

ST. TERESA'S AT COSPICUA DISCALCED CARMELITES IN MALTA

***A Short Historical Survey (Conclusion)
by Fr. John Leone, OCD.***

BALANCING DATA

To go back to our Statistics, we now come face to face with the question of their identification. Who were they exactly, and from where had they come to St. Teresa's? The ACTS refer to them under their assumed name in Religion. As for their Provincial affiliation, this is supplied for the minority of them. It sounds unforgivable by modern standards. Their death to the world was taken too literally. It makes of the omission a great shame, and of the responsible secretaries illogical scribes. For in their entries concerning lay brothers, whether foreign or local, they would see fit to provide their full identity: name at baptism, their parents' names, their age, their place of birth and naturally their assumed name in Religion.

These gaps notwithstanding, we are to rule out altogether that any of the students were or, for that matter, could have been of Maltese nationality. For no novices could be accepted in this House. Canon Law always resisted until very recent times that a Religious House might carry more than one status in the area of formation. A house that served as a Novitiate might not attend to Scholastic purposes, and vice versa. It is known of one solitary case at St. Teresa's, in which one cleric was received as a novice. It was a young man from Vittoriosa by name Deborio sive Debono. He was clothed here by a special permission of Very Rev. Eugene of St. Benedict, General of the Reform at the time. But having been clothed on the 20.V.1647, the next day had orders to proceed to Messina to undergo his full novitiate. Our assumption for the Foreign nationality of the entire Student Body at St. Teresa's is further strengthened by the consideration made earlier in connection with the eventual closure of the College, which we pinpointed to the failure of students no more inflowing from abroad.

We have qualified the numerical record of 245 students for the years 1636 - 1782, as a very good one. It could have been even higher except for two factors. On the one hand, there was the fact that there were two more such International Colleges operating in the young Reform, each depending on one feeding source, and possibly involving also competition on the part of the Colleges themselves.

On top of the foregoing, the intake of students at St. Teresa's was conditioned by a twofold consideration. The first is its physical capacity. Until 1694, the College could accommodate a maximum of twenty Religious at a time between Fathers and Students. Only shortly before that year that extension work was decided upon and undertaken, by building a further wing that provided the College with an extra 14 cells with a large lecture room and private oratory. The other limiting factor was the financial independence of the College, this being exclusively dependent on local resources. Local generous benefactors - and they were pretty numerous, as we have had occasion to point out - had indeed amply provided for the support of the College and its activities; yet the administrators were bound to draw the mark somewhere. It would appear that where they drew it, it might have well been the right watermark.

As we went through the Records often referred to in our Account, the vision of those promising youngsters, growing up and maturing in both virtue and scholastic accomplishments, came home to us alive and impressive. At vital stages of their formation, their progress in either respect would be made the object of the keen interest and fatherly concern of those responsible for their healthy growth into seasoned missionaries. Especially upon their promotion to Holy Orders, their moral and spiritual standard would be gone into by the entire Community, while their scholastic expertise tested by a picked team of three, two exercises canonically known as 'Adprobatio quoad mores' and 'Adprobatio quoad scientiam', respectively.

The students would be allowed to present themselves at the Episcopal Curia in Valletta for their periculum sive examination, conditionally on the successful outcome of a majority vote of the two said previous tests.

On making a meticulous balancing of the results of such tests, we could not help being struck by the all round resulting standard of their supposed preparation reflected in the marks registered.

Within the whole lifetime of the College NOT one single student failed in either ballot; in three cases the ballot 'quoad scientiam' though positive, was not unanimous; in only three other cases, students were advised to withdraw from the College, and this for only health reasons, certified and confirmed by the House Physician.

The course at St. Teresa's lasted four years. The students were admitted after finishing their Arts in their respective Province. They took their full Theological course here specializing in Oriental Languages. A few overstayed in the College with a view to take an extra examination in connection with what is known as Faculties, by which was meant their fitness for hearing confessions. This was most likely done for temporary pastoral work among the cosmopolitan Knights who found St. Teresa's with its multilingual features and the spiritual climate prevailing there, a congenial place where they could have their spiritual needs best attended to.

Historical as well as physical landmarks, existent within our lifetime bore out unmistakably the last stated fact. We have in mind the presence of a Romitorio sive Retreat House, adjoining St. Teresa's, and especially built by the Knights themselves, provided with ample orchards, wherein the more fervent among the Knights were wont to withdraw from their normal occupations and seek refuge, that under the guidance of one of the Fathers from the College they endeavored to enhance their spiritual closeness with God. This relic of times bygone has for some time been obliterated. The Cospicua Primary School rises over where the orchards stood, and the Romitorio first was incorporated as an Annex to the latter school, and subsequently completely destroyed by enemy action during the last world war. This part of the site has since been deployed by the present Cospicua Community for the construction of premises facing partly Alexander and partly Nelson Streets.

At an earlier stage of this Narrative it was pointed out how the three International Colleges currently operating in the Teresian Reform throughout its first two centuries owned one of two specializations and how of the three only St. Pancratius's and St. Teresa's were strictly missionward. The activities of each of the two last mentioned gradually crystallized, and parted ways in respect of the missionary area each catered for.

