St. Anthony Mary Claret

REFLECTIONS ON AGRICULTURE, WITH SELECTIONS FROM THE DELIGHTS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE

Reflexiones sobre la agricultura; Las delicias del campo

From the Spanish of the pamphlet of 1854 and the book of 1856

English translation

Contributed to Mind of the Church by a friend of the library who wishes to remain anonymous

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About this translation

Translated from the *Reflexiones sobre la agricultura* (Barcelona, 1854), complete; and from *Las delicias del campo* (1856), a book of 312 pages, **selections only** — part of the Introduction, Conference 24, part of Conference 25, and the regulations of the parish savings bank.

The notes give the references to Claret's sources and the notes he printed himself; the modern editors' commentary and the translator's own remarks are not reproduced.

Reflections on Agriculture (1854) — complete text

Reflections on Agriculture

"Nihil est agricultura melius, nihil uberius, nihil dulcius, nihil libero homine dignius" (Cic. in C.).[1]

The wise and most eloquent Cicero used to say: "If one examines it well, of all the things there are in nature, none is better than Agriculture, none more abundant, none sweeter and none more worthy of a free man."

God Himself gave it to Adam and taught it to him, and so that he might practise it He placed him in the paradise of delight, not that he should toil, but that he should refresh and enjoy himself with Agriculture and so avoid idleness. Not as a punishment, nor for idleness' sake, but because it was the best occupation to which he could devote himself.

When God taught Agriculture to Adam, Adam did not need it to feed himself, for he had in abundance all he required; nor did he practise it as a punishment, for he had not yet sinned and was still preserved in sanctifying grace and original justice. But after sin, God laid work upon him as an obligation and as a punishment, in these words: "With great toil shalt thou draw thy food from the earth all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat of the fruits that the herbs or plants of the earth yield. By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, until thou return to mingle again with the earth from which thou wast formed, since dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return."

Although the earth was cursed because of sin, we see how much it produces: from an acorn or a shoot comes a great and abundant tree that gives ripe and tasty fruit; from one grain of maize, of wheat or of other seeds, what abundance of grain is not gathered?

Agriculture is the sweetest of all ways of acquiring, first because of its gain and usefulness, since there is nothing sweeter than gain, and also because this way of acquiring is clean of injustices and evil arts, and consequently of remorse of conscience. That is why St. Augustine calls Agriculture the most innocent of the arts.[2] And finally Agriculture is sweet because it is free of those bitternesses and vexations which the other ways of earning a living bring with them, as we see every day.

Lastly, Agriculture is the thing most worthy of a free man. It is an error, it is the crassest and most harmful ignorance, to think and say that Agriculture is proper to slaves. The wise Cicero thought and said the contrary. For him the thing most worthy of a free man is Agriculture. If a pagan, guided by the light of reason alone, thought so, what must we Catholics say, who, besides reason, have divine revelation, which assures us that it was God Himself who taught Agriculture? Oh, what a noble art! If one looks at its author and master, surely \[*a bien seguro*\] its equal will not be found. Who was its first disciple and the first to practise it? Adam: the noblest man, the wisest man; the first and greatest authority in the world; the father of all men, the only purely free man by nature, since all the rest of us are either slaves or freedmen of sin. Agriculture is the only art that has been practised by a man purely free by nature, since all the other arts, even those called fine and liberal, have been invented and practised by freedmen and slaves of sin.

Moreover, Agriculture was practised by the nobles of antiquity, as appears from sacred and profane histories. Not only Adam practised it, but also Abel, Cain,[3] Seth, Noah,[4] Abraham,[5] Isaac, Jacob,[6] Boaz,[7] Gideon,[8]

Elisha and others; and, as Cornelius \[a Lapide\] relates, all the most celebrated men of antiquity were farmers.[9]

We know that Cyrus, king of the Persians, was a farmer, as were the ancient Romans; and so Fabius very aptly says that the Lentuli, the Pisos, the Ciceros, the Vitellii, the Porcii, the Servii and the Appii honoured farming names with the magnificence of the triumph. And Valerius Maximus relates that the very rich and noble Romans passed from the plough to the Consulate and from the Consulate returned to the labours of the field, not to take their ease but to work with sweat (*cum sudore*); and when the need of the public good required it, they left their private work to devote themselves to the public good.[10]

Besides the Romans, history tells us that a great many men, the noblest and richest, occupied themselves with Agriculture and the shepherd's art, such as the Chaldeans, the Arcadians, many of Greece and of Phrygia. Of many kings we read that they not only occupied themselves with Agriculture but also wrote treatises on it, such as Mithridates, Philometor, Attalus and others.[11] I mention this only in passing, so that it may be seen how properly Cicero says that Agriculture is the occupation most worthy of a free man. Would that the nobles and the rich busied themselves in directing and writing treatises on Agriculture! Both because of its own nobility, and also because of the benefits it brings; for Agriculture is instituted by God and is the first work of nature. Agriculture is the most pleasant of the arts; it protects bodily health and strengthens the powers; it is what provides abundant harvests and tasty fruits. Agriculture is the most fitting school for learning and meditating on the movement of the heavens, of the planets, comets and other stars, the cause of clouds, rains and other meteors \[i.e. atmospheric phenomena\]; Agriculture teaches its intimates and friends the treasures that nature keeps shut up in her bosom, the laboratory of trees, plants and other natural beings. Besides this it serves for contemplating the divine attributes and praising Him in the solitude of the fields, man being invited to this meditation by the warbling of the little birds.

Perhaps someone will be surprised that I meddle in speaking of Agriculture, and in astonishment will perhaps say: What business has a Prelate to concern himself with these matters, when his element is Sacred Theology and Canons and Christian morals? There is no doubt that this is my principal obligation; but I do not consider it unreasonable to concern myself with the spread and perfecting of Agriculture, both because it has a powerful influence on the improvement of morals, which is my principal mission, and also because of the abundance and happiness it brings to men, which I am obliged to obtain for them as far as I can, being their Prelate and spiritual Father, and loving them so much. And since to love is to wish well \[*amar es querer bien*: a play on *querer*, "to love" and "to wish"\], I must provide them with this great good and benefit by means of Agriculture.

This love and the desire for their well-being obliged me, in the course of the mission and pastoral visitation of the country parishes, as opportunity offered, to teach them how to sow, plant and graft, so that with the same work, and perhaps with less, they might gather more abundant and tastier fruits. And my diligence and charity were kindled when I considered what I have read in history that other priests have done in this branch of Agriculture.

Among many of them, I see shining like a star the famous and charitable Father Bartolomé de las Casas, who did so much good to the settlers and natives with Agriculture and other industries that he used, as his zeal and charity dictated to him in these most vast countries of America.

Likewise I was encouraged and guided by that great Spanish luminary, prodigy of learning and model of prelates, the never sufficiently celebrated Cardinal Cisneros. This prince of the Church, this great statesman, had distributed free of charge the *Agricultura general* composed by Don Gabriel Alonso de Herrera;[12] so greatly did he desire that all should be instructed in it and put it into practice. In imitation of this great prelate, I shall try to distribute some booklets on Agriculture, botany and natural history, particularly as regards breeding animals and domestic fowl, according to the different works I have read on these subjects

and the observations I have made, with much care and scruple, and the questions I have asked throughout my archdiocese during the pastoral visitations I am continually making. I already have the material; what I lack is time to write and arrange it; meanwhile I shall make use of various little booklets already in print, for example the *Cartilla rústica* \[*Rustic Primer*\] by Don José María Calvo; the *Course of Practical Agriculture* by Masson-Four, translated by D. Francisco de P. Serrano,[13] and some others, not omitting the *Booklet of Catalogues of Implements for Agriculture and Horticulture*.

