Chapter VII: UNIVERSITIES FIRSTHAND

In choosing the title for this chapter concerning my career as a biologist, I had in mind the fact that I had had ample opportunity to make certain comparisons among the various types of universities, both in our own country as well as abroad. I had intended to stress the more academic aspects of the subject. My personal experiences, nevertheless, as I thought them over, seemed the more interesting; and they are undoubtedly the more bizarre. Indeed, I make bold to say that in irregularities, my career as a student seems to excel.

My introduction as a student to a university program was in the summer of 1907. I had already established myself as a teacher in the rural schools of Johnson County, Iowa and had had a short experience as principal of a two-room school at Hot Sulphur Springs, Colorado. It seemed time for me to go in for promotion and so I planned to attend the summer session at the University of Iowa that year. Summer schools were then only beginning to be a real academic business. I had no desire at that time to enter as a candidate for a degree. I knew something of the credit system that was then well on the way toward development into the high-powered-machine for academic bookkeeping which distinguishes our American education today. But I was not interested.

Promotion for me meant primarily a first-class state certificate. That was, as it still is, an essential password at the academic portals. This testimonial could be acquired only through examination as prescribed by the department of education. And so I chose for that summer program one course in physics and another in algebra--the subjects in which I would have to write. More or less as a filler-in, I also registered for a course in methodology--some species of education course. This department in American universities was already on the way to the big business that it has since become.
It happened that the final examinations in the university courses and those for the "uniform county certificate" (virtually a state certificate) were set for the same day. Naturally, I reported at the state examining office. I passed. Subsequently I found myself an eighth grade teacher in the public schools of Iowa.

My next summer experience, also in the University of Iowa, was prompted by somewhat different ambitions. I had been teaching all of the subjects required in the eighth grade. It seemed that my stock in literature and history should be brought up a little higher. In the office of registration, because I was a teacher perhaps, I was allowed to choose such courses as most appealed to me. I did not realize that the three courses I picked were most probably all at the graduate level. Of course I must have registered as "unclassified," but I was at the same time completely ignorant of any irregularity in my elections.

My program included a course in Shakespeare, one in the teaching of English, and the third in American biography. I had been teaching English and American history so, why not? There proved to be nothing particularly difficult about these courses and there were excellent teachers for all of them. Professor Wilcox taught the history, Percy L. Hunt the Shakespeare, and a visiting professor from Ames, whose name I have forgotten, taught the pedagogical English. He was indeed very fine. We did a lot of sentence analysis, I remember, and I seemed to think, too, that it was all quite eighth-gradish! At any rate, my credits in English there, which I later requested sent to me, at least exempted me from freshman college English in my novitiate career.

My next experience with study in a state school was at the University of Wisconsin, as a professed novice, in the summer of 1915. By this time, I was well on the way to a degree, but with a major in home economics. The following summer, 1916, I took only botany courses at the university;
and because of the work I had already done on the subject at Saint Clara, I again elected some courses at the graduate level. This I continued to do the following summer, 1917, because, in the meantime, I had been awarded the bachelor's degree in home economics from Saint Clara College.

Thus I entered the graduate school of the University of Wisconsin in the summer of 1917 with a major in home economics and the permission of Professor C. E. Allen, Head of the Department of Botany, to carry on toward a master's degree in botany. He had advised me previously, however, that possibly I would have to put in a little more than the usually required residence for the master's degree because I had not done my major work in botany. Personally, I was confident that I had about the equivalent to it, although much of it was self-taught and was therefore off the record. I had not yet had a course with Prof. Allen. Neither could he know how much tramping I had already done through the fields and woods of Sinsinawa and her environs--always on biological quests.

I carried a very full program that summer, mostly botany, but it included a course in advanced English composition. The dean of Saint Clara College, dear Sister Clementine, had insisted upon this; but she had not intended that I overload my program. I seemed to be on my own, academically, and so when I registered that summer I more than filled my program. For one thing I carried a course in field zoology. Twice each week, the class spent the whole afternoon on a boat trip across Lake Mendota for study and specimen collections. I made use of the time consumed in boat riding by doing some of the first drafts of my composition work.

Sister Clementine seemed well pleased with the results, and I have ever been grateful to her for her insistence in this matter. The English course was excellent. It was taught by Prof. Harned, who afterward transferred to the Department of English at the University of Chicago. Later, when I was a student there, I occasionally saw him on the campus, but I
had no time for English courses then.

At the close of the summer session of 1918, I accepted two problems for research in absentia as we have already mentioned elsewhere--"the ferns and the fungi of the Sinsinawa region." Since these problems involved a lot of field work, the collections were made simultaneously with those of the plant material that I needed for investigations relative to the dissertation that was also assigned me. And so, I really had three problems; but so far as field work was concerned these all dovetailed very conveniently, and on some of the days that I was free to go, I went, rain or shine, on these collecting trips.

By this time I was becoming expert in credit counting. I knew that six credits were all that could be taken in a single summer, or, more exactly, all that might normally count toward a degree. Therefore, the thirty graduate credits necessary for the strict quantitative requirement for the master's degree was a minimum. This meant five summers in residence. As a graduate student, I had thus far had only two summers. The work in absentia seemed to be limited to four credits as a maximum for one year, granting, of course, that such work proved satisfactory. Therefore the two summers and a maximum of four credits in absentia for the coming year would still leave me fourteen graduate credits in the red. This was the academic stage on which I found myself in September of 1918. I wanted to finish my candidacy for the master's degree in the summer of 1919. How make up the extra eight credits over and above the six that would be allowed in residence during the summer of 1919?

Well, it was the aftermath of World War I. The university ran on quarter time (8 weeks each) the academic year, 1918-1919. The spring quarter would lack two weeks of closing on the date when it would be possible for me to get away from my class duties at Saint Clara. Then there would be two more weeks before the summer session opened. I knew that,
by the clock, at least, one might earn a credit a week by
doing private research at the university.

I had a lot of technical work to do before finishing up
my microscopic slides. These were to give me all of the final
answers for my dissertation. I knew what. I would ask to go
up there and work during those four weeks and thus I would
have access to certain university equipment of which Saint
Clara was not then in possession. Permission was granted and
I went. I had already done a lot of work on the dissertation
as I went along with the collection of ferns and fungi during
the year. And what the sectioned and technically prepared
material would show would confirm and amplify what I had
already discovered in the living material as I had examined
it, macroscopically and microscopically, each time I made a
collection. Thus I had the "goods" on the thesis, as it was
called. It was a problem in the liverworts, the class of
plants on which I did a great deal of research subsequently.
The thesis had a very unfamiliar-sounding title: Germination
of the Spores of Conocephalum Conicum.

Everything was going fine. But the fact was that I could
still see four weeks beyond the close of the summer session
which would probably stand between me and the master's degree.
I would stay four weeks after the summer session in order to
pay the last farthing, if necessary. At the same time, the
dissertation was shaping up and about the end of the third
week of the summer term, it was OK'd by Prof. C. E. Allen,
head of the department. What would I do during the four hot
weeks of August and early September were I to remain at the
university? My required courses would be finished and I had
done enough of them at the graduate level. Of this fact, one
of the professors had reminded me when he pointed out that I
had done graduate work in 1916. Of course I was still an
undergraduate then, and I had found out by that time that in
the American education machinery there are some sharp corners
which have very arbitrary turns. How get around this one?
I had registered at the office of the dean of the graduate school when I came, near the end of the spring quarter. I remembered only too well what the good man had said then—quite pompously and emphatically, too—"You will, of course, receive credit only for the time you are in residence." My mathematics then showed me that I would be short just four credits; but I said nothing about it. Now, I had reason to know that the Department of Botany was fully satisfied with my candidacy, but I also knew, what was more to the point, that I would have to clear the way with Dean Comstock. What excuse could I make to have an interview with him without attacking the real problem directly? My tactics may have been irregular as here applied. Nevertheless, they were of the exact psychology which most women use when they want to get something done. I had learned it long before by observing my mother.

I would go to the dean and, in an air of all the dependency of a child on her father, ask him something which I needed to know but which involved a problem for which only he had the solution. I might seem that I did not know as an absolute certainty for which master's degree I was a candidate—whether in science or in arts. I did know, however, that my record would not show enough credits in foreign language for the master of arts; but this question might make a good lead toward the answer I really wanted.

I went to the administration building and knocked on the door of the dean's office. Dean Comstock was in the best of order. Without any waste of time, I told him, in effect, that I had come to him with a question, the final answer to which only he could give. Then I promptly posed it. He decided the matter almost as quickly by telling me that, since I had so registered on entering my candidacy, the master of science it would be.

Then the dean had a question. And just the one I wanted! When did I plan to come up for my examination. Again I tried
to appear very dependent and inadequate but managed to say that I would be very glad to take my oral examination during that summer session, if possible. He asked me about the status of my thesis. This, I assured him, was near completion and had already been accepted—that there was little left to do then but the re-copying and final typing of it. Then he told me to step into the registrar's office and fetch him my complete record. This I did in almost breathless haste.

I returned to the dean's office just as promptly, bearing my complete record. This consisted of several papers, one of which was a large yellow sheet marked Third Quarter. I do not remember now whether I took time to give it the once-over, but I lost no time in delivering the whole set of papers into the dean's hands. He began to read and to count. Soon he said, "Third Quarter," without the least doubt or difficulty in his voice. Evidently he had forgotten! But who was I to jog the memory of the Dean of the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin! Why should I remind him that I had been in residence only the last two weeks of that 8-week quarter plus two weeks following it! And the difference made the four credits that, according to my previous careful counting, I was convinced I would need!

Then, after drawing a silent, deliberate breath, the good old dean said simply: "It all depends upon your department. If they are willing that you come up for your examination this summer, it will be all right with me." I must have assured him that I thought it would be agreeable to them. But I wanted to get away quickly before he might remember.

At any rate, the dean lost no time in notifying the botany faculty. Subsequently they greeted me with much good cheer telling me that they had heard that I "got by the dean." What seemed to surprise them most, and they said it, was that they had never known him to admit anyone to the oral examinations who had not put in the full time. At the same time they assured me that they were glad to have me come up
for the examination. Was it my business to tell them that evidently their records were responsible for this unusual situation? But a woman does not always tell everything she knows!

What I did not know at that time was whether the "mistake" which was made by the professor who sent in the record was inadvertent or intentional. He certainly well knew that the work I had done in absentia during the previous academic year fully merited that much credit, and most probably he was big enough to thus honor it. At any rate the exact cause of the "error" was certainly not matter for me to investigate and much less to correct.

It was the week before the last of the summer session and the bulletin board in the administrative building carried the announcement of my oral examination for the master of science degree. It was to occur on August fourth, 1919, at 4:30 p.m.!

Well, Saint Dominic and the prayers of a lot of his good American spiritual daughters did the rest. But during the week that the notice of my examination was up, I used to go each morning and probably again before I went back to the Edgewood convent in the late afternoon to see whether it was still there. I had a strange fear that the dean might still come to! I felt confident that if any of the members of the botany faculty should discover the "error," they would not so consider it. All of them, as well as the dean, of course, were too much occupied to be concerned about any such minutia; and so, the extra four weeks remained my secret.

My examination committee included Professors C. E. Allen, E. T. Bartholomew, and G. M. Smith. All of them are now retired, the last two after long professorial and scientific experiences in California, where they transferred not long after 1919.

Many years afterwards I had occasion to visit at some length with Prof. Allen on the train returning to Chicago from Saint Louis. We had both been there at a botanical
convention. It was then that I told him this story. He seemed to enjoy it very much.

The academic year 1921-22 was advancing at Saint Clara College, Sinsinawa, and the prospects pointed toward the opening of greater Saint Clara, that is to say, Rosary College, at River Forest, Illinois, in the year 1922-23. It was plain that I was to be the one who would open the department of biology there. I was nevertheless very keenly aware of my deficiency in the philosophy of science. That is to say, I felt the lack of a satisfactory understanding of the synthesis and cooperation of the natural sciences with other disciplines.

I had known of Father Julius A. Nieuwland of chemistry fame as an excellent student of plants. He was also a splendid historian of biology. Here was a priest-scientist who was, first of all, a classical student as well as one who was well versed in philosophy and theology. Briefly, here was a real scholar. I would ask to go to the University of Notre Dame for the summer of 1922 in order to have some of the knotty problems opened up and cleared away before I would take up my new responsibilities. Summer schools were just becoming a regular program in most institutes of higher learning. And since "credit collecting" for me was still a part of the necessary academic game, I would select such courses as would not duplicate, in name at least, courses I already had on my record. After examining the Notre Dame summer school announcements, I decided upon two courses, both of which would be given by highly competent priest instructors. These were taxonomy of seed plants by Father Nieuwland and the history of biology by Father Francis Wenninger.

Certainly these courses were important to me primarily because they would afford me contact with the kind of trained minds that I needed right then. I had no serious difficulty in clearing the way with my superiors, particularly because at that time Sister Clementine was the dean and therefore the
virtual president of Saint Clara College (there was no president so-called at that time). Sister Clementine was more than understanding of the situation as I presented it to her. The rest was her problem, and she solved it as I knew she would.

One bright early June day I found myself on the campus of Notre Dame. Sister Julie was my companion. She had been there a summer or two previously doing graduate work in the department of English.

Now for the irregularities in which I was to indulge even on the campus of Notre Dame! It was Monday, the first day of the session. It seemed that there had been no applicants for the course in the history of biology. Well, I was one. Couldn't they get a few more? I simply had to have that course! The upshot was that, before the day was over, there were four other registrants for that course. All of them proved to be eager students and Father Wenninger, who knew the history of the field very fully, was a splendid instructor and leader of all our discussions. We had to write term papers, too. I wrote on the theory of organic evolution.

I had not yet met Father Nieuwland so, after succeeding with the registration in the history of biology, he was the next one I had to see. I wanted to persuade him that I was to have a research course in the taxonomy of seed plants under his direction. I was informed that he was just then giving a lecture in organic chemistry. No matter. I went to the chemistry building. I could hear his lecture going on as I stood outside his classroom door. If I were to wait outside, Father Nieuwland might go out by another door or continue discussion with a student inside until time for another lecture, perhaps, and thus I might miss him completely. I took no such chances.

And so, with my usual impetuosity and determination, I knocked on his classroom door. He opened it, chalk in hand and, with the last words of a sentence dying on his lips, he
looked to see who the intruder might be.

I briefly stated my case in short sentences and at almost breathless speed, probably asking him, too, to please pardon my boldness in interrupting his class. He gave me the once-over and I had the feeling that he was repressing the irritation he might easily have felt at this intrusion. He might have been thinking, too--here was just another nun--probably one who had been sent to take that course. It was not, however, just that way. But his mind at the moment was evidently more intent on the organic chemistry problems about which he told me much in the course of the summer, for he was then in the midst of his fundamental research which led to his great achievements in the synthesis of rubber.

Finally, seeing that I was not going to take, "No," for an answer if he could possibly say, "Yes," he compromised by saying: "Well, I can give you more to do in ten minutes than you can accomplish in three hours." I promptly replied that that was just what I was looking for.

Very soon, Father Nieuwland assigned me to a special laboratory where I spent most of my free time afterward, during a delightful summer of six incomparable weeks.

I also carried a course in French that summer against the time when I would have to pass an examination in it as a candidate for the Ph.D. degree, wherever and whenever that might be. This class met for the first two hours every day, including Saturday. For me this was extra insofar as it would carry no credit toward my goal. The course was taught by Father Doremus, himself a Frenchman. Enough said. There were included in the class two young men who had just flunked the course in the academic year. Naturally, they should have had the advantage, but the religious in the class felt an obligation to set these lads a good example. Did I work! I usually studied my verbs and vocabulary on walks that Sister Julie and I took together around the campus after the evening meal each evening before Benediction of the Most Blessed
Sacrament. I recited my French verbs to Sister Julie as we walked along. She endured all of this with gracious charity. Neither did I seem to think that she was doing anything out of the ordinary. Were we not members of the same religious community and were we both not expecting to be sent to the new Rosary College! Except for her two years later as a student in Oxford, England, and for my sabbatical in Europe, still a little later, we continued as colleagues until I left Rosary College in June of 1953. Indeed, we were two of the "trio" that long replaced the orchestra group that was once a faculty unit at Rosary.

Since the lecture course in the history of biology did not require a great deal of outside reading and since the taxonomy could be done in my free time, I also visited a course in human physiology for one hour a day. This was taught by Prof. R.M. Kaczmarek, also an excellent instructor.

Father Nieuwland provided facilities for field work in taxonomy. The campus and its immediate surroundings made splendid research territory. But he did not stop there. He planned an all-day trip to the Michigan Sand Dunes and some of the bogs. He arranged that the whole class in the history of biology and several others would be included in this outing.

We took some kind of a suburban train to Michigan City and then went on foot in the sphagnum bogs. Here is where cranberries grow, also pitcher plants and several other semi-aquatics. I remember that we had been caught in a shower of rain but since the weather was warm no one seemed to mind a little thing like a limp veil or damp clothing. There were a few secular students in the group, several sisters, Father Albertson, another botanist, and one or two other priests besides Father Nieuwland.

When we reached the bog, I remember Father said, quite dramatically: "Only the bravest of the brave go in here." Another sister, Sister Marcelline, of the Grand Rapids congregation of Dominicans and I were the only two who
followed Father into the wet, soggy, thick growth of sphagnum moss, the plant that is the chief contributor to a peat bog. Shoes and all, we picked our way in to where the cranberries grew. They were almost full grown but still very green.

