

## Chapter six: 1839-I *The separate worlds connect*

### In France: renown

Less than three years after the little known loose groups of Marists in the dioceses of Lyon and Belley had been officially recognized as a religious institute of pontifical right, they had drawn national attention. In May 1837 both the *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi* and *L'Ami de la religion* told the story of the voyage of Pompallier and his seven companions as far as Tenerife.<sup>1</sup> In January 1838 both publications took their readers to Valparaiso with the sad report of the death of Claude Bret in mid-ocean and the problem the missionaries then faced in having to cross the Pacific.<sup>2</sup> A week later, 3 February, *l'Ami* announced that *les Prêtres Maristes* were readying a second group of missionaries.<sup>3</sup> The *Annales* followed suit in March, mentioning also the possible opening of a procure in California.<sup>4</sup> On 11 September *L'Ami de la religion* told its readers that Pompallier and his two companions had reached Australia and New Zealand, that English Protestant missionaries had tried to push them out of New Zealand, that they had been helped by a rich local French citizen and that a French naval vessel was about to sail from Sydney to New Zealand to show the flag in their support.<sup>5</sup> In October *L'Ami* announced the departure of the second group of missionaries from Bordeaux and in November readers of the French paper knew that the Marist missions had been mentioned in the Roman paper *Diario*. Also in November the *Annales* published Bishop Pompallier's letter from Sydney nearly in full. They left out his detailed requests for missionaries but not his complaints about letters not being answered.<sup>6</sup> In January 1839 they published, again in full (eighteen pages!), the first letters from New Zealand from Bishop Pompallier and Fr. Servant.<sup>7</sup>

Not only the Oceania missions attracted the attention of the newspapers. In February 1839 a parish mission in Moidieu near Vienne, in the diocese of Grenoble, that first threatened to collapse through the indifference of the local people, caught the headlines when it became a great success in the hands of four 'missionaries of the Society of Mary in Lyon'.<sup>8</sup> There were other more casual honourable mentions for the priests, such as Fr. Deschamps preaching in Saint-Vincent. The Marist Brothers got into the paper several times for opening schools in various places.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pompallier had written to Colin from Tenerife on 18 January and enclosed Claude Bret's diary; cf. above p. 47. The *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, LII, May 1837, pp. 507-511, gave a summary of Pompallier's letter and quoted extensively from Bret's diary, LRO, doc. 1 [51 – 53]. Mention in *L'Ami de la religion*, 27.04.37 (93), p. 183, Cstud. II, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales*, LVI, January 1838, pp. 235 -238, with a summary of the events and excerpts of Pompallier's letter of 17 July, 1837 (cf. LRO, doc. 15) that had reached Colin on 13 November, cf. above p. 63. *L'Ami* carried the news on 25.01.1838, cf. Cstud. II, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Cstud II, p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> *Annales*, March 1838, p. 319.

<sup>5</sup> *L'Ami*, 11.09.38 (98), p. 489, cf. Cstud II, p. 58. This news must have been sent in February/March by a correspondent in Sydney, possibly an officer of the *Héroïne*, i.e. before the ship left for New Zealand. With the rich local French citizen the article probably referred to the baron de Thierry, who, however, was not involved in the events of 22 January at Totara point.

<sup>6</sup> *Annales*, November 1838, pp. 70 – 76. LRO, doc. 22, dated 23.12.37; cf. above, p. 64f. This is the letter that Colin received around 01.09.1838.

<sup>7</sup> *Annales*, January 1839, pp. 140-157.

<sup>8</sup> *L'Ami*, 12.02.39, cf. CS, doc. 57 & 59.

<sup>9</sup> *L'Ami* mentions Fr. Deschamps in Saint-Vincent (11.03.37). The Marist Brothers are mentioned on 11.10.36; 22.11.38 & 18.12.38. Cf. Cstud. II, pp. 57f.

### **Also in France: financial support**

The young Society of Mary did not have the means to finance the missions entrusted to it. Archbishop de Pins had from the beginning involved the Propagation of the Faith, then established in the archdiocese. It gave the Marist missions impressive support: in the four years 1836, 1837, 1838 and 1839 they donated respectively 25.000, 33.200, 52.181 and 78.000 francs, whereby, in today's money, we must think of amounts in the order of 200.000, 265.600, 417.448 and 624.000 Euro.<sup>10</sup>

Such sums can only have been brought together by regular contributions of many thousands of generous people, probably reading the *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*. The missionaries themselves were well known to the clergy of Lyon and Belley. They had studied together and had been their colleagues in the ministry. They will have given full support to the fund raising of the Propagation of the Faith.

### **And the cream of the nation**

Given the image that the Society of Mary was quickly acquiring in France, and the massive support of the laity, it is no wonder that she attracted men of great quality. In the year after the founding chapter of September 1836 no less than sixteen diocesan priests entered the novitiate. By September 1839<sup>11</sup> twenty-seven new Marists had joined the Society, among whom were (Saint) Julien Eymard who would later found the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, two future bishops (Épalle and Viard), one future superior general (Favre), men like Poupinel and Rocher who would soon put the administration of the missions on a solid base and several others who will for ever be venerated as *founders of Churches*<sup>12</sup>, such as Petit-Jean in Christchurch<sup>13</sup> and Chevron in Tonga.<sup>14</sup> In assigning the missionaries Colin could maintain the high standards of generosity and commitment that he considered essential.

### **Also in France: a frustrated superior**

When, in October 1838, Colin had received Pompallier's letter of 14 May and the letters that Servant had sent to his two friends<sup>15</sup>, he had simply passed them to the Propagation of the Faith. They were published – nearly in full - in January 1839.<sup>16</sup> Once Colin saw them in print, and possibly because of reactions he picked up from Marists or other readers, he made up his mind not to let that happen again.

A few months later, in April, he received the letters sent in September 1838<sup>17</sup>, and at about the same time those from the missionaries of the second group in Valparaiso.<sup>18</sup> This time he did not send them as such to the Propagation of the Faith but asked his trusted friend Gabriel-Claude Mayet to edit them for publication. It was probably when instructing him on

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<sup>10</sup> Bernard Bourtot, op. cit. p. 28. Cf. Excursus B, above, p. 100.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. CS I, pp. 652ff

<sup>12</sup> The expression 'founding new churches' is coined later for religious, in the *Directives for the mutual relations between Bishops and Religious in the Church*, of 14 May 1978, AAS, LXX, 1978, p. 478: *sollicitudo in novis fundandis ecclesiis*.

<sup>13</sup> Mary Catherine Goulter, *Sons of France*, pp. 35ff.

