



The
Texas
Bishop
of
Krishnagar



By Delia and Ferdinand Kuhn

Published by the authors for the Krishnagar Guild

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To the Readers of This Booklet:

Since we are strangers to you, it seems only fair to tell you who we are and how the story of the **“The Texas Bishop”** came to be written and published.

We are a husband-and-wife team of free-lance writers and photographers for newspapers and magazines. On one of our trips to Asia in search of material, we met Bishop Morrow for the first time in New Delhi. He invited us to come to his mission at Krishnagar.

Two visits to the mission gave us insight into the Bishop’s work. We were deeply impressed. In an article in Collier’s Magazine early in 1957 we called **Bishop Morrow “a towering figure” in India**, “a missionary who has breathed new life and hope into a blighted area.”

Wanting to contribute to his work in some small way, we asked the Bishop for permission to publish this pamphlet for the Krishnagr Guild, which helps to support his mission. The Bishop gave us his consent.

Let us add that we are not on the staff of any publication, nor do we represent any organization, religious or other. We are not Catholics (our background is Jewish). Finally, we should like to emphasize that our friend, Bishop Morrow, is not responsible in any way for what this booklet contains.

Delia W. Kuhn
Ferdinand Kuhn

Washington, D.C.
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The Texas Bishop of Krishnagar

. I .

THE MOST REVEREND LOUIS LARAVOIRE MORROW, one of the two American Catholic Bishops now stationed in India, is a modest man with few material needs of his own. Yet when he flew back to his diocese of Krishnagar in West Bengal, India, in 1949, after home leave in the United States, his personal baggage filled more trunks and boxes than that of any traveller except, perhaps, the Duchess of Windsor.

It added up to 204 pieces which tipped the scales at around thirty tons. The baggage included, among other items, two jeeps, one Willys jeep station wagon, one small tractor, six automatic lathes, one Hammond organ, seven tape recorders, three film projectors with generators, fifty cases of canned foods, ten crates of children's books, two dozen hair clippers, and thirty cases of medical supplies.

The Texas-born Bishop Morrow, a benign, powerfully-built man of sixty-five, prefers to travel by air whenever he can. Since the airplane companies limit free baggage to sixty-six pounds per passenger and charge \$4.05 a pound for overweight, the Bishop arranged in advance to ship his excess baggage by the freighter *Exchange Voyage 39* of the American Export Line, scheduled to sail from New York for Calcutta on the fifth of January, 1950. Before boarding his plane, Morrow paid a final visit to the office of the line at 39 Broadway, where he found Vice-President William H. Dousey and his assistants in something of a flap.

"Bishop," said one official, "we thought you were sending a few things, but you've practically hired the ship!"

The Bishop admits he was a little embarrassed as he looked over the invoice labeled "Personal Unaccompanied Baggage," with ninety-six separate items on it. He thanked the Vice-President and reminded him that these boxes and bales were for the children of Krishnagar, whose needs were dire and almost unlimited.

He had arrived in the United States, on that 1949 home leave, with a staggering shopping list of things he felt his children must have □ and no money. This discrepancy might have discouraged a less devout or less resourceful man. But it propelled Morrow into a whirlwind begging and bargain-hunting expedition around the country. While the Bishop's faith in prayer is profound, he believes that the Lord should not be bothered with unnecessary details. He also believes in the goodness and generosity of ordinary Americans, a faith which his own experience, at least, seems to justify.

Wherever he went and told his story about the work of his mission and the needs of his children, he found some people willing to listen and to give □ from pennies to lathes, from a dollar bill to a thousand-dollar tractor. Particularly in the Middle West, he recalls, he found helpers, not by any means all Catholics, who were ready to collect for him and pack and ship his booty to New York. With everything safely piled on the dock, the Bishop flew back to India, in happy expectation of the arrival of the S.S. *Exchange Voyage 39* and its cargo.

In due course word came that his “baggage” had arrived at Calcutta. He hurried from Krishnagar, two hours away, to see the cargo safely through the Indian customs. Anyone who has survived an encounter with this breed of Indian officialdom will understand the Bishop’s fears on that occasion.

“I had the surprise of my life,” he recalls. “The custom officials couldn’t have been more friendly. They even insisted that I had over-valued some of the items on my declaration. Can you imagine such goodness and kindness to our mission?”

The Bishop needn’t have been so surprised. He had written in advance about import licenses to authorities in New Delhi and had mentioned that he was known to the Governor-General, the famous elder statesman C. R. Rajagopalachariar, who is now the Chief Minister of Madras. The Bishop, who is deceptively meek in his manner, does not hesitate to drive right to the top of officialdom, if necessary, for the sake of his mission.