Father was very cautious in placing his steps so as not to tramp any of the berries that someone would want to pick later in the season. Sister and I took his cue. He was like that--meticulously careful not to do the slightest injustice to anyone.

On this trip, too, he had occasion to demonstrate some of his ever-ready-wit. We had just descended from an elevation of considerable height and meanwhile had collected various kinds of fleshy fungi which some of us were carrying. In the valley, as we approached it, were a couple of women and several children, some at least of whom evidently lived in a house nearby. It seemed that there were just too many religious garbs and Roman collars in the group to meet with the approval of one of these women. Noticing the various types of fungi that we were carrying, some of them mushroom-like, she practically challenged us as trespassers.

Father was quick with his response. "Oh," he said, "my dear madam, do you realize the danger to which these children are exposed? Some of these plants are deadly poisonous." This, of course, was true; but while children try anything once, if it has even the semblance of food, there was hardly any danger otherwise. The good woman was embarrassed and was evidently chagrined that she had exhibited not only crass ignorance but the fact that she was or had not been a fully intelligent custodian of these children. And, of course, she was glad to see us carefully carrying away such sources of danger. Father continued conversation with her just as though she had greeted us most cordially in the first place. She recognized a gentleman and showed that she could be a lady, too.

As for the rest of us, we had enough to do to restrain
our mirth until we got out of earshot to have our laugh.

Sometimes during the summer course, Father Nieuwland would come into the laboratory which was assigned for my research work to check my results. I recall one time particularly when he was more than usually inclined to talk and to air his splendid ideas on education in general and the training of teachers in particular. He walked up and down the room smoking his corncob pipe and seemed pleased that I was at least a good listener.

Father Nieuwland, because of certain wrinkles in his brow, might have been mistaken for a stern character, but, on the contrary, he was very gentle and tender and a lover of children. Near the university there was a family of his relations. The little twelve-year old daughter came occasionally to visit with Father. It was then that he enlisted her as my companion. Thus, with all necessary and proper religious decorum, we could have field work on the campus where he could point out to me some of the interesting features of the flora there that I might otherwise overlook. Jokingly he spoke of this little cousin of his as "Sister Helen’s chaperone." He nearly always put the "H" before my name.

One day, when Father Nieuwland was particularly communicative, he told me of the origin and progress of the American Midland Naturalist, of which he was the founder and longtime editor. It was my privilege afterwards to contribute a couple of short articles to this periodical while Father Nieuwland was still its editor.

The history of his adventure as an editor exemplifies the ambition, the energy, and the foresight which were characteristic of the man, as well as his devotion to Notre Dame. He told me that he had started this serial in order that it might serve as an exchange publication and thus bring to his university complimentary or reciprocal scientific publications among the many other serials that were, even
then, in circulation in the scientific world. Under the title, *American Midland Naturalist*, the periodical might include any article which was concerned with natural phenomena or natural things. Geographically, its limits were no less than the western continent. He told me that in the early years of the life of this magazine there were relatively few papers submitted for publication—so few at times that he himself had to be the principal and almost exclusive contributor. In order that this might not be too obvious, he sometimes used his mother’s name in signing off an article. It seems that only Father Nieuwland could have kept such a periodical going. At any rate, he succeeded in building up libraries of scientific literature.

I learned a lot about taxonomy during those six weeks at Notre Dame; but most of all did I learn something of what it is to be a real scholar—one whose life was so well balanced, intellectually, morally and spiritually. Father Nieuwland was a man with a many-sided character. With all his gifts and accomplishments he was as simple and as humble as a child, no doubt the explanation of his achievements in the first place. His heart was in Notre Dame and his spirit still pervades its atmosphere.

I should have been most happy and privileged to continue my candidacy for the Ph.D. in botany under Father Nieuwland’s unusually fine direction and influence, but the matter of residence and other difficulties seemed to militate against it. Father, too, was obviously much more interested in research in organic chemistry at that stage of his scientific career and even suggested that I might change my major. This was, of course, not feasible even if I had really wanted to do so. I had gone too far in botany and zoology and had had chemistry enough to carry me through.

Later I took the matter of the choice of university up with my mother general. I knew that the University of Chicago, unlike many other universities, was established on
the quarter system and thus a candidate for a degree could complete the necessary minimum residence requirement in three summer quarters, these being equivalent to the usual academic year.

Thus I obtained the permission to take up the matter with the proper persons at the University of Chicago.

Time came in May, 1923, when I would have to make some kind of cold plunge into the Department of Botany at the University of Chicago. The great Dr. John Coulter was still the head of the department, but I knew that he was near the retiring age. I realized that while I had never met any of the members of the faculty there I most probably knew a great deal more about them than they did about me. This was because I had studied at Saint Clara under two biologists who had trained there and I was quite familiar with some of the department’s published works, including textbooks of botany. I had heard Dr. C. J. Chamberlain speak at a botanical convention in Saint Louis. I knew that he was not unacquainted with sister students because he had been the major professor of Sister Helen Angela of Convent Station, New Jersey, when she was in candidacy for the doctorate and that he had directed published research by Sister Alice Lamb of the College of St. Scholastica, Duluth. I would ask for him when I got there.

It was a beautiful spring day—probably about the middle of May, 1923. Good Sister Reparata, librarian and, later, founder of the school of library science at Rosary, always ready to oblige and to lend herself to any project that might be for the common good, agreed to be my companion. She was the kind of companion, too, who would know just what to say at all times. In such a case as I knew this one was going to be, I knew that she would also know just what not to say.

I knew what I wanted but I also knew that I would have to convince these professors, at least one of them, that I knew what I was talking about. And this on short acquaintance.
Of course, what I would ask to do would be irregular!

I had already had two summers of graduate work beyond the master’s degree, one at Wisconsin in 1920, and the other at Notre Dame in 1922. During our first year at Rosary, too, in lieu of proper laboratory facilities, I had investigated and made use of what this new geographical area had to offer. We therefore did no end of field work: the Cook County Forest Preserves, the Palos Park region, city parks, conservatories, museums, zoos, etc.

I was scheduled to teach a large class, some fifty sisters, a course in general zoology during the first part of the summer. Then, after retreat, I wanted to go over to the university and start a problem which might work out to be matter for a doctor’s dissertation in some phase of botanical science. I deemed it necessary to have this kind of a start and, of course, the faculty’s approval of the problem which I might be able to investigate independently during the coming year in the biological laboratory at Rosary College. This, by that time, had taken on some dignity as well as utility.

After some little difficulty and no less merriment (because we thought we were really lost) dear Sister Reparata and I finally located the botany building on the campus of the university. Directly, we were inside Prof. Chamberlain’s office. I introduced myself and then my companion, Sister Reparata. Prof. Chamberlain was the essence of courtesy. Then I launched into my proposition. I was interested in continuing my botanical studies at the university; but I would not be free to enter upon residence the approaching summer quarter until about the beginning of the last three of the ten weeks. Nevertheless, I would like very much to begin work on a research problem which could be continued in my own laboratory during the coming academic year.

In the meantime, Dr. W. J. G. Land, his colleague and close friend, came into Dr. Chamberlain’s office. We were duly introduced and greeted most graciously by the newcomer.
It was soon abundantly evident that these two men had planned a little outing for the late afternoon that day. Their hobby being sharpshooting, they were all set to go out to try their skill as marksmen. But here were these two nuns! I was, of course, "very sorry to interrupt"; but I was no less determined to execute my plans.

After my proposition was fully understood by both of them, they pointed out the difficulty in undertaking such a program inasmuch as the regulation of the university required at least a quarter of work in residence before a problem for research could be assigned to a student. Still, they showed enough interest for me to see that there might well be ways of getting around such a regulation. In the course of the conversation which followed—a virtual preliminary examination for me—several important facts were brought to light. First, the previous summer, I had studied at Notre Dame. "With Nieuwland!" they asked. Yes, it was. This was the precise moment when all of the balls began to move in the right direction.

Then, my master's dissertation, published in the American Journal of Botany seemed to ring a bell for Dr. Land. This kind of research was in his specialty, the liverworts. I think I managed, too, to let them know that much of that work was done in absentia or at least independently.

My stocks continued to rise. I knew that Dr. Chamberlain was a specialist in the cycads and that naturally he knew much about their forbears, the ferns. I casually let him know that I was not a stranger either to his human interest book, The Living Cycads, or to the ferns.

By this time I could see that, regulations to the contrary notwithstanding, I had convinced these two good professors that what I was proposing was not an impossibility. No doubt this was largely owing to the efficacy of Sister Reparata's prayers.

After a few more questions and answers on both sides,
before we left the office, the subject of the research which later became the title of my doctor's dissertation was assigned: Germination of the Spores and Early Stages in the Development of the Gametophyte of Marchantia Polymorpha. I remember very distinctly that Dr. Land said, "If you did that," meaning my master's thesis, "you can do this."

These two good men seemed to have forgotten their hobby of sharpshooting for the time being at least. For before Sister and I took our leave they brought up the matter of residence by telling me to come over to the university at the middle of the summer quarter (this was always a two-term quarter) then to register for the second term even though I must be delayed in coming for work for two more weeks. In this way, they told me, the way would be cleared in the registrar's office when credit for the second term of the quarter would be sent in. It all seemed good to me, and I complied with all to the letter in every detail.

I reported for work at the university just three weeks before the end of the quarter. In the meantime, I had written one of my former students, Caroline Weber, at Janesville, Wisconsin, to get me some Marchantia plant material and send it on to Dr. Land's office on, or around, the date of my arrival there. I knew that Caroline, now Mrs. Gilbert Broeckmann of Chicago, could and would do this. The plant material, in shipshape, was in Dr. Land's office on my arrival. He went with me to the greenhouse to show me where everything that I would need could be found.

I made the most of the three weeks in residence in that late summer of 1923. I visited classes and got a good start on my research and had space allotted to me in the greenhouse laboratory to grow my plant cultures in their later stages. The early ones I would cultivate and give close observation and testing in my own laboratory at Rosary. The work was not at all difficult, since this plant was a congener of the one I had worked with for my master's dissertation.
I continued my work toward the doctorate during the academic year 1923-1924 using the Rosary College laboratory facilities, besides making a number of collecting trips meanwhile. I made periodic visits to the university (once about every six weeks) to report and to show my findings and, incidentally, I worked off my French and German examinations with those departments on the university campus.

The summer of 1924 took me to the university for a full quarter in residence. Among my elections was a course in plant chemics, one of their most advanced courses in plant physiology (my major was in plant morphology). It was quite difficult and required a lot of laboratory work in applied chemistry and considerable mathematics. But I felt that if I made the grade in this advanced course no other courses in plant physiology would be required. One of the men in the class was good enough to help me out with the placing and removing of flasks of boiling "brews," in exchange for a lift with his mathematical difficulties in the course. This kind of cooperation worked out very well because a long flowing veil, such as most sisters wear, can be a real fire hazard in such circumstances.

I worked very hard that summer and at the end I was advised by the department to register for the fall quarter and that by continuing my research just as I had done the previous year, I would receive residence credit as though I were really present on the campus.

During the academic year 1924-1925, I registered for two majors each, in the autumn and winter quarters, and for one major in the spring quarter. Just for fear, I had started work in two or three other genera of the liverworts, close relatives of Marchantia polymorpha. There were certain routine processes which applied to my investigations of all these plants. I wanted to be sure that I'd have enough "new findings" for a doctor's dissertation, particularly if some other candidate in some remote corner of the globe would beat
me to it and come up with the data on *Marchantia polymorpha* before I would be able to present my findings. The fact is that a doctor’s dissertation has not only to be original research but it must embrace or include new knowledge. I was not to be caught up in any net of this kind if I could avoid it.

Later, when the time came for me to write up the results of my research in the form of a dissertation, I asked Prof. Land just how much I could include in the essay. He told me most emphatically that the part which applied to the original assignment would be quite sufficient and that I had enough matter otherwise for the work of a lifetime. He was right.

During the spring of 1925 I completed my dissertation and presented it before the botany club—the group which made up the faculty and the graduate students of the department, besides such visitors as wished to attend. Dr. John M. Coulter presided. It was his last quarter before becoming professor emeritus.

The summer quarter of 1925 was my second full quarter in actual residence. There were six candidates that summer for the Ph.D. in botany and I used jokingly to say—five other men and myself. I really wanted August fourth for the date of my oral examination; but something, I do not remember what, hindered this. And so, I did the next best thing. I asked for the octave day of the Feast of St. Dominic, August eleventh, and this was granted. That made me the first of the class to face the examining board; but with my characteristic vehemence, I wanted to have it over. I was unusually popular in the botany laboratories after that; because, of course, the general and fundamental questions must necessarily be similar or even duplicates in these examinations.

This time the orals lasted for two hours and there were seven professors on the committee. But, as with the one in Wisconsin, it was altogether a very pleasant experience—not at all the kind of ordeal that one might imagine. The fact,
too, that I had gone through one of lesser moment was a good preparation. It was anything but frightening and I got away with flying colors and profuse congratulations. Nevertheless, I did not know with what merit the degree would be granted and I was too tongue-tied, or too proud, perhaps, to ask them. I would wait until I could see my diploma a couple of weeks or so later.

The sisters, at that time at least, were excused from taking a degree in public and so I went to the registrar’s office to pick up my testimonial after the show was over. I had gotten a magna cum laude!

Was I proud of it? Yes, and no. I was thoroughly convinced that I was misnomer. I would be classed as a doctor of philosophy and, while I was fully aware of a considerable knowledge of the biological sciences, I was just as certain that I was not educated—not yet, anyway. Frankly, I knew that I had still to get an education if the letters after my name were to mean very much. This I have tried to do during the thirty years since. Without the clutter of credit collecting, it has been a real joy. I continued with scientific research and have done considerable writing for publication on various subjects. In due time, I resumed the study of music, this time on the cello as a hobby; I have also done some serious work in the study of languages, particularly French and Spanish.

In the life of a religious, and in that of a Dominican in particular, the intellectual is a most important means toward spiritual advancement. And so, it has been my good fortune always to have the privilege of planned courses and lecture programs, over and above the yearly spiritual retreats, all of which give splendid opportunity for advancement in the knowledge and love of God.

The conclusion, of course, is that a human lifetime is too short a period in which to acquire an education in the true sense of the word. It is thus comparable to our progress
toward perfection in the spiritual order. This is the goal which, no matter how ardently sought, is never to be fully attained until we meet with Him who is Omniscience and Perfection Himself. And so, it is only in the striving to advance that we can at least keep a balance. There is no standing still either in the intellectual or the spiritual life. Intellectually, we must continue on the road toward advancement in order to combat the rusts and cobwebs that will otherwise clog the mind. Just so, too, we must persevere on the road to spiritual perfection as a necessary opposition to the otherwise inevitable backsliding and infidelity.

In the summer of 1929 I was permitted to attend some classes in zoology as a guest of the University of Minnesota. One of the courses was in animal histology. My main objective was the preparation of microscopic slides for class use in zoology. I, of course, was a free lance and when I found an opportunity to do something more important and more advantageous, I simply took it.

One such occasion came when I was invited to attend an all-day liturgical convention at Collegeville. This is reputed to be the "first liturgical day" in the United States of America. Father James J. Byrnes, then superintendent of schools of the archdiocese of St. Paul and now pastor of Nativity Church, as Most Reverend Monsignor, was the host to the group of which I was one of the fortunate ones to be invited. Reverend William Busch, distinguished liturgist, and four of the Sinsinawa Dominicans (Srs. Mary Magdalen, Joan, Agnesita, and the author) made up the party of six who drove from Minneapolis to Collegeville that very memorable day, July 25, 1929.

On the way to this valuable experience, since we were all persons concerned with the education of Catholic youth, we naturally talked shop. The question arose as to the relative importance of the elementary and secondary schools in the formation of adult character. It seems that most of us were
of the opinion that the high school years were probably the more important, at least for those who have secondary school experience. The strange thing that came to light in the discussion, as I recall the facts now and so far as I am able to check them, was that not one of the six of us had had a complete Catholic education; and, except for immediate preparation for First Holy Communion or Confirmation, perhaps, none of us had had Catholic elementary schooling. It seems that at least three of the group had only public school training until the time for college or seminary or convent entrance. This, to be sure, was an extraordinary coincidence also in a time quite different from the present. As a group, we were undoubtedly not representative of the Catholic religious of the country, even then. And the Church in the United States of America had come a long way since the time we were of school age, just as the Catholic schools and colleges have multiplied their numbers since 1929.

The liturgical program was most interesting, informing and enjoyable, I remember. In the late afternoon we visited St. Benedict's College for women. I had previously known Sister Remberta, the biologist, and we, of course, had some special interests for discussion. In such ways, I have usually found opportunity to visit other colleges and universities. My Minnesota visits have given occasion for a tour of St. Catherine's in St. Paul and a drive to Winona, to see St. Teresa's College, one of the oldest among more than one hundred Catholic senior colleges for women in the United States under the administration of sisters today.

To say something firsthand of a European university here is to get ahead of our story. But since we have freely ignored chronological order in the arrangement of this book, it seems pardonable for the sake of comparison, to say a little about the European university with which I had almost a year of firsthand experience, and leave the rest for a later chapter where it will fall into its proper setting.
Personally, I was, of course, more passive as a foreign guest rather than a regular student in the new atmosphere. I was there only for the pure joy of learning by observation and keen listening to splendid teaching in foreign languages.