<sup>14</sup> Jean Coste, *Lectures on Society of Mary History*, p. 242

<sup>15</sup> LRO, doc. 24. Servant to Buffard, 22.05.38 & to Thiollière du Treuil, 22.05.38, LRO, docs 26 & 27.

<sup>16</sup> *Annales*, LXII, January 1839, pp. 140 – 157. On 1 December he wrote to Pompallier, and 2 December the novices at Puyлата also wrote. Both letters are lost. Cf. Pompallier to Colin, 20.08.39, LRO, 35 [1].

<sup>17</sup> Pompallier to Colin, 04.09 & 14.09, LRO, docs 29 & 30, and Servant to Colin, 16.09, LRO, doc. 31. That these letters arrived in April is clear from Colin to Fransoni, 26.04.39, CS, doc. 63.

<sup>18</sup> 25.01.39. Cf. above, p. 103f.

what to take out and what to leave, that Colin showed his irritation, and Mayet took note of his remarks.<sup>19</sup>

With all respect for the bishop's zeal and hard work Colin could only feel distaste at Pompallier's impatience and his constant moaning about more men and more money. 'You must know how to put up with things', he said. 'Did Francis Xavier have that much money? Was he also not a long time alone? Planting the faith in a country takes suffering. Isn't that one of the first things in the apostolic life? In four years, if I am not mistaken, Francis Xavier asked eighteen times for more men, and only four times he got reinforcements from Europe'.

Another thing Colin missed was piety! 'Where is Our Lady in all of this? The Picpus Fathers put a statue of Our Lady in the pagan temple', he said, and 'when we took possession of Puylata we went on our knees and put an image of Our Lady in every room. *Mais eux rien!* Nothing of that with them! The history of our mission must be edifying!' <sup>20</sup>

What also irritated him was that Servant constantly called Pompallier *His Grace* (*Sa Grandeur*) and using phrases such as: 'I had the honour to accompany His Grace'. Inappropriate for a simply missionary bishop in New Zealand! He grumbled at Pompallier's description of the new house at Papakawau: 'the whole episcopal palace!' And he found the bishop's remark that for those missions one needed great virtue and scholarship pretentious. He even thought of inserting bits and pieces into the letter, such as: 'as long as a missionary has his head on his two shoulders, he knows no fear'.

In short, what he wanted to see in the letters was 'modesty, simplicity, devotion to Our Lady and a manly nerve that rallies the readers with the courage of lions!' In the end he had Mayet cut out the offending bits but he refrained from entering phrases of his own. In any case, the *Annales* did not publish the censored version! We do not know why and the text has not survived.<sup>21</sup>

### **From France: a third group**

When, in October 1838, Colin received the first letters from New Zealand<sup>22</sup>, he set his mind on sending ten to twelve missionaries<sup>23</sup> as asked by Bishop Pompallier. This third wave would nearly double the numbers: seven divided over Wallis, Futuna and New Zealand, and the six still on the way. Writing to Cardinal Fransoni on 10 November he speaks of sending eight to ten priests in the course of 1839.<sup>24</sup>

During the following months enough volunteers came forward for Colin to write to the Propagation of the Faith on 12 April 1839 that he could count on eight to ten missionaries, priests and brothers. They could leave in June. However, the directors advised against sending such a large group. Given the hazards of travelling and of transferring too much money by one and the same occasion, they would rather see Colin divide his missionaries over two groups, which he did. Some Marists expected them to leave again from Bordeaux<sup>25</sup>, and thus

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<sup>19</sup> MM I, pp. 186 – 189, printed in full in CS, doc.64.

<sup>20</sup> This is not mentioned in Pompallier's account of the visit to the Gambier Islands. The nearest he gets to it is that a pagan temple was turned into a rural chapel (LRO, doc. 21 [4]). Did Colin's imagination supply the statue? Or is this another trace of Caret's visit (cf. above p. 69)?

<sup>21</sup> Colinian language: *une mâle intrépidité proper à aguerrir les lecteurs et à les remplir d'un courage de lions*. One can understand Colin's annoyance at those pages of self-pity but his anger gets the better of him when he does not see that the remark on the 'episcopal palace' was only ironically meant. In spite of his irritation at the deferential language he did not attempt to introduce a change. It went on for years. The reason for Pompallier's fit of anger in Valparaiso (above, p. 54) may well have been that the Picpus Fathers were not using the same pompous language. The Marists had evidently agreed to put up with his vanity.

<sup>22</sup> Written 14 May 1838, LRO, doc. 24, cf. above p. 90.

<sup>23</sup> CS, doc. 52 [1].

<sup>24</sup> CS, doc. 54 [3], cf. above, p. 92.

<sup>25</sup> CS, doc. 58 [11].

to Valparaiso, but, possibly again on advice of the directors of the Propagation of the Faith, Colin sent them via London and Sydney.

He wrote to Cardinal Frasoni at Propaganda to notify him of the pending departure of the third group of missionaries and of Pompallier's September letters, without however enclosing copies. Nor did he let on about his annoyance at Pompallier.<sup>26</sup>

Colin appointed four priests and one Brother. The first one he assigned was **Joseph-André Chevron**. Born in 1808 in Nantua, Haut-Bugey (Ain), diocese of Belley, he entered the seminary and was a brilliant student, earning a *cum laude* for his end essay. Being too young for ordination he taught among other places in Belley under Colin as principal.<sup>27</sup> He became a priest for the diocese in 1831 and although oversensitive and of precarious health, he asked to be sent to the foreign missions. Mgr. Devie asked him to serve for ten years in the diocese which he did.. When, in 1838, he was the parish priest of Montanges he applied again and was given permission to join the Society of Mary. Colin accepted him immediately and assigned him to Oceania. Until then Chevron had kept his plans a secret but when it became known that this highly regarded priest was going to Oceania, a man in his parish who had made no secret of his distaste for anything religious, publicly converted.<sup>28</sup>

From Lyon there was **Philippe Viard**, born in 1809. He had studied at the minor seminary of l'Argentière together with Pierre Bataillon. Ordained for the archdiocese in 1834 he was a curate in the town parish of La Guillotière, in easy walking distance from the *Montée St-Barthélémy* when the Marist novitiate of Puylata opened there. He was a man of limited ability, but a devout priest with a reputation of successful pastoral work. He had a great devotion to Our Lady of Fourvière and was considered a bit of a saint. He arranged his transfer to the Marists in all secrecy and joined the novitiate on 1 January 1839. He was professed after less than five months.<sup>29</sup>

A second Lyonnais was **Jean-Baptiste Petit-Jean**,<sup>30</sup> born in 1811 in Mornant, near Lyon and ordained a priest for the archdiocese on 28 February 1836. He entered the Society and was a novice in Puylata until his profession.