Bishop Morrow stubbornly undervalues his own influence in West Bengal and the respect and affection felt for him by the officials and people of the Krishnagar area. He has never gotten over his astonishment at what was probably the most remarkable event in his sixty-five strenuous years: his election by the people of Krishnagar as one of the twenty-nine municipal commissioners who govern this city of 70,000 people.

A few weeks before the general election of 1951, the first ever held in independent India, a former municipal commissioner came to see Morrow at his mission and said,

“Bishop, why don’t you let us enter your name on the ballot as a candidate for commissioner?”

The Bishop’s first reaction was “Impossible!” Before independence came in 1947, Indians working for the British administration had tried to persuade him to accept an appointment as commissioner, but Morrow had refused. He did not want to identify himself with the British Raj, even though he was on friendly terms with it.

But this, India’s first general election, was different. Other prominent citizens of Krishnagar came to the mission to put pressure behind the request. Their most persuasive line was:

“Bishop, you are the most respected man in the community, and if you consent, other good men will follow your example.”

Morrow asked for time to think it over.

Under the Nationality Act of 1940, he would lose his American citizenship if he cast a vote, or took an oath of office in a foreign country. Morrow knew this. But what if he avoided these things? Could he still run for office, and serve? He consulted his Church superiors in Rome. He went to Calcutta to consult his friend Evan Wilson, then the American Consul-General. Wilson outlined for him the relevant provision of the law and said:

“You mustn’t vote and you mustn’t take an oath of office. But there’s no reason why you shouldn’t serve your community as a commissioner □ if they want you.”

Morrow asked the Consul-General for an assurance in writing; and when he got it, he told his backers in Krishnagar that he would run.

“I’ll do it on these conditions,” he told them. “I won’t run on a party ticket, I won’t campaign for votes, and I won’t vote or take an oath of office if I’m elected.”

The Bishop’s first condition changed the whole basis of the Krishnagar municipal election, for it resulted in all candidates dropping party labels and running as independent good citizens.

Morrow’s refusal to campaign for votes caused his backers considerable worry. They pleaded with him:

“Bishop, can’t you at least show yourself to the voters, even if you don’t make speeches?”

They also pointed out that he had to have some kind of symbol, as other candidates did, so that those who could not read his name would know where to mark the ballots. The Bishop agreed to ride around the town on his bicycle, as he was accustomed to do, to let the voters see him. And he finally decided to choose a clock as his symbol, because the only public clock in Krishnagar was the familiar one on the campanile of his mission church. [You can see it on the cover of this booklet.]

Nine candidates were to be chosen in the Bishop’s ward, out of eighteen names on the ballot. On election day, the Bishop stayed quietly at his mission. When the votes were counted, he had eighty-two percent of all valid ballots, and would have had more if many voters, in their eagerness to elect him, had not surrounded the clock symbol with crosses and so invalidated their voting papers.

The newly-elected commissioner promptly addressed a formal letter to the West Bengal Government, asking to be excused from taking the oath of office. The request was granted, and an announcement to that effect was published in the Official Gazette in Calcutta. At the first meeting of the new Board of Commissioners, all stood and repeated the oath of office except the Bishop, who sat silent.

One of the new commissioners was not satisfied and asked the chairman: “How do we know that this man will do his duty?” The chairman, with whom Morrow had worked in many good civic causes, answered, “We know the Bishop, and we know that even without taking the oath he will do his duty as faithfully as any one of us.” There was no further objection.

How did an American Catholic Bishop manage to win the respect and affection of a community that is sixty percent Hindu and thirty-five percent Moslem? One clue is to be found in the Great Famine that swept Bengal in 1943.

In that catastrophe, remembered throughout India with horror and anger, between a million and a half and two million people of Bengal died of starvation or of the malaria, cholera and other diseases that followed in the wake of hunger. The famine is generally conceded to have been preventable. A variety of failures, most of them human, caused it. The Japanese conquerors were sitting on rice that India normally imported from Burma, but supplies within Bengal would have been enough if it had not been for speculators and the neglect of the government to deal with them. In the words of the official commission of inquiry there was “a moral and social breakdown.”

“What happened,” said the official report, “was that producers sold their rice as they saw fit at the best price they could obtain, or held it in the hope of still higher prices. Traders bought, held and sold with the object of obtaining maximum profits, and consumers who could afford it bought as much as they could and not as much as they needed. The results were on the one hand unprecedented profiteering and the enrichment of those on the right side of the fence; on the other, the rise of prices to fantastic heights and the death of perhaps one and a half million people.”

Bishop Morrow, at Krishnagar, saw the consequences all around him in his diocese and had to deal with them. He remembers stepping off a train in Calcutta and nearly tripping over bodies on the station platform—bodies of some of the hundred thousand starving men, women and children who flocked to Calcutta from the villages in that famine year in search of food. The Bishop had been in Krishnagar for less than three years; his mission was small and very poor at that time, and his personal influence was unimportant.

