lady of Good Counsel on October 15, of the same year.

On June 2, 1927, Fr. Louis Carew, Superior of Mount St. Bernard died. A native of Cappoquin, he joined about 1870 and was Master of Novices, Bursar and Subprior before being sent as provisional Superior to New Melleray in 1889. After the election of Dom Alberic in America in 1897, Fr. Louis was appointed definitior at Rome, where he remained for nine years. In 1910, he became Superior of the English filiation and continued there until failing health brought him back to Ireland where he died; he was buried in Mount Melleray. The General Chapter of 1927 appointed Fr. Celsus O'Connell, Prior at Mount Melleray, to succeed Fr. Louis and he became Abbot of Mount St. Bernard towards the end of 1929.

In May 1931, Abbot Marus fell seriously ill, so ill in fact that doctors deemed an operation indispensably necessary. As he was too weak to be removed to hospital, the operation was performed by Dr. P. Kiely of Cork and was successful. The distinguished patient rallied for a time and seemed to be on the road to recovery when he had a sudden change for the worse on July 10, and died on the evening of the same day. Bishop Hackett pontificated at the solemn Mass of Requiem in the presence of the Metropolitan, Archbishop Harty, and Bishop Cohalan of Cork; the Abbots of Melleray, Mount St. Bernard, and Mount St. Joseph were present. The Mass of the month's mind was sung by Rt. Rev. Mgr. Wm. Walsh, P.P., V.G., Clonmel, a class-mate of Dom Maurus at the Seminary, and Bishop Wm. T. Cotter of Portsmouth presided.

Chapter XVI.

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS.

DOM CORENTIN GUYADER, Abbot of Melleray, presided at the election on August 16, for a successor to Dom Maurus and the choice of the community was Fr. Stanislaus Hickey. Born in Clonoulty parish, in the archdiocese of Cashel, in February, 1865, the Abbot-elect did his classical and philosophical studies at the Seminary before entering the novitiate on July 16, 1884. After his ordination in 1890 he was appointed college professor, succeeding Fr. Maurus in the chair of Philosophy, when the latter became Prior in 1894. Becoming Subprior in 1908, Fr. Stanislaus continued to teach philosophy, using his own works already referred to, until the death of Fr. Eugene Aherne in 1914. From this time until his election he fulfilled the duties of Prior, save for a short period of two years, 1925-27, spent in Rome as Definitior.

Dom Stanislaus was solemnly blessed abbot on October 28, 1931, by the diocesan Bishop, Dr. Hackett, assisted by Dom Dominique Nogues of Timadeuc and Dom Celsus O'Connell of Mount St. Bernard. The Archbishop of Cashel presided at the ceremony, and seven other bishops assisted. It was the new Abbot's privilege to bring back the Cistercian nuns to Ireland in the spring of 1932; he assisted Bishop Hackett at the formal enclosing of the Sisters on March 14. In that year the old red-

brick tiles were removed from the floors of the cloisters, refectory and community kitchen and replaced by terrazzo. Abbot Stanislaus also had the cloisters re-ceiled in ornate plaster work. But his term of office was brief, for on February 21, 1933, he contracted a heavy cold which developed into pneumonia. Special medical attendance was summoned but without avail. The heart of the patient was unequal to the strain of his illness and he passed peacefully away on Saturday, February 25, being in the sixty seventh year of his age. The funeral took place on March 1, and Dom Celsus O'Connell celebrated the Solemn Mass in the presence of the Bishops of Cork and Clifton, the Coadjutor of Cloyne and a large representation of clerics and lay folk. The Vicar Capitular, Mgr. Wm. Byrne of Ballybricken, sang the month's mind Mass. Archbishop Harty and Bishop Collier of Ossory were in the sanctuary.

At the election held on April 5, 1933, Dom Celsus O'Connell, Abbot of Mount St. Bernard, Leicester, England became seventh Abbot of Mount Melleray, for the Cistercian Constitutions lay down that "every mother-house can freely elect an abbot, not only from among the religious of her filiations, but also, if necessary, from among the abbots thereof." A native of Mourneabbey, Mallow, Dom Celsus did his secondary and philosophical studies in the Seminary before becoming a member of the community in 1902; he taught in the college both before and after his ordination which took place in Thurles Cathedral, June 19, 1910. Sent as assistant-chaplain to Stapehill in 1912, he took up the duties of Guest-Master on his return and became Subprior and

Master of Lay-brothers in 1914. Elected Definitior for the Order in 1920, he was in Rome till the expiration of his term of office in 1925, when he came home to fill the duties of Prior. In September 1927, the General Chapter appointed him provisional Superior of Mount St. Bernard Abbey in succession to Fr. Louis Carew, lately deceased, and in 1929 he became Abbot of the same monastery, being blessed by Bishop Cotter on November 13.