The choice of the fourth man illustrates that interest in the Society was extending beyond the dioceses of Lyon and Belley. He was **Jean-Baptiste Comte**, born in 1810 in Silenzin, Haute Loire, in the diocese of Le Puy. He joined the Marists as a seminarian shortly after the founding chapter of September 1836, and was a novice in the *Capucinière* during the school-years 1836/1837 and 1837/1838. He was ordained a priest in March 1838 and continued his novitiate in Puylata in 1838/1839.<sup>31</sup>

On the Sunday of Pentecost, 19 May, Philippe Viard, Jean-Baptiste Comte and Jean-Baptiste Petit-Jean made their profession in the hands of the superior general, Jean-Claude Colin, assisted by Claude Girard, their novice master, and Pierre Colin, the superior of the house. Joseph-André Chevron who had only just entered, was to do his novitiate on the ship

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<sup>26</sup> The letter is dated 26.04.39. CS, doc. 63

<sup>27</sup> As a member of the staff he signed a declaration in favour of de Lamennais against the wishes of Colin and the bishop, cf. OM II, p. 424.

<sup>28</sup> MM, V, p. 499.

<sup>29</sup> In the margin of the Mémoires Mayet, Ia, p. 84 - 86, he is described as being not of the brightest: *peu de moyens!* His fellow curates once sewed the sheets on his bed together to see how he would react: he just slept in a chair! Talking of bishops Denavit wrote to Colin, 26.06.41 (APM, Bataillon, personal file): *Ils pensent que la meme charge ne pourrait convenir en aucune façon au Père Viard. Il est trop minutieux et a l'esprit trop embarrassé.* In 1846 Colin was annoyed when Viard was made a bishop without consultation of the Society. Cf. MM, IV, p. 551.

<sup>30</sup> APM, personal file

<sup>31</sup> APM, personal file

under the direction of Philippe Viard. Four men, as Colin wrote to Fransoni, full of zeal and courage, of proven virtue, sound doctrine and adequate learning.<sup>32</sup>

There was only one Brother this time. He was not selected by Marcellin Champagnat but had definitely made his own decision: **Jean-Baptiste Grimaud**. He was born in 1809, as the only son of a rich family of St.-Cassien, near Grenoble. At an early age he already expressed the desire to enter religious life. His parents did everything they could to talk him out of it, but at the age of 29 he went his own way and joined the Marist Brothers in the Hermitage. On 15 August 1838 he received the religious habit from Marcellin Champagnat under the religious name of Brother **Attale**. When his parents made a last attempt to make him change his mind by offering him immediate transfer of their estate, he asked to be sent to Oceania and was professed 15 May 1839, just before leaving.<sup>33</sup>

As the new missionaries were to leave shortly after their profession Colin gave them a forceful dose of spiritual direction in a letter nearly identical with the two letters he had written to the first and the second groups of missionaries.<sup>34</sup> He wrote this third letter with the first and second one in hand. It is nearly the same as the second one with a few phrases taken from the first one. There is one minor but not insignificant addition: he gives explicit permission to write directly to families and friends. He maintains the reference to Pompallier being their bishop and superior, and repeats the warning never to go out alone. Nothing in the letter betrays the feelings he had earlier shared with Claude Mayet.

As had been done with the second group, Colin used the opportunity to send letters to the missionaries. Colin's letter to Bataillon is a testimony of his deep concern<sup>35</sup>:

Sadly, how long we have to wait before we hear from you. Since you have been left on the islands of Wallis we have heard nothing from you, nor from *monsieur* Chanel. Console our hearts and use the first occasion to write to us. We pray the Good God for you without ceasing, and we entrust you often into the hands of Mary, your loving mother. Even among the *sauvages* and in the midst of all sorts of dangers, she will be with you and protect you. Keep yourself tight between her loving hands (*serré entre ses benignes mains*). Be courageous and full of confidence.

Judging from Servant's reaction he got a similar letter<sup>36</sup>, and we can assume letters went to the other men. He wrote to Pompallier to tell him among other things that the Propagation of the Faith had given permission to buy a ship.<sup>37</sup>

## Leaving

Colin was vividly aware of the sacrifice his missionaries were making and how much it cost them. On Wednesday after Pentecost he wrote to Lagniet in Belley that Petit-Jean and Viard had left and that the other ones would go in a day or two. For three of them leaving must have been particularly painful: 'The missionaries over whom the Holy Spirit has come down on Pentecost are leaving. The Blessed Virgin has taken three of them by their hair and forced them to leave'.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> CS, doc. 82 [6].

<sup>33</sup> Ronzon, FMO, p. 39.

<sup>34</sup> CS, doc. 68. For the first one, of 13.10.36, cf. CS, doc. 4, above p. 32. For the second one, of 02.09.38, cf. CS, doc. 48, above p. 83.

<sup>35</sup> Dated 19.05.39, CS, doc. 69. Cf. LRO, doc. 38 [1].

<sup>36</sup> It was dated 21.05.39, Servant to Colin, 05.03.40, LRO, doc. 52 [1].

<sup>37</sup> On 24.05.39, CS, doc. 72 and LRO, doc. 33 [5].

<sup>38</sup> CS, doc. 70 [2].

Only of Chevron there is a record of saying good-bye to his family. He later described it as the most difficult time of his life. He had asked the parish priest of his home parish to prepare his mother, but when he came to say good-bye she held on to him and did not want to let go without his promise to come back and see her again. He agreed he would, turned off and added: 'in heaven'.<sup>39</sup>

They travelled in two groups, part of the way by steamer, to Boulogne and from there, again by steamer<sup>40</sup>, in twelve hours to London. Nobody had thought about the practicalities and it was quite a business to even find one another! They could not believe how big London was (sidewalks everywhere!), went on walks, admired Westminster Abbey and London Bridge and got repeatedly lost. They would go out without noting down their own address, and without money in their pockets to take a cab. Afraid to take a coach, they walked for miles! England was a true discovery. They were surprised at how well the British people lived (carpets to the front door!), how calm and composed they were, and how courteous and helpful. They found the food extremely seasoned, enough to melt one's palate! Of the English language Chevron could only write: 'It must be the most barbarous language spoken under the sun'. They urged Colin to open a house in London.

They booked on the *Australian Packet* that they described as a small but new, beautiful and comfortable ship, *vraiment coquet!* They were given three cabins of their own where they also could say Mass when the weather permitted.