Yet Krishnagar citizens remember that Morrow, as chairman of a voluntary Citizens' Food Committee, pleaded Krishnagar's desperate case with the harassed officials of the Bengal provincial government. They remember that the committee, under Morrow's leadership, dispensed what rice it could beg and scrounge, and did it fairly. The Bishop and his devoted staff worked with the people, kept vigil with them in their homes, helped to bury them, if they were Christians who believed in burial, and almost died with them during that nightmarish famine year.

“We gave away everything we could lay our hands on,” the Bishop recalls. “It wasn't enough, of course. The American army camp at Ranaghat helped to pull us through. The Americans just requisitioned more rations than they needed, and brought them to our mission in truckloads. Whatever they brought was distributed in no time. All of us were weak with hunger.”

The Bishop, whose normal weight is about 185 pounds, was down to a gaunt 120 when the energetic new Governor of Bengal, Richard G. Casey of Australia, came to Krishnagar early in 1944 to offer Government help at last. Morrow says that if Casey had not come, he himself and all his mission staff might have been dead within two weeks. They could have bought or wangled enough food for their own use, but they preferred to share.

Indians do not forget such things. One of the strengths of the Indian people, especially the villagers, is their ability to distinguish between the demagogues and the unselfish men in public life. Physical suffering is one badge of integrity in India, and there are relatively few men of over thirty in positions of political trust today whose records do not include several years in jail during the struggle for independence.

When a man in an important position has suffered with them or for them, the Indian people will put their trust in him regardless of his caste, religion, race or nationality. So it was with Bishop Morrow in the aftermath of the famine. The Krishnagar community had had little reason to trust foreigners, but it was ready to put its confidence in this churchman from the United States.

In the years since the famine the authorities and people of Krishnagar have given other proofs of their respect for the Bishop, apart from electing him to their municipal council. In 1950, for example, he was appointed as one of the official jail visitors of Krishnagar. This is a non-political job, given by the Government of India only to the most respected citizens of each community. Morrow's duties are to make periodic inspections of the local prison and report on conditions there.

His visits are without advance notice to the guards. When the tall man in the white cassock appears at the entrance, the guards present arms, the gates are unlocked, and the Bishop glides through the building from end to end. He goes first to the Superintendent to check in; next to the kitchen, to see if it is clean and to satisfy himself that the prisoners are getting decent food. Then he inspects the prison hospital, workshops and women's quarters. Finally, he makes a round of the cells and listens to any prisoner with a grievance. Before leaving he goes back to the Superintendent's office and writes his findings in the official Visitors' Book. His report is immediately copied and sent to the Bengal authorities in Calcutta.

Sometimes his reports have helped to speed up the cases of prisoners held too long without trial. Once they resulted in the release of a boy who had slipped illegally across the Pakistan border and had been clapped into jail along with hardened criminals, because Krishnagar did not have a separate jail for juveniles.

When Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in 1948, and when 15,000 people of Krishnagar gathered on the banks of the river for a memorial service, the city fathers did something that was, to say the least, unconventional. They invited Morrow to speak for the Christian community at the ceremony along with one Hindu and one Moslem. It did not matter to them that there were only 9,000 Christians in Morrow's diocese of 4,000,000 Hindus and Moslems. If there had been only a dozen Christians, they would probably have invited him to speak, if only because of his standing in the community and his work at the Catholic mission.

The Bishop put on his black cassock and walked to the ceremony at the head of a procession of the thousand school children of his mission. This was their first public appearance as a group: 200 small boys in white shorts and blue shirts, 500 bigger boys in khaki, 300 girls in white saris with blue and pink borders. All the children were barefoot. Each of the three groups carried its own school banner on a pole ribboned in black.

Morrow talked to the multitude on the river bank in their own Bengali language from a manuscript translated for him by one of his priests. He said that Gandhi, the father of his country, had offered his life as a sacrifice for the peace of India. He died forgiving his assassin. Certainly Almighty God would reward him. He was gone at a moment when he was most needed. The Bishop begged the people to follow Gandhi's example and work for the welfare of India.

MORROW'S mission is deep in the delta country of Bengal, a corner of northeast India that has attracted Christian missionaries for more than a hundred years. In this steamy lowland, where the sacred Ganges alternately tumbles and oozes into the Bay of Bengal, European Man has clung to lonely beachheads and taken to a beating at the hands of a climate that saps his energy and sucks away his spirit.