There was really nothing, too, that might be classed as irregular or aggressive this time about my personal attitudes. I was only very curious and eager to learn and to know. It was abundantly clear that European universities were not American! In the first place, they do not begin their school year as early in the fall as we do, and they do not close for the long vacation until some time in July. Their other term intermissions are more or less like ours. Attendance at lectures is not arbitrarily required in the European universities; but insofar as I could determine, the students reported one hundred percent and many of them regularly visited other courses than those which were concerned with their chief interests. They seemed to be out for an education and went at it as a business. So far as I know there is nothing comparable to a commencement exercise or any great to-do when a student accomplishes what he is supposed to.

Class conduct is also different. If the students seem to think there is reason to approve or applaud the professor for something he says or does, the men at least, and they are far in the majority (I attended one class where I was the only woman) pound on the floor with their feet, instead of clapping hands as we do. On the other hand, should the professor seem to merit their disapproval in any way, by word or deed, they are just as prompt to pay this recognition by vigorously scraping their feet on the floor. When there are nearly a hundred of them they can make a considerable and quite disagreeable disturbance this way.

I knew a little about these customs before I was a witness to them. For example, when the professor ushered me into the lecture room the first time I made my appearance in the class, the young men pounded their feet on the floor with
much expenditure of energy. I was glad that they approved of me but sat down in the nearest front seat as quickly as possible, feeling the temperature rise in my cheeks. I was glad that they were behind a good thick black veil. That was all very well.

One day, after I had become, as I thought, a person of no great consequence among them, I, for some reason or other, did not arrive until the professor had begun to speak. This time they scraped the floor as vigorously as they had pounded it when they approved of my entering the class. I realized that I had made a great faux pas. I never repeated the offense.

There comes to my mind now an interesting occurrence in a genetics class that I attended regularly. The lectures were conducted in German which by that time I had but small difficulty in following. The professor was demonstrating mathematically on the blackboard a certain problem of heredity and inadvertently put down a wrong figure. Immediately, the whole class, it seemed, scraped the floor until he saw what he had done. I almost envied him at that. Here he had a class of young people absolutely alert and challenging. There was probably no one writing letters instead of class notes, not one trying to catch up on his sleep, or no one taking another look at her boy friend’s most recent letter.

There was a little bake shop near the university, that is to say a boulangerie, where these young men and women would go out during an intermission and buy hard rolls which they would eat from their hands, without butter or spread of any kind, and without a drink. I was all for pitying these good young people who seemed to have come to class without their breakfast, until I found out that they knew what was good for them and tasty, too. After just seeing them apparently enjoying these rolls of French bread I tried them myself and learned to like them, too, just that way. I do not mean that I learned to eat them while walking along the street as they did! But ever since, I prefer plain hard rolls to any other
kind of bread and like to munch one especially if I have some coffee to facilitate mastication and swallowing.

The rest of what we may have space to give to the University of Fribourg will be taken up in Chapter IX after we get there.

I have seen the campus of the Catholic University of America more than once on the several occasions which took me to the nation's capitol. My student experience with it, however, was during the period in which the university conducted an extension of the graduate school at Rosary College during several summer sessions. The course in theology which I entered was taught by Father Walter Farrell, O.P., of revered memory and Thomistic fame. There was nothing very irregular about my conduct this time.

Unqualifiedly, I believe that Father Farrell was the finest university instructor I have ever met. It made me revert to the teacher of my childhood and youth whose name was Father John O'Farrell and whose ability as a teacher of young people, teen-agers and less, was just as effective with older people, also. I believe that Father Walter Farrell might have handled youngsters very capably, also. As a teacher of adults his simplicity, his compelling erudition, his irresistible personality, and most of all, his indubitable sanctity made his course of instruction one of pure joy to attend.

Father Walter Farrell's written requirements for the course in theology included two term papers, one of which was due at the middle of the term and the other the last day but one. The same subject was assigned to each member of the class of probably a hundred students, mostly women religious. The title for the second paper was The Direct Social Significance of the Sacraments. He limited each paper to not more than three pages and told us that more than that he would not read! The reasons, of course, were obvious. I kept mine under three pages but I typed it single-spaced. I double-spaced the paragraphs--so that it was easy to read, if
perchance, it was a little on the long side. I'm sure he read all the papers completely.

The last day of the course, he quoted from some of the papers to the class, those he had marked with an A. Mine was one. I had thought myself that my paper should get an A and then and there I decided to offer it to an editor who might buy it. And so I re-copied it, double-spacing it this time and sent it to the Reverend Editor of The Catholic Educator. I received a check and the essay later appeared in their journal, the October issue of 1948.

I was really proud of that paper largely because of the subject matter. It was my last formal test of accomplishment in any academic course, and there probably will never be another one. So, I can truthfully say that I sold my last test paper! It sounds a little suspect to those who have heard about some examinations and the means some of our young Americans have employed to pass them. The original paper marked with Father Farrell’s "A" I am keeping, now somewhat as a relic.

The night that Father Farrell went home to God (Nov. 23, 1951), I was in Cleveland, there to attend a science convention the next day. For some reason, that night I had a conscience problem to settle before I went to sleep. Suddenly there popped into my head the proffered advice that I had received from Father Farrell in the sacrament of penance several years before. It was exactly the same principle that I had to apply then. My problem was settled.

The sad news of Father Farrell’s premature death was the shock we received immediately on our arrival home the second day after.

My most recent university experience was as a guest at Northwestern in the summer of 1953. It was a human relations workshop sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, although the university employed the directors, collected the fees from those who were obliged to pay them,
and administered the coveted credits to all who had need of them. The program by its nature was unique, being strictly adapted to the purpose of promoting good human relations among people of various races, creeds and colors.
Chapter VIII: RESEARCH AND CONVENTIONS

Whoever specializes in any subject is in for a lot of research. The saying goes, too, whether it be wise or unwise, that specialization is learning more and more about less and less. Maybe so. At any rate, the one who has really done research is perfectly sure about the more and more, if quite doubtful about the less and less.

Research in the natural sciences, for example, plant science, involves a lot of things. Like other problems to be investigated, one must examine the literature on the subject. This requires some familiarity with languages, for it means much delving into musty tomes, just as the historian or the litterateur must do for his findings. The great difference is that the researcher in plant science must also examine the plant. And, by comparison, this is his big job. Usually, he must make a very thorough study of it. This may include the exploration of the way in which the particular species grows, collections of it, experimental cultivation of it and, most often, a lot of technical work in making preparations for microscopic study in order to discover the otherwise hidden information that is sought. All of this means work--no end of it--and patience a-plenty, even to learn a little of the more about the less.

But always as one proceeds there is one challenge after another. New questions arise and intrigue the worker. This is when research becomes fun. Hours of intense study and examination of whatever evidence comes to hand may become real recreation. When probing for the hidden secret, another more fascinating and challenging seems to be hiding somewhere to plague your curiosity. By this time you know you are really doing research.

It was very near the close of my candidacy for the Ph. D. when in a conversation with Professor C. J. Chamberlain, he, inadvertently, as it were, gave me some good academic advice.
My dissertation was to be published in the *Botanical Gazette*, a highly reputable periodical which was founded and sponsored through the years by the Department of Botany, the University of Chicago. The dissertations that are worked out under the direction of the university's Department of Botany when published in this serial, are placed under the caption "Contributions from the Hull Botanical Laboratories." That immediately puts them into a class by themselves. In other words, it designates the authors as candidates for higher degrees who completed their research under the direction of the department.

Prof. Chamberlain advised that I order at least two hundred reprints of my dissertation to be sent to other botanists throughout the country, who would no doubt respond with reprints of their own. He made it clear that my reprint would be recognized as one of a dissertation; but if it should later be followed by other papers, reporting independent research, I would find that exchange reprints would be coming my way in great numbers. Although he did not say it in so many words, he certainly got the idea across to me that a doctor's dissertation evidences work which was done under the direction and sponsorship of the university concerned; and unless and until the newly-made doctor subsequently publishes research findings or scholarly papers, on his own, such a one will have no particular standing in his chosen field. Indeed, unless he continues his research for publication after graduation, the university which honored him with the doctorate must consider him an unprofitable servant.

I recalled Dr. Land's remarks to the effect that I had enough research started for a lifetime of investigation. And so, through the years, I built up a kind of research habit. Besides a very considerable number of less important papers--scientific, educational, and whatever they were, I worked out and published at least three other papers--any one of which was as comprehensive and important a contribution as the
Two of these papers were also published in the Botanical Gazette and the third in the American Journal of Botany, the journal which had previously published my master’s dissertation. For reprints of some of these papers I have had requests from botanists as remote as India. For a religious necessity is not under the personal necessity of making a reputation as a scientist; but if one holds a position in a college or a university, it seems necessary as an incentive to young students, and to meet the standard of productive scholarship that is required of such institutions. This is true, although it may increase the working load of the individual college professor. I happened to have superiors who encouraged rather than minimized the importance of such activity. The repetitive humdrum, too, of teaching the same things over and over is offset by the satisfaction and enthusiasm one experiences in actually finding the answers to new questions. And such questions, in any field of natural science, are legion.

I began attending the state, national and other conventions quite early in my botanical career. While still at the University of Wisconsin, at the suggestion of the professors there, I joined the Botanical Society of America. I attended my first of its annual meetings in the winter of 1919. I remember well the very cordial greeting I received from my former instructors. That meeting was held in St. Louis. Then and for many years afterward the botanical society met with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, another organization in which I later became, first, a member, and later, a fellow. In 1920 I attended the meeting held in Chicago.

At the convention held in Toronto, Canada, in 1921 there was a guest of great note, William Bateson of England. He was invited jointly by the American Society of Zoologists and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Bateson,
now some years deceased, was a great biologist. He included in his book, *Mendel's Principles of Heredity* (1913), the English translation of Gregor Mendel's classic papers. Bateson was at the time of which we are writing (1921) one of the world's outstanding geneticists. At the Toronto meeting he made several speeches and was a guest speaker in the symposium on orthogenesis, which is to say, organic evolution. There were several specially chosen speakers in the symposium. Each represented his own particular field as it was concerned with the theory of organic evolution--biochemistry, bacteriology, serology, paleontology, etc. All were Americans (I mean from the States).

Each speaker was an enthusiast in his own subject and it would seem that to him, too, the evolutionary process was particularly illuminated and supported by his particular point of view as revealed by his personal interpretation of the scientific facts. These good men were not trying to prove that organic evolution happened. They were all considering this *theory* as a *fact*. What they were vigorously attempting to prove was the *how* of it--each from his own special little store of information.

I had known Bateson through his book (referred to above) and knew, too, that he was a neo-Mendelian through and through. During the individual speeches of the symposium, he was seated on the speakers stand ostensibly marking well the enthusiasm and personal convictions of each speaker. When all were finished, Bateson took his place on the platform. I cannot recall all of his exact words, but they were definitely to the effect that all of the discussions which had just preceded were in defense of various pet theories as to the *how* of evolution. He made it clear, too, that he was personally unconvinced and did not presume to have the answer himself. I remember more distinctly that finally he said that he believed that the manner in which evolution operated was most probably something which man was never supposed to know. The
speakers and all present accepted his statements in a good spirit. All laughed heartily and lustily cheered his word of finality.

I was still young in the field but have always been grateful for this experience. This was not just for the opportunity of seeing the outstanding neo-Mendelian of the time but also for having my own private convictions upheld by this kind of championship. These convictions, by the way, have not changed much either during several decades since. I might have missed this program entirely except for one circumstance. Father Alphonse M. Schwitalla, S.J., since then long-time dean of the medical schools of St. Louis University, was just then completing his doctorate at the Johns Hopkins University. He was in attendance at the Toronto meeting where he presented a paper on some of the physiological aspects of the amoeba. While in Toronto, he was a guest at the college directed by the Sisters of St. Joseph, just as Sister Mariola, my companion, and I were also. Father Schwitalla, I remember, insisted that I should not miss the program on orthogenesis. Therefore I made an effort to be present at it.

But that was not the end of the symposium on organic evolution either. Newspaper reporters were at that meeting and no doubt others, too, who got their own stories by individual interpretations of what they heard, just as I thought they would. This all came out strong the next winter when the American Association for the Advancement of Science met at Boston, or perhaps I should say at Harvard University.

This was 1922--just one hundred years after the birth of two very great scientists: Gregor Mendel and Louis Pasteur. Sister Mariola and I again attended this meeting, going first to New York City where we spent Christmas with our sisters there. This meeting of 1922 was a very special one which placed great emphasis on the centenary of the birth of two great scientists--Gregor Mendel and Louis Pasteur.
Of course, the matter of the theory of organic evolution had more than the ordinary place on some of the programs of this convention, if only because of the rapid advancement in the knowledge of Mendelian heredity and its probable role in the origin of the new species.

I was not surprised when the Boston newspapers came out with very agitated comments under very "thought-provoking" headlines. These amounted to such questions as: "Hadn't they settled that last year at Toronto—that is to say that evolution was defunct? Why were they again bringing this old skeleton out of its closet that seemed to be sealed forever and aye?" A glance at the newspapers left no doubt that a great number of fundamentalists were living in and around Boston at that time. Again, I was very grateful for having been at the Toronto meeting. Moreover, my trip to Toronto involved more than a scientific adventure.

When I knew I was going to the Toronto convention, I wrote home to tell the folks that I was to have a trip to Canada, most probably via Buffalo, New York. I asked for information about my father's surviving relatives at Buffalo and at Erie, Pennsylvania, with the idea of making stop-overs on the return trip in mind. The answer came promptly and enclosed a nice check.

Sister Mariola and I returned from Toronto via Niagara Falls. We made our first stop-over at Niagara Falls, Ontario, and thus had a good view of the falls from the Canadian side. Then we went to Buffalo where we spent the weekend. I am not now certain but believe it was at the convent of the Lorretines, or possibly with the Mercy Sisters, that we were entertained while in Buffalo. I was able to locate a cousin of my father, a lay brother in the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. He took us sightseeing and included a visit to a mutual aunt of his and my father's, Miss Annie O'Brien, a very elderly woman who had been a European buyer for a women's furnishing firm for many years. Thus she had made numerous ocean voyages
to and from Paris during her long career as a business woman. She was interesting to meet even then, although she must have been well beyond the octogenarian milestone. She was a sister of my paternal grandmother whose life had been so different from hers, but, not withstanding many years of separation, she was strikingly like her. So much for heredity!

From Buffalo we went to Erie, Pennsylvania and soon located the home of my father's first cousin, Thomas Hanlon, who had been for many years the clerk of Erie, Pennsylvania. Incidentally, all of my grandfather's brothers, of whom there were several, dropped the "O" from their names. Thus the various Hanlon families who are in Ontario, Canada, or the eastern United States, are distant cousins of mine, notwithstanding the "O" to which my grandfather clung. My father's cousin corroborated many of the statements I had heard my father make of his boyhood home. The next morning, a very cold, wintry one, he drove us out to the farm where my father had lived immediately before the family left Pennsylvania for the Midwest. There was the apple orchard which my father had so often described to us and many things not so different from the mental picture I had formed of them. We went into the house and my cousin explained to the people then living there our particular interest in their home. They were most courteous, in spite of the fact that there was a very sick child in the home.

About three years after this adventure, my father and Uncle Frank paid me a visit at Rosary College on their return trip from a visit to Erie and other places of their boyhood experiences. Then it was that we could talk about these places with greater mutual understanding.

My Grandfather O'Hanlon, while a bridge builder himself, had hoped that some of his nine sons would become farmers and so, after leaving Erie, he again invested in a farm near Iowa City in the vicinity of which some of the bridges which he built still stand. These my father often pointed out with
great pride. As for farming, my father was the only one of
the nine brothers who took to it. And, that’s the how of my
being a farmer’s daughter.

In 1923 Sister Marie Lillian, chemist at Rosary College,
and I attended the national meeting of scientists which was
held that year at Cincinnati.

The following year, 1924, again Sister Mariola, who had
been my companion at both the Toronto and Boston meetings,
consented to go with me to Washington, D.C. We left Chicago
immediately after the close of school for the holiday recess
and had about a week before Christmas to sightsee in our
nation’s capitol. It was my first visit there, but my
companion had been a student in the Catholic University, so
she was a good pilot, although there were many interesting
places that she had not found time to visit then. One of the
Saint Clara alumnae, Catherine Ludwig, who was then employed
by the United States Government, took us to all the more
distant places, such as Arlington, Mount Vernon, etc. Of
course we were both greatly interested in a visit to the
Bureau of Standards.

With less exceptions than was the rule, attendance at the
meetings, 1926-1953, for me also included the presentation of
some piece of research in plant science. That meant a special
investigation of some problem and the preparation of a paper
during the months preceding it. The first paper that I
presented at one of these national meetings was at the
University of Pennsylvania in the winter of 1926. I was a
guest during my stay in Philadelphia at the College of
Chestnut Hill, conducted by the Sisters of Saint Joseph. It
happened that at the particular session during which I was a
speaker, there were present a number of Wisconsin botanists,
among them, as a recent doctor of philosophy from the
University of Wisconsin, Father Keefe, who also reported on
some of his research. I had made his acquaintance at the
Washington meeting in 1924. Dr. R. A. Harper, former head of
the Department of Botany at Wisconsin, then at Columbia, was among those of us who had a kind of informal reunion meeting after this program.