Whatever might have been the floating position initially, it would seem that the Governing Body of the Teresian Reform assigned Mesopotamia and Malabar to St. Pancratius's, and to Malta's St. Teresa's was allocated with the pastoral needs of Asia Minor inclusive of the Holy Land. In this assumption we have been guided by a thorough inspection of the Chronicles partly published by Sir Herman Golancs. (Oxford University Press: 1927 2 - XXIII, pp. 669.) And partly by the rest of the same Report which the late Ambrose of St. Teresa, one time General Archivist of the Order, and appearing in *Anaclecta Ordinis CC.DD.* 1933-1934.

From the accurate inspection we have been able to make of the said documentary evidence, St. Teresa's did definitely offer transit facilities to missionaries to and from lands beyond Asia Minor and the Holy Land, but it owned no direct responsibility bound to be met by man-power trained in Malta, allowing at the same time that some of the latter did in fact transfer there from either the Holy Land or Asia Minor, at a later stage.

There would be also another bit of circumstantial evidence to support the assumption that Malta's missionary relations were mainly with Asia Minor and the Holy Land. We would find this living unmistakable link on a smaller scale in the continued contacts of St. Teresa's with that same area, even following its changed status of a Missionary College. The impression closely approximates the image of one hanging on with one hand to what previously used to hold with both, and refusing to let go altogether! So many in fact are the known Religious provided from St. Teresa's between the years 1790 - 1918 for service in Asia Minor and the Holy Land. Some were appointed Superiors of Mt. Carmel, others parish priests either at Haifa or one or other place in Asia Minor, among them the famous Julius of the Redeemer to whom belongs the honour of reclaiming permanently the Holy Mount of Carmel cradle of the Order, from the Turkish Sultan overlord of the area during the period under review. But with this important episode we shall be dealing *ex professo* in the Postscript already promised in these Notes. To add a touch of colour, surely not unrelated with the small items of evidence, all pointing to the same conclusion, we recall the pleasing discovery of the impact Malta's activities had made in those areas, still much alive while we worked there during the immediate years before the last war, areas where people go about their history less by written records than by oral traditions.

LIFESTYLE AT ST. TERESA'S

The domestic life Style at St. Teresa's was of a rather Spartan pattern. It may be gauged by what we found it prevailing some fifty years ago in the same House during our first year in the Religious Life. For six days in the week, a simple black breakfast, consisting of a small bowl (skutella) of black coffee with a slice of roasted bread. The main meal was at mid-day followed by a modest supper in the late evening at about 9:00, so modest that it was termed 'Collatio', a snug little wearing and tearing one's masticating organ. It was all that the Community went on. On Sundays one count on the luxury of a little milk at breakfast, and an extra drop of wine at the mid-day meal. Until a very short while before those days, the sick in the community, because of their special diet involving the item of meat, prohibited by the Rule, ate separately in a small separate refectory, apart and 'beyond sight of the rest of their Brethren'. What the provisions could have been one hundred and fifty odd years earlier, provided it be kept on the harsher side of the scales, is everybody's guess. No wonder the life span of the Religious rarely passed the sixties.

REGIMEN

There was one outdoor and indoor regimen for Fathers and Students. The Fathers might have a little extra activity, a sick-call to quote one of very few. Outside contacts were entrusted mainly to the bursar, on one or two days in the week. The students had nothing else to be concerned with except study and prayer.

The Religious were allowed a twice weekly stroll in the nearby countryside, like with like. Under no circumstances did the Fathers mix with the students, or vice versa. Valletta was 'out of bounds' for the students. The only exception was in connection with their occasional examination at the Curia prior to their ordinations.

The Community lived in practically two air-tight compartments. Only on very rare occasions they relaxed jointly. This was in connection with the more solemn celebrations of the Liturgy, such as Christmas and Easter, and five other days between September 14th and the following Lent, once monthly, days known as Extraordinary Recreation. Otherwise Fathers and Students met only during Community Acts, and the former met of course their Lecturers during lectures or private scholastic consultations.

STERN TIMETABLE

It was a stern timetable. And human nature being then what it has always been, the Visitors General paying regular visitations in order to ascertain the spiritual pulse of the College, would repeatedly draw the attention of the Religious to a constant watch for the faithful compliance of the spirit and letter of what were the Statutes of the College. Each Visitor would leave his remarks and paternal reminders in writing in an 'ad hoc' book, one of the best preserved in this House Archives. It has been thanks to this relic that we have been able to build the foregoing picture of the College's regimen. The quality of the paper is sub-mediocre, but the handwriting is generally excellent to read. (General Visitations 1627 - 1956, passim.)

Besides the above mentioned reminders relating to the Written Law, the rather too paternalistic Visitors made it a point to keep alive for the best part of the first half century of the College's lifetime another even harsher disposition, somewhat amusing in the climate of today's outlook. It concerned bathing. At first there was no strict inhibition for Religious to give themselves this luxury, provided it was done before dawn, and never within sight of potential onlookers. One day there was a fatality in which an Irish Student lost his life by drowning. Access to the sea from then on became greatly restricted. The Religious were only allowed dipping their legs and not beyond their knees, with their 'heavy harness' on $\frac{1}{4}$ and of course at the same unearthly hour.