The Ganges delta has the distinction of being one of the hottest, wettest and unhealthiest of the great river deltas. In these respects it outclasses the Mississippi delta, being eight degrees of latitude nearer the equator, ten degrees of temperature hotter and more than twice as rainy. Like all delta areas it is very flat. The Earl of Ronaldshay, who had the job of governing Bengal for the British from 1916 to 1922, remarked that "a man who has lived in the deltaic tracts of Bengal all his life could not possibly know the meaning of the word 'mountain' except by means of what the logicians call derivative knowledge." In the Ganges delta, he wrote, "there is neither hill nor rock nor, indeed, so much as a stone to dispute the unchallenged ascendancy of the rich alluvial soil."

When the summer rains have stopped, the Bishop's diocese is a watery landscape of golden paddy fields and ponds that stretch to the horizon with only occasional clumps of banyan or mango trees, or bamboos or palms, floating like islands on the sea. Toward evening, when the steamy heat has subsided a bit, the scene has a forlorn beauty that tempts writers to be extravagant with words. It moved the great Bengal poet, Rabindranath Tagore, to talk about "the unobstructed sky filled to the brim, like an amethyst cup, with the descending twilight and peace of the evening."

When the rice harvest is in, the farmers of Bengal in their villages of mud huts and thatched roofs, give thanks to the appropriate gods, Hindu, Moslem or Christian. In Morrow's diocese of Krishnagar, the population figures work out something like this: Hindus, 2,250,000; Moslems, 1,700,000; Christians, 9,000. Of the Christians, over 6,000 count themselves Catholics and members of Bishop Morrow's flock. On Sundays and saints' days they can go to church, if they live within reach of one of the village chapels of Morrow's mission.

Those who live within bullock-cart distance of Krishnagar City can drive all the way to Morrow's cathedral and make a day of it. There is a paved road leading into the city. The road is raised six feet above the paddy fields and thereby provides the only surface over which wheels can travel through the July-to-September monsoon rains.

From the eminence of the road, a traveler can see at a distance the sprawling conglomeration of mud huts, tin shacks and two-story buildings to a city that appears to be without architectural dignity or design. This impression turns out, on closer inspection, to be correct with only a few exceptions. A whitewashed municipal center and a well-

kept brick police barracks suggest respect for the institutions of civic order and government, and are worthy of this Indian city of 70,000 people. Inside the walled palace of the former Maharajah are the frowsy remains of the oriental elegance of better days.

Another relic is still struggling bravely, if inadequately, to perform the useful service for which it was designed. This is the riverside plant of the Krishnagar waterworks, representing the best of British engineering skill of its day. In 1923, when the waterworks were built, it must have been proud and ambitious enterprise to pipe water to the 22,000 people who then lived in the town. Two hundred spigots replaced the old polluted wells as social centers where the women came to fill their brass and copper water jars.

Today the town has more than tripled in population. More than most of the cities of northern India, Krishnagar has become a refugee center.

In 1947, just as Bengal was beginning to recover from the ordeal of famine and epidemic, came partition. The curtain between India and a new country that called itself Pakistan came down just fifteen miles from Krishnagar. And through the curtain tumbled the refugees, part of the biggest most disorderly and most panic-stricken flight of human beings in recorded history. Krishnagar, being a border town with a "safe" water supply, got more than its share. They overran the town and clung to it as desperate people overwhelm a raft in a stormy sea. The wonder is that the town stayed afloat as a going concern, and that a few vestiges of order and dignity survived.

One of them is the mission, which is both apart from the town and a conspicuous part of it. Inside its low brick walls and iron gate, it is a community, dominated by a white cathedral with a clock tower, where 1400 adults and children live and work together. It operates four schools that board 770 children and teach 500 day pupils besides, at a total cost of \$38,318 a year; it has a dispensary that treats people at the rate of 78,000 visits a year; an open shed that serves as the children's recreation hall; an 18-acre refugee settlement where seventy-five families live. The diocese has four other centers where resident priests carry on work similar to that of Krishnagar, but on a smaller scale.

THE headquarters of this enterprise is the modern, brick two-story Bishop's House, from which Morrow directs the work of twenty-four men and fifty-eight women and plans the development of his diocese. No G.H.Q. was ever more flexibly or informally run than this; no commander-chief was ever more accessible than the Bishop. His doors are open to local bigwigs and beggars alike.

In recent years Morrow has had to take refuge on the first floor of the house where he can now have at least a measure of quiet in a small bedroom and private office. Here privacy also is a relative term. On an office desk that measures six and a half by five and a half feet, he has four telephones, one of which connects him with the outer world, the other three with other parts of his mission by an automatic switchboard. The mission's telephone system was devised out of United States Army surplus, a bargain which Morrow picked up from a firm in California.

His desk is cluttered with books, papers, and religious statuettes. From his swivel chair the Bishop can see, on the wall facing him, his black-framed Papal commission as Bishop, unsigned portraits of Pope Pius XII and Archbishop Cushing of Boston, and a picture of St. John Bosco, founder of the Society of Salesians to which Bishop Morrow belongs.