Petit-Jean acted as bursar. They had left Lyon with 40.781 francs, and having paid their expenses in London and their fare to Sydney they had 35.060 francs left. The fare to Sydney was probably £ 40, i.e., 1.000 francs; a fraction of what the earlier voyages had cost.<sup>41</sup>

They sailed on 14 June 1839.<sup>42</sup>

## **Group two: half-way to New Zealand, the other way around**

Having left France on 11 September 1838, the second group of missionaries had an easy voyage. When, after three months, on 12 December, they reached Valparaiso, it looked as if they too would get stuck there, like their bishop a year and a half before. Fortunately, a few days after their arrival, Father Maigret who had been stranded at Pohnpei until 28 July<sup>43</sup> also arrived in the schooner *Honolulu* that he had bought in Hawaii<sup>44</sup>. He offered to take the Marists to Mangareva, where Bishop Rouchouze wanted the ship for an exploratory trip to the Marquesas Islands. It was foreseen that he would need it for a month. The Marists could stay on Mangareva to learn English and Polynesian.<sup>45</sup> After the return of Bishop Rouchouze the ship would take them via Tahiti to New Zealand, calling at Wallis and Futuna if the winds permitted. Épalle was not much in favour - a waste of time - but he finally agreed because of the opportunity to learn languages. It shows that the superior of the group, Baty, made decisions in consultation with his men.

A thing the missionaries now learned the hard way was to care for the mission goods they brought along. Cases and boxes were not waterproof, clothes had not been packed properly. One cassock had four big holes in it through moisture and mildew. Quite a few

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<sup>39</sup> Chevron to parish priest, 22.05.39, APM, personal file. Cf. CS I, p. 124, n.1.

<sup>40</sup> Steam-powered ships took over river transport in France in the 1830's. In May, Baty told Chanel on Futuna that there now was a steamship travelling on the Rhône. Writing to Antoine Séon 12.10.39 Chanel expressed his satisfaction that Colin's travelling would be less demanding in the future! EC, doc. 54 [6].

<sup>41</sup> This was the normal fare some years later, cf. Rocher to Poupinel, 10.07.52, LRO, doc. 1156 [4], and to Colin, 15.07.52, LRO, doc. 1158[3]. The fare for five men would explain the difference between 40.781 and 35.060.

<sup>42</sup> Petit-Jean to Colin, 26.05.39 & 06.06.39, Comte to Poupinel, 14.06.39. APM, 1405/20043. Cf. above, p. 100.

<sup>43</sup> On 10 November the *Honolulu* had called at Mangareva. Cf. Jore, II, p. 117.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. above, p. 71.

<sup>45</sup> The Polynesian dialects of the Eastern Pacific were known to be closely related to Maori.

things had to be thrown away already. The cases and boxes were not properly labelled and numbered, and there was no list of what each of them contained. Just what was needed to whet the appetite of suspicious customs officers. As a consequence things that should have passed as *mission goods*, were classed *merchandise* for which duty had to be paid. Pompallier had warned them about this<sup>46</sup> but evidently nobody had taken notice. Thanks to the Picpus Fathers they got off lightly, paying no more than 24 piastres<sup>47</sup>, whereby Baty remarked that in Sydney things would probably have been a lot stricter.<sup>48</sup> When their goods had to be loaded on the *Honolulu*, and pass through customs again, the Picpus Fathers were their guardian angels and a good lady was so kind as to make up a proper manifest.

Fr. Baty discovered here that the 8.700 francs that were sent from France in May 1837 had not gone lost but had eventually reached Valparaiso and had been sent on.<sup>49</sup> Transferring money by cheque to Valparaiso had proved easy, but as Maxime Petit found out, it was not a good idea to do it through the shipping company with which one travelled. Settling accounts with the captain for the final fare and the little extras, involves an amount of haggling and one is not in a strong position to haggle with an agent who is holding one's money! Another lesson for Colin to pass on to the next group: make sure you carry small change and do not try to buy things with large-value coins. Traders and vendors do not want them.

## Crossing the Pacific

The *Honolulu* was a very small schooner, 34 tons, about half as big again as the *Raiatea* that Chanel had called a 'nasty little schooner'. Shortly before leaving<sup>50</sup> Maigret was able to make the final payment and the ship was officially re-registered as the *Reine de Paix*.

They sailed on 27 January 1839. Becalmed for many days they took forty-seven days to get within sight of the mountain tops of Mangareva.<sup>51</sup> On 18 March they landed on Akena Island to discover that Mgr. Rouchouze had not waited for the *Reine de Paix*. He had found another ship and was gone with his missionaries to explore the Marquesas Islands. They were expected back any day, but when they had not turned up at the end of the month, the Marists decided to wait no longer.

The absence of Rouchouze and the stay on Mangareva forced them to reconsider their situation. Maigret admitted that bishop Rouchouze was not all that happy with the *Reine de Paix*, not only because the purchase meant a big bite out of the mission budget, but also because of the worries and the recurring expenses involved in keeping a ship.<sup>52</sup> The Marists still had to get across the Pacific and they knew that their bishop had to visit Wallis and Futuna. Maigret and Baty came to a sensible agreement. They would each pay half of the purchasing price of 4.000 piastres, and the two missions would own it together. Each bishop had the use of it for six months of the year. If the bishops disagreed they could come back on the arrangement and sell it.<sup>53</sup>

The *Reine de Paix* left on 2 April and took eleven days to reach Tahiti.<sup>54</sup> The Protestants there continued to do everything in their power to turn the people against the Catholics and, as

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<sup>46</sup> LRO, doc. 17 [8]. That letter written from Valparaiso had reached Lyon in November 1837, months before the second group was appointed. Were the instructions passed to them?

<sup>47</sup> Still 120 francs, something like €960!

<sup>48</sup> APM, Baty to Colin, 25.01.38. From Pompallier's letter of 23.12.37 he could have known that things were a good deal easier in Sydney!

<sup>49</sup> This is as much as Baty could tell Colin at that stage. Baty to Colin, 12.01.39.

<sup>50</sup> On 25 January Baty still calls it the *Honolulu*.

<sup>51</sup> The *Raiatea* had done it in thirty-three days.

<sup>52</sup> That is how he wrote to Bonamie, his superior in Paris, cf. Wiltgen, op. cit. p. 212.

<sup>53</sup> Pompallier makes it 10.000 francs. Sounds better. Cf. LRO, doc. 33 [5].

<sup>54</sup> Against a good five days of the *Raiatea*.

Baty tells it (from hearsay of course), they used a magic lantern to show slides of the Pope, assisted by Catholic priests, cooking Protestant ministers in a large cooking pot. If the story is true, the Tahitians were not impressed. The Marists were free to walk around anywhere and, while curiously observed and followed, they could contact any people they wanted. In fact, they were invited into some homes.