And so that another of the motives and causes that drive me to promote Agriculture, particularly in this diocese which God has entrusted to me, may be more clearly understood, I am going to develop an idea which until now I have kept gathered in my mind, and it is this:

"In the sacred book of Genesis, chapter II, I see as it were two marriages with one single man: the one is that of Adam with Eve, and the other marriage, or quasi-marriage, so to speak, is that of the same man with the earth. As to the marriage with Eve there is no doubt, the Scripture being clear and conclusive, according to which God Himself says: 'It is not good for man to be alone; let us make him a help and companion like himself.' And as soon as God had formed the woman, He set her before Adam, and he said, or exclaimed: 'This is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Wherefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' And we know that Jesus Christ took these very words to prove to the Pharisees the indissolubility of marriage.[14]

"The other near-marriage is that of Adam with the earth; for just as God took a rib of Adam and formed Eve and married them, so too He took a portion of earth and formed Adam and gave it to him to tend and cultivate, so that by his labour and tillage it might be made fruitful with copious and tasty fruits. Even the common people seem to share this idea, for land that has never been cultivated they call virgin land.

"Wherefore, just as until now I have sought by means of the missions and pastoral visitation to cleanse the first marriage, since it is a sacrament of the Law of grace, a solicitude so proper to my sacred ministry, and since it is so disposed and commanded by the sacred canons and even laid down in the Roman Pontifical itself; after, I repeat, having cleansed this first marriage, pulling up the bad cockle \[*cizaña*: tares, darnel\] that the enemy, as the Gospel says, had sown,[15] for such are the concubinages, adulteries and other abuses that had crept in unnoticed, it seems to me that I now have the obligation to cleanse the near-second marriage, which is that of man with the earth, by means of Agriculture; and so in some way I shall imitate what God did from the beginning: the celebration and happiness of marriage between man and woman, and the promotion of the cultivation of the earth by every means within my reach."

I do not doubt that this will contribute not only to the personal happiness of each one who practises it, as is evident, but will also redound to the happiness, prosperity and wealth of the country; for it is well known that Agriculture and commerce or industry are like the two breasts with which nature nurses her children, with more or less robustness according to the greater or lesser activity in these two essential branches.

Thus I lay down my plan as prelate: to instruct, to moralize, and to smooth away the difficulties that stand in the way of love of work, which is one of the foundations of morality.

Instruction is like the head \[*base*, literally "base"; the context suggests "head"\] of the social body, which knows and directs the other members; charity, or fraternal love, is the heart that quickens everything and the soul that animates everything; the arms are the works of mercy by which they help one another; religion and justice, or the observance of the Laws, are the bases on which it must rest, or the feet with which it must walk towards the temporal and eternal happiness which, as prelate, I must seek for all.

The Archbishop of Cuba.

Observations to be kept in mind for the advancement of Agriculture

1st. I have observed that some lands are undivided or unapportioned, particularly in the jurisdiction of Las Tunas and of Bayamo on the Cauto side. The owners know and say that they have, for example, twelve *caballerías* of land \[*caballería*: a Cuban land measure of about 13.4 hectares, some 33 acres\], but they do not know the particular spot, though they know in general that their property lies there and is of great extent. These lands are the most wretched; no one cultivates them or builds a house on them, because no one presumes to fixed and determinate ownership; they merely put up, as a stopgap, some most miserable *bohíos* \[palm-thatched huts\]. The lands serve only for pasture, and quarrels and lawsuits occur very often; for whoever has more cattle and is bolder spreads out further, even though less of the land belongs to him. From this it follows that the division of the lands is absolutely necessary, so that each owner may know with certainty which is his land and may build on it, cultivating it or leasing it as he thinks best.

2nd. I therefore think it indispensable to establish a Law on the leasing of lands, for example: that whoever "fells the standing forest," as they say \[*tumba el monte firme*: clears virgin woodland\], or begins cultivation on virgin land, should be secured in possession of the land as a tenant for at least seven years: "two dead ones," as they say \[*dos de muerto*: two years free of rent\], and five at a moderate rent; and during this time the owner of the land may not alter the agreements. For I have observed that various hard-working and industrious tenants, after they have worked hard to make those lands bear fruit, and have succeeded, are in the third year thrown off them or dismissed, either by the owner himself or through the ambition of another tenant who offers the owner more profit than the first. This is very harmful to the development of industry, because the tenant, for fear of being turned off that land, neither cultivates it nor makes it bear fruit as he would if he were sure of remaining on it. So they have assured me themselves when talking about this. And as regards the house or dwelling, he should be paid for the improvements in case he is dismissed.

3rd. I have observed that some men in the countryside, by their way of doing and proposing things, show talent and some love of work and fondness for Agriculture; but for lack of capital they cannot undertake anything profitable. These men, then, helped with the resources of the Savings Banks, for example, which I have planned, can give a most happy result.[1]

4th. Until now I have distributed books and booklets of Religion and Christian Morals, and the happy results they have produced in this very field are incalculable; and they have produced another effect besides, which is that those who could not read have learned, simply from the desire to know what those books contained; so that nowadays there will hardly be found a house in all my diocese where one or more of the family cannot read.

Now, then, what matters is to give each country house some little booklet on agriculture, so that they may read in it how to understand \[the land\] and how to harvest; these booklets also including a part on natural history, particularly as regards the most common and domestic animals and birds.

5th. All country parish priests will have a quantity of these books and will distribute them free to those they know can profit by them, and at the same time, as opportunity offers, they will exhort the owners and tenants of the *haciendas*, farms, *hatos* \[cattle ranches\], etc., to keep at least the most common plants, animals and birds, according to the quality of the land.

6th. It would be very fitting for the higher authority to deign to enforce what is laid down by the Royal Pragmatic of 6 October 1771, which forbids games, not only unlawful but also lawful ones, on working days and hours, to labourers and to all country people who need their daily work to live and to cultivate the land well; for I have seen with my own eyes many of these spend the whole working day, or a great part of it, at gaming, with incalculable harm and damage following from it.

And it will be good to encourage them on feast days to amuse themselves with games that are in some way gymnastic, such as skittles, *truco* \[a table game like billiards or bagatelle\] and the like, not very violent, but more profitable than billiards, for example, under whose cover other forbidden games are hidden; and above all much less strenuous than dances and balls, in which morality also runs risks, if it is not lost altogether.

7th. In this part of the island there are a great many forests, and if this plan is adopted it is to be expected that much standing and uncultivated forest will be felled, and the lack of so many trees may cause some change \[*novedad*\] in the country. This is a truth that can not only be proved by physical reasons but demonstrated by what has happened in other countries through similar actions; and here, given the hot climate in which we are, the consequences could be fatal if care is not taken to forestall them beforehand, for example by leaving some forests, planting fruit trees and other trees of good timber, etc.

8th. A botanical garden will be formed, and in it will be planted the trees and plants of the country that are capable of some improvement, and those will be brought in from abroad which it is judged may give happy results here. One part will be devoted to agriculture and another to horticulture, and every Sunday, from ten to twelve, a professor will give public lessons for all. And since this measure is even more fitting and useful to country people than to the cities, it is set on Sunday so that all may have the opportunity to attend after having fulfilled the duties of Religion on these holy days.