Beside the desk is a modern aluminum standing lamp which gave Morrow one of his most uncomfortable hours during his eighteen years as Bishop. During the war, when the British authorities and the local police were more than usually suspicious of foreigners, a rumor spread through Krishnagar that Bishop Morrow had a secret radio transmitter in his office. The police came to search, and when they saw the standing lamp they thought they had found proof that the Bishop was a spy. They were convinced that its purpose was the transmission of secret information. The Bishop calmly turned on the lamp turned it off again, invited the police to use it and examine it and finally persuaded them that this rumor, like so many others in wartime, was false.

Sitting at his desk, Morrow can swing 180 degrees to a table with a Smith-Corona typewriter, on which he drafts and revises the manuscripts of his books. For the past twenty-five years, in his spare time, he had been writing Catholic textbooks that have become best-sellers in their field. When he needs reference material, he walks through an arched doorway into a small dark room, stacked from floor to ceiling not only with religious books and encyclicals of the Popes, but also with novels and recent books on world affairs. Several of his books are by Anne Morrow Lindbergh and her husband. The Bishop has been told that he is distantly related to the family of the late Dwight W. Morrow, but he has never bothered to make sure.

Just inside the other office door, which leads onto a broad veranda and stairway to the ground, is a table piled high at all times with boxes of pink candy, steel bead rosaries with white plastic crucifixes, bright satin hair ribbons and stacks of children's clothes. These are for the "children's hour" –the time after lunch each day when youngsters inside and outside the mission know that the Bishop's door is open to them.

The Bishop starts his day at four thirty in the morning, a good time to begin working in tropical Bengal. He puts on a white cotton cassock, which is light and relatively cool in the hottest weather, slips around his neck a silver cross given him by Pope Pius XII, walks downstairs and mounts his Italian Velo-Solex motor-bicycle, a girl's model that will not get itself entangled with the long skirt of the cassock. Then he sets off through the gate and down the road for the porticoed concrete building where the mission's twenty-six Catechist Sisters of Mary Immaculate are living and learning to be social workers in the villages.

The Bishop leads meditation for them for half or three quarters of an hour, says Mass with them, and breakfasts with them at seven o'clock. All but one of them are Indian girls, from different Catholic communities, who have taken or are preparing to take the veil. Their veil, in a literal sense, is a graceful white cotton sari with a brilliant blue border. The twenty-sixth of the nuns is an attractive blue-eyed young woman from Detroit, now known as Sister Frances, formerly Miss Honorine Esper, whose gaiety, so far at least, has not been dulled by the hardship of social service in Bengal.

The high spirits and enthusiasm of these nuns, known as "the Cycling Sisters of Krishnagar" is a tonic to Bishop Morrow, who is planning a useful future for them in the villages. One of them is already a trained midwife; three are attending Krishnagar College; four are in nursing school at Patna; two are studying to be doctors.

"My dream," the Bishop has said, "is to have at least half the Catechist Sisters work as trained nurses."

After breakfast, Morrow and his Filipina secretary, Miss Natividad Marquez, get to work on his correspondence and his religious text-books. Ever since 1931, when the Bishop was secretary to the Apostolic Delegate in Manila, he and Miss Marquez have collaborated on the editing, proofreading and layout of his remarkably successful five-foot shelf of Catholic literature.

"I couldn't have done the books without her," the Bishop recently remarked. "I'd have gone crazy".

Toward the end of the morning, with most of his paper work done, he goes to visit the Mission's technical school which is one of his enthusiasms at Krishnagar. On the way he is almost always stopped by someone with a hard luck story, and almost always gives a few coins out of the twenty rupees' worth (about \$4) which he is careful to keep in the pocket of his cassock for just such emergencies.

THE heart of Morrow's mission is in its four schools, at least one of which the Bishop tries to visit every day. In these schools more than a thousand boys and girls, Christian, Hindu and Moslem, are getting free education, still a rarity in India even though the new Constitution lists it as a goal to be achieved by 1960. The long, low whitewashed school building at the Krishnagar mission house about 770 boarders, most of them from villages in the diocese.

In the Bishop's early days at Krishnagr it took some persuading to convince village parents that one or two of their children perhaps even a girl □ might profit by learning to read and write, something that nine out of ten villagers never had a chance to do. But when the great famine came, many parents suddenly became desperately anxious to send at least one member of the family to the mission school where children were fed. Morrow watched some parents making the agonizing decision of which child was to be saved.