Moerenhout<sup>55</sup> again proved to be an excellent host and did everything he could to help the Marists along. He showed them an article in a local paper in which captain Stocks, who had sailed the *Raiatea* with the first group to Wallis, Futuna and New Zealand, described the hazardous shoals at the Hokianga river mouth. Moerenhout also handed the Marists letters from Pompallier in which he wrote that the next group of missionaries, were they to come that way, should go not to Hokianga, but to the Bay of Islands and notify him by overland courier.<sup>56</sup> On 17 April 1839, they sailed from Tahiti.

### Visiting Wallis

Now they had very favourable weather indeed and in just over two weeks, on 2 May, the *Reine de Paix* reached Wallis. After the rumours in Tahiti that Bataillon and Luzy were being harassed, they were overjoyed at finding them safe and in good health. The parcels of letters were the first mail in nearly two and a half years. Together they walked all over the island, and both Pierre Bataillon and Joseph Luzy were full of stories on whatever there was to be seen.<sup>57</sup> The visit was a terrific boost for the morale of the two isolated missionaries. Wallisian people may at times have wondered if Bataillon and Luzy were all that different from the beachcombers that were well-known and often notorious on all Polynesian islands.<sup>58</sup> The arrival of this large group of missionaries, and on a ship of their own, undid much of the damage caused by the fact that Bishop Pompallier, having promised to return within six months, had not appeared after eighteen.

Although the *Lavelua*, king of Wallis, liked the missionaries personally, he and many Wallisians wanted to have nothing to do with their *lotu*. He was under a lot of pressure to expel them. For a month or more he had prevented Bataillon from meeting with his little band of catechumens. Bataillon used the presence of the new missionaries and their ship to come out into the open – for the first time - with his purpose of converting Wallis. He taunted the King to say openly he wanted the missionaries to leave. After a lot of pushing the *Lavelua* reluctantly agreed to come on board of the *Reine de Paix* where he was wined and dined (and later on surprised that his ancestral gods had not struck him down for it). Sunday 5 May the band of missionaries sang a High Mass to the accompaniment of a little organ they had brought along. It attracted a lot of people. The *Lavelua* himself stayed cautiously away.

When he understood the ship would go to Futuna, he humbly asked them a favour, to return to Wallis after their visit and bring back some fifteen Wallisians who had sailed in their own craft to Futuna. It gave Bataillon the idea of visiting Chanel and Nizier. He left Brother Joseph alone on Wallis, promising to be back in about ten days. They had a fine North-

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<sup>55</sup> After his dismissal as American consul, Moerenhout was promptly appointed consul of France, cf. Jore, op. cit. II, pp. 233 & 237, above, p. 59, n. 99.

<sup>56</sup> Baty to Colin, from Tahiti, 15.04.38, APM 1404/20033.

<sup>57</sup> Both of them had been writing extensively on Wallis, its people and its customs, cf. LRO, docs. 19 & 28.

<sup>58</sup> LRO, doc. 28 [26]. Estimates are that in the 1840's and 1850's there may have been as many as 2.000 so-called beach-combers scattered all over Polynesia and Micronesia. A few were French, but most were English or Americans, some were escaped convicts from Australia, others deserted sailors or adventurers. The easy-going Polynesians usually tolerated them on their islands and used them for their skills. If any landed on the Melanesian islands, they had no chance of surviving. It took another half century before the tough Melanesians tolerated them on their islands. Cf. Howe, op. cit., pp. 102–108.

Easterly wind and did the forty leagues ( $\pm$  220 km) in thirty hours. The chiefly Tuugahala<sup>59</sup>, who had been a supporter of Bataillon, had received instruction in the Faith and had put his little island of Nukuatea at Bataillon's disposal as a safe haven for catechumens, went along to serve as a pilot, accompanied by seven other Wallisians.<sup>60</sup>

### Visiting Futuna

On Wednesday 8 May the *Reine de Paix* reached Futuna. The rain was so dense that the ship was about to drop anchor before it was seen. The missionaries went ashore near Alo, no less than seven of them! It was the first time, after a year and a half, that Chanel and Nizier received visitors. They were speechless, 'a joy beyond expression', as Chanel put it.<sup>61</sup>

They got colourful ribbons out of the boxes on the ship and decorated a corner of Niuliki's house to use as a chapel. Next day, Ascension, was celebrated by five Masses, said by each in succession. The last of the five was a solemn High Mass, to the accompaniment of a small organ donated by a kind lady in Lyon.<sup>62</sup> Bataillon presided and gave the sermon in Wallisian. No wonder a large number of Futunans attended, as did Niuliki himself, and they behaved in a most respectful manner.

The missionaries' house had not yet been rebuilt after the last cyclone but they were both in good health. The unexpected arrival of four priests and three brothers, and on a ship of their own, made a similar impression on Futuna as it had done on Wallis. It undid the damage that the missionaries' credibility had suffered by the broken promise of Pompallier.<sup>63</sup>

While Br. Marie-Nizier was admired by the newcomers for his fluency in the Futunan language<sup>64</sup>, they found Chanel – to his own frustration – still struggling. Bataillon commented later on to Colin that due to the constant warfare on Futuna, Chanel had not had much opportunity to devote himself to study of the language<sup>65</sup>. Very kind of him, but not true. Even in times of war, Chanel was in daily intensive contact with the people and, as his diary shows, he devoted nearly every day several hours to language study.<sup>66</sup>

For both of them there were gift parcels and letters but these were exciting days and most letters were put aside for later perusal. Two letters Peter Chanel answered immediately. His mother's letter would have confirmed what the confreres had already told him, i.e., that his sister Françoise had died on 24 April 1838. He wrote to mother immediately and gave the letter to be taken to New Zealand for mailing.<sup>67</sup> Because Françoise had been the beneficiary

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<sup>59</sup> Neither Bataillon nor Chanel are consistent in their spelling of this or other names.

<sup>60</sup> LRO, doc. 32 [1] & doc. 38 [3].

<sup>61</sup> EC, doc. 45 [1], *un plaisir indicible*. The visit of the missionaries is described by Chanel in his letter to Colin of 16 May, cf. EC, doc. 45, in his diary, pp. 430 – 434 (from 08.05 to 19.05) and by Bataillon writing to Colin later, LRO, doc. 38 [3 & 4].

<sup>62</sup> The organ was a gift for Chanel and stayed in Futuna (CE, p. 435, 22.05.39; p. 480, 15.12.39). There is also mention of an accordion, but it is not clear whether this refers to the organ or to a second instrument. Chanel knew how to play it. Marie-Nizier, much later, denies that there ever was an organ on Futuna, but that is a lapse of memory, cf. EC, p. 434, n. 5. To Pompallier's annoyance it did not go to New Zealand, LRO, doc. 37 [8].

<sup>63</sup> EC, doc. 45 [6].

<sup>64</sup> Ronzon, FMO, p. 30.