WORKSHOP THAT WAS

The College was enriched with a library worthy of a Missionary College of an International character. Ourselves recall the existence of a number of Works nowadays preserved only in National Libraries. Most of them were already out of print before the last world war. Next to little survived the concentrated bombing absorbed by this House during the same world conflict. The loss included three priceless manuscripts which out not to have been kept in the Library. But then even the Archives suffered the same fate. One of these was an ORDO DIVINI OFFICII, a calendar with detailed directives for the daily recitation of the Liturgy. It might have well been, if not the very first, surely among the earliest. No other imaginable reason for its preservation

in a library. Handwritten but as neat as if printed, with an art long lost and unknown in days more concerned with mad speed than with self-respect. Its paper was of a light blue hue. Considering that these booklets are only valid for the year for which they are printed or written, we always had taken it for granted that it had been preserved for some special consideration, such as its very early compilation.

A second manuscript dealt with Maltese idioms and their corresponding equivalents in Arabic, Hebrew and Latin, with the two first tongues transcribed in European letterings. The third manuscript represented the FIRST volume of a Maltese/Italian - Italian/Maltese Vocabulary. The surviving volume, the SECOND, glad to note in an excellent condition and 9" x 12", bears a heart-rending appeal for its publication at some later date. This appeal is written by a different hand, and dated 18.9.1823. It reads as follows: 'Chi trovera' questo Vocabolario, abbia la gentilezza e bonta' di farlo stampare - ovvero d'aver cura perche' da qualche mano strappazzante non venga rovinato. Benedetta la mano che con diligenza custodira' questo dizionario, l'autore del quale non dimentichera' il favore ricevuto. Padre Carmelitano Scalzo di S. Teresa - Convento in Cospicua, 18.9.1823'.

Basing our calculations on the daily satisfactions of Masses in the House at the time - records of which are also available for the whole period - the number of Fathers stood at from 5 to 8, whereas that of the students between 15 and 25, at a time. These figures have been established from the known capacity of the House for the first 50 years of the College, and its second 100 years, when the capacity for the students was doubled.

The drafting of either class of Religious, Fathers and Students was entirely and exclusively made by Rome. In a College like St. Teresa's, the Fathers were mainly engaged in teaching. Little time was left for anything else; neither might have been by reason of the Statutes of the House. To elaborate further on what we have already recalled earlier in passing, pastoral ministry in their church was restricted to a bare two hours in the morning, except for Saturdays and few more rare occasions, days on which the Fathers would be available for confessions in the early hours of the afternoon. The very church would not be accessible to the faithful at other hours and days. Hence the Community would be at other times engaged in one of three activities: teaching, study or prayer. Once more, here again we depend on the already quoted book: 'General Visitations, 1627 - 1659.'

The Board of Examiners was made up of three, two 'ex officio' and appointed by Rome, one chosen by the Chapter Fathers. The three normally functioned for three years.

ST. TERESA'S BY ITS FRUITS/ PRESTIGE RECOGNIZED

The prestige enjoyed in both the Order and outside by the Fathers connected with St. Teresa's was noteworthy. Many of them would leave the College only to take more important positions in the Order at Rome either as Procurators = Official Representatives of the Order with the Holy See, or Definitors General = Members of the General's Council. In Malta, a few served as Consultors or Qualificators at the Inquisitor's Office. One was even appointed Inquisitor.

Having made the foregoing general remarks concerning the Scholastic and domestic set-up at St. Teresa's we would see fit to integrate the same picture by going into the Cultural background of some - among the earliest - of its Lecturers. The limitation is only due to the Sources at OUR disposal. And among these last mentioned only in respect to those that were survived by publications reviewed by contemporaries; or in a few cases where they would have ended their days on this Island and therefore remembered by their obituaries.

SOME DISTINGUISHED MEN FROM THE COLLEGE

AUGUSTINE of the Saints An exceptionally talented man and brilliant in many ways. Born in nearby Calabria in Italy, died of plague in 1656. Lectured in Theology at the College in Malta for three years. Previously he had done so in both Theology and Philosophy elsewhere both before and after his assignment to Malta. Authored the following Works; De Trinitate; De Angelis; Sermony sopra la Regola Primitiva dell'Ordine Carmelitano, this last being a Work dedicated to Alexander VIII, to whom he had been personal confessor for some time. In Malta he was also Consultor at the Inquisitor's Office . (Wessels: Bibliotheca Carmelitana, 1927: Vol. I, p.207.)