Immediately that he had entered into his new office at Mount Melleray Dom Celsus began to make preparations to celebrate, in a becoming manner, the centenary of the foundation of the monastery. It will be remembered that it was in the earlier part of 1833 that Dom Vincent and his brethern finally abandoned Bethlehem and came to live permanently in the "preparatory house" and on August 20, of same year the foundation-stone of the monastery proper was laid. It was decided that the celebrations should primarily take the form of an act of thanksgiving for the extraordinary aid that God gave to the pioneers, to overcome the almost insurmountable difficulties they had to contend with over a number of years and for all the favours showered down on Mount Melleray, and, through it, on Ireland during the century of its existence. The celebrations were to continue for three days and each day would be confined to a certain section of the people. August 15, feast of Our Lady's Assumption, under which title she is especially honoured by Cistercians, was fixed for the opening day of the ceremonies.

The pontifical High Mass in the open air was celebrated on the first day by Bishop J. Kinane, the newly consecrated Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, in the presence of a congregation of between 4,000 and 5,000 persons. Archdeacon Byrne of Waterford preached a very instructive discourse at the end of Mass on the significance and influence of Mount Mellera. The first day was for the laity in general and the specially invited guests were representatives from the various parishes which had rendered such signal assistance to the monks when they first took up their abode on the slopes of the Knockmealdowns. Dr. Kinane presided at the luncheon and spoke highly in praise of the services rendered to the Continent in general and to Ireland in particular by the Cistercian Order down the ages. The day closed with solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament given in the evening at the open-air altar by Bishop Cohalan of Cork. The outdoor Mass of the second day was celebrated pontifically by Bishop Wm. T. Cotter of Portsmouth. When he had vested at the throne and before beginning Mass, his Lordship ascended the pulpit and addressing the vast throng of assembled people asked them to join with him in offering the Holy Sacrifice for the welfare of Ireland. The preacher on this occasion was Dean Rossiter of Ferns, a past pupil of the Seminary and an ever-faithful friend of the monastery, who spoke eloquently on the Cistercian ideal. The second day was for civic heads, and, among the distinguished guests, were President E. de Valera and his son Eamon, Mr. W. T. Cosgrave, ex-President, Mr. Frank Aiken, T.D., Minister for Defence, Mr. P. J. Little, T.D., Parliamentary

Secretary; Deputies Goulding, Belton, Redmond, Nolan, Professor Merriman, President U.C.C., Professor Wm. Stockley, the Lord Mayors of Dublin and Cork and the Corporations. President de Valera was the guest of honour at the luncheon and he spoke of the gratitude he felt in being invited to join with the monks of Mount Melleray in celebrating the centenary of their monastic home and of the good done by the Cistercians in pre-reformation days in Ireland and since their return to the country. In the evening, solemn Benediction, given by Bishop Lee of Clifton, closed the events of the day, though later a liturgical reception was given to his Eminence Joseph Cardinal MacRory, who arrived with Bishop MacKenna of Clogher about 7 p.m.

Unfavourable weather on the morning of the third day prevented open-air Mass. The pontifical Mass was therefore celebrated within the church by Bishop Roche, then Coadjutor of Cloyne. Cardinal MacRory presided at the throne; Archbishop Harty and Bishop Kinane, both in *cappa magna*, occupied special places within the sanctuary. Other prelates present were the Bishops of Cork, Clogher, Achonry, Ferns, Ossory, Portsmouth, Clifton and Sierra Leone. The preacher for the occasion was Rev. Fr. Oliver, C.P. The day was reserved for the clergy and there were up to 500 priests, secular and regular, present. In the afternoon at 4.0 p.m., Cardinal MacRory, vested in cope and mitre, blessed and laid the foundation stone of the new abbey church in the presence of the bishops and a vast crowd of clergy and laity. He was assisted by Very Rev. Wm. Daly of St. Helens, Lancs., as deacon, and Rev. P. J.

Flavin, St. John's College, Waterford, as subdeacon. Revv. David and Nicholas Power of Waterford were masters of ceremonies. Solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was then given at the open-air altar by the Archbishop of Cashel and all joined in singing a grand Te Deum of thanksgiving at the end.

On the next morning before his departure, Cardinal MacRory addressed words of congratulation to the community, assembled in the chapter-room, because of the tremendous work that had been done at Mount Melleray in the course of the century of its existence and spoke highly in praise of monastic life such as it is lived by Cistercians; he then imparted his blessing to all present.

Chapter XVII.

THE ABBEY CHURCH.

FROM his very first days in office the new Abbot of Mount Melleray seemed to regard the building of the Abbey Church as his special task. The church erected by the founders, built as it was in a period of great financial straits, was never intended to be more than a temporary structure. Hence at no time was there a question of having it consecrated. Moreover, the original church was lacking in some of the qualities required by Cistercian tradition, being without a choir for the lay-brothers and having a section cut off at the western end to provide a separate place of worship for the laity. For many years at various intervals the idea of building a new church suggested itself to Superiors but nothing practical was done till the middle twenties when the Chapter consented to Dom Maurus' project of purchasing Mitchelstown Castle. It would be no small undertaking to convey the lime stone from the borders of Co. Cork to Mount Melleray but by doing so, very essential material would be at hand for future church builders.