9th. There will also be a collection of animals and birds from within and outside the island whose knowledge and introduction are judged profitable, and the way of raising them will be taught.

10th. I have planned the foundation of a house of charity to take in orphan boys and girls, or children of poor parents, in order to provide them with a decent way of living and dressing and with suitable religious and moral instruction, as well as some trade; and in a particular way they will be taught Agriculture, theoretical \[*especulativa*\] and practical. The botanical garden will be situated in the same establishment, and the same professor who teaches the boarders is to give lessons to the day pupils on feast days, as has been said, so that all may learn something so useful and profitable.

11th. In the same establishment there will be a class in Chemistry applied to the arts for boarders and day pupils, and for the latter on feast days, as has been said, \[a class\] in Botany and Agriculture, according to need, inclination, or what the director judges most prudent.

12th. Besides this central establishment and instruction, there will be a parish one, in which will be taught not only the Catechism, Religion and Morals, reading, writing, arithmetic and linear drawing, but also these subjects. To this end the seminarians are being instructed in these branches for a while each day in their hours of rest and in vacation time, in addition to the books of the subjects of the classes to which they belong. This serves them and prepares them to give, in due time, this most useful instruction in their parishes when they are parish priests.[2]

For this purpose, in all the churches that are being built I order a room beside the sacristy to be set aside for this parish school, as soon as it can be established.

These are the observations I have made for the preservation and improvement of morals and for the property and wealth of the country.

Santiago de Cuba, 1 January 1854.

Antonio María Claret, Archbishop of Cuba.

The Captain General's reply

Having brought this and other projects to the notice of the Captain General, he replied as follows:

Most Excellent and Most Illustrious Lord:

By Your Most Illustrious Excellency's communication of the 3rd instant, I have learned with the liveliest satisfaction of the zeal and interest with which Your Most Illustrious Excellency attends to all matters relating to your sacred ministry for the benefit of the peoples of this diocese; and in reply I must tell Your Most Illustrious Excellency that for my part I shall endeavour to assist you, providing you with the means of carrying out your important, useful and beneficent projects, making provision separately in each file as is proper, in accordance with the faculties and powers granted me by the authority that Her Majesty has deigned to confer upon me.

God keep Your Most Illustrious Excellency many years.

Havana, 28 January 1854.

The Marquis de la Pezuela.

To His Most Excellent and Most Illustrious Lordship the Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba.

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[1] *De officiis*, I, 42, 15, 151: *M. Tulli Ciceronis De Officiis libri tres*, ed. P. Fedeli (Mondadori, 1965), p. 100.

[2] AUGUSTINE, *De Genesi ad litteram*, VIII, 9, 18; in *Obras de San Agustín*, ed. Fr. Balbino Martín, O.S.A., BAC \[Madrid 1957\] XV, pp. 968-971.

[3] Cf. Gn 4:2.

[4] Cf. Gn 5:29.

[5] Cf. Gn 12:16.

[6] Cf. Gn 30:43.

[7] Cf. Ru 2:1.

[8] Cf. Jgs 6:11.

[9] Cf. *Commentaria in Pentateuchum Moysis*, by Fr. Cornelius a Lapide, S.J. (Antwerp 1671), p. 128.

[10] Cf. ibid.

[11] Cf. ibid.

[12] Madrid 1818-1819, 4 vols.: I, 544 pp.; II, 466; III, 655 pp.; IV, 361 pp.

[13] MASSON-FOUR, *Curso de agricultura*, with additions by D. A. Bachiller (Havana 1841).

[14] Cf. Mt 19:4-6.

[15] Cf. Mt 13:25-40.

[16] *Autobiography* 569.

[17] *Agricultura del Prior*, 1 vol. in 4to. - *Maison rustique*, 5 vols. in folio."

The Delights of the Countryside (1856) — SELECTIONS ONLY

The Father of the Family in the Country House (from the Introduction)

"You do me too much honour, Don Francisco. Still, speaking frankly, I will tell you that it is true I am no king, but I would not exchange my lot with the most powerful king in the world; I envy no one's lot, I am content with what I have; with my wife and family I lead the happiest life in the world; I lack nothing and have more than enough of everything, and I have the wherewithal to help the poor and unfortunate, for whom I feel great pity and much compassion, because I consider them my brothers and children of God, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and I know the great pleasure I give God by this, whom I always wish to please in all my dealings. I do not busy myself with the things of the world; books of Religion, scientific books, the instruction of my family and the care of my estate are my whole occupation and amusement. I find no pleasure whatever in games, idleness or other foolishness more proper to brainless and lazy people than to sensible, well-bred men who love to do good. Besides, every day, with great pleasure of heart, I give some lectures in natural history to my son and to some young enthusiasts who gather here daily."

Don Eusebio found the foundation of the Conferences in the first three chapters of Genesis:

"These three chapters of Genesis suggest to us the greatest and noblest ideas that can occur to us: for example, the existence of the first Being, His power, His wisdom and His other attributes; the creation and preservation of all things heavenly and earthly, visible and invisible; the beginning of the human race, its end and occupation, the fall of man and the hope of a Redeemer. What grand ideas!"

On the Duties of Man. — Institution and Goods of Marriage (Conference 24)

“Don Eusebio said: Following the order of creation, we have spoken of the sun, moon and stars, and of the most notable phenomena observed in the atmosphere. We have also dealt with the earth and its chief productions.

“But just as the Creator, after drawing all these things out of nothing, formed man and made him lord of them all, and therefore created him after He had created them, so we, after speaking of these same things, though briefly, shall treat lastly of man; for God Himself formed him in His image and likeness, and in man He made a compendium of all creatures, and adorned him with the gifts He had communicated and distributed to them all: so that He gave him being, like the planets; life, like the plants; sense, like the animals; and understanding, like the angels. And so man consists of soul and body. In his soul he is like God and the angels, and so it is spiritual and immortal, capable of knowing and loving God, and insatiable except by God; but in his body he is like the beasts, the plants and the earth from which he was formed: he lives and dies like the beasts and plants, and finally turns to earth and dust. But since this mortal body has lived united with the immortal soul and has been its companion in the good or evil the soul has done, it will therefore finally rise again by the power of that almighty God who drew all things out of nothing; so from dust He will draw forth the body of man and join it once more to the soul, so that it may have for ever the reward or the punishment of its good or evil works. And so it is very greatly fitting \[*muy mucho*: an emphatic old-fashioned doubling\] that man should always keep in view his chief duties, in order to fulfil them and be happy in this world and the next. The chief duties of man are three, namely: towards God, towards himself, and towards his fellow men.

Duties towards God

“God is his Creator, his Preserver, his Redeemer, his Father and his Lord. It is most reasonable that man should love Him, obey Him and serve Him, respecting His holy law, observing His divine precepts, and directing all his thoughts, words and deeds to His greater honour and glory; remembering at the same time that He is a most just judge, who will not leave one iota unrewarded or unpunished; remembering besides that He is immense, that He is in every place, that He sees everything, hears everything, that nothing is hidden from Him. And so one should very often say to oneself: Take care, for God is watching me and observing me.

Duties of man towards himself

“As regards the body, he must preserve his health and strength, eating and drinking with temperance, living with cleanliness and neatness, being always moderately occupied.