Today the Bishop has to make the agonizing decision to turn hundreds of children away for lack of space and money. The floors of the dormitories are covered from wall to wall with the little straw mats on which the children sleep, and the wooden classroom benches are crowded with students sitting elbow to elbow. One other thing limits the number of boarding scholars; the fact that the mission does not observe the rigid dietary rules of orthodox Hindu and Moslems. None the less, most of the day scholars are from Hindu and Moslem families.

If free schooling is rare in India, the kind of education Morrow's children are getting is rarer still, and for village children practically unheard of. For generations past, the privileged few of India's well-to-do families have been taught in the rigid Oxford and Cambridge tradition, at institutions modeled on the English public schools and universities. Since independence, India is making a brave attempt to bring education to the villages, but in this radical new departure the three R's are still the main tools and the Hindu and Moslem scriptures are the main materials.

Morrow has proceeded on the daring assumption that the school is interested in the whole child, possibly because he himself, as priest, educator and lover of children, is

interested in the whole child. Physical training for boys begins with the first day of elementary school. From miles around, people come to see the six-to-ten-year olds of the junior school parade and drill in bright blue shorts on the mission grounds.

Another mission curiosity is the high school boys' band, equipped with a full complement of instruments which Morrow managed to collect in Italy. When the Bishop entertains distinguished visitors from Krishnagar, Calcutta or New Delhi, the band can hardly wait to get into action with a blaring march tune, the Indian national anthem, and, on appropriate occasions, The Star-Spangled Banner.

When the Bishop inspects his schools on his morning visits, nothing gives him such satisfaction as a sight of the machine-shops at work. Manual arts at Krishnagar have an importance and a dignity that are virtually unknown in Indian schools. There are those who maintain that Morrow's finest contribution to the Krishnagar diocese is his technical school which, each year graduates a dozen boys as master carpenters and metal workers.

"Not one of them has ever failed to find a job," the Bishop boasts. "Contractors and industries all the way from Krishnagar to Calcutta snap these boys up even before they graduate."

India's unemployment problem is serious, and in the Krishnagar area, where refugees from Pakistan flood the labor market, it is acute. In giving his boys a mechanical skill, Morrow is meeting a bad situation in a practical, if unconventional, manner. For he knows that "education" in the rigid academic sense does not open the door to a livelihood in India today.

Of the boys who come pouring out of Calcutta University, armed with B.A. and B.Sc. degrees, it is estimated that only one out of four finds a job within the first five years after graduation. Krishnagar boys have the advantage, even if they do not have degrees, of becoming self-supporting and useful members of a society that is starved for lack of skilled workers.

The machine-shops of the mission school are a tribute to American generosity as well as to Morrow's imagination and powers of persuasion. Here are to be found many items of the Bishop's "personal unaccompanied baggage." Here, for example, are the lathes and the shaping machine given to the Bishop by Harold Le Blonde of the Cleveland Automatic Machine Co. in Cincinnati; here is a power-driven planer given to the Bishop by Messrs. Thomas and John Longo of Cincinnati; here is a steel-cutting saw from Edwin J. Cox of the Cox Machinery Co. of Covington, Kentucky, and a grinder from Charles and Frank Laurens of Norwood, Ohio.

Here, too, are replicas of the American machine tools, made or assembled at the school with the aid of local home-made dies and United States Army surplus materials. The school sawmill was concocted out of \$40 worth of metal scrap and Italian ingenuity. For the director of the mechanical school is an Italian from Turin, Lay Brother Ernesto Montanaro, who served his apprenticeship in the Fiat automobile works. Montanaro and his students have designed and fashioned the furniture for the mission as well as the wrought iron windows and lighting fixtures for the cathedral. They are beginning to sell small hand tools and other gadgets in the Krishnagar market, but the school's main purpose is still to turn out trained artisans.

A CASUAL visitor to the mission might come away with the idea that Bishop Morrow is less interested in educating the girls of his diocese than the boys. The girls' school is comparatively poorly equipped and badly housed. A new building is needed and is, in fact, part of the mission's construction program, though not at the top of the list. In one recent year the mission had to refuse admission to 300 girls, all Catholics.

In the public schools of Krishnagar, the ratio of girls has grown from ten to thirty-five percent in the past fifteen years. If these figures mean anything (and most statistics in India should be approached with caution) they mean that Morrow's diocese is well ahead of other parts of rural India in seeing the usefulness of educating the daughters of the family. This trend delights Morrow, even though it puts him in the unhappy position of having to turn away little girls by the scores.

Raised in a family of strong-minded women, the Bishop is at heart too much of a feminist to align himself to the conservatives when it comes to the education of girls. Within India, especially in the cities, there is ferment and a drive toward the emancipation of women. The new Indian Constitution gave them the vote; they went to the polls in great numbers in both general elections since independence. Morrow is not sure that he doesn't owe his own election as municipal commissioner to the women's vote in his ward. At all event, he feels that the girls' school must have a better deal, and that he must supplement it with village social work that will raise the status of women.