At the beginning of July 1933, Dom Celsus discussed with his Chapter for the first time the project of erecting a new church and it was agreed that architects should be consulted on the matter. In August, shortly after the Centenary Celebrations, the proposed plans of Messrs. Kelly and Jones,

architects of Dublin, were submitted to the community and approved, and received the further approbation of the General Chapter in the following month.

Immediate preparations for building, commenced early in 1935 by the demolition of the old sacristy with its adjoining chapels and part of the sanctuary of the original church. By agreement with the contractors, Messrs. Maguire and Short, a beginning was to be made at the eastern side of the edifice, namely, that part which would include the sanctuary, transepts, tower, sacristy and chapter-room, and thus the community would be enabled to carry on their accustomed religious exercises as usual in the old choir. The digging and laying of the foundations started in April and actual building commenced with the east wall of the sacristy on July 1. At the end of September, when the walls of the chapter-room and sacristy had risen to a height of some twenty feet, an electric crane, equal in altitude to the spire, was erected by the contractors to facilitate the work of conveying material to the higher parts of the buildings. Before the year ended the ferro-concrete foundations had been laid for the sanctuary and lantern-tower. The sacristy and chapter-house were ready for roofing at Easter, 1936, and the copper flat roof and slates were on, before the end of June. Meantime the walls of the sanctuary and both transepts were rising and were finished towards the end of the year. At the beginning of December, the rubber floor was laid in the chapter, and, on Christmas Eve, the brethren assem-

bled there for the first time, after the office of Prime, for the solemn announcement of the feast of Christ's Nativity.

On Sunday, June 21, 1936, a bazaar in aid of the new church was opened at Cappoquin by Dr. Michael McGrath, then Bishop of Menevia, assisted by the Abbots of Mount Melleray and Roscrea. His Lordship was introduced to the assembled people by Very Rev. T. Fitzgerald, P.P., Cappoquin and addressed them in Gaelic and English. The bazaar continued for over a week and was formally closed by Dom Celsus on June, 29. Deep gratitude is due to the priests, nuns and people of Cappoquin for the genuine efforts made by them to secure the success of this event.

The sanctuary of the church with its cloister and the transepts were being roofed at the beginning of 1937, and then building operations started on the tower which was completed on October 22, when the four bronze crosses were set, one on each of its four pinnacles. Thus ended the first part of the undertaking. Because Catholics, within and outside Ireland, had been generous in contributing pecuniary assistance towards the building fund, Dom Celsus felt he would be able to proceed with the completion of the church without any delay. At the end of November, therefore, the old secular church was closed to the public and the new sacristy opened as a temporary chapel for the people of the district and for visitors. The foundation of the western wall of the monks' church, which is about five feet longer at that end than the original church, was laid and preparations were made for a commence-

ment on the church of St. Philomena, as the new secular church was to be called. The church of St. Philomena, at right angles to the monastery church proper, is cut off from it almost completely, in such a way that services in one building can be carried on without distraction or interruption in the other.

In February 1938, the spire of the old church, which had been a land mark in the district for years, was taken down and the two church bells were transferred to the lantern tower. A little later the monks had to abandon their former choir, the stalls of which were temporarily set up in the new section of the church. On April 21, the Diocesan, Bishop Kinane, laid the foundation stone of St. Philomena's; it was already half built, and by August was ready for the slaters. Meantime the walls of the nave were rising apace, as the old walls had been retained to the height of the cloisters. The roof was put on the nave early in the following spring and the plastering of the interior was begun. Central heating was installed by some members of the community during that summer and just before Christmas, an Austrian oak block floor was laid down in the nave. Choir stalls to the number of 200 were then fitted in. These stalls, with panelling and artistic dias overhead, were made entirely at Mount Melleray by three lay-brothers; they were fashioned for the most part from Austrian oak with a small mixture of Spanish chestnut. Along the border of the dias the Canticle of Our Lady has been artistically carved and on the canopies over the stalls of the Abbot and Prior are invocations in honour of the holy names of Jesus and Mary. It was at this period also that most of the windows

were put in and that the transepts and cloister were floored. On Gaudete Sunday, December 15, 1940, the new choir began to be used habitually, beginning with Matins of the B.V.M. at 1.30 a.m. On the following Sunday, Abbot Celsus consecrated six of the marble altars which had been erected in the church during that year.

We were still using the southern cloister as a sacristy until May, 1941, when St. Philomena's was officially opened and the sacristy proper became available for use. The altars of Our Lady and St. Joseph were put up early in the spring; it was on June 6 that the first High Mass was celebrated at the new high altar. The parquetry floor was laid in the sanctuary and on the space beneath the tower, in September.

Chapter XVIII.

EXTENSIONS.