<sup>65</sup> LRO, doc. 38 [4]. He must have said the same to the newcomers. Baty repeats the remark, LRO, doc. 32 [1].

<sup>66</sup> A few years later Fr. Chevron wrote to Colin that when one is over thirty, the exhausting climate affects one's ability to learn another language (LRO, doc. 126 [4]). Rozier rightly points out the weakness of the argument. We must simply accept that Chanel was one of those people who even with a good passive knowledge of a foreign language (and Chanel did understand Futunan very well) just cannot get themselves to start speaking it. Cf. EC, p. 230, n. 6.

<sup>67</sup> Neither her letter, nor Peter's answer have been found back. Pompallier sent the letters from Wallis and Futuna together with his own of the 18.08.39 with a French whaler, the *Pallas*. She sadly never received it. It took thirteen months to reach Le Havre, and was forwarded on 24 September 1840, ten days after she died, 13 September 1840. CS, doc. 200 [1].

under his former will, he now made another will, and, on Colin's request he made out a document granting somebody power of attorney.<sup>68</sup>

On Thursday 16 May, three days before the schooner sailed for New Zealand, he took time to write to Colin. That Colin's letter to Chanel was in the same spirit as the one to Bataillon<sup>69</sup> seems clear from the reaction:

'Accept, my very reverend father, our sincere feelings of thanks for the wise advice that you have been so good to give. May it bear fruit in our hearts! Please have the kindness not to deprive us of your good counsels.'<sup>70</sup>

The visitors walked all over the island, visited all the spots and were received by several chiefs. They learned to drink kava and were entertained by dancing groups of men and women well into the nights. It so happened that just these days Peter Chanel said Mass for the first time in Singave, with Claude Baty and Maxime Petit in attendance.

The Wallisians who had come with Bataillon became unruly and wanted to return. To the annoyance of Chanel the Wallisian chief Tuugahala used his time well by obtaining another wife from Singave. The Futunan people too were anxious to see the Wallisians depart, but all the time Futuna was lashed by unseasonable strong northerly winds and constant rain. On Saturday returning to Wallis became impossible when the wind veered to the north-east.<sup>71</sup>

The missionaries gathered for a council meeting on the ship. The north-easterly was just right for a fast sail towards New Zealand so the new missionaries decided to leave. Bataillon would wait on Futuna for another occasion to return home. It possibly was when Chanel and Nizier handed the others their mail, that they discussed the difficulties with Pompallier, especially his insistence that all letters, even those to the superior general, should pass unsealed through his hands. Most likely the new missionaries also heard of his officious behaviour in Valparaiso and of his tantrum in Tonga. From later events we can conclude that they decided not to make an issue of it. They also agreed that some of the new men should come back to Wallis and Futuna, and they – rather imprudently - promised that the ship would soon return.<sup>72</sup> They sealed their resolutions with a fraternal drink.<sup>73</sup>

Petit had decorated the make-shift chapel, using, among other things, a beautifully embroidered robe of Our Lady of Fourvière, that had the Futunans rush in for an admiring look. Next morning, 19 Mai 1839, Pentecost Sunday, all five priests said Mass, the first one a solemn High Mass, with singing and organ. While the ship was readied they had breakfast together on board. Chanel gave Maxime Petit some rare shells to be sent to his friend Bourdin. Bataillon had quickly put the last hand on a lengthy report on Wallis for Fr. Colin. Then, they embraced – *le baiser fraternel* – and Chanel, Marie-Nizier and Bataillon went ashore, the anchor was lifted and the ship sailed off, direction New Zealand. The three looked at the sails dropping behind the horizon, expecting it to return soon.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> EC, docs. 43 & 44.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. above, p. 82, CS, doc. 44.

<sup>70</sup> EC, doc. 45 [7].

<sup>71</sup> Wallis lies north-east of Futuna.

<sup>72</sup> For the promise to send the ship back soon, cf. LRO, doc. 55 [10].

<sup>73</sup> EC, p. 433f, 18.05: *on boit la goutte pour fortifier la decision prise.*

<sup>74</sup> EC, p. 434, 20.05 : *en attendant ceux qui reviendront partager nos travaux.*

## Bataillon on Futuna

Bataillon wrote later that he gave Chanel a hand in rebuilding his house. Chanel's own account suggests that the visit of the *Reine de Paix*, as well as the presence of Bataillon, moved Niuliki into action. He got people to cut posts in the bush, sow leaves for the roof, carry sand from the beach for the floor and he did everything in his power to get the job done, in fact he joined in the work himself. The missionaries too worked with the people and kept their interest alive by donating a few pigs.<sup>75</sup>

The two also worked on the language together, translated catechetical texts, prayers and hymns from Wallisian into Futunan and even composed a hymn to Our Lady, straight in Futunan.<sup>76</sup> They visited all the hamlets on the island and crossed over to Alofi. Bataillon found the Futunans more open, simpler, less prejudiced against Europeans.<sup>77</sup> He was convinced that, were it not because of the endemic warfare between Tua and Singave, Futuna would already have been converted.

Bataillon challenged Niuliki to bring in all the *atua muri* that hung here and there on trees and on particular places. He would burn the lot!<sup>78</sup> Niuliki and the chiefs laughed at him, sure he would be too afraid of the misfortune that the spirits would bring down on him. Next day the two missionaries went on a tour of the island and burnt most of the *atua muri* they found,<sup>79</sup> with the villagers looking on in fear from a safe distance. The next morning they were surprised to see the missionaries walking round unscathed.<sup>80</sup> At least, that is Bataillon's story.<sup>81</sup> A few days later he questioned Niuliki on his ancestral god *Taga roa* until he reduced the king to silence.<sup>82</sup>

Chanel's meticulous day-to-day account confirms that on 1 June Bataillon challenged Niuliki to bring all the *atua muri* to be burnt and that on 5 June they did in fact burn one *atua muri* of the notorious trouble maker Vae Tosso. He does not mention anything more.<sup>83</sup> Whatever happened, Chanel's short, sober and casual mention strongly suggests that he was not all that happy with the confrontational tactics of his confrere. He had never done such a thing.<sup>84</sup> Chanel took a more tolerant view of the traditional religion as is clear from the fact that a few days later, when the prophetess Faremaa uttered an oracle of the god *Taga roa* in the presence of the two missionaries, Chanel presented her with a nice dress for one of her daughters.<sup>85</sup>

Chanel tried to talk Bataillon into staying longer, but he could not leave Brother Joseph Luzy alone on Wallis. When the weather improved and Jones decided to sail to Wallis, he took the opportunity and left, 3 July 1839. He had spent fifty-six days on Futuna.<sup>86</sup>

The return trip turned into an adventure. There were more Wallisians than Jones' little schooner could carry and they did not want to leave the canoe behind on which some of them had come. They decided to travel by their own craft, promising to stay close to the schooner. However, the canoe was much faster than the ship and during the night they got far ahead,

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<sup>75</sup> EC, pp. 435ff, 25.10.ff

<sup>76</sup> LRO, doc. 38 [4].