On Morrow's own mission staff, women are in a heavy majority. There are, to begin with thirty-one white-robed and hooded Italian Sisters of Charity, seventeen of whom teach and mother the small boys and girls in school. A second group consists of the twenty-six Catechist nuns and novices whom the Bishop visits each morning. Finally, there is a third group of women whom Morrow decided to add to his mission about four years ago. These are fifteen Franciscan Nuns of the Perpetual Adoration, whose presence was made possible by an anonymous gift of money from an American archbishop.

The fifteen, headed by Mother Clare, an American from Shaker Heights, near Cleveland, pray in relays around the clock and never appear in public. They live in a small white convent just behind the cathedral, and chant their prayers aloud behind the altar of one of the cathedral chapels.

"The principle," Bishop Morrow explains, "is that everything comes from God, through prayer; the sisters pray, and we do the material work."

Whether or not he is aware of it (and one suspects that very little escapes the Bishop) the non-stop praying nuns have a twofold practical value to a mission. For one thing, their voices in the chapel provide a constant point of interest to anyone from Krishnagar who may wander into the cathedral to pray, or just to look around and satisfy a Hindu or Moslem curiosity. Something is always going on. The church never seems dead or deserted. The presence of the Lord is never for a moment ignored or forgotten.

A Second advantage is that in his begging appeals to contributors at home, Morrow can tell prospects, with truth, that their offerings "will be forever remembered in the daily Masses and prayers of the missionaries and people of Krishnagar." Even where this

promise may not be a deciding factor, it is an added inducement to many contributors, and one that no Catholic fund-raiser can afford to overlook.

Bishop Morrow's church hardly conforms to the conventional American idea of a cathedral, especially if the word conjures up an image of Chartres, Notre Dame or St. Patrick's. Krishnagar Cathedral is Romanesque, not Gothic, and is adapted to the Mediterranean sky and brilliant sun of India. It is not dim, musty or ornate, but plain gleaming white, both outside and in, and flooded with sunshine and color. Its wide arched windows are edged with yellow glass to heighten the impression of sunlight. The chapel in which the praying nuns give voice is curtained off with a wide splash of crimson cotton.

"I always wanted a red curtain," Morrow has said. "I dreamed about it for years."

The plain dome and clock tower are strictly Italian. The whole church, in fact, was designed by A. Carbone, an architect from Naples, and built under his direction. In this instance, the Bishop's "angels" were The Most Rev. Richard J. Cushing, Archbishop of Boston, and Mr. Leslie Martin, an English businessman in Calcutta, who donated a whole year's personal income to the project. A plaque on the new cathedral commemorates these two benefactors.

When Morrow finishes his daily visit to one of the schools, he motor-bikes to the Bishop's house in the mid-day heat for an early lunch, known as "dinner", with his priests who are his closest and most trusted helpers. They and the brothers are Indian, Italian, Hungarian, Dutch and German, "composing," says the Bishop, "a real League of Nations." The priests, many of them bushy-bearded, are as unsanctimonious and as full of humor as the Bishop himself. Coming as they do from rural families, they have a simple touch in dealing with Bengal villagers. They live in their work, and some of them will not live long, for all of them suffer periodically from dysentery and malaria.

Perhaps for this reason, perhaps because the Bishop had a French father, he insists that the food at the mission shall be plentiful and good, and shall be cooked with as much loving care as the Krishnagar kitchens will allow. The Bishop tries to keep his staff well and at work. He believes that life in Bengal is austere enough without unnecessary self-denial.

The most frequent dishes at his table are dehydrated American soups, sent regularly by one of the Bishop's anonymous admirers in New York; meat stews, rice, spaghetti; an occasional chicken; canned American codfish made into cakes on Fridays; and almost always the little bananas that are plentiful and cheap in Bengal. To top off the meal, the priests relish their powdered coffee, also supplied to them by their New York benefactor. This is a special luxury, brought out only when visitors come to the mission.

After "dinner" the Bishop goes upstairs to his office to receive his children, rests from one o'clock to half past, spends an hour reading his breviary, has a bath and by three o'clock comes downstairs again for tea, with visitors from the town already waiting to waylay him. After tea he may go to the city by jeep or motor bike, for a meeting of the municipal commissioners, or the hospital board. He works until a quarter to seven, has a light supper at seven, officiates at night prayers at eight, and usually stays up working until half past ten or eleven, long after the rest of his staff have gone to bed.

Every Sunday from October to May, when the roads are not impassable from the summer rains, the Bishop climbs into his jeep and goes out to say Mass at one of the village chapels within thirty miles of Krishnagar. He seldom says Sunday Mass at Krishnagar, but sometimes he wanders into his cathedral to hear one of his priests playing the cherished Hammond organ, which was one of the items of his "personal unaccompanied baggage" from New York.