AS the number in the community was increasing in recent times, Dom Celsus decided before the end of 1933 to provide a more commodious garden where the brethren could pray and read during their intervals and on Sundays and holidays. Their only place for taking fresh air up to now was in the cemetery in front of the monastery. Consequently a large area of several acres in extent, to the immediate north of the guest-garden was marked off and enclosed on all sides by a concrete wall, ten to twelve feet high. In the spring and summer of 1934, much of the time of work of the brethren was spent in laying out this garden; in making paths, digging plots and planting flowers and shrubs. A conservatory was built there in 1936 by one of the priests of the community and a few years later a Lourdes grotto was put up, also by some of the fathers.

In June, 1934, because of the growth of the community, which numbered over 120, it was decided to extend the refectory. About the same time the former choir novitiate was changed into a dormitory for the juniors and new quarters were assigned to the novices in the eastern part of the monastery. An artistic summer-house in bungalow style was built for the gentlemen guests in the spring of 1935.

The windows of this building were taken from the sacristy of the old church.

On May 1, 1935, Dom Celsus assisted at the blessing of Abbot Frederick Dunne at Gethsemani U.S.A. Two days later he presided at an election at New Melleray at which Dom Bruno Ryan, a former monk of Mount Melleray, was chosen to be third Abbot. After the General Chapter, the new American Abbot spent some days here before returning to his monastery. In 1936, the carpentry shed in the upper yard was considerably enlarged and extended so that the very valuable machinery installed there would be protected from the weather and that work could be carried on independently of climatic conditions. It was in this busy workshop that all the furniture for the church was to be produced, the choir stalls, panelling, benches, confessionals and sacristy furniture.

In former days it had never been the custom at Mount Melleray to sing the offices of Matins and Lauds, for various reasons. In the year 1934 the practice of singing Lauds on Sundays and holidays was introduced. On Easter Sunday, 1937, Matins and Lauds, without the responsories, were sung and that has been the practice ever since. Now, in accordance with the Cistercian Usages, the monks rise at 1.0 a.m. on the greater feasts of the year and sing the whole of the night office from beginning to end.

The chief event of 1938 was the purchasing of Oriel Temple, Collon, Co. Louth, with its estate of a thousand acres, in view of making there a new foundation. With the approval of the community and with the authorisation of the General Chapter

and the Holy See, Dom Celsus applied to Cardinal MacRory for permission to establish a new Cistercian monastery within his diocese. A ready consent was given and the property came into the possession of the monks on November 4, 1938. It was a cause of great rejoicing throughout the Order, for, although the ruins of old Mellifont did not lie within the boundaries of the newly acquired territory, Collon itself and the surrounding districts belonged to the ancient Abbey on the Mattock. In a little over a fortnight, on November 22, a party of four religious, including Fr. Benignus Hickey the Superior, left Mount Melleray to take over the newly acquired house and lands to which it was decided to give the name of New Mellifont. Later when the monastery became an independent house, it came to be known simply as Mellifont Abbey. Early in the year 1940, a number of young choir religious and lay brothers were sent to Co. Louth and by the end of the year the community there consisted of twenty-one members. Mellifont became autonomous at the end of 1945, and, in January of the next year, Dom Benignus became its first Abbot. It is now a well established monastery of over sixty members and splendid work is being done by the monks by way of cultivating the land and improving its condition.

At the end of August 1939, the community at Mount Melleray was saddened by the news of an outbreak of hostilities between Germany and Poland, which developed eventually into the second globular war. Contact with the Continent and with Superiors in Rome was soon cut off and when Abbot Corentin Guyader of the French Melleray died towards the

end of 1940, it was four or five months before the news reached here, via U.S.A. No General Chapter was held between the years 1938-45. In June, 1940, a joint pastoral letter from the Hierarchy prescribed special devotions for the peace of the world to be held on Sundays and Fridays. This prescription was carried out faithfully at Mount Melleray during all the years of the war.

In August, 1941, Most Rev. J. C. MacQuaid, Archbishop of Dublin, accompanied by Mgr. Enrici, Secretary to the Nuncio Apostolic, honoured the monastery with a visit. In the following year, in February, Bishop Jeremiah Kinane, who had been Bishop of Waterford for almost nine years, was translated to Cashel as Coadjutor and titular Archbishop of Dercos; he succeeded Dr. Harty in September 1946. Our new bishop, formerly Canon D. Cohalan, Ph.D., J.U.D., of Cork was appointed early in 1943 and was consecrated on April 4; he paid his first visit as Bishop to Mount Melleray at the end of September to confer sacred Orders and he addressed an inspiring lecture to the community

Notable additions were made to the Abbey library in 1940, when Very Rev. Canon Burke, P.P. V.F., Lismore presented a valuable collection of historical works; again in 1942, when Very Rev. J. O'Shea, P.P., Ballyporeen, bequeathed his entire library to Mount Melleray. Some time later a complete collection of the enactments of Dáil Eireann appeared on the shelves of the library through the kind influence of Mr. Dan Breen, T.D.

On January 11, 1943, a message from Rome told of the passing of Most Rev. Herman-Joseph Sme'

Abbot-General of the Reformed Cistercians. For three years, until peace was restored to the world, the Order was without a head. Most Rev. Dominic Nogues, Abbot of Timadeuc, in Brittany, succeeded as Superior General on May 1, 1946; he visited Mount Melleray in July of the next year.