“As regards the soul, he must seek instruction, the practice of the virtues and perseverance in them, always keeping away from all that is evil and constantly exercising himself in what is good. Not to follow the wicked, and faithfully to imitate the good. To live always as he would wish to have lived at the hour of death.

“To live as if he were to die that very instant, and to work and make provision as if he were always to live.

Duties towards one’s neighbour

“Man must reflect that we are all brothers, that we all have one same Father, who is God; one same Redeemer, who is Jesus Christ; one same Mother, who is Most Holy Mary; and that we all have one same appointed end, which is heaven; and therefore we must love one another. This mutual love consists in doing good to one another. Man will love his neighbour as himself. He will treat him as he would wish to be treated, and will not do to him what he would not wish done to himself; and for that very reason he will never take revenge, but rather will strive to be generous in almsgiving and merciful.

“He will never give occasion for people to speak ill of him; but if, in spite of his care, they do speak ill of him, he will observe these three things:

“If they speak ill out of thoughtlessness and bad habit, the prudent man should pay no heed; if they speak out of madness, he should pity them; and if they speak out of malice, they should be forgiven and God should be prayed to for them.

“In nothing are a man’s fortitude and virtue so well known as in knowing how to bear trials, illnesses and calumnies in silence, hoping that it will pass; praying for those who have caused us that adversity, and doing good to the very ones who caused it. Blessed are those who live so, for they are happy already and will be so afterwards for ever.

“Here are some verses in which the chief virtues of the good man are set out:

He does not grumble or curse,\
He is meek of heart,\
He acts in justice and reason\
And thinks well what he says;\
His bearing is in nothing unbecoming,\
He proceeds with loyalty,\
He always speaks the truth,\
He helps the needy:\
He is noble, rich and learned,\
And has no vanity.

“— I like them very much, said Don Luis; I am sure \[*a buen seguro*\] I shall never forget them.

“— We have now spoken, Don Eusebio went on, of the creation and destiny of man and of his essential obligations; but now we must draw your attention to the words we read in the second chapter of Genesis: that as soon as God had created man, He took him and placed him in the paradise of delights to cultivate it and keep it. With this date the art of agriculture begins: how ancient!… how noble!… there can be no equal to it. At the same time observe how God is an enemy of idleness and laziness, since He at once places man in paradise to cultivate and keep it, so that he should not go about idle and lounging from one place to another doing nothing. What a lesson for the lazy!… It is well that they should know that idleness is the mother and mistress of all vices. Happy the man who is always occupied!

“You will also remember that we read in the same second chapter of Genesis that God said: It is not good for man to be alone; let us make him a help and companion like himself. And then God created woman and gave her to him as wife, and married them; and with this same date marriage was instituted. After the flood it was confirmed, and in the law of grace it was raised to a sacrament by Jesus Christ, who first purified it of polygamy, which by concession had crept in even among the patriarchs, and of repudiation \[divorce\], which Moses had permitted to the Jews because of the hardness of their hearts; but Jesus Christ declares and says expressly that from the beginning marriage is between man and woman, is of one man with one woman alone, for ever, or until the death of one of the two.[1]

“*It is not good for man to be alone.*

“First, by reason of man’s own individual nature, which is rational, social and communicative.

“Second, by reason of the species, which must be propagated and preserved rationally by the means the Creator has established; and to do so otherwise is not rational, nor according to his species, but brutish and

contrary to the nature of man.

“Third, because of the goods of fortune.

“It is not good for man to be alone, because he soon gives himself up to dissoluteness. It is better to marry than to burn, says St. Paul;[2] it is better that he marry than that he burn now with the fire of concupiscence, and afterwards there in hell with that fire which will never be quenched, as Jesus Christ says,[3] because of the licentiousness in which he has lived and the impurities into which he has fallen, by which he has offended God, breaking His law; he has injured himself in soul, body, honour and interests; he has degraded his children and outraged public morals.

“This irregular way of life is rebuked not only by his own rational nature but even by irrational nature: oh, how many brutes could teach him a lesson! There are many animals that, when they reach the proper age, take a mate, and no examples of infidelity are known: the death of one obliges the other to seek a new union; so it is with some varieties of monkeys, with the fox, the marten and the mole, which have only one mate. Among birds are counted the eagle, the sparrowhawk, the stork, the swan, the cock pigeon, the turtle-dove and the nightingale…

“Only men depart from this channel the Creator has marked out; but it must be noted that when men act thus they are led not by reason nor by law, but by passion, which degrades them, blinds them, drags them into disorder and makes them unhappy; but when men feel as men, they speak otherwise. Thus Plato said: When reason and law rule, life is a state of happiness; but on the contrary, if the passions rule, life is a most unhappy state. The same Plato said: Marriage is the foundation of the human race, and whoever opposes it, perverts it or confounds it will be an enemy of the race.

“And this great philosopher maintained in his theorems that laws on marriage and on the education of children should hold first place in the code of society. Not only Plato, but a great many wise lawgivers also enacted laws in favour of marriage.

“Phoroneus, in the laws he gave the Egyptians, commanded and ordained under grave penalties that a man who was not married could hold no office in government.

“Lycurgus commanded marriage to the Lacedaemonians, and expressly ordered that the captains should be married.

“The ancient Romans had a law that the dictator, the praetor, the censor, the quaestor and the master of the horse must all of necessity be married; for they said that offices on whose government the peoples depend should not be in the hands of unmarried men, because a man who has no wife and children at home cannot have much authority in the commonwealth.

“And Cicero relates that when the great Roman Marcus Porcius \[Cato\] governed the commonwealth, he never consented to have an uncle of his named Rufus made master of the horse, to which office the Senate had promoted him, saying that what Rufus deserved as a brave man he forfeited as a man living in concubinage; and he added that he would never give his vote for things of moment to be entrusted to a man who had a woman not lawfully his wife.

“Plutarch says of the Romans that the unmarried could not sit in the temple.

“Solon strictly commanded the Athenians that on reaching the proper age they should marry and so avoid concubinage and impurities, under penalty that a child born out of wedlock should be a slave of the city at large.

“In Corinth it was ordained that a man or woman who had had a child without being married should not be given burial after death.

“What has been said suffices to show how those wise men thought, spoke and acted concerning the necessity and usefulness of marriage for making families and whole nations happy, and, on the contrary, the misfortunes and harm that follow from neglecting marriage. To be convinced of it, it is more than enough to cast a rapid glance over Greece flourishing in the time of Aristides and Greece corrupted in the time of the Late Empire. Run through the annals of Rome while the Republic was made up of married men, and compare those golden centuries with those unhappy times of the emperors’ despotism, and you will see the difference between caring for marriage and neglecting it.

“To conclude this matter, we shall relate not what used to happen among the pagans, but what is happening today among Christians. In some cemeteries \[*campos santos*\] of large towns, relatives take great care to visit the remains of their forebears with their prayers, which they address from that place to the God of mercies on behalf of the departed; it is a very clear proof of their piety and love; and to show their great affection they place wreaths of everlastings on their tombs; they sow, plant and tend with great care various little flowers, symbols of their virtues: on the grave of virgins they sow lilies, on that of widows violets, on that of married people roses; and on that of old bachelors \[*solterones*\] their relatives sow nothing; only some rascally strangers sow rue and thistles: rue, to indicate by its bad smell the shameful vices in which they had lived, and thistles, whose thorns indicate the scandals they have given. And since they leave no one to take an interest in their welfare, no one visits their grave, and the rue and thistles keep growing because no one pulls them up; those who see them only laugh and say: Here lies an old bachelor. This happens in Bohemia, whose people are perhaps the most devout in visiting cemeteries. And nowadays it is a proverb on seeing an old bachelor: If this one dies in Bohemia, they will sow rue and thistles on his grave.