<sup>77</sup> Unlike Futuna, Wallis has a safe anchorage: an attractive place for whalers and other ships. At Futuna ships would call, but they seldom stayed for any length of time.

<sup>78</sup> The *atua muri* were a sort of amulets, cf. footnote nr. 4 at LRO, doc. 38 [4].

<sup>79</sup> *la plus grande partie des de ces indices redoutables de leurs divinités*

<sup>80</sup> LRO, doc. 38 [4].

<sup>81</sup> Ronzon, *Delorme*, p. 67. quotes an unidentified account that largely supports Bataillon. It could be a later paraphrase of Bataillon's own tale.

<sup>82</sup> CE, p. 439, 10.06.1839.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. EC, p. 411-412, 08.02; 11.02; 13.02.

<sup>84</sup> Bataillon says it was the first time this was done. That would be true. But, not unlikely, Bataillon exaggerated and dramatized his own role in the proceedings!

<sup>85</sup> EC, p. 439, 11.05. Cf. Excursus C, *On Power Encounter and Iconoclasm*, below, pp. 115ff

<sup>86</sup> EC, p. 443, 03.07

heading too far south, in the direction of Samoa. In the morning the canoe could only just be seen from the masthead and Bataillon urged Jones to go after them. When the men in the canoe saw the ship following them, they misunderstood its intention and paddled even harder: further into the wrong direction! Then the weather closed in and Bataillon tried to get Jones to go searching for them, but Jones judged he had to abandon the pursuit and turn to Wallis. It was a rough night and Bataillon feared for the lives of the people in the canoe: 'if only they had been baptised and in the state of grace!'. Bataillon had to tell the king that the men he had promised to return to Wallis were lost at sea. The *Lavelua* was upset, but he also had more confidence in their seamanship. In the end he did not blame Bataillon but his own men for their presumptuousness. As it turned out, they got to an island in the Fiji group and returned many months later to Wallis.<sup>87</sup>

### **In New Zealand: the first sign of life**

All the time, Bishop Pompallier had been immersed in his missionary work. The little house in Papakawau was constantly full of people. When he was at home, the bishop himself gave instructions in the Faith morning and evening, and whatever he was doing, Maoris from near by and far off would walk in, sit down and ask questions, tell stories of their lives and tribes, beg for one thing or another, and he had always time to listen and to talk with them. As unpleasant as he could be with his two confreres<sup>88</sup>, with the Maori people he was invariably kindness itself.<sup>89</sup> He went on long tours, walking through the dense forests across rivers and swamps to visit the tribes. He would often talk through the night building contacts and making friends. This was the core and the toughest part of his missionary effort and he did it mostly himself. In a letter to Cardinal Frasoni of 10 November 1838 he explained that so far he had visited the tribes in the areas of Hokianga, the Bay of Islands, Kaipara and Mangonui, within a radius of 35 to 40 leagues (200 km) around his residence.<sup>90</sup>

He considered this work too difficult for Father Servant, who usually had to stay home with Brother Michel and mind the shop.<sup>91</sup> Between September 1838 and March 1839 he only wrote one letter to Colin – emotional and full of complaints - and entrusted it to someone in the Bay of Islands to mail. For lack of a good opportunity the letter was still lying there months later. When he found out, he was happy the letter had not been sent and he tore it up.<sup>92</sup>

Then, in March 1839, a French ship, the *Justine*, under Captain Bernard,<sup>93</sup> arrived in the Bay of Islands, bringing a parcel of letters. It contained a letter that Colin sent in November 1837 after receiving the news of Fr. Bret's death at sea<sup>94</sup>, and, probably, a letter sent earlier, in

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<sup>87</sup> LRO, doc. 38 [5].

<sup>88</sup> Servant described the painful cohabitation in vivid terms a year later, when he could get a letter away in Pompallier's absence. He sometimes asked to see the letters of the missionaries. Servant to Colin, 26.04.1840, LRO, doc. 55 [6, 7 & 8].

<sup>89</sup> Petit to Colin, LRO, doc. 56 [8] and Viard, LRO, doc. 45 [3].

<sup>90</sup> Quoted in Simmons, *Pompallier, Prince of Bishops*, p. 40.

<sup>91</sup> 'Father Servant still suffers of his half-deafness; still he helps a little at the station itself'. LRO, doc. 33 [7]. Once Pompallier had left Papakawau for the Bay of Islands, Servant took on extensive bush work. Cf. Servant to Colin, 05.03.1840, LRO, doc. 47 [4].

<sup>92</sup> LRO, doc. 37 [3]. He says he wrote 'with a deeply distressed heart (...) a letter that would have hurt you because of the bitterness that I felt and that only God understands the depths of', *avec un coeur bien affligé*, and *elle n'aurait pas manqué de vous affliger sensiblement à cause des amertumes que j'éprouvais et dont Dieu seul connoissoit toute la profondeur*.

<sup>93</sup> The *Justine* had left Bordeaux in September 1837 with 237 German migrants for Australia. During a stop in Brazil they decided to stay there. Bernard took freight to Valparaiso where he loaded horses for New Zealand and Australia. He then went to Tahiti. Cf. Jore, op. cit. I, p. 101. The mail for Pompallier must have been given him by Fr. Liausu

<sup>94</sup> Of this letter we only know from Pompallier's letter to Meynis.

May with the 8.700 francs that Colin had obtained from the Propagation of the Faith and sent after receiving the letter from Tenerife.<sup>95</sup> There also was a letter from the Picpus Father Chrysostomus Liausu in Valparaiso.

Colin's letters have not been preserved. In any case, Pompallier now learned that, after receiving his letter from Santa Cruz, in May 1837, Colin had approached the Propagation of the Faith in Lyon and obtained a grant of 8.700 francs. The money, in the form of about 100 ounces of gold, had been sent to Valparaiso. The letter of Fr. Liausu (also lost) told him that the money had reached Valparaiso only after his departure from that port in August 1837. Fr. Liausu had divided the money in two lots. He had entrusted 50 ounces to Captain Dumont d'Urville who was on an exploratory voyage in the Pacific on the *Astrolabe* and who would, in due time, visit New Zealand.<sup>96</sup> The other 50.72 ounces he had given to Captain Bernard when he left for Tahiti. Captain Bernard told Pompallier that, on his arrival in Tahiti, he had paid off Moerenhout.<sup>97</sup> The remainder, 73 piastres, about 400 francs, he handed to Pompallier in New Zealand.<sup>98</sup> It was the first money the bishop received since leaving France. Captain Bernard lent him an additional 200 piastres, about 1.100 francs, on a promissory note against the Propagation of the Faith in Lyon.