BALTHASSAR of St. Catherine Native of Bologna in Italy, made his religious profession in 1615 and died in

1675. He was on the Island for barely six months in the year 1641. Daniel a Virgine attributes to his authorship the following high-sounding publications: *Sermoni riflessi di celeste sapienza, irradiati dai gerarchi Tomaso d'Aquino e Teresa di Gesu*. Also: *L'Ascesa dell'Anime a Dio* - an Italian translation from the Spanish by his confrere Jose de Jesus-Maria (Quiroga). The first work undertaken much later and terminated two short years before he died in 1673, sounds by its title like a dying swan's song. Contemporary reviewers - always according to Daniel a Virgine (In his *Speculum Tem.II*, n.3962) quoted above - credit this Work as an excellent and brilliantly presented. The same theme, incidentally, is faithfully reproduced in an exceptionally artistic painting preserved in the sacristy of our church at Cospicua, portraying the two Doctors St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Teresa meeting with their ecstatic look upon a Dove high up between them, obviously standing for the Holy Spirit, as if to underline the mutual supernatural source of their individual teaching. No clue is available as to its authorship, date and manner of its finding its way to St. Teresa's.

ISIDOR of St. Joseph Of French nationality, born either Douai or Dunkirk, he took his vows among the Discalced Carmelites in 1662. From early in life he had revealed his high talents for both teaching and government. Entered upon his long teaching career at Louvain, Malta's sister International College, from where he passed to St. Pancratius's in Rome. With as many as fifteen years of teaching experience at the two latter Colleges behind him, not to mention the complete command of as many as five languages, Greek, Latin, Spanish, Italian and his native French, was assigned to the combined office of teaching and ruling at the Malta College. He left the Island on his appointment of Procurator General of the Reform, and for a further triennium that of Assistant General. Currently throughout those six years at Rome, he was also a Holy Office Consultor. His main and best known publications: *Bouque sacre de la Bienheureuse Vierge Marie du Mont Carmel*, reprinted several times: *Privilegia Carmelitarum Excalceatorum*; *Annalia Congregationis Italicae*, a survey of the main events referring to the outstanding undertakings of the said Congregation in Europe and Mission Lands; *Vita, Virtutes et Epistulae Spirituales Joannis a Jesu-Maria*, one time General of the Order, and whose personal contributions towards the glory of the Church went far and wide; finally, *Vita Venerabilis Alexandri a S. Francisco*, nephew of Pope Leo XI, himself a prolific writer, but above all, a perfect contemplative and apostle, to whom the honours of the Altar are long overdue. Many praises were lavished on Isidor of St. Joseph by contemporaries in recognition of his cultural presence in the fields of Letters, History and Apologetics (Wessels, *opere citato Vol.II cc. 201-202.*).

DOMINIC of the Trinity Son of Louis TENDY and Barbara TRAPES, saw the first light of day on the 4th August 1616 - hence probably his name at both Baptism and in the Religious Life - at NEVERS in France, while his father served as procurator to the Duke of that Region. Dominic was endowed with a happy disposition and intelligence and all but slow in answering generously to what he had considered a clear summons from the Master that he should serve Him in the Church among the Discalced Carmelites. These he duly joined in Paris, though forced to give up the Religious Life by none else than the French Senate at the request of the young man's parents. Dominic however persisted in his determination until allowed to return to the Discalced Carmelites in 1633. Then having specialized in what was then known as the Theological Department of Controversies, at the College of St. Pancratius in Rome, he initiated his teaching career at St. Teresa's in Malta. Claimed some time later by his Alma Mater for the same assignment, his teaching career came to an abrupt end with his election to the Headship of the Reform at the 20th General Chapter held in Rome in 1659. His dexterity in the government of the Reform led to his re-election to the same office in the following Chapter in 1662. While in Malta, besides his teaching responsibilities, he held the office of Inquisitor of these Islands. Having already enjoyed first the affection of Alexander VIII, he was subsequently held in highest esteem by Clement X, who on his friend's outgoing from the active government of the Reform, appointed him A Qualificator of the Holy Office that he might be retained close by for advice in Rome . (Wessels, *opere citato Vol.I, cc. 420-421.*)

DOMINIC of St. Nicholas Dominic of St. Nicholas had belonged to the Old Observance of the Order in Belgium, where he was also born, and came to the Reform that he might lead a more perfect way of life without relinquishing the Carmelite Order. His was the honour of transplanting the Teresian Reform from his native Belgium into Germany. While representing his Province as Socius at the General Chapter held in Rome in 1647, was elected in the same Chapter to the Rectorship of St. Teresa's, Malta. He was the eighth to hold this office; and during its tenure was entrusted with the canonical visitation of our Missionary Stations in Persia and Malabar. On his way back to Malta he became very sick and had to be disembarked at the Island of San Miguel at the Azores. The Jesuits on that Island offered him shelter, and nursed him throughout his infirmity

from which he died in their midst. In announcing Dominic's death to the General of the Order in Rome, the Superior of that College speaks in glowing terms of the deceased holy and edifying end. Translated into German from the original Latin by Ven. John of Jesus-Mary: *Instructio Novitorium*; and *Summarium Graduum Orationis et Contemplationis*, by the other Venerable Thomas of Jesus. (Philip of the Blessed Trinity: *Décor Carmeli*, p.121.)