The monks of the present day retain the traditions of their forbears and are very assiduous in the planting of groves. In February 1936, a shelter belt was planted as a protection along the northside of the new community garden. In the spring of 1943, the grove at the north-west corner of the estate, having deteriorated through age, was cut down and replanted. Again in March 1945, the grove bordering on Hayden's farm on the east side of the monastic lands received a complete supply of new trees. A number of other smaller plantations have been made. The monks have their own nursery where the seedlings are put down and the tiny trees get time to develop and mature.

On March 6, 1944, the community mourned the death of Fr. James O'Boyle. Superior and Procurator-General of the Columban Fathers at Rome, Fr. James, who was a Doctor of Theology and Canon Law, entered the novitiate at Mount Melleray in April, 1936. He made his final profession on Ascension Thursday 1941, and was appointed director of the scholastics. A keen student and capable professor, Fr. James distinguished himself during his time here as a fervent religious, anxious to carry out in the minutest detail every provision of the Cistercian Constitutions and he showed special assiduity in devoting

himself to hard manual labour. Though suffering for many years from some internal complaint, his death was unexpected and came as a shock to all who knew him, within and outside the monastery. On August 4, died Dom Bruno Ryan, Abbot of New Melleray since 1935, and on the sixth of the next month, Dom Justin MacCarthy, Abbot of Mount St. Joseph, Roscrea. A new abbot for Roscrea was elected on September 25, in the person of Fr. Camillus Claffey hitherto Prior of the monastery. Despite war-time difficulties, Dom Celsus succeeded in getting to America in November to preside at an election for an abbot there and Fr. Albert Beston was the community's choice.

Chapter XIX.

PRESIDENTIAL VISIT.

IN addition to the farms at Garrycloyne and Killeagh donated to Mount Melleray, other pieces of land were later purchased or acquired. In 1924 the farm of Mr. Thomas Scanlan at Monavugga was bought and in the autumn of 1940 Mr. John Crotty sold his farm of 105 acres to the monks. In March 1944, a tract of over thirty acres of fertile land was presented by Mr. Eugene O'Keeffe of Shanbally, Cappoquin and in August 1948, with the necessary authorisation, the Killeagh farm, being too far away from the monastery, was sold and the lands of Mr. T. Walsh at Bealica, Cappoquin, were purchased in its stead.

On May 7, 1945, the community rejoiced to learn of the ending of hostilities in Europe and all joined fervently in the High Mass and Te Deum ordered by the Hierarchy for June 29, to thank God for preserving our country from the horrors of war during the years just passed.

All Ireland mourned at the passing of his Eminence Joseph Cardinal MacRory on October 13. Exactly a month before, he celebrated his diamond sacerdotal Jubilee at Armagh, when the clergy of the archdiocese and the Bishops of the Northern Province united with him at a Pontifical Mass of thanksgiving. There was a solemn Mass of Requiem

for the dead Cardinal at Mount Melleray on October 15, and Dom Celsus was present at the obsequies in Armagh two days later.

On the feast of St. Joseph, 1946, Dom Benignus Hickey, who had been elected in the previous January, was blessed Abbot of Mellifont by Bishop Lyons of Kilmore. In his younger days Abbot Benignus had been a student at the Seminary, passing to St. John's, Waterford and later to Maynooth. Entering here towards the end of 1919, he was ordained in 1925, was a teacher for a while at the college and became Master of Novices in 1933, a position he held till his departure for Co. Louth in 1938.

In June 1946, President Seán T. O'Kelly and his wife paid an official visit to the Mount. Arriving with his suite on the evening of June 3, the President stayed at the Guest-House and his Lady with her companion put up at the College. His Excellency was present at the High Mass next morning. The liturgical reception as prescribed in the Cistercian ritual, took place at 9.30 a.m., and when the distinguished visitors had listened to an address of welcome read in Gaelic by the Cantor, Mr. O'Kelly addressed the community assembled in the Chapter-room, in the native tongue and in English, thanking the monks sincerely for their kind welcome and speaking highly of the place Mount Melleray holds in the country's esteem. In his reply Abbot Celsus said, among other things, that the President was the first lay gentleman to address the community since the visit of Daniel O'Connell and that, as far as he could tell, Mrs. O'Kelly was the first lady ever to be admitted within the monastic

enclosure. After the addresses the members of the community were presented individually to the President and his wife. In the afternoon a concert was given in their honour in the Aula Maxima and Aod de Blacam's play "The Golden Priest" was staged.