“— I cannot help laughing at the wretched old bachelors, said Don Francisco, and at the same time being filled with satisfaction at having known how to choose a state of life at the proper time, and at seeing myself free of the miseries, disgraces and passions in which old bachelors are necessarily entangled, and at finding myself, with my wife and family, whom I love dearly, the happiest man in the world. One difficulty occurs to me, and it is this: since it is so good to marry and so bad to remain an old bachelor, how is it that priests do not marry, and indeed I know that on receiving major orders they make a vow of perpetual chastity?

“— To which Don Eusebio replied: For two reasons: the first is the holiness of their ministry, and the second is that their very mission requires it. We said, for the holiness of their ministry: priests are called to be, and must be, angels, and as such must not be married. They must imitate their divine master Jesus Christ, who lived so. They must be holy in soul and body, and this is achieved by chastity; they must be entirely and always consecrated to the service of God; they must serve God with body and spirit, but with a body mortified as if it were dead; and this is what the clerical or black habit signifies: dead to the flesh, dead to the world, dead to self; and the white surplice signifies the whiteness of his soul, the purity of his spirit. We said that the priestly mission itself required it: indeed, the mission of the priest is spiritual and not carnal; he is called father, but spiritual father, who begets his children through the preaching of the Gospel, as the Apostle said,[4] and also through the administration of the holy sacraments; he rears them by works of charity and nourishes them with his holy zeal; so that a married priest would be like a dove without wings, which would always walk about the house but never leave it, because the care of his family would absorb all his attention: for it he would do business, for it he would hoard… Whereas nothing holds back the unmarried priest in the impulses of his zeal; he flies like a white dove to the fulfilment of his sacred ministry, and occupies himself with those things that are according to the pleasure and will of his heavenly Father, as Jesus Christ taught and practised.[5] If a priest were married, how could he leave his wife and family to attend to strangers? How could this priest-shepherd give his life for the sheep, as Jesus Christ says,[6] and as all good priests do in times of plague and on other occasions, by day, by night, in rain and in heat, exposed to a thousand diseases and to death itself, if fear of leaving his wife a widow and his children orphans held him back and kept him from devoting himself to the fulfilment of his ministry?

"— Therefore, to enter the priestly state a special vocation is required; and to those who are called by God, it is His affair to give them this grace of continence, to those to whom it has been granted from on high, as Jesus Christ says in St. Matthew 19:11; and He adds: There are eunuchs who were born so from their mothers' womb, there are eunuchs who were made so by men, and there are eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, with the vow of chastity. He who feels capable of this resolution, let him take it. But if he does not feel he has the courage to be chaste, let him not enter the priestly state; it would be better for him not to have been born, as Jesus Christ said speaking of Judas;[7] for the unchaste priest is the devil himself, says St. Ambrose.

"Let us leave these reflections and return to our purpose; and so we affirm that man and woman are not truly such except through marriage, for then they can give rise to beings who resemble them. Men and women of good morals should not live isolated upon the earth (unless a special vocation to live otherwise intervenes); rather, it is by uniting in marriage that they will find happiness in this life and the next, paying at the same time to the State one of the most sacred of debts, furnishing it with individuals who, duly brought up and instructed, will in time become useful members of the commonwealth. In short, marriage perfects man and woman: first, because it is necessary to the development of their organism, and second, because it obliges them to work to secure the sustenance and existence of their family.

"Certain persons who pass for clever have allowed themselves jokes and invectives about marriage. It is, according to them, the grave of love, the field of vexations and anxieties, and other things in this style. Such expressions should be despised, because they do not come from sensible mouths; the idea is entirely mistaken, and to these persons, for their undeceiving, we say: It is not marriage that is bad; it is sometimes those who contract it who are bad. An Italian proverb says that marriage is a paradise or a hell.

"The comparison is exact. Under the aspect of the peace, joy and happiness enjoyed by two spouses united by the close bond of affection \[*simpatía*\], the days run by delightfully amid the most pleasant emotions of family life; the sky that lights them is serene, and if now and then some light cloud comes between and deprives it of its natural clearness, it is at once dispersed, and its former colour soon appears, smiling even more.

"But what a disastrous picture is offered by an ill-matched marriage, an uncongenial marriage!… The sky is gloomy, lightning crosses its horizon in every direction, storm clouds follow one another almost without interruption; and if at certain moments some calm appears that promises some improvement, soon another storm comes on, more fearful still, which wrecks \[*da al traste con*\] everything it meets in its path. In the midst of this picture are seen two poisoned beings raging, living like two wild beasts in a continual state of hostility, insulting each other, cursing each other and even coming to blows.

"Is not this properly a hell?… Can there be a hell without sin?… By its fruit the tree is known…[8] It was not God who joined them, but the devil; it was not prayer, counsel and reflection that joined them, but passion, caprice and sin.

"To every man who is trying to find himself a companion we must recall that proverb, as old as it is necessary, which says: Before you marry, look at what you are doing \[*Antes que te cases, mira lo que haces*: the proverb, here printed "Antes no te cases"\]; and besides, we shall tell him that he must put before the fortune of his intended her upbringing, her morality and her religion; and if in these and her other virtues she has the proper carats \[*quilates*: the fineness of gold\], let him go on to celebrate the marriage as soon as possible, guarding himself more than against death from the baseness of some suitors \[*celebrantes*: in Cuban usage, young men courting a girl\], who, under pretext of love, have the audacity to profane their intended, making her a bad woman before she is a good wife. What wickedness!…

"But those who marry with the proper dispositions know from the outset that marriage is the foundation of all society and the safeguard of good morals; it makes man and woman much more virtuous and keeps them

from giving themselves up to vices, to a bad life. The married man, about to commit an evil deed, is almost always held back by his wife. The mother of a family, at the moment of going astray, enters on the path of virtue on seeing her dear children. The father of a family represses his bad inclinations; he does not want to stand before his children leaving them disgrace as their inheritance.

“Lastly, before ending this conference, we shall say how married people should behave so that their happiness may be lasting.

“The man must never abuse the authority he has over the woman, nor must she usurp in the least the rights of the man. Each will give way to the other, without showing stubbornness or bad manners in their opinions. The husband will be attentive to his wife, will satisfy and even anticipate her wishes if he judges them reasonable, and above all let him not show indifference or anger when he is at her side. The wife, for her part, must forget worldly dissipations in order to direct all her solicitude to her husband and her children; for a woman who thinks only of finery and ornaments, who dreams only of parties, balls and theatres, will come to a bad end. Everything in its time: dolls for childhood, but for mothers prudence, modesty, justice and the other virtues.

“Alas, how many marriages appeared with a most smiling horizon and, through lack of caution, came to nothing and ended in the most violent of storms!

“Enough for today. Tell us, Federico: Who created man? When? What gifts did He grant him? For what purpose? What are his chief duties? What does he owe to God? What to himself? What to his neighbour?

“— This other part Don Francisco will kindly explain, as a good husband and father of a family: When did God institute marriage? Is it good for man to be alone? What evils follow? What do the wise say on this matter? What do you think of the old bachelors in Bohemia? What do you think of clerical celibacy? What do you say of the saying, marriage is a paradise or a hell? What must be done to choose rightly? What, to persevere?”