CAESAR of St. Bonaventure A Dutchman by birth, was born at the University City of Leydon, son of Peter BERTUS, formerly a well known Calvinist Theologian prior to his entire family's conversion to the Catholic Faith. Upon this latter event the family immigrated to France where Caesar and two of his brothers joined the Teresian Reform. In 1647 Caesar led a specially trained contingent of his Brethren into his native Holland. Great is known to have been the contribution of this picked group of twelve towards the conversion of that Country. Not too much later in the General Chapter held in Rome in 1661, he was elected the nineteenth Rector of St. Teresa's College at Malta. Alas, for only one short year, having died aged 56 on the 26th October, 1662. He is remembered by an excellent treatise: *De Sanctissimo Eucharistiae Sacramento*, in which he treats at considerable depth the three focal points, namely the Real Presence, the Mystery of Transubstantiation, and the Sacrificial aspect of Mass . (*Liber Mortuorum, Cospicua.*)

BERNARD MARY of Jesus Thirty-sixth Rector of St. Teresa's, elected 9th July 1677. Though of Spanish Nationality, Bernard Mary was born and bred in Sicily. Clothed Discalced Carmelite on 23rd February 1642, aged 18. Excelling in both profane and ecclesiastical studies, he was reckoned second to nobody among his contemporaries in Sicily for his deep knowledge of Philosophy and Theology, on which he also lectured in many colleges all over the Island. For long, he was also considered a veritable 'powerhouse' in his own field by leading men on the Continent, and an expert in sorting out genuine mystics from those merely possessed by the Evil One. In recognition of so many outstanding personal qualities he occupied in Naples the combined office of Censor and Consultor of the Inquisition, responsibilities called to also both in Rome and in Malta where he served as Prior for the term 1667 - 30. On the termination of his Rectorship at Malta, passed to the same office at St. Pancratius's, from where at the General Chapter that followed was returned unopposed as Procurator General of the Order, so great was his recognition among the Gremiales sive Chapter Fathers of his talents and virtue. He died at his native Palermo on 27th February 1696 . (*Wessels: ibidem, Vol.I, cc. 276-277.*)

Concerning the other Rectors and Lecturers active in the College, on the basis of available sources we have been less fortunate in tracing their full stature, as we have been with those as far as 1680. However, all things being equal, as they are supposed to have been, we would be inclined to surmise that theirs could not have been inferior to that of their fore-runners. Admittedly, in the field of History this inference is not much valid. However, with their list of at least 92, we have been able to compile their names, the period during which they taught or governed at the College, and sometimes even the department of their teaching. This should serve as an ample basis for further profitable research both in Malta and overseas. The challenge is fascinating for any eager student of Teresian matters with special reference to Malta. May these concluding lines fall not on deaf ears, and left go lost with the wind!

The present Notes concerning St. Teresa's Missionary College have therefore to end here. At this point we pass to the promised Postscript with a view to complete the perspective of the College in respect of events strongly related to the momentum the College retained nearly unabated, even after it had stopped functioning strictly speaking as such.

POSTSCRIPT

AN INSTITUTION RESISTING EXTINCTION

Living beings and Institutions are known to face extinction in three ways; from Outside, from Inside and instantaneously as by heart failure, or from Inside but by gradual wear and tear. St. Teresa's end came by a mixture of outside violence and insufficient breath, that is by gradual strangulation. With its deep roots in a glorious past, it struggled as long as it could until it had to accept defeat: a dignified end that merits covering in a postscript to the foregoing Notes.

To put it in a nutshell, the College represented a Malta-based Foreign Educational Institution, with foreign personnel, and geared for overseas Missionary service; and for its survival it depended entirely on an uninterrupted flow of manpower from abroad, that is an uninterrupted flow of manpower from abroad, that is from the Reform's Foreign Provinces. With the gradual drying up of these sources, so did the tempo of the College in Malta; and their complete drying up spelled the end of the College. But all was not lost. The predicament was by resourcefulness in terms of redeployment from an outward to an inward looking springboard, an imaginative change, which though going back to the year 1790, it did not crystallize until a full century later.

Malta had made its plans, but Rome hesitated by hoping against hope that the old conditions would somehow be restored. Twice the local Novitiate was checked into inoperation by rulings from Rome that involved local recruits to join the Order in the Roman Province from where they would not find their way back to Malta. But the hopes entertained by Rome were not to be. It was therefore high time that a more realistic vision of events should eventually prevail. And prevail it did. The Novitiate was set on a more stable footing in 1870, and St. Teresa's moved since steadily forward towards its new goal ahead.

The limitations of a Postscript do not allow us to go into a detailed picture as it builds up in the course of this interregnum. However we cannot help presenting five personalities connected with the period, men that deserve far more than our modest recognition which follows.

POSTHUMOUS LINKS WITH THE EAST

JULIUS of the Redeemer It was to this Discalced Carmelite from Malta that the Teresian Reform could eventually reclaim permanently the biblical cradle of the entire Carmelite Order in Palestine. The feat with which JULIUS is rightly credited, can best be evaluated in the background of heart-rending events going back to over three hundred years ago.

The Senior Branch of the Order had been definitely ousted from the Holy Site of Mt. Carmel between the Fifth and Sixth Crusades some time in 1244. So unfeasible were the political conditions prevailing for longer than three centuries that no attempts could have been considered for the reclaiming of the Holy Site. The nostalgia for the return however never died down. Though it was left tot he newly established Reform within the Carmelite Order to undertake effective steps towards that much cherished goal of its reclamation from the hands of Islam.