The following winter, 1927, the national meeting was held at Nashville, Tennessee. Sister Marie Lillian was my companion and we enjoyed the hospitality of the Dominican Sisters there. My participation on one of the programs at this meeting was of particular interest. It was quite evident that in that area the appearance of a Catholic sister on such a program was somewhat of a curiosity. At any rate that program was well attended, so much so that the audience overflowed the room assigned into the corridor where chairs were provided for the extra spectators.

I remember, too, after the session, a lady came up to me with a personal question. Of course, I appeared in the full Dominican habit--without a spot or wrinkle, just then. She frankly told me, in effect, that her problem was how I managed to collect the plant material about which I had spoken if I wore that kind of dress. I explained to her that, after all, the Dominican habit is what many women call a "tub dress" and that, when I was out in the field collecting material, I naturally appeared a little less spick-and-span than I did in an audience such as I had just addressed, but that my religious attire had proved no real deterrent in the collection of plant material. I do not remember whether I told her that at times when my collections had to be made, rain or shine, I used to drive an old horse hitched to a phaeton, especially when it rained. Incidentally, one of my regrets is that I never had a snapshot taken of this outfit. Usually, if a sister were not available, one of my students accompanied me on these collecting trips.

Some of these companions could at least drive a horse, but others could not. But I had been brought up on a farm where it was often necessary to strike out to the pasture with a noose and a feed of oats to catch the old grey mare that was
gentle enough for the girls of the family to drive. One had to be quick enough to get her neck into the noose while she got a mouthful of oats before she might quickly turn and kick before bounding away. Usually it took two to turn the trick, both for safety and surety—one to hold the pan of oats (her favorite feed) while the other threw the open noose over her neck and quickly snapped it shut. After that she behaved well through the leading, harnessing and hitching. We usually let her finish the oats while we harnessed her.

And so, as a young sister, I was glad enough to get a companion for my collecting trips even if she had to be entirely an on-looker. I remember one companion, a student who was a music special. She had no classes on the particular afternoon that I was free for my collecting and so I enlisted her into the service. She could not drive. In fact, she was what one might call a passive consort.

I was to make one of the spring collections of the liverwort I was investigating for my master’s dissertation. The collections were one week apart, and I had one free afternoon each week for that trip. This was a rainy day and when we reached the place which was the nearest our equipage could get to the collecting spot, there was still a 5-barbed-wire fence, a much swollen creek and, a little farther, a minor stream to cross before I could lay hands on the desired plants. These grew on the rocky bank of the small spring-fed, swift running, rock-bottomed stream.

When we reached the fence it was pouring rain. I first turned the horse so that the back of the old phaeton was in the direction from which the rain was pelting at that moment. This was for my companion’s protection while she waited. If this good girl was not actively helpful, she was at least very tranquil and seemed to have no misgivings as to what I might be going to do.

The big creek just inside the fence, almost parallel to it at this point, was, as I said, much swollen after several
days and nights of spring rain. But here and there at least some rocks of various size and contour projected above the swift-running current. These rocks, whether flat or rounded, indicated little as to what security they might offer as stepping stones to the other side. Nevertheless, this they must be. I had, therefore, to step or jump from one to the other in order to keep out of the water. It was a risky crossing. It reminded me very forcibly of one of Eliza’s flights from the fugitive slave laws in Uncle Tom’s Cabin. But I made it, too. I got to the other side of the small spring-fed stream, collected my precious specimens and repeated the Eliza act, getting to the fence in safety and triumph over the elements. A little obstruction like a barbed wire fence was inconsequential then.

This was only one of many adventures that I experienced in collecting plant specimens for study and research during a good many years. I relate this one here because it seems to answer best my lady friend’s question at the Nashville meeting of botanists. Whether this good woman was a botanist herself, I know not; but, womanlike, she was interested in ladies’ attire—that time in a thirteenth century mode.

My next presentation of a paper at one of these national conventions was in 1928 in New York City. It was on the occasion of this particular convention, too, that there came into existence an associate group which later was distinguished as the Catholic Round Table of Science. The purpose of this association was to encourage the Catholic scientists and teachers of science to attend these national meetings and arouse enthusiasm among such of them as were equipped to do scientific research. Most prominent among the prime movers of this means of stimulating interest in the natural sciences were Rev. Anselm M. Keefe, botanist, St. Norbert College, West De Pere, Wisconsin, and the late Rt. Rev. Msgr. John M. Cooper, distinguished anthropologist at the Catholic University for many years. Others were Professor
Hugh S. Taylor of Princeton and the well-known science columnist, Frank Thone, now deceased.

One of the advantages of the Round Table was that it gave the Catholic scientists of the country a two-fold purpose in attending the national convention. At the same time, unlike some other organizations which hold periodical conventions, one travel expense account served the two purposes for us. The meetings were planned during most of that long period by Father Keefe, who was at the same time president-dean of St. Norbert’s College and head of its department of biology. He acted in the capacity of an executive secretary, other than whom there were no permanent officers. He worked out our programs; prepared and sent out the newsletter; took care of publicity; appointed the local committee and presiding officer with whom he decided on the place for each meeting; and, to make a long story short, kept the ball rolling.

Following the New York meeting, 1928, the next year, 1929, the national convention was held at Des Moines, Iowa. This was something like going back home and my sister companion, Sister Mary Timothy, Professor of Earth Sciences at Rosary College, and I were guests at St. Catherine’s Home, the hospice where I lived when a public school teacher in Des Moines. At this convention, I presented a paper before the botanical society. There was also the second Round Table meeting at Des Moines Catholic College.

The next annual meeting was at Cleveland in 1930. Again, Sister Mary Timothy was my companion. The Catholic Round Table meeting was held at the John Carroll University, which was host to the group.

In 1931 the annual meeting was held at New Orleans. Sister Timothy, as my companion, and I were the guests of the Dominican Sisters of St. Mary’s Dominican College. This time the Catholic Round Table met as the guests of Loyola University of the South. Besides the Catholic Round Table and a certain few of the scientific programs (at one of which I
presented a paper), there were many attractions in New Orleans. Since it was the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, all through the city in the residential districts the poinsettia shrubs—almost tree-like—were in full bloom. The live oaks, too, so called because their leaves remain green all winter, were decorated as Christmas trees in the open in many places. Some of the immense trees are naturally festooned with the so-called Spanish moss which hangs from their branches. These were all intriguing sights for the botanist who was in the Deep South for the first time. One feature of this city of special charm is the old French Quarter. To this, sight-seeing trips, under the direction of professional guides, had been arranged by the local committee for their guests.

My first glimpse of the Boardwalk in Atlantic City was in the winter of 1932 when, again, the Botanical Society met with the A.A.A.S., and, again, I presented a paper. There was a very interesting Catholic Round Table meeting, too, held at one of the numerous hotels of Atlantic City.

The following summer the large annual convention took place in Chicago, simultaneously with the Century of Progress. This time my speech was at the meeting of the Catholic Round Table held at the Stevens Hotel.

We shall skip over 1934 here, when I was in Europe, and come again to St. Louis in the winter of 1935, where the national meeting was held. This time the Catholic Round Table was entertained at a luncheon by the faculty of St. Louis University.

Again in 1936 we went to Atlantic City for the annual science convention. When it was over, we went to New York City to visit our sisters there, some of whom had come down to the convention.

In 1937, again I offered a paper at Indianapolis, the place of the annual meeting. While in Indianapolis, we enjoyed hospitality at Marian College, conducted by the
Sisters of St. Francis.

Now we come to the winter of 1938 when the national convention was held at Richmond, Virginia. This meeting was unique in several ways. It was the first time in its history that the A.A.A.S. met in the state of Virginia. But it was the southern hospitality as manifested by the citizens of this historic city that was good in the extreme. It happened that the weather was bad for at least a part of the time--rainy, with very icy streets. This was all offset by the previous arrangements which provided for local transportation of all conventionists wherever and whenever it was needed. Hospitality committees of Richmondtites had been appointed to the number of approximately 1500 members, many with automobiles available for showing historic Richmond to visitors and for service generally.

One evening when the weather was particularly inclement, it happened that by some misunderstanding, my companion, Sister Mariola, and I were separated in the hotel headquarters. I finally decided that she had gone home to the Benedictine Convent where we were being entertained almost deluxe; and so when a good Richmond woman offered her services to take me home, I accepted, I was quite dismayed when I reached the convent to find that Sister had not yet arrived. My uneasiness was of short duration, for in a very short while she returned, having been similarly conveyed.

Another gesture of the Richmond generosity to their guests was the donation of barrels and barrels of delicious apples. All during the days of the convention charming young girls carrying baskets of these unusually fine apples distributed them to all the conventionists. I remember I had collected several before the sessions were over. Sister Mariola and I went home via Washington, D.C., where we stayed over Sunday. Then we gave substantial evidence of the courtesy of historic Richmond with these unusually large delicious apples.
The winter of 1939 took us to Columbus, Ohio, to the annual convention. All of the sister conventionists were guests at the motherhouse of the Dominican Sisters of St. Mary of the Springs. Their college bus was at our service and conveyed a large number of us to and from the sessions, all held at the University of Ohio. I remember, too, that the Catholic Round Table luncheon was particularly well-attended, although it probably did not reach the number (175) that had registered at the St. Louis meeting in 1935.

I did not attend the 1940 meeting, probably because I was too busy working on my projected book, Fundamentals of Plant Science.

It was in the winter of 1941 during war and rumors of wars that the A.A.A.S. convention was held in Dallas, Texas. I had previously made the acquaintance of Sister Rose Agnes, one of the biologists of Fontbonne College, St. Louis. This was probably during the convention in Columbus, Ohio, in 1939. At any rate, subsequently, by correspondence, we planned to attend the Dallas meeting together. Therefore I traveled to St. Louis and had a nice visit at Fontbonne en route to Dallas. During our sojourn in Dallas, we were the guests of the Ursuline Sisters, who conduct an academy for girls there. A number of other sisters in attendance at the convention also enjoyed genuine southern hospitality at this Ursuline school.

The Catholic Round Table was presided over by Father Keefe, as usual, that time in military uniform, as Lt. Colonel A. M. Keefe, Chaplain of the 135th Medical Regiment. The Round Table meeting, I remember, considering the rather out-of-the-way place in which the convention was held, was well attended. The report of the Dallas meeting as it appeared in the February, 1942 issue of The Tabloid Scientist, besides the roster of those in attendance, included the following excerpt:

...The following resolution was drafted: "The Catholic Round Table of Science expresses the feeling that
Catholic educational institutions should take the initiative in activities looking toward successful prosecution of America’s war against inhuman and anti-Christian aggressors, in all ways possible by their respective equipment and personnel, pending specific calls from the government. First line work should be training for leadership and development of scientific and technical skills useful in national service. Use of laboratory equipment for defense purposes is urged. Supervision of first aid training is an essentially commendable activity. And always we should pray that we may be made men and women of good will, that we may merit ultimate peace.

Through the years 1928-1941 inclusive, Dr. Keefe not only kept the Catholic Round Table of Scientists alive but actually flourishing. Then, as Lt. Col. A. M. Keefe, he was called into active military service. During the period following 1941 until 1947, Father Keefe was replaced by his colleague, Rev. Dr. S. C. Becker, P. Praem., as acting secretary of C.R.T.S. After returning from his distinguished service as army chaplain, Father Keefe formally resigned his position in the Round Table. This occurred at the luncheon held at the Stevens Hotel on Dec 30, 1947, during the annual convention of the A.A.A.S. The existence of C.R.T.S. for the several following years was in other hands. So far as I now recall, my next and last attendance at the meeting of the C.R.T.S. was at Trinity College, Washington, D.C., September 15, 1948. This was during the centennial program of the A.A.A.S. held at the nation’s capitol that year. This Round Table meeting was organized by the Rev. Dr. J. R. Courteleyou, C. M., of De Paul University. Father Courteleyou had been elected national secretary of C.R.T.S. at the Chicago meeting in 1947.

Since that time, somewhere along the way, the C.R.T.S. folded up. It is now replaced by a national organization which has a similar objective, under the very appropriate name of Albertus Magnus Guild.

Another extra feature of this convention at Dallas and of importance to me personally was the book display. It happened
that the June previous my book, Fundamentals of Plant Science, came off the press. Reviews had been coming out and now, as a feature of the national convention of the A.A.A.S., the Science Library (Booth Nos. 51-52) carried the publications of 1941. Such a display is a popular part of the annual exhibition of the A.A.A.S. That year it was a collection of approximately 500 volumes published in 1941 by more than 50 publishers. My book was included, and reprints from the Science Monthly (for free distribution) gave a catalogued summary of these publications.

On the home trip, much of the way through Oklahoma was in the daylight. As I looked out of the train window, I noticed tufts of green vegetation clinging to the branches of the leafless trees all along the way. I wondered for a moment what these could be. Had it not been the winter season, I would probably not have noticed them at all, but now these evidently parasitic evergreen growths were very conspicuous on the leafless trees of winter. Finally it dawned upon me from that fast-moving train what they might be. There was a lady sitting near me who I thought might be a resident of the area. I asked her if these green tufts were mistletoe. She assured me that they were. After I came home I did a little research on the mistletoe and incidentally found out that it is the state flower of Oklahoma, just as the redbud is the state tree, facts I might have remembered from reading. But such knowledge is bookish, if at all acquired, until one has real, live contacts with the subject.

Anyone who has made a study of plants knows that the plant itself—a live one growing in its natural habitat—is the most instructive. My experiences in field work, before I went to Rosary College in 1922, were almost entirely in the state of Wisconsin and in northern Illinois. Of course, I had acquired a good deal of knowledge of plants in the less formal way all through my childhood on an Iowa farm. It was in Wisconsin that I began the more systematic study; and, besides
Sinsinawa and its environs, such haunts as Devil’s Lake and the Dells were explored in conducted tours sponsored by the university. Elsewhere in this book something is told of experiences in the Fox River Valley and in the North Woods of Wisconsin.

Later, the Michigan and Indiana Sand Dune regions were explored, in Illinois the Cook County Forest Preserves, the Palos Park area, Starved Rock, Morton’s Arboretum, as well as the parks and conservatories of the Chicago area. All of these places were visited regularly as class projects. Later in this book we shall give some brief hint as to the more extensive advantages which time and travel had to offer—in Canada, east, north and west, Washington State, Oregon, California, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Ohio, Kentucky, the Deep South, Washington, D.C. and even the Swiss Alps. In all such expeditions, there is always the human side which, in retrospect, makes them really live.

During the period 1919 to 1950, the annual meeting of the American botanists usually convened at the time and place of the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Thereafter, the botanical society has met as an integral part of the American Institute of Biological Sciences, a large organization which was in the process of formation as early as 1945. The last scientific paper that I presented before an audience was at the 1953 meeting of the A.I.B.S. at the University of Wisconsin in September of that year. That paper, "Vexatious Verbalisms," was since published in The Biologist, the official organ of the Phi Sigma Society, under the editorship of Dr. Anselm M. Keefe, St, Norbert College. And my most recent published paper, "Albinism," appeared in the May, 1955 issue of the same periodicalal. This paper was a left-over from a meeting of the Illinois Academy of Sciences in 1950. Other scientific papers, prepared for one purpose or another, that are still in my files might yet find themselves in shape for an editor.
During and after the years that I continuously did plant research for reports at the national convention programs and subsequent publication in various scientific serials, other scientific activities of similar nature were also included in my extra-curricular activities. These included service in official capacities in several scientific organizations and the preparation of addresses and papers for programs and publication.

I held membership in the Illinois State Academy of Sciences and was frequently active through the years 1928-1950. These meetings occurred in early May each year and were distributed among the following places: Urbana, Bloomington, Peoria, Chicago, Jacksonville, Rockford, East Saint Louis, Rock Island, DeKalb, Springfield, etc., all of which gave opportunity to learn more about our state and to visit many of its institutions of higher learning.

Often, too, I attended the annual meetings of the Central Association of Science and Mathematics Teachers which is habitually held during Thanksgiving week each year and, more often than not, in Chicago. The records now show that I was an active participant in these programs in 1941, '50, '52, and '53. During the long period that I was at Rosary College, I occasionally attended the meetings of the Chicago Academy of Sciences, also.

In February, 1938, I accepted the invitation of Dean Hugh C. Muldoon to address the Annual Duquesne University Conference at Pittsburgh; and twice I addressed the Chicago Catholic Teachers Association, first, at Loyola University, at the invitation of Sister Cecelia of Mundelein College for Women, in 1943, and at their meeting held at the Museum of Science and Industry in 1949, at the invitation of the Rev. John B. Murphy of DePaul University.

Through the years 1943-44 I was associated actively in the Cowles Botanical Society of Chicago. In a later chapter, it is made evident that one important incident in this
particular scientific affiliation was one of the several stepping stones which led the way to my career in human relations. And, although my last published scientific paper is as recent as May, 1955, my major interests have for some time been in the promotion of good race relations. It is not that I love science less but rather that I love my neighbor more.
Chapter IX: SABBATICAL LEAVE: PART ONE

It was Holy Week, 1934. I had come from Rosary College to spend these hallowed days at Saint Clara. It is a privilege that necessarily comes to only a few each year. I had received a special permission to talk over a special problem with the Mother General, then Mother Mary Samuel. Toward the end of our conference, Mother surprised me by asking me where I would like to spend the approaching summer. Now I had been brought up by a father who always maintained that it was a very poor policy ever to look a gift horse in the mouth. So this time I spoke up. Among the few parts of the United States of America that I had not already seen, California was still unexplored. Cheyenne, Wyoming was one of the congregation's more recent acquisitions that I had not yet visited. I finally settled by saying it would not matter to which of the two I might be sent for my summer vacation. And so I returned to Rosary College after Easter Sunday without any definite summer plan. Nevertheless, I had a feeling that something in the offing was simmering for me, although I really did not know what. I would wait.