On the Country House, Rules of Religion and Morals, and Rules for its Business (from Conference 25)

“Don Eusebio said: Just as little birds build their nests, so too, and much more, married people must build or rent a house, not only to raise children, as the birds do, but also to shelter and protect themselves from a thousand bad weathers.

“To succeed, whoever wishes to build a country house must keep three things in mind, namely: the site, the size and the material. \[…\]” *\[The rest of this passage is not given in the source.\]*

Rules of religion and morals to be kept in the country house

1st. In every country house there will be a little altar \[*altarito*\], as they call it, and as a rule there is one already, with an image of Jesus and another of Most Holy Mary; for images are very fitting to remind us of the originals, who are in heaven, and it is they whom we venerate in their images; besides, before images one is more attentive, recollected and devout in prayer.[1]

2nd. Everyone, morning and evening, will make the Christian’s exercises \[daily prayers\] in the manner given in the *Camino recto* \[*The Straight and Sure Way*\]. If possible, all will gather before the altar; or else each will do it wherever he can, for God is in every place.

3rd. During the day he will remember that he is in the presence of God, who sees him and observes all that he does, says and thinks. And so he will take care to offer each thing in particular to God inwardly, saying from the heart: Lord, I do this for love of You. I know it is Your will that I fulfil my duty. This I do because it is my duty. Blessed be You, my God. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.[2]

If during the day something grieves him, he will say: Give me patience, my God, and accept this trial that afflicts me in satisfaction for my sins. Blessed be God. All for God.

4th. Every day at a suitable hour the Rosary will be prayed to the Blessed Virgin Mary, without dozing; rather, they will pray it with attention and devotion, meditating on the mysteries of the life, passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ.[3]

5th. He will have his time well distributed and will do each thing at its hour, without letting himself be deceived by sloth; and so he will have room for everything and will do it well; otherwise everything will be left to do at night, and it will happen that it is not done, or is done badly, because he is tired from the day's work or overcome with sleep.

6th. On Sundays and feast days he will try to attend Holy Mass and the instructions given in the parish; and if he cannot, because it is raining or for some other grave cause, he will try to make his devotions at home, sanctifying the feast in the best way he can.

On feast days he will occupy himself with prayer and the reading of good books, and will exercise himself in works of charity, such as teaching the Catechism, visiting a sick neighbour…

To sanctify the feasts better he will have some good books, such as: the *Camino recto*, the *Maná*, the *Catecismo explicado*,[4] the *Verdadero Libro del pueblo* by Madame de Beaumont,[5] the *Instrucción de la juventud*,[6] the *Devout Life* of St. Francis de Sales,[7] the *Glories of Mary*[8] and the *Avisos a los padres de familia* \[*Counsels to Fathers of Families*\].[9]

On feast days, after fulfilling the duties of Religion, one may visit the neighbours and rejoice and enjoy oneself in the Lord.

Every year he must take care to fulfil the precepts of Religion, of paschal confession and communion \[the Easter duty\]; and it will be better if during the year they are received frequently out of devotion.

7th. In the country house the holy fear and love of God must preside, His holy law being constantly kept, each one promptly turning away from all that is evil and diligently exercising himself in all that is good.

8th. Entry will be denied to every vice; but particular watch will be kept that drunkenness, excessive gaming (whether in the amount or in the time spent), and impurity do not get in; and so shameful expressions will never be allowed, nor will the least bold action be tolerated.

9th. In the country house these virtues must dwell permanently \[*de asiento*\], namely: alms for the poor, hospitality for travellers, and charity towards all. So they will be happy in this life and afterwards in the next. Amen.

Note

And if he wants more advice with the aim of reaching the highest degree of perfection, let the countryman not think that only in many large books will he find what he desires, nor that it is very uphill \[*muy cuesta arriba*: very hard going\], as the saying is, to order a life that makes a paradise of any spot on earth. Nothing of the kind. Everything is reduced to the ten short lines of this *espinela* \[a *décima*, the ten-line stanza named after the poet Vicente Espinel\], which we may call commandments for domestic happiness:

An honest and well-ordered life,\

Using few remedies,\

And taking every means\

Not to be upset by anything.\

Moderate food,\

Exercise, devotion,

And some recreation:

Living in the country is very healthy;

Little shutting oneself in, humane dealings,

And continual occupation.

Rules of good management for a country house

Whoever manages a country house must indispensably have five virtues, which are: prudence, activity, order, economy and perseverance; it being well understood that he will advance in his tasks in proportion as he exercises himself in the said virtues; and so we shall say something, though briefly, about each of them.

Prudence

With prudence he will consider and weigh his undertaking, settle the plan, combine the whole and distribute the details, preparing in good time the means best suited to attain his end.

Let him not be quick to be carried away by illusions; let him flee extremes, and before setting up even what seems infallible to him, let him try it on a small scale and gain experience in advance.

When, a project being well matured, he goes on to put it into practice, let him proceed with a steady hand \[*con pulso*\] and caution, without insisting on rushing the course of things, leaving to time the part that belongs to it, and not neglecting to do on our part what we ought, how and when.

Activity

On this virtue the farmer's happiness rests, for work achieves everything. Let him be the first to rise; let him carry his business forward, and not let his business carry him.

Let him appear unexpectedly before his workers, and never be idle, nor have an indifferent or absent-minded air; but on the contrary, let him approve or correct the material operations he witnesses, as they deserve. Let him on occasion take up the hoe or the pruning knife, and let the servants and tenants see that he understands it; by this his authority will gain greater strength.

The master's eye does more than his hands \[*El ojo del amo…*: proverb, cf. "the eye of the master fattens the horse"\]. He who has servants and tenants and does not see them will be brought to poverty by them.

The farmer's worst evil is sloth. It walks so slowly that poverty soon overtakes it.

Sloth finds everything hard; but activity makes everything easy. The sluggard who gets up late is in a hurry all day, and has barely begun to do anything when night overtakes him.

Order

With order work bears fruit, means suffice and the farm prospers.

Let there be no more people than necessary, for the surplus causes expense and gets in the way. Let distribution be made with good judgement, provision for the livestock be made, and let all departments be run as regularly as the works of a clock. This is achieved with a little activity from the start.

Let the harvests be well stored. Sometimes more is lost in one day through carelessness than is gained in a week of work.

Everything in its place. It is very praiseworthy to form the habit of proceeding regularly in everything, of training the eye to measure distances and surfaces, and of finishing one's operations and journeys on a fixed day, which is like making oneself master of time and of one's tasks.

He will give very few counter-orders, and, if possible, none.

Economy

Economy consists in the farmer's spending all that is necessary but nothing useless, and in making use of whatever can be applied to the farm work, or to the market, or to household uses.

Let nothing be begun that is not to be continued, and let neither time, strength, seed nor anything else be wasted.

The rich must be economical so as not to become poor and to keep the means of doing good; and the poor must be economical so as not to perish of want. Whoever cannot buy grown cattle, let him begin with calves; they will grow, give young, manure, produce and money.

With economy, he who has keeps and increases; he who has not, acquires. Without economy the best patrimonies melt away like salt in water, and a season of sterile luxury is displayed, only to go on, step by counted step \[*por sus pasos contados*: by inevitable stages\], to succumb at the hands of usurers.