In September 1946, died Dom Albert Beston, fourth Abbot of New Melleray. A native of Aglish, Cappoquin, Fr. Albert entered the novitiate here in the summer of 1899, and was ordained in 1907. For many years he taught classics at the Seminary and was sent in the autumn of 1920 to America, where he became Prior and Master of Novices. He was elected abbot on December 12, 1944, and called at Mount Melleray on his way to the Plenary General Chapter, held at Citeaux, in May of the year he died. In November, 1946, Fr. Paul Barry, bursar for over twenty-five years, passed away and on January 6, following, Fr. Canice Maher, Prior. Born at Rathdowney, Co. Leix, in 1883, Fr. Canice did his classical and philosophical studies at the Seminary before entering the monastery in 1909. Ordained in 1916, he was intimately connected with the College as professor, dean of discipline and bursar until, in 1931, he succeeded Dom Stanislaus Hickey as Prior. At the beginning of 1946, he was elected to Mellifont but did not accept the office. Falling ill towards the end of the same year, he survived only six weeks.

Connected with the monastery for sixty years, Miss Ellen O'Donnell, Superintendent of the Ladies' Guest House died on March 21, 1947. Towards the end of the same year on December 7, died at Roscrea, Fr. Anthony Daly, former definitior of the Order for

twenty years and a past student of the Seminary. A fortnight later another distinguished alumnus of the college and a son of the Melleray district, Bishop John Colman of Armidale, died at Sydney.

A life-sized Calvary, the gift of Mr. Patrick O'Shea, Windgap, Co. Kilkenny, was erected on the front avenue in July 1948. It was about this time that the community began to deliberate about a mansion and farm at Portglenone, Co. Antrim, which were up for sale. Permission to make a foundation was generously accorded by Bishop Mageean of Down and Connor, but difficulties were feared from Orange opposition. On September 3, a phone message from the North announced that all obstacles had been overcome and that Portglenone House and its lands had become monastic property. Fr. Oliver O'Farrell as Superior and four others were sent at once to take over the place. Before the year was out, fourteen members of the Mount Melleray community had migrated to Co. Antrim. The fifth daughter-house of our beloved Abbey, which was given the title of Our Lady of Bethlehem, became an independent monastery in July 8, 1951, when Fr. Oliver was elected Abbot; he was solemnly blessed on September 8, by Bishop Mageean. Born in Co. Meath, a little to the south of Drogheda, Dom Oliver was educated at Clongowes and at the Seminary. Joining in August 1934, he was ordained in 1942, and became Bursar here a year before he was sent as Superior to Portglenone.

In the early Autumn of 1949, the brethren had the pleasure of entertaining the illustrious Archbishop of Boston, Dr. Cushing, who, with his Auxiliary and a large contingent of Catholics from

Massachusetts, visited Ireland and was received enthusiastically wherever he went. On September 24, His Grace left for America bringing with him fourteen nuns from Glencairn to make their first foundation of Trappesines in the United States within the confines of the Boston archdiocese.

The Irish Bee-keepers Association held conferences here in July, 1948, and again in 1950, at about the same time of the year. For the past eight or ten years great progress has been made in the Mount Melleray apiary and a large quantity of honey is produced annually. The poultry farm also has seen important developments and a stock of over a thousand hens, Leghorn and Rhode Island Reds, is constantly maintained. Day-old chickens are hatched out in great numbers in the springtime by an incubator, installed in 1948, and capable of carrying 3,000 eggs.

In September 1950 the work of re-roofing the common dormitory of the monks was commenced, but, in addition to the new roof, many changes were to be made. The ancient gothic windows were to be removed and in their place a double row of steel-framed windows were to be put in. Inside the dormitory itself, which formally accommodated about sixty monks, a double row of cubicles, one over the other, providing place for 120, was to be installed. The undertaking was finished in the early spring of 1952 with very satisfactory results, arising from more perfect ventilation, better lighting and greater security from the severe cold of the winter season.

Chapter XX.

MODERN TIMES.

THE Consecration of the Abbey Church was the big event of 1952. The Church, as has been already remarked, is a monument to the faith of Irish Catholics at home and abroad. Externally it was completed at the end of 1940 and was liturgically blessed on November 26 of that year.

The high altar and the twenty lesser altars—all in white marble—are gifts of generous benefactors. A rood-cross, presented by Very Rev. P. Canon O'Leary, of Glounthane, Co. Cork, hangs from the southern arch of the tower facing down the choir. The magnificent Harry Clarke window at the back of the Sanctuary was given by Mr. James McVey, Foxrock, Co. Dublin. Its main theme is the coronation of Our Lady by Christ the King. SS. Bernard and Malachy are represented in the outermost panel at the Gospel side; in the next, SS. Brigid and Columcille. On the extreme panel on the Epistle side are depicted SS. Alberic and Patrick; in the adjoining panel SS. Carthage and Ita are portrayed.

August 20, the feast of the great Cistercian saint and doctor, St. Bernard, was the date selected for the consecration of the abbey church and high altar. The ceremony was performed by Most Rev.