In late June I went to Cheyenne where I had a most delightful summer at our convent there. They had a violoncello and Sister Amanda Corteau (now deceased), a musician of Parisian training and rare ability, was good enough to act as accompanist to all my amateurish strivings. Sister Amanda was not only a musician, a pianist of unusual quality, but she was also a teacher par excellence. She did not know the strings experimentally, but, willy-nilly, I had to get true tones by exerting my utmost to abide by the instructions of my previous teachers. These were respectively, Sister Chrysostom and Sister Mary John, both accomplished violinists, and both of whom had tried to teach me all the tricks. Sister Amanda was most patient and really seemed to enjoy helping me. I just couldn't get away with
anything so far as pitch, phrasing, modulation, time, etc., were concerned. So I did my best, unassisted, with the tone quality which, if it were less than good, was a real hair shirt to Sister Amanda’s musical sensibilities.

While I was in Cheyenne, the rodeo was on. Of course, I saw only the parade but from a remarkably good and exclusive vantage point. This exhibition was certainly enough to instill a pretty clear concept of the "Wild West" of pioneer days. Some of the elaborate floats pointed up one of the phases of American history that should make us wish we might blot off the page, for example, the self-appointed manipulations of the law by the vigilante.

One very delightful excursion was planned by the ladies of the parish, who took us to Estes Park in Colorado for an all-day outing. During the summer, too, I spent one week in Denver. We had two convents there at that time. I had been in Denver before I entered the convent, but there were still many places of interest that I had not visited so I did some sight-seeing there. Moreover, bus and streetcar service in Denver is free to sisters and clergy!

When time came to return to Rosary College, I was appointed to pilot Sister Amanda back. She was somewhat elderly and still unused to American ways. I did not then suspect that I was soon to learn still more about European ways than I had picked up in her society that summer. I was indeed thankful for all the genes I had inherited for un sentiment tres vif de l’humour. We stopped off at Omaha and were guests at one of our convents there. During that time, I received word from the Mother General that she wished to see me when I returned. I knew she had gone on to Rosary College so I followed her instead of stopping at Saint Clara en route to await her return.

It was the twenty-eighth of August. Mother Samuel sent for me at the end of the first part of the choral recitation of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, one of our daily
devotional exercises. I really had no definite idea what she might have to say although I had speculated on it and not without suggestions from others who were interested. Mother began by saying something to the effect that she had for some time intended to give me a change—a sabbatical leave. And now she was planning to send me to Europe for the year! I was scarcely able to trust my own ears although they had always functioned one hundred percent. It was perfectly clear. But it seemed that there were no words with which to express my surprise, my gratitude, and my joyful anticipations. I could do nothing then except to thank her as well as I could. I did my best to show my very deep appreciation of her generosity.

She then told me to say nothing about it to anyone until I would hear from her a little later. She assured me that I would certainly go and advised that I put away my personal belongings very quietly. In due time she would send for me to come to Saint Clara to get ready for the trip. My companion was not yet appointed, nor did I know who she might be.

Mother left almost immediately after giving me this message. But I noticed that she walked alone with Sister Thomas Aquinas from the front door to the car. Did she have time to tell her or would she write it to her? Sister Thomas Aquinas had that very day been formally installed as prioress of the community and president of the college. I had still to be tongue-tied and so I walked around as if on air, but sometimes with a sense of unrealness. Perhaps I might have had a dream? There was no one else to prove that I didn’t.

Finally, I could stand the pressure no longer. I seized my first opportunity to ask Sister Thomas Aquinas if Mother had said anything to her, that is, about me particularly. The response was, "Yes, she did." Then I was free to discuss my joy a little and to settle a few small matters. Sister was very sympathetic and obviously pleased with my prospects. The best of it was that I then knew that what I must still keep secret was indubitably real.
For the next week or so, I felt like a member of the secret service police, emptying my room until there was almost nothing left that belonged to me and hiding things, being careful at every turn to avoid arousing suspicion. I had some space in my private science laboratory where I surreptitiously stored such personal things as I knew I would need on my return. All the time I was investigating as to just what sisters of ours as well as those of other institutes were then at Villa des Fougères in Fribourg, Switzerland. Here would be my headquarters for the next year. I even ventured to ask, apparently inadvertently, certain questions about the living quarters there and other details that had not before interested me. There were several sisters on the Rosary faculty who had spent considerable time there, so a casual question here and another there could provoke no suspicion or any embarrassing questions.

I also got out the preliminary program of the 7th International Congress of Botanists, which would convene in September, 1935 at Amsterdam, Holland. Somehow, I had put it away carefully when it arrived several weeks before. I remembered of thinking, too, very vaguely of course at the time, that possibly I might get there. I would say nothing about that to Mother now—not until I was well adjusted to European life. Then I wrote her, asking permission to remain long enough to take in this Congress. She readily consented and so I came back by a different route.

Finally, September eighth, 1934, the Feast of the Nativity of Our Blessed Lady, came and brought word for me to come home to Saint Clara and for our newly appointed president to announce my departure to the rest of the faculty.

Between September eighth and October sixth I was busy enough going through the passport problems, getting outfitted with a black travelling habit, etc. I even made a short trip to Omaha as companion to an elderly sister. During the few days I spent there I enjoyed a visit with Margaret Mueller,
who was then teaching in one of the high schools--where she continued through twenty-five years before her retirement as a teacher. She was very happy about my prospective year, as indeed all of my friends seemed to be.

Soon after Easter of that year, I had put the whole business of whatever seemed to be brewing for me into the hands of the Little Flower, Saint Therese of the Child Jesus. I asked her to give me some sign that she was interested. Shortly after, she gave me roses in a most peculiar way. One morning, immediately after breakfast, I went down to what is called the laundry at Rosary College. I went to one of its remote, rather dark corners and there disturbed a washboard. To my great surprise, behind it I found a bunch of fresh, crimson, rambler roses, still wet with dew! These were probably left there by a sister who preceded me, but, if so, she was gone. Just why I should be the one to find these roses in such an unlikely place, still in all their freshness and beauty, also needed some explanation. I took it that it was one of Saint Therese's signs. About the same time I received a nice letter enclosing a small picture which included roses, from a person who I had felt should indicate to me some assurance of her loyalty just then. Both of these occurrences seemed significant. I kept up my petitions to the dear little saint.

Then, while I was in Omaha this second time, everything seemed settled for the European trip except my companion and certain minor details. I trusted in the negotiations of the dear Little Flower. While I was visiting Margaret Mueller she took me for a walk in the garden. Here, to our surprise, on that late September day, were several roses of different colors in the height of bloom. These were clipped and presented to me. I was certain then that I might enjoy my home visit in perfect peace because I had every assurance that my little Heavenly Friend was in the ring.

I returned to Saint Clara from Omaha via Iowa City, where
I remained nearly a week with my dear ones, those of my immediate family who were still among the living. It was my first visit home since the death of my dear father in January of that year. I was informed by letter that my traveling companion would be Sister Vincenza, my novice mistress of more than twenty years previous.

Together we set out for Rosary College on October sixth and remained there until the twelfth, Columbus Day. Then we took the train for New York City. Our sailing date was October seventeenth, on the President Roosevelt. We spent these last days with our sisters at Our Lady of Mercy Convent—one of the three convents of Sinsinawa Dominicans in the great metropolis. No less a person than Sister Gertrude, of Bloomington memories and postulant days, was then teaching there in the boys’ high school. As always, she was more than helpful on this last lap of the sailing preparations. One of my former students, Helen B. Twohey, who was instructor at Hunter College for some years, called to see us and arranged to have us driven with her to the pier on the morning of our sailing. Still another student, Ellen Raepple (now Mrs. Frank Donahue of Freeport, Illinois), who was doing graduate work at Columbia University was also at the pier. These girls had been classmates, first at Saint Clara College and then at Rosary College.

At the purser’s office, we found gifts and boat letters galore. It was enough to make one wonder how they all found it out, almost as soon as I did myself. And also how they found the time to write or telegraph, to send gifts, etc.

The ocean voyage was very calm and pleasant. We had no mal de mer and so enjoyed the deck and everything. At that season the boat was not at all crowded, and we each had a double bedroom—second class—with every comfort that one might find in a well-appointed home. There was a splendid string orchestra, and I enjoyed their music immensely—
particularly the cello part.

Since my companion knew no French and my speaking ability of it at that time was very limited, I had fortified myself with two pocket dictionaries--one English-French--the other French-English. The first was to give me certain illusive words that I would need in formulating questions and other necessary sentences; the other would help me to translate all signs and directions. I made no end of use of them, particularly after we got to Paris and from there to Fribourg, Switzerland.

Now I must tell about our landing and our first experience in Paris. Our boat docked at Le Havre but was some hours late. We had missed the boat train to Paris and had to take a later one. This reached Paris only a little before midnight. While at Le Havre, it was necessary for us to exchange the third class tickets we had bought in New York for those of second class. There was no one in the station to serve us, it seemed, but a woman official. She spoke no English and seemed not greatly inclined to put herself out for us. I suspect that it was near the hour for her to go off duty. Fortunately there was an American war official nearby who took in the situation at once. He flew at her in French with a rapidity and vehemence sufficient to stagger any native. At least, she was evidently unsteady under his French fire. I was completely unable to follow his exact words (perhaps that was all to the good), but even if I could not understand a single word there could be no doubt about the substance of his context. He told her off with such vigor and decision that she was changed, as if by magic. We had the correct tickets almost immediately and there was nothing for us to do but to thank each of them for a good job well done. We had but a short wait for what turned out to be a very good train. We were whisked across that part of France with all possible speed; but by the time we reached Paris it was close to twelve midnight.
We took a taxi to 49 Rue de Vaugirard, a convent at which many of our sisters had previously enjoyed hospitality. I had written the superior from Rosary College, telling her the exact time of our arrival and, although this was a much later hour, I trusted that they were accustomed to later boat arrivals. We got out of the taxi and after the driver had reminded me of a "tip," the only word, I think, he could say in English, we dismissed him, tip included. The exterior of the convent did not surprise me much. It was right on the sidewalk and the front entrance was more like a store front than anything I had yet seen. I rang the doorbell, and, standing surrounded by various bags, as the escort of my former novice mistress, I was a bit chagrined after two or three minutes had elapsed and there was no sign of an open door. I had heard and known that it may well be said that a convent door opens out more freely than it opens in, but this one was well barred and the sound of a mere bell seemed to have no effect either way. I looked again at the address. It checked. My companion showed her first sign of distrust in my pilotship. Looking at the forbidding closed doors of what looked more like a great granary than a convent and ignoring, as it were, the name and number in plain view, she questioned whether we had come to the right place.

It was after twelve midnight. My former novice mistress of some twenty years before and I were standing alone on the gay streets of Paris! Except that the light was artificial, it was as brilliant as if it had been twelve hours earlier by the clock. Traffic seemed to be at a peak and pedestrians were hurrying hither and yon in all directions. The hour seemed to have no significance excepting for us two, one of us particularly. If any other sister that I can think of who might have been my companion just then, I am sure we both would have laughed, if only to convince each other that we were not afraid, something like a small boy who whistles in the dark. As matters were, in spite of the ludicrous side of
the situation, our predicament just then was downright tragic. I am certain that Sister Vincenza must have stormed heaven to come down to our rescue. Suddenly, I realized that this convent bell was not intended to summon the sisters at midnight. Any mischievous youth might not be able to resist the temptation simply to stretch out his arm to ring it as he passed along, at whatever hour. No amount of ringing would turn the trick for us. They must have a telephone, I thought.

Just at that moment two young fellows were passing. I called their attention to our dilemma and asked them if they would please go to the nearest available telephone and put in a call. I asked them to tell the sisters that two Dominican sisters from America were waiting admittance at their front door. These two lads proved to be regular fellows and scurried off immediately. It seemed but only a few seconds when the telephone inside was ringing madly. Of course, we were fully awake with our ears cocked for such welcome sounds. But things began to happen with great rapidity inside as well. We could hear footsteps on the stairs and considerably agitated calling and explaining. This was immediately followed by a turn of the key. Then the great wide door swung in and we made all haste to follow it, bag and baggage. It closed on us and shut us in away from the glamorous glare of the midnight streets of Paris. Deo gratias!

I first explained that I had written previously. The response to that was that the superior was away and no doubt my letter had arrived after she had left. French apologies were profuse and spoken so rapidly that I could hardly catch up with them. My relief, however, was more than compensation for the anxious moments we had spent just outside the cloistral walls.

Everything settled down in due time and I enjoyed the feather beds, one under and one over, as I remember. The latter I think they call a duvet. Our stay in Paris was full up to the hilt. We visited all of the more beautiful and
historic churches and other places of interest and beauty. Among my first purchases in Paris was a little catechism. This helped me enormously with the French vocabulary. All the words which were strange looking in other contexts would have to come alive for me in this setting. I had once memorized my catechism when my brain fissures were very plastic and impressionable and now I found that all the words were there—each distinct and in its proper groove. Now I could translate them into a different language—on which, up till that time, I had had only classroom experience. Previously, my goal, too, was no more ambitious than such knowledge as was required to pass a reading test prescribed for American candidates for the Ph.D. degree. Now it was necessary to buy stamps of various values, to exchange money, to ask directions, to make small purchases, etc. Add to this that I was the pilot of my previous novice mistress who seemed to think at times that I might have the "gift of tongues." I must not let her down or disillusion her. On some of the sightseeing trips which might be too strenuous for her, such as Le Louvre and the Sorbonne, one of the sisters with whom we stayed acted as guide for me.

The convent at 49 Rue de Vaugirard is very near to the Jardin de Luxembourg. Here I went alone. Both children and adults recreate in this park, the children riding burros or in carts drawn by burros. Women bring their knitting and grown men play croquet, apparently with much pleasure and indubitable skill and concentration. And there was no dearth of enthusiastic spectators at those games. It all amused me very much, particularly when I thought of some of the vigorous American sports.

Sister Mary Anne of the convent where we were guests proved to be a most competent and very charming guide and companion. I noted that she had a rather olive complexion—somewhat deeper than even the darkest of the other sisters. I simply supposed, probably because of her superb Parisian
French, that her dark skin was no different than that of many other Mediterranean. She was very well educated and a woman of superior ability generally. In the course of our trips together we became better acquainted. I had to go to the American consulate while on one of our outings. Sister Mary Anne told me that she was also an American who had been educated in one of the American convents of her congregation, but that she herself had made her novitiate in France. I asked her if she had ever returned to America. She answered me very simply in the negative, and I seemed to sense that she had no desire to do so. There seemed something slightly covert about this, but, because of our brief acquaintance, I asked no further personal questions. After my arrival in Fribourg, I casually told the sisters about my charming sister companion in Paris. It was not until then that I realized how naive I must have seemed to this lovely Negro woman.

Our trip from Paris to Fribourg, Switzerland, was on a beautiful bright autumn day--October thirtieth to be exact. We left Paris at 8:20 a.m. We had to change trains at Ins,Anet; from there we had an electric train to Fribourg. All day we rode through a very interesting part of France. The autumn coloration rivalled anything that I have ever seen since or before. No doubt, this was because there were so many mixed clumps of evergreen and deciduous trees. I was interested in what I saw in the fields. Perhaps as many women as men were at work there. The use of oxen as beasts of burden was also intriguing. The whole trip was full of new and strange experiences, but the third class seats did not become softer as the hours wore on. In the meantime I found it necessary to resort to my nebulous French because those train officials, to least on that route, were not linguists. You spoke their language or they didn’t understand you. Here was where my small dictionaries did me maximum service. I was most grateful and happy, as I had been in Paris after my short stay there, whenever a question that I asked was understood.
and the response corresponded to my needs. We had greatly enjoyed our experiences in Paris, but we looked forward now to our more permanent abode, Villa de Fougeres, which we knew would smack of a real American flavor.

It was good to be met by our very own sisters--Sister Theodosia, the superior, whom I had worked with years before at Saint Clara when she was prefect of the academy, and Sister Benvenuta, a student in the university there and now Professor of French at Rosary College. They duly escorted us to Villa des Fougeres--only a stone's throw from the station, La Gare as it is called there. We then had a real American meal. We were ready for it, too, since it was long past anything like a six o'clock dinner hour!

One of the first places we visited the next day was the cemetery! That may seem strange, but Sister George, about whom we have already written, was the first and only one of our sisters, so far, to be buried there. It was then I learned that graves are leased in Europe--usually for twenty years. If the lease is not then renewed the bones are dug up and put into a common bone pile. The reason for this is obvious. Needless to say, our lease has been renewed and, God willing, will continue to be as long as there is any possible integrity in dear Sister George's mortal remains. She was director of studies when I was a novice and my prioress for three years when I was a young sister. And although she got me into home economics, she was, I am sure, the prime mover in my release from it. Requiescat in pace!

I was in Fribourg but a few days when I went out to rent a cello. This was my year off, and so I could ride all my hobbies with impunity. The cello was my most beloved one at that time, and Sister Benvenuta was a willing and good accompanist. She also acted as chapel organist that year. Besides there was a European girl living at the Villa (a student at the university) who was a good musician and very willingly played with me. The cello rental fee, quite small
in Europe, proved to be a good investment.