The first attempt was undertaken in 1631, and the task was entrusted to the Spanish PROSPER of the Holy Spirit, who through the good offices of Count Philip de Harlay, ambassador of France to the Turkish Sultan could overcome the many difficulties standing in the way, and at long last obtained from the Emir TARABEU, tributary to the said Sultan, the possession of the Holy Mount against the annual toll of 200 deniers, later reduced to 150.

All seemed brought to a happy conclusion, and thus PROSPER and his valiant little flock somehow settled down under a sort of a peaceful co-existence with the ferocious Darwish Clan who had insisted on retaining a foothold on the Holy Mount.

PROSPER died 22 years later and was buried also on the Holy Site, not without the satisfaction that even if not all had been accomplished for the time being, matters augured well for the times ahead. Though that was not to be the case. In fact not so much after PROSPER'S death, the situation went back to zero point. All was lost once more . (Wessels: opere citato, Vol.II, c.662.)

Over the following two centuries three more attempts were undertaken towards the rescue operation, though all proved unequal to the task. Temporary bridgeheads had been indeed made, but with the odds telling heavily against them, they were abandoned and the Reform had to admit a temporary defeat.

It was left to the adamant JULIUS of the Redeemer to succeed where all others before him failed altogether.

His was no smooth sailing, for the solid barrier of old-rooted bias against every Christian endeavour in the Holy Land, was difficult to demolish overnight.

We best quote GUGLIELMO di S. Alberto, the first among historians to put the matter in its right light: 'While Europe was brought upside down through the pride of Napoleon, the Superiors of the Order never allowed the reclamation of the glorious cradle of their Order escape their attention. PETER ALEXANDER of St. Margaret, Superior General, summoned to the task a Maltese Religious named JULIUS of the Redeemer. This man, humble yet full of apostolic zeal, proceeded to Haifa in 1805, where for more than 30 years was to preside as Vicar over the chequered fortunes of the Holy Place. To whom else but this undaunted man, full of ardent success, which the Venerable PROSPER had indeed set up to achieve, but left unaccomplished in a permanent manner?' (GUGLIEMO di San Alberto: Circular Letter to his Order in ANALECTA O.C.D., 1931, Fasc.IV, pp. 201-204.)

Besides his great skill and tact, JULIUS had yet another personal quality. It was his doggedness in not taking a refusal at any stage for a final defeat. In fact his diplomatic juggling went on patiently for twenty-four long years, and always single-handed, as far as we have established. Only when all the hard spade-work had been accomplished that one by name JOHN CASINI, a lay brother from the Roman Province, credited with both the drawing of the plans and their execution, for the present Monastery and Sanctuary, appears on the spot some time in 1827. He had indeed tried to go there once before to help JULIUS, but finding the situation too hot, made his way back to his native Italy, without even landing in Palestine on reaching Acri in Galilea, within sight of the Holy Mount.

We may have given away now strongly we feel on the subject of whose was the 'Onus and the Honor', the burden and the honour for the reclamation of the Holy Mount to the Order. Historians for the best part of two centuries indulged in unfair attributions by extolling beyond proportions the part played by both PROSPER and JOHN CASINI in that connection, to the complete exclusion of everybody else. The Very Rev. GUGLIEMO di S. Alberto was the first to shed the first light in the right direction. Yet there was still room for further redress. This we have now put right once for all.

It took JOHN CASINI ten years to bring to an end the construction of the present Basilica and its adjacent Monastery. JULIUS was happily spared life to see his dream come true during the vicariate of his immediate successor as Superior of the Holy Mount, another Maltese, Emmanuel Aloysius of Our Lady of the Snows. The Custos of the Holy Land, another Maltese, the Franciscan FRANCIS of Malta, performed the ritual blessing of the Basilica on the Feast of Corpus Christi of the year of our Lord 1836. A hat trick for little Malta, to borrow from the conjuror's jargon!

JULIUS was born at Valletta in Malta, on the 30th December 1771, Raphael CALLEJA at birth. Joined the Discalced Carmelites in Malta, 9th April 1792, taking his solemn vows 14th April 1793, also in Malta. Completed his priestly studies in the Roman Province of the Order, where he also resided until entrusted with the Herculean task of reclaiming the Holy Mount of Carmel in Palestine for the Order. He died at the age of 69 on the same Holy Mount, on the Feast of the Epiphany of the year 1841.

The German historian AMBROSE of St. Teresa, and the Spanish FLORENCIO del Nino Jesus are both inaccurate concerning the place where JULIUS made his solemn Profession. They would have been expected to do more justice with regard to his Religious affiliation, which they, as others, connect with the Roman Province (24). That JULIUS made his Solemn Profession besides his Novitiate in Malta is clearly borne out by the entry of his Act of Profession in the Liber Professionum CC.DD. in Novitiatu Melitensi 1790-1845. He did indeed later pass into the Roman Province for the purpose of his ecclesiastical studies there; but any other connection with that Province was simply and purely a canonical fiction due to the fact that Malta was not as yet raised to the status of a separate unit of the Order.