On 17 March Pompallier wrote to Mr. Meynis. He thanked the Propagation of the Faith, although at that time, nearly two years later, he had received only a small part of the money. Still, he confessed, he now knew he had not been entirely abandoned: it was 'the first sign of life after leaving France', as he put it himself. He was delighted and all the good news from France restored his courage. He sent Meynis copies of the promissory note.<sup>99</sup>

### **In New Zealand: reinforcements**

Friday 14 June 1839 was a memorable day. On one side of the world, in London, the third group of missionaries, Chevron, Comte, Petit-Jean, Viard and Brother Attale Grimaud boarded the luxurious *Australiasian Packet* for Sydney. The same day, in New Zealand, the *Reine de Paix* sailed into the Bay of Islands. It was eight in the evening when the schooner dropped anchor and the six new missionaries, Baty, Petit, Épalle with the Brothers Marie-Augustin, Forentin and Élie-Régis went ashore. By chance they ran into Brother Michel Colomb who was staying with friends in the Bay of Islands, recovering from a bout of illness. Michel took them to a friend of Pompallier, an English protestant former sea captain who ran a trade store in the Bay. They were warmly received at his home.<sup>100</sup> The man gave them a letter that the bishop had left for the new missionaries he was waiting for. Following these instructions Baty wrote to Pompallier, who was still living in Papakawau, on the Hokianga River, and handed the letter to a courier. The letter got to Pompallier two days later. He took two days to walk across and met his new missionaries. Only one of them he slightly knew, Claude-Marie Baty. The other two priests had joined the Marists after his departure. The three

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<sup>95</sup> Cf. above, p. 64. Pompallier says the mail from the *Justine* was the first sign of life, and as far as we know there was nothing between the *Justine* and the *Reine de Paix*. If it is true what Pompallier later writes that he had received two letters from Colin before the second group of missionaries arrived (LRO, doc. 33 [13], 18.08.39) Captain Bernard must have carried two letters.

<sup>96</sup> He would reach the Bay of Islands only in April 1840. Jore op. cit. II, p. 87.

<sup>97</sup> Pompallier did not have enough money in hand when he chartered the *Raiatea*. He had left owing Moerenhout a considerable amount of money. We can now estimate it must have been close to 4.000 francs. Cf. above p. 60.

<sup>98</sup> The amount is confirmed in a letter from Pompallier to Colin, 28.08.39, LRO, doc. 37 [5].

<sup>99</sup> OPM, H30, 000867. It is only from this letter to Meynis that we know of the visit of the *Justine* at the Bay of Islands, and of the mail and the money it carried. It reached Lyon before Christmas 1839, cf. CS, doc. 119 [1].

<sup>100</sup> LRO, doc. 32 [2].

Brothers had been in the Hermitage since 1835, they would have seen Pompallier when he blessed their new chapel on 4 October 1836<sup>101</sup>, but they would barely have met personally.

Imagine, he wrote to Colin, the joy and the renewed forces that came over this warrior, besieged on all sides and in dire need, exhausted by fatigue and success, on the point of losing everything, who then at once sees reinforcements and help arriving: this was the joy I felt in the Lord.<sup>102</sup>

## Summary

The dramatics would have been wasted on Colin, but the arrival was a milestone in Pompallier's life. Two and a half years after he left France, a year and a half since he had settled in New Zealand, he finally got reinforcements. All the time there had been just the three of them. Now, at once, they were nine. Perhaps equally important, he received a considerable amount of money to do the things he had dreamed of. Unknown to him, five more missionaries had just left France, and this time they were coming the simple and straightforward way. They would get to Oceania in half the time and at a fraction of the cost.

For the first time the bishop got news from the four missionaries he had left on Wallis and Futuna: they had managed to settle down among the Polynesians and, although there were no spectacular successes to rejoice in, they were holding their own and in good spirits. For the first time too he knew for sure that Colin had received the news of the mission having been established on the islands and in New Zealand. The first, exploratory phase of the Marist missions had come to a good end. The separate worlds had connected.

The absence of information, the lack of a perspective on the future, the hard work, and the living in cramped conditions, had taken their toll. Many months of feeling abandoned, looking with expectation at the rare ships entering the Hokianga River, only to be disappointed, again and again. No sign of life, no word of assurance, neither from France, nor from Rome. No money, just getting deeper into debt. In the middle thirties about five or six hundred Europeans had settled round the Bay of Islands and Kororareka had become a busy little town. But the bishop of New Zealand was stuck at an isolated spot called Papakawau, unable to realise his projects, unable to move to the Bay where English, American and even French whalers frequently anchored.<sup>103</sup>

Pompallier did not get along with his two companions. Father Servant, part-deaf, was less emotional about the hardships they all had to put up with and the resistance they ran into. He took it all in his stride, but the bishop considered him incapable of running a mission: 'The enemies of our religion are numerous and very clever; they will play games with him as with a real innocent'.<sup>104</sup> For Brother Michel Colomb he only had disdain.<sup>105</sup>

In spite of all, Pompallier had worked hard. He had a good command of English and he had the support of many Europeans, Catholics, but also some Protestants.<sup>106</sup> He was able to preach, converse and give instructions in the Maori language. He had walked over large parts of the North Island. He had visited many of the tribes and built up good contacts with Maori

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<sup>101</sup> Cf. above, p. 27.

<sup>102</sup> LRO, doc. 33 [1].

<sup>103</sup> Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, p. 40, speaks of 150 ships a year. Cf. LRO, doc. 33[1].

<sup>104</sup> (...) *les ennemis de la religion (...) s'en amuseront comme d'un innocent*, LRO, doc. 29 [2].

<sup>105</sup> Servant to Colin, 26.04.1840, LRO, doc. 55 [7].

<sup>106</sup> Baty wrote this the very first day in Kororareka, while they were staying with the Protestant friend of Pompallier and before the bishop got there. Cf. LRO, doc. 32 [2].

people and their chiefs He could point to a number of catechumens and had received a few people into the Church.<sup>107</sup>

If the Marist superior had not managed to build the happy and supportive community that could have helped him keep up his spirits, the bishop had done well. The destitute situation Pompallier was in, and that had caused him so much pain, may in fact have been a positive factor in his missionary effort. Polynesians and Europeans met a man who had nothing to offer but his convictions and his commitment: a powerful message in any culture.

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<sup>107</sup> LRO, doc. 29 [4].