Among the strange things that intrigued me was the narrowness of the streets in Fribourg, although I believe I since saw them eclipsed for reduced width in our own Quebec. The fact of an old town, Basse ville, and a new town, Neuve ville, built on the peripheral hill was also fascination. In due time, I took a ride on the funiculaire to fetch me from the one to the other.

I am ever glad and grateful that it was my privilege to have had the leisure of almost a year to live in a European atmosphere. Moreover, I believe, too, that Fribourg, Suisse is about as representative of a single cross-section of European culture as it would be possible to select. Switzerland is bi-lingual--both French and German being freely spoken by the residents of all the cantons, of which there are twenty-two. One of the latter is Italian, so that there really is a third language of the country. I remember being very much alerted to signs at the time. I read on the windows of the train coming up from France the caution to passengers not to put their head or arms out of the window. This was written in German, in French, and in Italian. And, as I said before, we traveled third class on this trip where there was evidently no prohibition on smoking. Cigarette smoke particularly has always been more than offensive to me as both my eyes and throat tissues are affected by it. I had gotten about all I could take, and I remember that one of the first things I said to the sisters when they met us, by way of describing our trip, was this: "They smoked in three languages all the way up!"

Of course, the prevailing language of Fribourg, like Lausanne, Geneva and Neuchatel, all university centers, is French; whereas Basel, Bern and Zurich are German university centers. The University of Fribourg differs from all the others in being international and, therefore, Catholic in all connotations of the word. Most of the courses in secular
subjects in the University of Fribourg are given both in German and in French; those in theology are given in Latin. As a university, Fribourg is, therefore, tri-lingual. There are students from all over the world, none of whom seem to suffer from any scholastic handicaps and least of all from linguistic disadvantages.

Sister Marie Louise, who was then a student there, conducted me to the part of the university which is devoted to the natural sciences. Indeed, this area of the university at that time was called The University of Fribourg. The letters and arts, philosophy, and theology were then housed apart in another quarter of the town, the building being that of an old lycee, that is to say, a secondary school building. More recently, a very modern group of buildings have been erected by the university for this purpose. Sister Marie Louise had been studying French there for some time, but, as I joked with her afterwards, until that day she had never been in what was really called The University of Fribourg! This group of natural science buildings might easily have been mistaken, from the exterior, for an industrial plant of some kind or other. On the inside, however, it was plain that all parts had been properly planned primarily for their particular functions. There was plenty of space for lectures, laboratory, and demonstration material and performance. The Europeans, too, have a fine faculty for conserving and for utilizing every inch of space to the best advantage. For example, behind the blackboards were cabinets which gave splendid space for demonstration material, such as models, museum specimens, etc. The blackboard could be automatically raised when these articles were needed.

We went first to the office of Dr. Uhrsprung, Head of Botany and Professor of Plant Physiology. I knew of him through his writings and his standing as a botanist of note. He was most gracious and showed a preference, as I then thought, for the German language. I was rather glad of that,
because, at that time, I could at least understand it better than I could French. He showed us through his laboratories, and finally we settled down to a real botany gab-fest. He reached up to a bookshelf and handed me a copy of the current issue (September, 1934) of the *Botanical Gazette*. This was by way of showing me his interest and respect for this science in the United States of America.

It was rather a coincidence because it happened that in that issue my latest paper was published. I flipped the pages until I came to it and handed it back to him. "Oh," he said, "I read that," and he was very pleasing in his reaction. I had brought with me, by way of professional introduction, a reprint of this and others of the botanical papers which I had previously published and knew would interest him. These I then presented to him. I found out that all of the courses in botany and some of the other courses in natural science were then being given only in German. In one way I was rather glad of that, but I did want to point up my French, because Fribourg is a French canton. That means that French is the dominant language there, although practically everyone can speak German also.

The upshot of this first visit to the University of Fribourg was for me a pass key to any course or exercise, including field trips, etc. I became a guest of the university. This was also true for any other of the European universities--a courtesy which is extended by universities all over the world to holders of the degree of doctor of philosophy. I made use of the privilege to a very limited degree in the Universities of Bern and Zurich, but I was a regular attendant at the classes in the University of Fribourg throughout that school year. It was easy to follow the courses in natural science, whether in German or French, because of the demonstration method that is so pronounced there. Knowing the subject matter also made it relatively easy and, I would say, one of the best ways to learn a strange
language. I also attended lectures in philosophy and sociology which were delivered in French. These were less easy to follow until my vocabulary grew, which it did.

There was a further advantage in improving French. During the meals we had directed conversation by a well trained native linguist. Besides this, one was free to attend extra masses on Sunday with a wide choice among the numerous churches in Fribourg. Whether one’s preference was for a German or a French sermon, there was a considerable number of each from which to choose.

Since I was really a free lance, I could spend my time about as I pleased. Sometimes I volunteered to answer the door bell and, finally, the telephone. Whenever I completed these commissions of the official portress with the proper dispatch, I experienced a real sense of satisfaction. This was true also with the sister superior, particularly when once she overheard me gracefully send an agent on his way without disturbing her.

Christmas came and went in Fribourg with the usual festivities, both religious and social. The day before Christmas I went as shopping companion with Sister Marie Louise. As no banquet is ever complete in Switzerland without cheese—sometimes of several varieties—Sister had been commissioned to make the proper selections. She took me into what I would call a cheese shop. At least, there seemed to be nothing else there, insofar as both sight and smell could distinguish. Now I have never been fond of some milk products, and cheese, even the mildest forms, can be even repellent to me. We had come in out of the cold, fresh, wintry air, and so I endured the atmosphere within for a few minutes (I was greatly intrigued with the colors of the different varieties of cheeses). Soon, however, I began to notice that my olfactory sense was being over-stimulated and that neither sight nor sounds would distract me then. Sister Marie Louise was more than deliberate in making her choices;
so, finally, I asked her to please excuse me and told her I would wait for her outside. Here the rather cold, brisk air of December twenty-fourth was highly preferable to the warmer odors within.

We had midnight mass at the convent. Before this we had a program of carols and other music suitable to the occasion—also cello music! Everybody within the household assembled in le salon rouge—all of the sisters, two of the French teachers, and the two peasant girls, who were the maids there. We were Americans and therefore democratic, at least in that; the others fell in line. Because of the personnel I did not feel at all homesick or even wish to be back in America on that Christmas eve. The next day I helped with the table decorations. We had some American guests at dinner, and, excepting the cranberries, which we were unable to get, the dinner was strictly American. The cranberries were replaced by red currant jelly made from the fruit that grew on the villa grounds. Had we been thus served at home, we might have mistaken the one for the other.

In the course of time, our pilgrimage to Italy was shaping up. Fortunately, a small group of Swiss people were planning a tour to begin the day after Easter. The conductor was Abbe Rive of Geneva. He had been in Switzerland perhaps since his ordination to the priesthood but was himself Italian. This made him a doubly ideal conductor. The group was rather diverse: including three or four elderly French women; three or four younger French women; a German-Swiss priest, whose name I do not recall; Pere Kohler, O.P., the chaplain at Villa des Fougeres; and two or three other French-Swiss gentlemen; besides us two "soeurs américaines." With the exception of one elderly mademoiselle, whose age and intellectual and other attainments merited her the title of Madame, no one in the group except ourselves spoke English. The conductor, Father Rive, was fluent in French, in German, and of course, in Italian. I had to get all directions in
French. Those two weeks of the pilgrimage were equivalent, I think, to several courses in a classroom. When I got to Italy, I found that in all places, such as stores, post offices, money exchanges, etc., French might be used as well as Italian. I was greatly amused when I was taken for Swiss-French, probably because each of the pilgrims wore a little Swiss flag, and at another time, for Canadian French. That indicated to me that there was something, to say the least, foreign about my French, but it did encourage me to keep at it.

The party assembled at Lausanne on Easter Monday. We went to Milan and spent only a few hours there, and that was almost all spent in the great cathedral. We did visit the church, Saint Eustorgio, one of great historic interest. In one of its chapels is the tomb of Saint Peter Martyr, often referred to as Saint Peter of Verona. This great Dominican was canonized by Pope Innocent IV within a twelve-month of his death. He was martyred April 6, 1252 and raised to the dignity of Saint on March 25, 1253. The sculptor of his tomb was the same as the one who designed the tomb of St. Dominic in Bologna.

We also visited the Basilica of Saint Ambrose. This basilica includes the tombs of Saint Ambrose, Saint Gervase and Saint Protase. Here, too, is the Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, the only Catholic university in Italy.

While we were in Milan, we must have recalled that this great Italian city was the home of Father Samuel Charles Mazzuchelli of venerated memory. From Milan we took a night train to Rome where we were met by a sister from the convent of Maria Monte on the Via Nomentana. Thus Sister Vincenza was escorted to that convent and I went on to Naples with the rest of the party. Sister Vincenza thought that this part of the trip would be too strenuous for her. Perhaps she was considering Vesuvius which, by the way, was putting on a pretty good show at that particular time. We spent a few days
in Naples. One thing that I saw there was a funeral. It was, I would say, a real Italian show. I am very certain that outside a conservatory or one of the large botanical gardens in the height of bloom, I never had seen so many and such beautiful flowers at one time before. There were literally auto loads of them.

The next morning we attended mass in the Basilica of Saint Dominic and afterward made some explorations. We venerated the relics of both Saint Dominic and Saint Thomas Aquinas, including the handwriting of the latter. Saint Thomas Aquinas is the guardian saint of Naples. Here also we saw the picture of the crucifix which spoke to Saint Thomas. It was a picture of a crucifix that spoke to St. Thomas Aquinas and not a crucifix itself, as I had previously thought.

We made some delightful bus and auto trips from Naples—one to Pompeii. The beautiful auto drive along the Mediterranean was more than delightful in that season. We visited Amalfi and Ravello. In the Cathedral of the latter we greatly admired the pulpit which is acknowledged to be the most beautiful in Italy. In the Cathedral of Amalfi we all prayed together at the tomb of Saint Andrew, the Apostle. We stopped at Sorrento and went through some of the shops for souvenirs. This was all most interesting. Perhaps it was particularly so for me, the only American in a group of Europeans—all of whom were willing and able to make the necessary explanations. One of the last places we visited in Naples was the Museum Nationale. It might well be described as marvelous.

The day of our departure from Naples, we took the four-thirty p.m. train to Rome, arriving there at eight-thirty. Here I was reunited with my companion, whose good friends had brought her to the hotel where the pilgrimage was to be housed during our stay in Rome. Since Rome is like no other city in the world, we shall dispense with the mention of all the many
interesting places religiously, historically and artistically considered. Keeping up a steady go for about six days we covered a lot of it.

Two of our privileges were outstanding. First, our audience with the Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, then reigning. This was private so far as our small group was concerned. The other was the truly wonderful closing ceremony of the Holy Year at Saint Peter's, the following Sunday. Kind and influential friends had previously negotiated for privileged tickets which provided us with seats in one of the tribunes. If course, such a privilege was not only something just exclusive but of extraordinary advantage for the most perfect view of this never-to-be-forgotten religious demonstration.

A pilgrimage such as we joined on our Italian tour carries many privileges. Besides the spiritual indulgences which attach to many of the devotional exercises, there was dispensation from all fasts and abstinence during the period of this pilgrimage. The penitential season of Lent had just closed (we set out on Easter Monday), but even the Friday abstinence was not of obligation for us. It might seem a little incongruous after having an audience with the Holy Father to go immediately back to the hotel for a meat dinner on Friday! There are some Americans who are sometimes said to be "better Catholics than the Church," and who might even scruple about eating meat under similar circumstances. Certainly, we Americans do have dispensations also--sometimes even on legal holidays, such as the Fourth of July and Memorial Day, or at other times and circumstances whenever the local Ordinary sees a greater good in granting such an indult.

The authority which imposes the discipline of abstinence, ordinarily seriously binding on all Catholics over seven years of age, may dispense from its observance for sufficient reasons, that is, wherever such dispensation may serve a greater good. The point is that the law of abstinence is strictly a matter of discipline. At the same time, it is a
small gesture of reverence and reparation commemorative of the cruel piercing of that Sacred Flesh on that first Good Friday, nearly two thousand years ago. The whole point is that there is nothing evil per se in eating meat or any other kind of good food which one can honestly get at any time. Only when Church Authority forbids it in the interest of a greater good does it become sinful. Then it is a sin of disobedience. Like all of the precepts of the Church, the law of abstinence is imposed as a help to the better observance of the commandments of God; all of these, of course, bind every member of the human race, whether Catholic or non-Catholic. But unlike the precepts of the Church, the laws of God leave no place for dispensation or relaxation.

So we two lone Americans in the company of all Europeans conformed without any puritanical or "holier than thou" attitude and ate what was served us on the Fridays of this pilgrimage like all the others.

My sister companion preferred to rest rather than take the all-day bus trip which included Tivoli, Frascati, and Subiaco. At Subiaco we visited the Benedictine Convent, the foundation spot of the great Benedictine Order. It would be quite impossible, even if space allowed, to attempt a description of many of our experiences which will nevertheless always remain in our minds as an effect of these memorable visits. It was a great happiness for me to write a little of this part of it to my old friend, Sister Theophane, O.S.B., nee Grace Trites, who has long been a member of the great Benedictine Order.

It was difficult to say goodbye to Rome. I felt reasonably certain that this was my first, last, and only visit to the Eternal City. Of course, in the religious life, one does not make her own plans and so we never know. The best rule is to ask for nothing and to refuse nothing. So far, this line of conduct has worked out very well for me. After leaving Rome, our first stop was at Florence, the city
of Dante. After admiring its great cathedral, Santa Maria del Fiore, we went to San Marco, once the Dominican convent there, but now a natural museum with many precious relics including the wonderful murals by Fra Angelico. Our visit to Florence antedated the association of the Sinsinawa Dominicans with the beautiful Villa Schifanoia by ten years or more. I still remember many of the beauties of Florence and therefore can well imagine what Schifanoia is like.

Of all the places that I visited in Italy, Assisi was the one which gave me a very deep feeling of real regret at the time of leaving. Our visit centered around the saint, the Beloved Poverello, whose name can never be separated from the city in which he lived. It was my happiness to stand in the exact spot where St. Francis talked to the birds. The night that we spent in Assisi a large choir of boys of the basilica, de San Francisco, broadcast a program which we were told was to be heard in America. It was nice to know that many of our compatriots were simultaneously enjoying this musical feast, even if at a great distance.

From Assisi we went on to Venice. I loved San Marco, but not more than some of the other cathedrals which I was yet to see. From Venice we made a trip to Padua, and there visited the cathedral of the beloved Saint Anthony.

Our homeward journey, that is, our return to Fribourg, was again by way of Milan so we had another look at the great Italian metropolis which, in many respects, exhibits a modernity similar to some of our American cities. We retraced our steps by returning to Fribourg via Lausanne. Sister and I stayed overnight with the sisters at Bois-Cerf. We attended mass in their chapel the next morning, and a little later took the train back to Fribourg.

It was a pilgrimage the like of which I could never even hope to duplicate in this world. We had had an exceptionally competent guide and the cooperation one hundred per cent of everyone in the group. Otherwise it would have been quite
impossible to cover the ground in the way that we did it during two weeks. We were never over fatigued, largely, I think, because our experienced director had everything so well planned. He was so considerate of everyone in the group and particularly kind and thoughtful of the few elderly women who were included. I speculated, because of his exceptionally fine feelings, that someone--a good woman of particularly fine character--must have greatly influenced his youth and character formation. I mentioned this casually to one of the women pilgrims. She answered me very simply by saying: "His mother is a most saintly woman."

As I look over my diary and some of the souvenirs of this pilgrimage it is plain that our conductor introduced us to what we might call the key cities of Italy, together with such satellites of each as were of particular note. His own intimate knowledge of all the places including their history left little to be desired, educationally or otherwise. Personally, as I have already indicated, it gave me more familiarity with the French language than I had previously enjoyed. This was because the group was almost unanimously French-speaking, and all directions and explanations were given in French and I could not afford to miss any of them.

It was a beautiful, bright Sunday morning in early May. Nevertheless, even after this incomparable sojourn in sunny Italy, we were glad again to be among our very own at Villa des Fougères, in Fribourg, Suisse.
Chapter X: SABBATICAL LEAVE: PART TWO

During the school year that I spent in Fribourg, it happened that there were no American students at Villa des Fougeres except Dominican Sisters. Several of these represented other congregations than our own. Sister Ann Joachim of the Dominican Congregation of Adrian, Michigan was one of them. At the time, she was young in religion but rich in experience prior to her entrance. She had been a practicing lawyer and held a pilot's license. At Fribourg, she was completing her candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in political science. She found it necessary to make trips to libraries elsewhere, and so, since I was practically a "lady of leisure," I acted as her companion. We enjoyed the beautiful new national library at Bern. We also made an excursion trip of several days which included Lucerne and the University of Zurich. In each of these German-Swiss universities, Bern and Zurich, I visited the department of botany. I received the utmost courtesy and much interesting information in both. Later I was to renew acquaintance with these professors at the International Congress of Botanists in Amsterdam, September, 1935.