To do belated justice to JULIUS's memory, a bas-relief marble medallion was erected in 1931 in the portico of the basilica.

JULIUS of the Redeemer was the first Maltese to be appointed to the superiorship of the Holy Mountain and its dependencies. The record he had established was such that a number of other Maltese confreres were called

later to occupy the same office, the last of whom to date was CARMEL VASSALLO, forced to quit the hallowed place on the outbreak of the first world war in Europe, on account of his British Citizenship.

STILL AFLOAT: HILARY OF ST. JOHN; CHARLES HYACINTH OF JESUS-MARY

HILARY of St. John Contemporary to JULIUS was JOSEPH MALLIA, born Malta 1768, known in Religion by the name HILARY of St. John. He joined the Order in Rome where he lived until he was fifty when he retired to Malta, apparently for reasons of ill health. For thirty years he distinguished himself in the teaching of Theology in his Roman Province. Pioneered the teaching of both Theology and Philosophy at the local Diocesan Seminary, first under Bishop Mattei, and then Bishop Xavier Caruana. Very active in the same field as Clergy and Prosynodal Examiner, in which capacity he sat also on the Faculty of Theology of the Malta Royal University.

In spite of suffering from some unknown infirmity all the time he was on the Island, he was unsparing in pastoral work among the sick. The Chronicler's remark that HILARY carried out all his outdoor commitments at no expense to his daily domestic monastic duties, underlines a secret known to very few. It was the highest compliment he could have paid to a true son of St. Teresa's, who had spent fifty years of his lifetime in the Lord's Vineyard, when he died aged 70 on the 21st September, 1838 (25).

CHARLES HYACINTH of Jesus-Mary Born at Aquì in the neighborhood of Genoa some time in 1767, he had sought asylum among his Religious Brethren here in Malta, as a result of widespread anti-clerical and political unrest in Northern Italy. Acquainted with his cultural background, especially in BOTANY & HORTICULTURE, the Malta Royal University enlisted his services for the setting up of the Botanic Gardens at Floriana, unrecognized memorial to his outstanding contributions to that scientific field on the Island.

By special permission of the Holy See, he was permitted to live for many years 'extra claustra' within the said gardens that he might attend fulltime to the improvement of his creation, enriched during his tenure of office by as many as six hundred new plants and an astronomical variety of three thousand new seeds. Publications: ESSAY ON HORTICULTURE IN MALTA, AND TWO OTHER MINOR WORKS. He died 1827, and was buried in the crypt of St. Teresa's under the high Altar (26).

A RESCUE OPERATION: CYRIL OF THE MOTHER OF GOD; RAYMUND OF ST. TERESA

CYRIL of the Mother of God At birth Francis STIVALA son of Joseph and Maria GALEA, was born at Valletta 25.11.1815, and died 22.6.1882. He is rightly considered as the architect and Father of the present Province of Discalced Carmelites in Malta. A most balanced man, he could look back to the past glories of St. Teresa's, in times bygone, but unlikely to return without being overtaken by their nostalgia, and hence look forward with hope and courage to provide for its future.

In spite of its inactive role as a Missionary College, its canonical status was not changed for as long as eighty years. To all intents and purposes it had become a temporary, convenient appendix of the Roman Province of the Order, except for the appointment of its Rector and first Assistant, still reserved to the Definitory General. During this interregnum a temporary provision was made for local recruitment under which Maltese youths either underwent their entire training in the Roman Province or partly in Malta and partly in the said Roman Province. CYRIL belonged to the first category of recruits.

Shortly after his priestly ordination, he was appointed sub prior at S. Maria della Vittoria in Rome, the beautiful church owning the most admired reproduction of St. Teresa's Transverberation incorrectly attributed to the famous BERNINI, whereas it is the work of one of Bernini's disciples, a Maltese known as Sr. MARIA de DOMINICIS, a lay Carmelite Tertiary (27). In 1847 he was appointed Vicar of Mt. Carmel, an office he retained for three subsequent terms, that is until 1856.

CYRIL of the Mother of God was the third Maltese to be appointed to that distinguished office in the Order within 50 years. Before him there had been JULIUS of the Redeemer, already reviewed at length in this Postscript (10 three year terms = 30 years), EMMANUEL-ALOYSIUS (1 three year term = 3 years) and CYRIL (3 three year terms = 9 years). Among them three they ruled on the Holy Mount for 42 years within a period of

50, a record unknown to be attained by any other single Province in the Order.

On his return home from Mt. Carmel CYRIL commenced maneuvering with the utmost skill the complete changeover of St. Teresa's from a dormant Missionary College to a House of Formation for Maltese, potentially a springboard in the establishment of a separate independent Province of his Order. To that end incessantly in his mind, he would give himself no rest for 26 years in seeing to the involved spadework. Among his Brethren in Malta none was more fit to handle the task more effectively, for he was well known and esteemed in Rome, and vice versa, none knew Rome better than he. Alas, he did not live to see his dream come true in 1896 barely four years after he died.