He who goes to borrow goes in search of a mortification. Lent seems very short to the man who has to pay at Easter \[*Bien corta se le hace la Cuaresma al que ha de pagar por Pascua*: proverb; debts fall due at Easter\].

To earn lawfully what one can, and to keep what one earns, is the secret of turning lead into gold.

Perseverance

Perseverance serves to keep one from wavering at slight setbacks or losing heart even at grave ones that may occur.

Let the farmer count on obstacles and stumbles; let him receive them without surprise when they come, and learn to overcome them without distress, for so he will keep his reason more serene and give proof of the elevation of his character.

Let him not lose heart because a trial goes wrong; it must be repeated two or three times, for only by dint of working is the experience that was lacking to be acquired.

Let him not confuse perseverance with stubbornness. From the moment he meets with disappointment, he must yield docilely to the evidence and seek a remedy for the error. Good sense advises him this, as does his own interest.

To till the land well, manure it suitably, change the lands for meadows every year, and sow the meadows afresh, is to be a good cultivator.

Let him take care of his servants, farmhands and labourers \[*peones*\], treating them with affability and always with justice, for unfounded preferences give offence. Let him reward the most capable and zealous, and dismiss the lazy, the vicious and those who repeat their faults, for if he kept them the rest would be contaminated.

Finally, let the farmer cultivate his mind, learn true principles and take pride in it; for with this, with fulfilling his social duties as an honest man, and with putting his trust in God that He may help him while he helps himself, he will have done all that is in his power to have peace in his heart and hope of prospering in his undertakings.

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[10] Cf. Mt 19:3-9.

[11] 1 Cor 7:9.

[12] Mt 25:41.

[13] 1 Cor 4:15.

[14] Cf. Lk 2:49.

[15] Cf. Jn 10:11.

[16] Cf. Mt 26:24.

[17] Cf. Mt 7:17-18.

[1] *Aut.* 48.

[2] Mt 6:9 \[-10\].

[3] *Aut.* 46.

[4] *Catecismo de la doctrina cristiana explicado y adaptado a la capacidad de los niños y niñas y adornado con muchas láminas* (Barcelona 1848), 484 pp.

[5] MME DE BEAUMONT, *Verdadero libro del pueblo, o conversaciones familiares de doctrina cristiana* (Barcelona 1855).

[6] M. CHARLES GOBINET, doctor of the Sorbonne, *Instrucción de la juventud en la piedad cristiana* (Barcelona 1855).

[7] FRANCIS DE SALES, *Introducción a la vida devota* (Barcelona 1855).

[8] ALPHONSUS MARIA DE LIGUORI, *Las glorias de María* (Barcelona 1856).

[9] *Avisos muy útiles a los padres de familia* (Barcelona 1845).

Regulations of the Parish Savings Bank, and the Rose of Mary

From The Delights of the Countryside *(selections).*

Regulations of the Parish Savings Bank, or Maternal Deposit and Safekeeping

It is so called \[the antecedent is the Savings Bank named in the title\] because it was invented by that noble and charitable Englishwoman, Mrs. Priscilla Wakefield \[printed "Wokefield"\], in the year 1803, in the town of Tottenham, two leagues from London.

In view of the happy results this Savings Bank has produced in every place where it has been established, some writers have said that it was the best work the moderns have invented for the benefit of humanity.

The Archbishop of Cuba, desirous of preserving the good morals he has taught by word and in writing, of promoting public morality, and of fostering at the same time agriculture and the mechanical trades, establishes it in his diocese as an effective means to this end in the year 1854, on the following bases:

1st. In each parish, particularly in the country parts of the diocese, there will be a Savings Bank, whose object is to foster good morals, agriculture and the mechanical trades, especially among the lower class.

2nd. To take care of this Bank there will be three commissioners, whom the prelate will appoint; they will be the parish priest, the district captain \[*capitán del partido*: the local civil officer\] or other authority, and one person of the parish who inspires most confidence by his morality, religious spirit and philanthropy.

3rd. These commissioners will serve without pay, because their mission is the good of their neighbours.

4th. The Commission will keep two books: one in which the sums received will be entered, and another for those paid out; but they must be entered in columns, so that a running total is always kept, and at any moment the cash is to be checked, all that need be done is to subtract the grand total of the book of payments from the grand total of the book of receipts, and the difference will be the sum on hand; this will avoid having to keep a cash book. In addition a third book, called the ledger, will be kept, in which an account by debit and credit \[*por cargo y data*\] will be opened for each person who appears in the two previous books; so that at a single glance it will be known what each person owes or is owed; and it will be a kind of abstract of the first two books. At the end this book will carry an index, in alphabetical order, of all persons having an open account with the establishment.

5th. The prelate offers to pay for these books and any other ordinary and extraordinary expenses that occur.

6th. The same prelate offers to lend one thousand *pesos fuertes* \[hard silver dollars\] to each parish to begin this great work of charity.

7th. The prelate will visit these banks and examine their books and accounts when he makes the visitation of his diocese, and whenever he judges it prudent or necessary, without charging any fee or emolument; for all these labours of the prelate and the commissioners should have no other aim than charity, nor look for any other reward and pay than God's.

8th. Anyone domiciled in the parish, man or woman, white or coloured, free or slave (in the latter case with his master's permission), may deposit in the Savings Bank any sum not less than two *reales fuertes* \[silver reals; eight to the peso\] nor more than five hundred pesos, on any day of the year, either at once or in different amounts in the same year, as he can and as best suits him; and deposits will be made by passbook, not exceeding fifty pesos a week.

9th. One of the three commissioners, chosen by themselves, will be charged with receiving the sums as they are deposited, noting in its place the sum received, dating the day, month and year of its receipt, naming who hands it in and signing as the one who receives it. Besides this record in the corresponding book, a brief receipt will be given to the depositor; and since it is assumed that he will make deposits at different times, these receipts will be made out in a passbook which the depositor himself will be given and will keep, and which he must present whenever he wishes to deposit any sum. This receipt passbook will be collected and filed by the Commission when the depositor has withdrawn all the sums he put into the bank.

10. The Commission will have a strongbox with three different keys, and each commissioner will keep one of them. Every Sunday from ten to twelve in the morning the three commissioners will meet to put in the sums the commissioner in charge has received during the week; and without waiting for Sunday, the commissioners will meet to deposit the money in the chest whenever it reaches five hundred pesos.

11. In these Sunday meetings whatever arises will be dealt with, and the sums requested will be paid out if the three commissioners judge it prudent. Thus no commissioner by himself may pay out anything. Besides the agreement and presence of the three commissioners, the applicant must present a person of probity and of settled means \[*arraigado*: owning property locally\], to the satisfaction of the commissioners, to be guarantor and principal payer of the sum handed over, both signing in the corresponding book of payments.

12. Whoever borrows from the Bank will pay as interest \[*premio*\] at the rate of one half per cent a month, or six per cent a year.

13. The depositor, when he wishes to withdraw the sum deposited, will give a month's notice, and at the end of the month it will be paid to him with the corresponding interest, which will begin to accrue fifteen days after the capital was handed in, to allow time for placing the money at interest; if there is a gain before the fifteen days, it will be given as alms, as will the interest that might belong to the prelate, as will be said in the following article.