Sister Ann Joachim and her companion, Sister Regina Marie, accompanied me on a botanical expedition sponsored by the University of Fribourg. It was in early July (the school year did not close there until about mid-July), that we went on an Alpine tour. A botanical field trip there is a real adventure. There were two or three large buses to conduct the class. We started between four and five o'clock in the morning. Someone had lent me a pair of mountain climbing boots that were well spiked. It was not far from Villa des Fougeres to the point at which we assembled; but I thought that I would have the pavement full of holes before I got there, not to say anything of the disturbance that otherwise sound sleepers must have suffered at that hour of the morning.

179
After we began the mountain climbing, I was a little more accustomed to this new style of footwear. But very soon I was convinced that I was not a mountain climber. We had brought our breakfast with us, also our dinner, so each carried a little lunch sack. Some of the young men of the party relieved us of our extra impedimenta until breakfast time. This was about eight o’clock, on the mountain side. Here we all rested and ate with extraordinary appetites.

We three sisters, after learning that they were going to climb to the peak of this particular elevation, decided that we would turn back and meet the rest of them in the small village where the buses were parked. We still had some lunch outside of us which was somewhat of a hindrance in making our descent. Sister Ann Joachim also lost a heel from one of her shoes. This was most conspicuous by its absence. But with her ingenuity she seemed to be able to compensate for this loss by using a stick, which she picked up on the way. We were again hungry after about an hour of descent. That seems almost more difficult than climbing, at least the possibilities for falling and, almost indefinitely, seemed to mount up to about a hundred per cent. We soon found a spot which would accommodate us for rest and refreshment. When we started out again, we had less to carry on our hands. This was true until we ran into a patch of orchids—Alpine Orchids! Swiss Alpine Orchids! We could not resist picking just a few. There were no signs anywhere, such as: VERBOTEN! or DEFENSE!

It was a very warm day, and, when we got to the village where the buses were, we found them parked in the scorching sun. They were impossible as a place to rest. So we decided to look around this quaint, little, old, Swiss village, the name of which eludes me now. We thought it would be a good time to do our daily praying, and so we stepped out to find the church. As we went along we found that the cemetery was between us and the house of God. We were intrigued with the reading of the epitaphs on the tombstones. We noticed, too,
that all of those who were buried there had died rather recently. This was explainable in terms of what we had already learned about burials in Europe.

Suddenly I noticed a small building in one corner of this God's acre. I called attention to it, and my two companions and I went to see what its function might be. It was almost completely open on the side toward the cemetery, and, when we looked into it, there they were! Bones and more bones! One might estimate the number of persons best by counting the skulls, but even that would be difficult because the pile had considerable height. We noticed, too, that most of the bones, probably all of them, were those of adults. We thought that this might be accounted for by the fact that children's bones are more perishable, and, of course, the mortality among children is much less.

There was a very good little meditation written in French and posted on this building. In translation it goes something like this:

As you are today  
I once was.  
As I am now  
Some day you will be.

We read it, and it had its effects. We went almost immediately into the church and, hot and tired as we were (hungry again, too), we prayed our most fervent prayers.

There were many things about this field trip that were interesting to me particularly, and one was the seriousness of the students as such. They were out to learn, however much sport they were getting out of this trip also. Most of them knew the common names of all the flowers in both German and French; some of them in Italian also. All of them, of course, were getting the Latin (scientific name) and the classification of each species. Many of them were interested
in the English names, also. Here I was glad to contribute my bit. All through that course, which I attended quite regularly throughout the year, I was highly edified at the students' attitudes. They were, of course, all at the graduate or professional school level; but many of them were no older than some of our American undergraduates. And I regret to say that I am afraid that most of our collegians would compare most unfavorably with this group. There were over one hundred students in the class, probably only about fifteen of whom were girls. The latter had taken the bachelor's degree at about eighteen years of age and the young men at an average of nineteen years. The majority of European girls drop out of formal education at that time. Well, that is Europe and this is America.

Sister Ann Joachim, a native of Germany, was born in Cologne. She was planning to spend a part of her vacation there. That fit in with my plans. The Sixth International Congress of Botanists was set for September 2-7, 1935. By leaving Fribourg not too late in August there would be time for sight-seeing and visiting in Germany en route. Sister and I set out together and made our first stop at Basel, Switzerland. Neither of us had been there before. Here is the university besides several other places of historic interest.

Basel is situated on the German border, and when we took the train for Germany we had some new experiences. As we walked out of the station, someone was attempting, very gently, to relieve me of the burden of carrying my luggage. I turned to see who it was and discovered that it was the conductor of the train! He was exceedingly courteous and very thoughtful of us. This pleased Sister Ann Joachim very much because she had told me beforehand that I would have some happy surprises in Germany. She was right. Particularly was this true in Cologne and in all my other experiences in the Rhineland. Sister Ann Joachim, although born in Germany, was
brought to America by her parents in her very early childhood; and America became the second home for this family. Sister told me that, with her mother, she had made a six months' visit to Germany a short time before she entered the religious life. She said that on that trip and during the whole six months, her mother refused to converse with her except in German. Previously Sister had not cared to learn the German language. When she entered the University of Fribourg she found that her mother's tactics on that trip were all to the good. Incidentally, the first trip we made together to Bern, Sister tried the same tactics on me. I do not know what some of the passengers on the train might have thought, but Sister Ann Joachim was adamant, so everything that we said was in some kind of hybrid German. Of course, when we got to Bern we did not hear anything but German.

To go back to our trip to Germany together, we first stopped at Frankfurt. More of less incidentally, we found ourselves on the very spot where the first frankfurters were made. We were two of a group of tourists, some of them Americans no doubt, and somebody took a picture of the group. How the picture got into my possession I have completely forgotten. But when I went to dig among my souvenirs of Germany, I found it. From Frankfurt we went on to Cologne. Here we stayed with the Ursuline Sisters, just a few squares from the great cathedral. Sister Ann Joachim had relatives in Cologne with whom we had lunch the first day of our visit there. Sister had other relatives in a not too distant town, and so we parted company in Cologne after a day or two.

The sisters at whose convent I stayed had had an academy and, of course, taught English. The sister instructor of English was thereupon excused from the retreat that the sisters of the convent were then making and was permitted to be my companion in order that she might have the opportunity to converse with an English speaking person. Moreover, these Ursuline Sisters were semi-cloistered, but special permission was given to my
sister companion to accompany me on the boat trip to Bonn. She had known Bonn very well, but, being semi-cloistered, she had not made such a trip in twelve or fourteen years. So this trip to Bonn was a break for both of us. I was particularly interested in visiting the university there. It had been a leading center for the science of cytology during the days of the great botanist, Eduard Strasburger. Among his disciples were two great American cytologists who had been my teachers: Charles E. Allen, now Professor Emeritus of the University of Wisconsin, and Charles J. Chamberlain (now deceased), Professor of Botany at the University of Chicago. Then was my opportunity to identify some of the interesting features of this university about which I had learned from them.

At the same time, I was looking forward to meeting Pere Victor Gregoire of Louvain University. Advance information and programs assured me that he would be at the Sixth International Congress of Botanists. At that moment Pere Gregoire held the laurels in cytology. A great scholar, he had earned three doctorates; one in science, one in philosophy, and the third in theology. One of his American disciples, L. W. Sharp, of Cornell, is America’s outstanding cytologist.

Unfortunately, Pere Gregoire was taken ill almost immediately before the congress, and so I was disappointed in losing this opportunity of meeting him. I had imagined him as being somewhat like Father Nieuwland, who was also a Belgian and a great scholar and scientist. My disappointment was somewhat assuaged in meeting Sister Christienne Doutreligne, a member of the congress, who had taken her doctorate under Pere Gregoire’s direction a year or so previously. Pere Gregoire died about four years later. And, so far as I know, that has left the honors in cytology to his American disciple.

Space will not permit even the mention of many of the sights and incidents we enjoyed on this boat trip to Bonn. I must mention, however, our visit to the Beethoven Museum.
Here in this picturesque city on the Rhine the great German musician (1770-1827) was born. Here he lived his life of pathos, of struggles and of disappointments.

Back in Cologne, I felt perfectly free to go wherever pleased, without a companion, if I so chose. Without exceptions, the Rhinelanders, particularly those I met in Cologne and on the boat trip, were the friendliest, kindest and most trustworthy people I have ever seen. The children on the streets would run up to me shouting: "Schwester, Schwester," holding up their little hands toward me for my greeting of them. Older people, both men and women, stopped me to ask if they could be of any help.

When Sister Ann Joachim left me in Cologne I thought I was then alone and strictly on my own. I was, so far as former acquaintances were concerned. But I was never lonely. Besides the sisters in the Ursuline convent, there was an Ursuline sister of another congregation who came in from another part of Germany to attend a physics convention. Like myself, she also wanted to sightsee. Besides German, her mutter-sprache, she could speak both French and English. I voted for French, so we both might have to work at our conversation about evenly, and this arrangement would give me opportunity to keep up the French. This sister told me that she had not studied either French or English for about twenty years—not since she was in the gymnasium (the name for the secondary school in Germany) when she was about fourteen years old. She must have learned both very well because we were able to converse without any particular difficulty. We climbed to the top of the Cologne Cathedral tower together. There we could look over the entire city and pick out the various churches and other monuments which we had already visited.

On one occasion I was walking outside the great post office of Cologne. It was built on the spot where the convent in which St. Albert the Great once lived. I noticed that a
statue of the saint was erected high up on the front of the building. While I was looking at these, a young man of about twenty-three years asked me, in very good English, whether there was anything he might do for me. I told him that I would like to buy some postcard pictures of the post office if I knew where I might get them. At once he volunteered to lead me to a near-by shop where he thought they might have them. On the way we chatted and because of his superb English, spoken as a cultured Englishman speaks it, I said, "You are English?"

"No, Sistah," he answered, "I am German."

"But," said I, "you must have learned English in England," a thing I had already learned about the better educated Germans and other Europeans.

His answer to this was, "No, Sistah."

Then I persisted: "You learned it from an English teacher?"

"No, Sistah, I learned my English in America." This was still more astonishing and so I asked him when and where. He told me that he had lived in America for about three years, and this time was divided so as to give him part-time residence in New England, in the Mid-Atlantic states, and even further south. His experiences with the language were also entirely informal.

I thought of the various accents and dialects that he must have encountered in this polyglot experience and I commented further saying, "But you speak just like an Englishman."

"Oh, Sistah," he said, "you know that when one learns English in Europe, one must speak it like an Englishman."

I put this young chap down for a very clever and exceedingly intelligent young man, one who could get hold of a language spoken in various accents and idioms and then work it over, improving upon it by imitating those whom, I presume, he knew had learned the genuine article firsthand. My
experience by that time had convinced me that educated Europeans do not have too much respect for the English spoken by the ordinary American. In fact, they call our language "American," not English. My personal experiences in having been taken for English rather than American in France, in Italy, and, later, in Holland, had some meaning. Not that I had any desire to be English, but it was flattering for the reason that I knew why this mistake was made. Naturally, I was pleased that I was not speaking what the educated Europeans who know English designate as "American."

I continued to go about Cologne during my ten days sojourn there, sometimes accompanied, sometimes alone, until I had visited all of the beautiful churches and places of genuine interest and beauty in that lovely city. At the time—the month of August—there were many English people who were spending their "holiday" in Germany. There were several reasons for this—the beauty of the place, the good food, the extreme cordiality of the people, and just at that time, the fact that English and German money were both at par. This was a boon to me also in the home going. In Germany and England a dollar was one hundred cents. But it was considerably less in France, in Italy, in Switzerland and in Holland, at that time. And so on the streets in Cologne and on sightseeing trips one heard more English than German. And it was English!

This was only about sixteen years after the first armistice was signed. It was, therefore, very interesting to note the good fellowship that prevailed between these two peoples. I remember one night I looked out of the convent window in the direction of the beautiful cathedral. The spire (to the top of which I had already climbed) was all lighted up, as was the whole cathedral. It was ten o'clock, and so the next day I asked one of the sisters why that was. She told me that a trainload of English people were passing through the city that night and that the cathedral was lighted
up so that, by its reflection, they could get a good bird's eye view of the beautiful city of Cologne. Here was something to think about. Such a short time ago these two peoples were apparently at each other's throats. Now all was forgotten and peace and love were again reigning. This seemed to prove that the majority of civilized people are not by choice warriors and fighters--but friends and neighbors.

I loved Cologne and all of the Rhinelanders that I met, but we must go on to Amsterdam. That train trip I made alone and enjoyed every bit of the lovely scenery along the Rhine--Bingen and all the rest of it.

Amsterdam is a kind of artificial Venice in that it has a network of canal waterways. The primary purpose for this system is, of course, drainage, because of the low altitude of the country. In this system of canals there are nearly three hundred bridges which divide the city into about ninety islands. One of these canals connects Amsterdam with the Rhine River.

The residents of Amsterdam graciously provided a boat excursion for the members of the congress as their guests. On this unique excursion it seemed that many of the American botanists were on the same boat. Whether this was merely accidental or had been so planned, I do not know. However it was, we made the most of it.

That day I met Dr. Neil E. Stevens, who was one of America's outstanding plant pathologists. He was the official delegate to the congress from the Bureau of Plant Industry, Washington, D.C. Soon after, in 1936, Dr. Stevens accepted a professorship and, a little later, was made the Head of the Department of Botany in the University of Illinois. There he remained until his untimely death, June 26, 1949. During his years at Urbana, Neil Stevens was one of my best professional neighbors, and more than once I had reason to appreciate his kindness and generosity.

Amsterdam as a great world center is famous particularly
as the home of the greatest of Dutch painters, Rembrandt (1606-1669). The local committee arranged for a magnificent exhibit of his greatest works of art as another special feature of the congress.

Under the leadership of the local committee, the residents of Amsterdam were exceedingly hospitable and charming hosts and hostesses to all of us at all times. I stayed at a pension (Huize Lydia), and many of the other women botanists stayed there also. This pension was conducted by sisters, and they made us feel quite at home. Thus I soon met some of my former acquaintances and other botanists whom I had known only professionally before.

One of the several excursions provided by the local committee was an all-day trip to the former Zuiderzee, at only a nominal cost to each member. This is the area which had been drained and was then populated by beautiful homes within the dikes. This excursion was on a Sunday so that the Catholics of us had to get up early for a downtown mass before the time of starting, which was about eight o'clock. The two sisters from Belgium and I made this trip together. There were thirteen large buses, each filled to capacity. We happened to get in with an all English-speaking group. These included Scandinavians, Dutch, Germans and Americans. Pere Gregoire's disciple, Sr. Christienne Doutreligne, was a linguist as well as a good botanist. She spoke (besides Flemish) French, German, English, and Dutch—all fluently. After taking the Doctor of Science at Louvain, she was awarded a fellowship to one of the universities of Holland (I forget just which one now) and had done post-doctoral research there during the year just previous to the congress.

These Belgian sisters (I cannot recall the name of their foundation) were of relatively recent organization. They were a teaching congregation and these two represented the Institut Notre Dame aux Epines at Eecloo, Belgique. In my humble opinion they wore a very unacceptable kind of dress. It was
most probably a type of peasant costume which their founding mothers had adapted for their religious garb. One item of it, which seemed most incongruous, was some kind of a cord attached to their belts and from the end of which dangled a pair of scissors! Now I could readily appreciate the convenience of such an implement in a great many circumstances, but I came heartily to wish that they might have left so unessential a part of their costumes for that day, at least, safe in the pension where we all enjoyed such true hospitality. The fact was that I was besieged with questions from some of my non-Catholic women compatriots as to the "symbolism" or "significance" of this accessory to a religious dress. I hastened to assure them that it had absolutely no religious significance whatsoever (or superstition either, I might have added, such as I secretly thought they might be attributing to it). I explained that it was no doubt an accessory to the kind of peasant costume which they had adapted for their religious uniform. This was somewhat as the white coronet sisters, that is the Daughters of Saint Vincent De Paul, and other religious groups of European foundations had also done.

All of this time I should have been thanking God that I was a Dominican--wearing a traditionally religious habit, the one worn by the holy founder of the Great Dominican Order seven hundred years ago. Certainly the habit does not make a religious, but it can be appropriately symbolic. This being so, it should be artistic and beautiful.

Clothed in the white and black of the Order of Saint Dominic, we share in the traditions and spiritual privileges of a long line of faithful followers of a most illustrious leader. Among these are both saintly scholars and scholarly saints. I can only humbly thank Divine Providence for bringing me into a distinguished religious family, one with a rich heritage for heaven. Certainly I knew little about it beforehand, and, after more than forty years of fellowship in
it, I still have much to learn of the value and use of its treasures for eternity.

There were somewhat over nine hundred delegates at the congress. These represented practically every country of the world where the study of plants had reached the level of scientific research. Among them there were probably at least one hundred Americans, including the wives and other members of some of the botanists' families. Considering the very large number of British in attendance, too—from England, Ireland, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India, and Africa—the English language, of course, had first place. All of the programs and directions were written in English, in German, and in French. As we have already indicated, the Dutch, like the Scandinavians and the Germans in attendance at the congress, all spoke English. All of the educated Europeans, at seems, master a second modern language and this, more often than not, is English.

There were times, of course, in Amsterdam, when one had to be understood by those who could neither speak nor understand anything but Dutch. I had one experience of this kind with a person who seemed to speak only Dutch. This was a street car conductor. Now most of the large assemblies of the congress were held at the Koloniaal Instituut, an immense building, rather centrally located. For the opening and other general meetings, everybody went there. But, of course, there were many other institutional buildings in which smaller group programs were held.