A Discalced Carmelite to his skin and beyond, his was no blind, impatient unrest for emancipation. Instead he was a realist and inspired throughout by healthy zeal for an overdue readjustment of conditions that could not be allowed to project farther, with too much at stake for both Malta and the Order at large.

CYRIL was Prior at St. TERESA's 1856-62 (two terms), 1865-72 (two terms), 1875-78 (one term). During all these years he was ably assisted by RAYMUND of St. Teresa, reviewed next, as Master of Novices and Praelector. Together they fashioned a whole generation of young Discalced Carmelites who eventually took the Order to three more HOUSES over the Island.

Under CYRIL and for a short while afterwards, contact with the Missionary Field previously catered for by St. TERESA's as a Missionary College, was never lost altogether. It was a common denominator between earlier and later years, an arrangement that was happily upheld until the First World War, when the Maltese contingent found themselves on the wrong side of the belligerents in Palestine. The Turks, Masters of both Palestine and the surrounding lands, ousted all Maltese Religious from the Holy Mount and the township of Haifa beneath it. After that War, Malta was again represented by two priests and three lay brothers, all but two having also died there at different times. But this lingering attempt to keep the tradition alive came also to an end. And with the political situation in Israel and the nearby Countries being what it has been for some time, the momentum would seem to have been lost in a 'Cul de Sac', for all intents and purposes (28).

RAYMUND of St. Teresa Tossed providentially about, this exceptional man left everywhere indelible marks by which he remains gratefully remembered long after. And this, of course, goes as well for the last land of adoption, Malta where he ended his earthly days.

Forced into exile from his native Catalogna in Spain, as yet a young Carmelite of nineteen, he made his way to Rome. Here he completed his ecclesiastical studies commenced earlier in Spain. Seconded to the Province of Venice, he was entrusted for many years with the formation of its youth, in his capacity of master of Novices.

At the request of the Queen Mother of Don CARLOS and Don ALFONSO de BOURBON in exile in Venice, currently he took upon himself the Christian education of the two princes. And that he might attend properly to this task was also permitted for some time to reside within the Royal Palace. An original letter with an autographed photograph of Don CARLOS himself is still preserved in the Cospicua Archives, dated 14th May 1890, written by the senior of the two princes, Don CARLOS. Then in his late thirties the good prince acknowledges with pride his indebtedness to his old master and tutor.

When the Austrians withdrew from Venice Raymund sought refuge at Cratz in Austria. A short while later was posted to St. Teresa's in Malta where he spent 23 years, for the greater part of which generously applying himself to the formation of the first generation of Maltese Discalced Carmelites, the nucleus of the shortly afterwards erected Province of Malta. He died 9th August 1893, on the very dawn of the second springtime of ST. TERESA'S. He left of himself the most cherished recollection of his outstanding personality among those that had been his proud disciples. Men they were imbued with the spirit of their master, as once ELISEUS with that of the Patriarch ELISHA (29).

CONCLUSION

As we approach the end of this POSTSCRIPT, we cannot help underlying the enthusiasm and single-mindedness of the last reviewed Discalced Carmelites towards a common objective. The stature of CYRIL of

the Mother of God and his worthy companion RAYMUND of St. Teresa soars the same height of their predecessors of three hundred years before them, the Founding Fathers of ST. TERESA's. None perhaps than the latter could have shown from Heaven greater understanding and appreciation of ST. TERESA's new look, one outstanding symptom of the Communion of Saints.

Regretfully the Missionary College of old stood no chance of seeing its doors reopened. A rescue operation was the only feasible alternative. This was carried out without any loss of face, nay with wisdom, tact and dignity by the combined effort of CYRIL & RAYMUND. Of the many, nearly 150 among dead and alive, Discalced Carmelites that took their newly chartered route over the last eighty years, CYRIL and RAYMUND have indeed deserved much!

From the outline we have been able to draw of St. TERESA's since its foundation, one cannot help noticing an unmistakable leitmotif of a pastoral sustained thrust projected towards the MIDDLE EAST. This motivation of ST. TERESA's existence cannot be reasonably questioned. Towards there only it must have been orientated throughout its years as an International College. We have been unable to pinpoint any other area where it could have forwarded its output of Missionaries. And if not Malabar and Mesopotamia, fed by St. PANCRATIUS's, then the other areas entrusted at the time to the Reform under review. This conclusion would be further confirmed by the contacts ST. TERESA's retained on a smaller scale with those areas for long after the College discontinued his previous normal commitments. These contacts, we are strongly inclined to believe and attribute to forces inherent in the former College, and still influencing the course of this House when historical events, not of its own making, led the Collect to gradual strangulation.

It is indeed true that the closing of one door, reopens another for an Institution too deeply established to be uprooted by one stroke of misfortune.

As every Good Friday is always followed by an Easter Sunday, we would like to look upon St. TERESA's fortunes. For the last eighty years it looks as decked for, and quite settled in, its new commitment. May it continue to fare well!

Historians are only concerned with the past. This we have surveyed with keen inquisitiveness, admittedly not always with the same measure of success and fulfillment; all the way, however, with warm enthusiasm. And the task has also rewarded us with no little filial pride. Praise the Lord!!