14. Although it was said in the previous article that the depositor will receive six per cent besides the capital, this rule does not apply to the thousand pesos the prelate lends, nor to other sums he may supply in time if he judges it prudent; for he declares from this moment that he claims nothing and desires no gain of any kind, but only the good of his sheep. And so the net profits which the sums the prelate has put in, and may put in, bring to the Savings Bank will be distributed to poor widows and honest maidens, as is laid down in the *Rose of Mary*, p. 384 \[of the book\].

15. There are three classes of persons who may apply: 1st, those who ask only for the deposit they have made; 2nd, those who ask for their deposit and part of the funds up to a certain amount; 3rd, finally, those who ask for a certain sum without having deposited anything. Those of the first class must be attended to at once, since they ask for what is their own, giving a month's notice. As for those of the 2nd and 3rd classes,

those of the 2nd should be preferred to those of the 3rd, unless certain circumstances arise that make the latter preferable to the former. Preference will go to the children and relatives of those who have funds deposited in the Bank; to those who wish to buy or rent land to cultivate; to those who wish to buy animals, beasts, fowl, etc., for their use and to foster breeding. Those who devote themselves to agriculture and those who work at some mechanical trade will always be preferred. All those to whom loans may be made must belong to the same parish where the Bank is, and loans will be made to those of another parish only when those of this one do not apply or are not deserving.

16. For now, at the beginning, only the sum deposited, whatever it may be, will be paid out. But when the sum deposited does not reach one hundred and fifty pesos and the owner asks for that amount, he will be given from the funds enough to make it up. When the applicant has made no deposit of funds at all and is worthy of a loan, he will be given the sum he asks for, if it is not less than fifty pesos nor more than one hundred and fifty. And the one who receives the sum and the guarantor and principal payer must both sign, as was said in no. 11.

17. The sum received from the funds will be repaid in the following form and manner: 1st, if the sum lent from the funds reaches one hundred and fifty pesos, it will be repaid in three years, fifty each year; 2nd, if the sum or part of the funds is one hundred pesos or less, it will be repaid in two years, fifty each year; 3rd, if the sum or part of the funds is fifty pesos or less, it will be repaid at the end of the first year, and he will be given a receipt or certificate of having complied. But the commissioners are empowered to renew the same loan to those who have had the use of it and met their term, on the supposition that there are no others applying, since they have already been favoured once.

18. If the borrower fails to meet the obligations of the preceding number, it falls to the guarantor to fulfil them and pay not only the sum and the corresponding interest, but also all the expenses that the delay and ingratitude of the one who received such a favour may occasion.

19. Since men often break their word in paying debts, not so much through their misfortunes (which may be taken into consideration when they are very notable) as through their vices, the commissioners will be watchful and very much on their guard, so as not to lend any sum to vicious men, particularly in gaming, drink and women. And if, after the sum has been lent to him, it becomes known that he is given to any of these vices or another like them, he will be called and warned in a fatherly way to amend; but if he does not amend, repayment of the whole sum will be demanded of him, and he will be obliged to pay all the expenses this occasions, and if he cannot, his guarantor will, as has been said. But on this article the commissioners will bear in mind that all their ways of acting must be guided by charity; and if the one who must repay the sum before time because of his bad life would be very gravely harmed, they will inform the prelate so that the most prudent and charitable course may be adopted.

20. The prelate reserves the power to add any article, if he considers it necessary.

Santiago de Cuba, 1 January 1854. ANTONIO MARÍA, Archbishop of Cuba.

Approval of the Savings Bank

Ever-faithful Island of Cuba. — Government and Captaincy General. — Political Secretariat. — 4th Section. — Most Excellent and Most Illustrious Lord: Having examined with interest and care the Regulations of the Parish Savings Bank, or Maternal Deposit and Safekeeping, drawn up by Your Most Illustrious Excellency on the 3rd of last month, and the project you proposed to me on the same date concerning the measures it would be fitting to adopt for the promotion of agriculture in that diocese, I have this day approved the said Regulations, a copy of which I am sending to His Excellency the Governor of that province for his due information, authorizing Your Most Illustrious Excellency forthwith to put into effect so useful and pious an institution. At the same time I have taken the appropriate measures for the observance of the laws in force on this Island concerning lawful and unlawful games, and I have passed on with my recommendation to the Royal Board of Development \[Real Junta

de Fomento\] Your Most Illustrious Excellency's memorandum and observations on the establishment of agricultural institutes and on forests and on artificial and natural meadows. — All of which I have the pleasure of communicating to Your Most Illustrious Excellency, expressing my gratification at the zeal that animates you for the good of your parishioners, from which I promise myself precious fruits. — God keep Your Most Illustrious Excellency many years.

Havana, 15 February 1854. The Marquis de la Pezuela. To His Most Excellent and Most Illustrious Lordship the Archbishop of Cuba.

The Rose of Mary

The sixty pesos which are the yield of the thousand the prelate puts in will be distributed in the same parish in which the Savings Bank is established, and this distribution will be made as follows:

Of the sixty pesos, ten will be taken and distributed solely to poor widows, and the remaining fifty will be given as a dowry and reward for her virtues to one virtuous maiden. And this gift will be called the Rose of Most Holy Mary.

The maidens who aspire to this Rose of Mary must meet the following conditions:

1st. They must be unmarried women \[*doncellas*\] between the ages of 14 and 40, so that those older or younger will not be put on the list that will be drawn up for this purpose at the beginning of the year; and during the year any who deserve it will be removed or added.

2nd. They must be poor.

3rd. They must be virtuous, so that they have never given any scandal; for those who give scandal are unworthy to be placed on this list of aspirants to the Rose of Mary.

4th. Nor will those be admitted who attend indecent dances, whether because of the manner of dancing or the manner of dressing, low-necked and in short dresses, after the fashion of those Jews who scourged Jesus Christ, the son of Mary. Maidens who dance only decent dances and attend them in decent dress will be admitted; but those will be preferred who have most closely imitated Most Holy Mary, who never danced, nor went to dances, nor dressed indecently.

5th. In drawing up the list, it will also be borne in mind whether the maiden being entered has had a suitor \[*celebrante*\] or not; and if she has had a courtship \[*celebraciones*: Cuban usage for formal courting\], that it has not lasted more than three months with the same suitor. For long courtships with the same person are as a rule the cause of many sins of thought, of desire, of word, of dishonour and of scandal. And just as the Most Holy Virgin married St. Joseph without courtship, so maidens must try to imitate her; in this way they will see themselves married sooner, and will be happy after marriage, because they will have had room to think dispassionately about whom they are marrying; and, free of passion, they will have made use of prayer to God and to Most Holy Mary, and of their parents' counsel. And besides, they will not have permitted any wickedness under promise of marriage.

6th. From the maidens of the parish who meet these conditions the list will be drawn up, and on the first day of the following year, or when the prelate goes there, the draw will be held; and the favoured one will be given the sum and accompanied to the church with congratulations, and thanks will be given to Most Holy Mary for the good fortune she has given her.

7th. If the one drawn is a maiden who came from another parish, or left this one, or married, she will be given the sum corresponding to the months she was in the parish, or was a maiden. In this case a second draw will be held, and the rest of the sum will be given to the one drawn second, and she, not the other, will be the one accompanied to the church to give thanks to Most Holy Mary.

8th. If any doubt arises, or in time any difficulty presents itself, let the prelate be consulted, in order to remove abuses and always to seek the greater glory of God and of Most Holy Mary and the perfection of Christian morals.

ANTONIO MARÍA, ARCHBISHOP OF CUBA

THE END