It was probably the second morning of the congress. I was headed for one of these more exclusive programs. All of us wore the congress badge and I had topped mine with a small American flag. The street-car conductor, who seemed to think he knew where I should go better than I did, insisted upon my staying on the car when I was trying to get off at the point where I had to change. He waved and gesticulated vigorously, speaking Dutch and more Dutch and only Dutch, very excitedly.
pointing at the same time toward the Koloniaal Instituut ahead. I knew what he thought from his most energetic gyrations, even if I could not understand a single word. In the meantime, I proved to myself, beyond a doubt, that I had no words which he could understand.

One thing was certain. I had to get off that car then and there. And I did. But I was really afraid that we would come to blows before I made it. After it was all over and I was comfortably seated in the car which I took at the intersection, this rather desperate situation, for the moment, struck me as exceedingly funny. It brought back to my mind the story that has gone the rounds in nuns' circles—perhaps throughout the United States and further.

My experience was with a Dutch street-car conductor in Amsterdam. The hero in the other story was an Irish policeman in Chicago. He was giving up his beat to a comrade. His range had included one of the larger railway stations. For many years, this good Irish policeman had been a veritable guardian angel to many a bewildered sister traveller en route to a new assignment. By way of perpetuating his noble efforts always to steer the nun travellers on the right course, he said to his successor, as he vigorously shook his hand: "Take good care of these sisters, Mike. The haf ov um don't know there they're goin'; an the rest ov um don't know how to get there."

At the pension I made the acquaintance of two very nice Dutch girls, Nellie Jouby and Minnie Goede. We corresponded after my return to America; but, like all my correspondence, it became one-sided ere long and naturally failed completely. These girls were in the business world and they spoke English very well, having learned it in England, to be sure. They took me on a number of interesting side trips which were outside the botany program.

One of the more strictly social functions of the congress was an afternoon tea for the women members. The ladies of
Amsterdam were the hostesses. As I have already indicated, I travelled in a black, rather nondescript garb. While it was made on the same model as the Dominican habit, it resembled it only as black resembles white. So, for the tea, I came out a full-fledged Dominican. I did not want any Europeans or any others to think that there was a single American who did not at all times distinguish black from white. This social event, like all the others, was well-planned and in every way done to a T.

I should say now and here that I had previously and since attended a great number of large science conventions—in the United States of America, one in Canada, and another in Switzerland. No one of them, of course, could have been as worldwide and democratic as was this international one. Likewise, I believe that none of them could equal in order of planning and execution the splendid management, especially by the local committee, of this international congress. So, now, my dear reader, if you are ever able to say truly of anything: "It beat the Dutch," you will have been somewhere and will have seen something.

As souvenirs of this congress photographs were taken of the different sections, that is, officers, morphologists, physiologists, cytologists, etc., of whatever specialty—to the number of ten groups. The exact time and place for the posing of each person was numbered so that when the published brochure, which included all the photographs, was finished, it also included this information. This and other data, which accumulated in the course of the congress, such as the list of members with their full professional addresses, were later printed, each brochure under a separate title and cover. Afterwards, they were mailed to the addresses we left. It is from this printed material that I am now able to recall more than I could ever write or anyone would ever want to read about the Sixth International Congress of Botanists.

Incidentally, I might add that because of wars and rumors
of wars, the previously adopted plan to continue holding such a congress every five years was frustrated. The next congress did not meet until 1950, just fifteen years later. This was in Stockholm, and in September of 1954 the eighth congress met in Paris.

One of my Dutch girl friends arranged to take me to the church in Amsterdam that was in the charge of the Dominican Fathers. We attended an evening service and at my request, she had sent word to the fathers that after the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, there would be an English-speaking penitent for confession. The confessor turned out to be the father who gave the sermon (in Dutch). Nevertheless he was Irish born and reared and so there were no language difficulties. After I was finished with my confession he said: "You are English, Sister," putting a very definite period at the end of his sentence.

I answered, "No, Father, I am an American."

"But you speak English," he persisted.

Yes, I did. By that time I knew exactly what he meant and so let it go at that.

Only a day or so before, one of the Dutch women at the congress insisted that I could not possibly have lived in America all my life. I assured her that I had done so, with the exception of the year just passed in which most of my time was spent in French Switzerland. It was with some reluctance that she accepted my answers. It was plain that she must have had considerable previous experience with many people who speak "American English."

I left Amsterdam by the night boat to London. Nellie Jouby and Minnie Goede and the mother of one of them, but which one I do not remember, escorted me to the docks. I had known these three splendid Dutch women but a few days, but they seemed like old friends and were as kind and thoughtful of me as if they were.

When I woke up the next morning I was in the London
docks. Here I had an interesting experience with one of the customs officers. He was very pompous, and as he looked me over he spoke to me in terms and tone which strongly suggested I might have been a small child, possibly a lost one. "And what are you doing heah?" he queried.

I resented his attitude and replied as nearly as I possibly could in his own tone and air of depreciation (and I have no good reason to think that I am a poor mimic). "I am heah," said I, "to wait for my boat to take me back to America." I do not know what he thought seeing there was the great city of London before me, waiting to be explored during the several days before my sailing date as indicated. At any rate, he asked me no more questions like that one. Moreover, and to his credit, like all the other customs officers that I had encountered up to that time, he was not at all snoopy.

Speaking of contacts with customs officials, my experience throughout was simple, even funny, as was this one, until I returned to our own harbor under the shadow of the Goddess of Liberty. This account will take us back to Rome, to the beautiful church and monastery of Santa Sabina. Here Saint Dominic once lived, and tradition has it that on old, knotty, time-scarred orange tree in the convent garden there was planted by him. I went to see it. Probably the old tree has, shall I say, changed hands many times since; but one can well believe that what is still alive there (or was in 1935) came directly from the seed or sapling that Our Holy Father Saint Dominic planted in this spot. Orange trees, possibly even more than those of any others of the Citrus species, and certainly more than most woody perennials of whatever kind, vegetate most prolifically. Obviously our whole seedless orange industry in California was developed in this way.

Thus one can well believe that, through the efforts to conserve this tree at Santa Sabina, the branches which I saw bearing numerous beautiful looking fruits might well have originated as offshoots or vegetative progeny, many cycles
removed from the seed or seedling planted by the saint’s hands, and thus identify these parts that are still alive with the original planting.

I was thrilled at the sight, and I asked the Dominican lay brother if he would give me an orange from that tree. He immediately plucked a big one, cautioning me at the same time to hide it. I did so, knowing that I had made a request that probably he would be free to grant only to a Dominican or to some other important person! I took the orange back to Fribourg and there very ceremoniously opened it, only to find that in spite of its richly colored thick coat, it was entirely inedible. This was because the juice sacs were almost completely replaced by thick cellulose tissue that was completely woody. This may have been because of the advanced age of the tree and, consequently, the impoverished condition of the soil in that spot.

Nevertheless, these modified juice sacs contained numerous good-looking seeds. I put these in water and set about sterilizing some Swiss soil and a flower pot in which I planted them. Previously I had removed all or a part of the outer seed coats. This stepped up the sprouting, and the seeds proved to be one hundred per cent viable. By the time I was ready to leave Fribourg, they were sizable, sturdy seedlings.

I fully realized that prohibitions relative to plants, particularly, are numerous and strict in American ports, but I also rationalized that I had sterilized the soil and the container; and I wanted these seedlings only as house plants, in a climate, too, where no oranges could grow in the open, and perhaps at least a thousand miles from the nearest place where orange culture is an industry. Thus I hoped that a reasonable customs inspector might let me through with them. A number of the saplings, I transplanted to be left in Fribourg. The last I heard of them was that at least one was a sizable young tree, growing in a large container and kept...
indoors during a large part of the year.

I selected four or five seedlings and temporarily transplanted them to sterilized soil in a sterilized flower pot. I bought a little covered pail that would accommodate the flower pot and its precious contents and started off with it in a handbag which allowed it to stand upright. It was to travel with me over the Swiss border, through Germany, Holland, and across the North Sea to London and, finally, over the Atlantic to the New York Harbor. Whenever I stopped overnight, I just took the flower pot out of the pail, placed it on the window sill, and gave it the kind of care that any house plant might get. On the boat across the Atlantic I kept it in my cabin and sometimes wondered how long it would be mine.

As I went through the customs at the New York Pier, I do not believe that my bags were even opened. I was carrying the precious little pail in a very unsuspecting handbag when I was asked whether there was anything I thought I should declare. I was honest as all good people should be and said, "Yes. I'll show you what it is." I hastily explained to him as well as I could (he didn't seem to be very susceptible) how I had come by these little plants and the sentiment attaching to them in my case. He was wearing a uniform, and, like a few other men whom I had previously met, it was too much for him. He began to explain; but I told him not to mind—that I was a botanist just returning from the international congress that had been held in Amsterdam. At the same time I drew from my purse the official identification card of my membership in the congress. But even that did not seem to impress him.

Strangely enough, like a number of other passengers on that boat, I was carrying a large bouquet of Scotch heather. This all went scot-free as I had been previously told that it would. Nevertheless, it seems that there is now a prohibition on this also.

This customs officer then proposed that I take the orange
seedlings and have them sent to the plant quarantine. All of this seemed to involve so much red tape that it gave all of my sentiments a death blow on the spot. It was as though I myself had to go to Ellis Island as a leprosy suspect perhaps. I am certain that this good man was only conscientiously fulfilling his obligations just as he saw them. Would that all government officials and employees might always be as exact, perhaps a little less about the letter of the law, but, more particularly, about the spirit of it.

It did seem to me just then that he might have made the whole business of quarantine a little easier by saying that he would send them to me if and when he got the green light. Personally, I saw only red just then. So I told him, in as ladylike a manner as was possible for me under the circumstances, just to keep them and to do whatever he liked with them. Most probably he threw them into the ocean!

I admit to a lapse of perseverance at this last and only critical milestone of a long-drawn-out journey with my little pail of precious plants.

History shows that the orange has always been a great traveller. All of the citrus fruits, that is the orange and its congenerers, were probably indigenous to Indo-China. From there they were introduced into Arabia and Persia in the ninth century. Europe owes its orange industry to the Crusaders of the twelfth century. The Spanish missionaries planted the first oranges in Florida between 1513 and 1600. And, according to Liberty Hyde Bailey, orange seeds were brought into California by the Jesuit missionaries who planted the first orange grove at San Gabriel in 1804.

Certainly in those days, little, comparatively speaking, was known of plant diseases, their carriers, noxious insects, etc. Experience proves that these pests have been introduced from one country to another by the transportation of plants and animals which serve as their hosts. Science is catching up with them.
And now we shall go back to where I left you in the London docks. Arriving in London as I did in the not-too-early morning, I hastened to check the small amount of hand luggage that I had brought from Fribourg and got a cab to take me to Westminster Cathedral. Here I heard mass and received Holy Communion at a side altar. I noticed among those who waited to make their Thanksgiving a very nice appearing young lady who reached the exit the same time I did. We greeted each other, and she proved to be a French woman who was teaching French in London. We went together to a nearby cafe for breakfast. There we chatted over our coffee as though we were old friends. But why not? Were we not co-members in the Mystical Body of Christ! Again, I did not feel at all lonely.

After breakfast I picked up my baggage and went out to the convent where I had previously arranged to stay. They showed me to my room and there, with other mail which had caught up with me, I found a small package, which had been mailed in Cologne. The contents were a pair of slippers that I had forgotten. I realized then that the people with whom I had stayed in various places on the Continent would all probably make use of my itinerary, if necessary. Incidentally, I was glad to have the slippers as I had sent most of my luggage direct to the boat from Fribourg and I hesitated to buy footwear in Holland! I was sorry to have caused this extra trouble to the good sisters in Cologne who had already been more than hospitable to me.

That afternoon I went to the British Museum which was only a square or two from the pension. That evening at dinner I was assigned a place next to Miss Jeffrey, a teacher of art who had just resigned a position in Edinburgh, Scotland to accept one in a large art school just outside of Cambridge. During the meal she offered to be my guide in London. Certainly I was more than happy to accept such an unusual offer. She knew London perfectly, and without her generous cooperation and initiative I would have missed much that I saw.
and learned.

I knew that my time was too limited to visit both Cambridge and Oxford. So I asked Miss Jeffrey which she would recommend as a choice. She advised Cambridge, by all means. Of course Cambridge is exclusively a city of colleges; whereas Oxford is an industrial city which includes a university, albeit a very distinguished one. I accepted Miss Jeffrey's good advice and invited her to be my guest on this trip. She accepted very graciously and again was a most competent conductor and a charming companion. Cambridge is one of those places that seems to bring book knowledge and pictures alive.

It would hardly be possible to visit Cambridge without remarking the many signs of the ancient Catholic life of the town, as well as the Catholic origin of the individual colleges which make up the university itself. My good companion, not yet a Catholic herself, certainly had strong leanings and intellectual convictions which might lead her into the church. I corresponded with her for a short time after my return. Finally, she wrote me of an appointment that she had made at the Blackfriars. What the outcome of that was I can only guess. Oh, yes, incidentally, during our correspondence she sent me a lot of flower seeds. Horror of horrors! They went right through Uncle Sam's hands! There was nothing I could do about that and certainly Miss Jeffrey had never questioned her part in it.

My time in London was drawing to a close. My sailing date was September thirteenth, 1935. I had not yet visited the church of the Blackfriars. So I took a bus in the early afternoon for this last sight-seeing trip in London. I was greatly interested in reading the names on the confessionals. Some of these Dominican Fathers I had known through their writings. Toward the back of the church in the long line of confessionals, I spied the most familiar name--Father Vincent McNabb, O.P., the one whom Chesterton called "almost the greatest man of our time."
It struck me that I would be on the ocean for nearly ten days (I came home on the American Farmer, a freighter which carried passengers, about which we shall say more a little later). So I decided that here was a good opportunity, perhaps, to go to confession. I went, therefore, to the rectory and rang the bell. It was answered by a Dominican lay brother. His manner was very assuring and his greeting most cordial in a rich Irish brogue. I told him that I was a Dominican sister (my black traveling habit was hardly sufficient identification) and that I was an American and would be sailing the next day. I would, therefore, like to receive the sacrament of penance, if convenient.

Immediately he said: "Yes, Sister, I'll tell Father Vincent."

"Oh," I exclaimed, "do you mean Father Vincent McNabb?"

"Oh, yes Sisther," he answered promptly.

I was indeed overjoyed at this great privilege, and, after thanking the good brother, I told him that I had already remarked Father McNabb's confessional when I was in the church and would wait for him close-by.

I went back to the church and began my preparation for the reception of the sacrament of penance. Soon a tall, gaunt figure in the full Dominican habit, including the black preaching cappa, was starting down the aisle. This was Father McNabb! He had entered the church by the sacristy door and the nearer his approach, the more saintly was his appearance. I had previously seen portraits of him. Now I was looking at this saintly Dominican in reality.

With all his unusual intellectual attainments and rare spiritual gifts, he was as simple as a child. I shall never forget this particular grace that apparently dropped into my lap by accident or chance. But I believe that it was neither one.

As I now read the recently published book, *Father McNabb Reader*, an anthology of some of his poems and gems of prose,
I renew my heartfelt gratitude for the privilege I enjoyed. It seems, too, that if my eyes have ever beheld a living saint, it was then. What the decision of Holy Mother Church will be, I know full well it is not for me to anticipate; but there can be nothing to hinder my ardent hope that Father Vincent McNabb will soon be known and loved as Saint Vincent, O.P.

On account of the botanical congress I had overstayed my time in Europe, considering that I was then a professor in an American college where they begin operations in September. I had had, therefore, little choice of sailings. All things considered, it had seemed best that I choose the American Farmer, a boat which, primarily a freighter, also carried a limited number of passengers—all one class. The accommodations were very good and the passengers were largely university professors and their families who preferred a restful sea voyage. It was a ten-day sailing and we had the experience of a storm at sea. Perhaps it was not what an old sailor would call a raging tempest, but it did make headlines in some of the American papers, much to the anxiety of some of their readers. It was an experience which one cannot help but remember, but always without any desire for a repetition of it.

One thing the rough sailing did for most of us was to give the added experience of a thorough spell of seasickness. There were but few exceptions among the passengers. In the dining room I had been assigned to a table of four. This included a French woman of American adoption who was then making her thirteenth crossing of the Atlantic, and so far as I could determine—"just for the ride." The other two were young men: one, a graduate from the University of Minnesota; and the other, John Thomas Howell, a botanist who was returning from the congress. He was and, so far as I know, is still one of the curators of the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. The two young men and I were all
absent from meals for two full days. Not so with our middle-aged French lady friend. She had evidently developed secure sea legs and perfect immunity to *mal de mer* in her career as navigator. Consequently, she never missed a trick.

We docked at Boston after nine days of sailing, not all of it too smooth. There we remained nearly all day. It seemed that most of the shipload was taken off there. This included a beautiful English horse which many of us had already seen. During the crossing, after the storm had subsided, the captain conducted all of the passengers who so desired on a sight-seeing tour of the vessel. There were many interesting items in the cargo.

In the course of the day in Boston Harbor, some of us got off the boat and took a stroll around that part of the historic city. Our sailing from Boston to the New York Harbor that night was calm and uneventful. All went well until I came to the surrender of my beloved orange seedlings about which we have already told you. Could it be that some of the custodians of science are more scientific than science itself!