Dr. Cohalan, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, assisted by members of the community. The rite of consecration—one of the longest in the Pontifical—took four hours and the Mass at the end was sung by Dom Celsus coram Episcopo. On the same morning the main altar in St. Philomena's was dedicated to the Sacred Heart by Abbot Benignus Hickey of Mellifont. Next day the most notable event in the history of Mount Melleray was commemorated by a solemn Mass of thanksgiving sung by His Excellency Most Rev. Gerald O'Hara, Nuncio Apostolic, in the presence of the Primate of All Ireland, Archbishop (now Cardinal) D'Alton, twelve other bishops, the Abbot-General and the Procurator-General of the Cistercian Order. Archbishop Kinane of Cashel preached the occasional sermon. The President of Eire and Mrs. O'Kelly were there and a number of deputies and senators. Major Vivian de Valera, T.D., represented An Taoiseach, who was prevented by illness from attending.

Early in May, 1953, a well-known member of the Mount Melleray community, Fr. Dominic Nolan, went to his reward. Born at Loughill, Co. Limerick, in 1874, James Nolan entered religion in August 1892, after four years spent in the Seminary; he was professed on the Feast of All Saints, 1894, and was ordained at mid-summer 1901. As a priest he fulfilled various offices in the monastery as sacristan, guest-master, professor and college president, but was best known in Ireland and outside as a confessor and spiritual director. The Bishop of Waterford and his Vicar-General, Mgr. Kelleher, were present at the obsequies of Fr. Dominic on May 9.

In July of that year Abbot Celsus discussed with his capitulars a project first suggested to him by the Archbishop of Wellington as far back as 1949, namely, the establishing of a Cistercian house in New Zealand. A farm, the property of Mr. Thomas Prescott, at Kopua, in the province of Hawkes Bay, was placed at the disposal of the Archbishop and he, with the full approval of the owners, offered it to the Cistercians as a suitable site for a monastic foundation. During his sojourn in U.S.A. in the winter of 1952-'53, Dom Celsus paid a flying visit to New Zealand and was favourably impressed by the proposed location. Consequently on his recommendation the brethren decided to accept the offer of Archbishop McKeefrey. On April 29, 1954, the first colony of monks, consisting of four choir religious and two lay-brothers, under the leadership of Fr. Basil Hayes, left Mount Melleray for the southern hemisphere. A second contingent, comprising four choir monks and four lay-brothers, departed from Eire on March 26, 1955. The Hawke's Bay foundation is known as the monastery of Our Lady of the Southern Star. Much progress has been made there in the erection of buildings and developing the land and good hopes are entertained that the seeds of the contemplative life will produce abundant fruit in New Zealand.

At the end of November, 1952, a past student of the Seminary, Fr. Vincent Daly, was elected sixth abbot of New Melleray in succession to Dom Eugene Martin, who had died a few months previously. Dom Vincent, who was born in New York, was the first native American to rule over our Dubuque

filiation. He visited Eire in September, 1953, on his way to Citeaux and it was destined to be his only visit, for in the Spring following he was found to be suffering from a malignant disease which carried him off in mid-May at the early age of forty-two. His successor, Dom Philip O'Connor, is also an American of Irish extraction.

Dom Celsus celebrated on November 13th, 1954, the silver jubilee of his abbatial blessing, and, on the following December 8th, the golden jubilee of his profession as a monk of Mount Melleray. His work was not yet finished for in the November of the following year he left Shannon airport for America and by Christmas he had reached New Zealand to pay his first official visit to the monastery of Our Lady of the Southern Star. Before returning home in the early Spring of 1956 he had also called at Our Lady of Terrawarra in Australia and New Melleray Abbey in U.S.A. In August of the same year he assisted at the National Synod held at Maynooth under the presidency of Cardinal Dalton. However, as the year drew to a close the Abbot's health began visibly to fail and he was obliged to absent himself of necessity from many of the Community exercises. It was then that he made the decision to retire from the office of Superior and hand on the administration of affairs to a younger man. On February 3rd, 1957, Dom Celsus announced to the brethren that he had handed in his resignation to the Abbot General and that he would continue to direct affairs until the election of his successor.

The election took place on April 26th when Father Finbarr Cashman, who had been claustral

prior for ten years, was chosen to be eighth Abbot of Mount Melleray. Dom Finbarr received the abbatial blessing on July 16th from Most Rev. Dr. Cohalan, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, who had officiated at many important religious functions in Mount Melleray since he became chief pastor of the diocese.

One of the new Abbot's first acts of administration was to select four members out of the Community to send to New Zealand. Among the number was Father Joachim Murphy, destined in the designs of Providence to be the first abbot of our New Zealand filiation. Dom Finbarr went himself in person to New Zealand early in the year 1958. Later on he was present at Melleray in Brittany for the election of a successor to Dom Louis de Gonzague, and, in the month of October, he presided at an election in the Abbey of Our Lady of Bethlehem, Co. Antrim. when Father Aengus Dunphy was chosen as second abbot of the monastery.

May of 1959 saw a new Superior in our English filiation in the person of Father Ambrose Southey, successor to Abbot Malachy Brasil, who resigned owing to ill-health and advancing age. In September of the same year, Dom Celsus O'Connell, whose health had been worsening for some months, went to hospital in Cork, where he died peacefully on November 13th. Bishop Cohalan presided at the solemn Mass of Requiem for the deceased Abbot, sung by Most Rev. John Ahern, D.D., Bishop of Cloyne, on November 16th, in the presence of President de Valera and representatives of Church and State.

Early in the year 1960 Dom Finbarr made his second voyage to the Antipodes to preside at an election for the first abbot of Our Lady of the Southern Star, Kopua. Father Joachim Murphy, Master of Novices, was the Community's choice.

The year 1961 came to be known in this country as the Patrician year during which the fifteenth centenary of the death of our National Apostle was commemorated by many celebrations, liturgical and otherwise. Our Abbot was present in Armagh Cathedral on March 17th, for the pontifical Mass sung by the papal legate, Cardinal McIntyre of Los Angeles, with which the celebrations were inaugurated. The sermon on the occasion was preached by Cardinal Cushing. In June there was a full week of events connected with the Patrician centenary in Dublin, presided over by yet another papal legate, Cardinal Agagianian. Dom Finbarr was present on the final day of the celebrations, June 25th, when a solemn Mass was sung in Croke Park by the papal legate and a sermon was preached by Archbishop Joseph Walsh of Tuam.

The Community retreat at the beginning of 1962 was preached by Father Eugene Boylan, O.C.S.O., who later in the year was elected to be fourth abbot of Mount St. Joseph's, Roscrea. In August, Cardinal Micheal Browne, O.P., paid his first visit to Ireland since he had been raised to the purple; he received an official welcome at Cappoquin on August 10th after which he came to Mount Melleray and stayed overnight. The big event of the year in the Catholic world was the solemn opening of the Second Vatican Council at Rome on October 11th.

Sorrow filled the hearts of many when news was spread abroad at the beginning of June 1963 of the death of Pope John XXIII, who had become so universally loved and esteemed during his short occupancy of the papal throne. On the 16th of the same month a close friend and collaborator of Pope John, Monsignor Thomas Ryan, was consecrated Bishop of Clonfert by Cardinal Amleto Cicognani at Frascati. Bishop Ryan was a student of Mount Melleray Seminary in his youth.

The opening days of 1964 were saddened by news of yet another death. This time it was Dom Eugene Boylan, well-known throughout the Catholic world as a preacher and writer, who had been Abbot at Roscrea for only eighteen months. In the same month of January in which he died a new Abbot General was chosen for the Cistercian Order in the person of Dom Ignatius Gillet, hitherto Abbot at Aiguebelle. A noteworthy change took place at Mount Melleray during the Spring of this year when the lay brothers put aside the brown habit formerly worn by them and donned the black and white robes of the monks.

Dom Gerard Kennedy, a monk of Mount Melleray was appointed Superior of our American filiation during the first month of 1965 and he retained the position until he was elected Abbot of Mellifont in April 1967. The new Superior General visited Ireland in June, spending an entire week at Mount Melleray. Father Malachy Dahille, widely known as dean and manager of the Seminary, died early in September, and, in compliance with the ruling of a recent General Chapter, was buried in

a coffin. Most Rev. Michael Russell, D.D., was consecrated Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, in succession to the late Bishop Cohalan, by Cardinal Conway on December 19th.

The year 1966 will be remembered throughout Ireland as the year in which was celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the 1916 Rising. Early in June of that year Eamonn de Valera was re-elected President of Ireland. Towards the end of the month of July Brother Colman Walsh, who had been a member of the Community for forty years, passed to his reward. A carpenter by profession he had been mainly responsible for all the woodwork in the interior of the Abbey church and sacristy.

A plenary General Chapter was held at Citeaux in May 1967. Among the enactments of this Chapter was included permission to introduce brief conversations into our monasteries as means of communication instead of the making of signs. Only in monasteries where the majority of the monks voted in favour of the change could this permission be availed of. It was accepted by the Mount Melleray Community on June 26th, 1967. In October, a former member of our Community died at our New Zealand foundation under tragic circumstances; he was Father Robert Kiely, Prior of the monastery and a native of Fermoy, Co. Cork, who was killed in a tractor accident. Before entering Mount Melleray in 1954 Father Kiely had completed an advanced course in Science and secured a Master's degree.

Permission to say the Office in the vernacular was granted to the Cistercians at the beginning of 1968. This privilege has not been availed of so far

in our monastery. The Cistercian convent at Staplehill, Dorsetshire, under the tutelage of the Abbots of Mount Melleray since 1915, was transferred to the care of Mount St. Bernard's Abbey during the summer of this year. On October 11th, 1968, Father Ailbe Luddy, who had been a monk of Mount Melleray for well over sixty years, died, at the age of eighty-five. He was well-known as the translator into English of many of the works of St. Bernard and as an author in his own right; he was the last link with the Mount Melleray of the early twentieth century.

So the story of Mount Melleray unravels itself. In the eyes of the Irish people, at home and abroad, Mount Melleray is a city built on a hill that cannot be hidden. May it ever be a beacon light shining forth even unto the ends of the earth, enlightening not only those who belong to the Fold but in a truly ecumenical spirit those others also for whom Christ died, that they also may become one with Him.

Finis.