The first Friday in every month, without fail, he conducts a service in the Cathedral for all his children. On those occasions he writes out his sermon and has it translated into Bengali by Father Austin Guarneri, one of his priests who has specialized in the language. The Bishop speaks little Bengali, but he understands well enough to read his sermons with correct accent and intonation. In one sentence, the Bishop feels at home in Bengali, the sentence with which he begins all his talks to his children:

"Amar prio sontangon, ami tomadigoke bhalobasi." ("My dear children, I love you.")

No six words ever came straighter from the heart of a Texan.

MORROW came to the Krishnagar diocese in 1940 by way of Texas, Mexico and the Philippines. In Texas, where he was born, he picked up a French-Irish inheritance and a pioneering tradition. In Mexico, where he became a priest, he acquired a soft Spanish accent and a hard apprenticeship in how to deal with trouble. From the Philippines, where he was secretary to a church dignitary, he emerged as a Bishop and also as a writer of Catholic books that sell by the million.

By Texas standards, Morrow's inheritance was not at all exceptional. His father stemmed from a long line of French Catholics, his mother from north-of-Ireland and New Jersey Episcopalians. In 1887 the two lines met and merged in Weatherford, sixty miles west of Dallas, by a standard American practice. Both families had come to this little frontier town of 2,000 people to seek their fortune. The only unconventional twist in the story is the fact that Morrow, born Louis LaRavoire, took his mother's more American sounding name when, as a young priest, he found himself in a tight spot in Mexico during the civil war of the 1910-20 decade.

His father, Joseph LaRavoire, had come to the United States as an emigrant from the town Rumilly in the foothills of the French Alps. A tiny village nearby bears the name of the Bishop's ancestors, "LaRavoire." Young Joseph found a job in Weatherford and a room with board in the big two-story frame house of Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Morrow. The Morrrows had moved to Texas from New York, where Mr. Morrow had run a studio specializing in microscopic photography at 661 Broadway, a few doors from the old Broadway Central Hotel.

In the 1880's Mr. Morrow went to Weatherford and bought some cotton fields, a venture at least as daring for a New Yorker in those days as his entry into microscopic photography. The family moved to Texas with their two young daughters, Isabelle and Grace. The eye of the dashing young French boarder fell on the dark-haired Isabelle and they were married. Louis, their second son, was born on Christmas Eve, 1892. There are old timers in Weatherford who still remember little Louis going to his Aunt Grace's kindergarten and wearing long curls.

When Louis was only five years old, Joseph LaRavoire took his family to live in Mexico, where the future Bishop was to spend the formative years of his life. Young Louis was put into a public school, but it didn't work.

"I proved to be a rather naughty boy," the Bishop said long afterwards. "I ran all over the city instead of going to school."

His particular passion was to jump on the backs or sides of the fast-moving electric trolley cars that were new in Mexico City in those days. The faster they moved, the more he liked to jump aboard; and once, slipping off, he missed by a few inches being mangled by the wheels.

His mother was converted to Catholicism in 1905, and as one of her first Catholic acts sent 11-year-old Louis away to a boarding school run by the Salesian Order at Santa Julia, on the outskirts of Mexico City. This, as it turned out, was the decision that ultimately made a priest and a bishop of Louis LaRavoire Morrow; for it brought him

under the influence of two Catholic saints, one as aristocrat, one a poor man, whose teachings were to shape his career as teacher, writer and missionary.

The aristocrat was Francis of Sales, the sixteenth and seventeenth century religious philosopher who was born near Annecy, only a dozen miles from Joseph LaRavoire's birth place. Francis of Sales was much more than a famous theologian, a philosopher and a Catholic missionary among the Calvinists of western Switzerland. He was also an effective pamphleteer whom Pope Pius XI, three hundred years later, declared to be "the Heavenly Patron of all Writers." Francis of Sales said that language "must be clear, precise and natural, without ostentation of words."

"To say marvelous things, but not to say them well, is to say nothing," he wrote. "To say little, and to say it well, is to say much." Catholics credit him with having coined the proverb: "One catches more flies with a spoonful of honey than with a hundred barrels of vinegar."

He took a particular interest in visiting prisons and consoling the condemned. His prison and pamphleteering interests did not prevent him from organizing a "Holy House" in which, among other things, there was a school of arts and trades where workmen and apprentices could earn their living.

"He was not a gloomy, austere saint," Pope Pius XI said of him in a famous encyclical, *Rerum Omnium* in 1923 "but was most amiable and friendly with all ... His kindness of spirit never varied."

The second great influence in Bishop Morrow's life was a nineteenth century Italian priest named Giovanni Melchior Bosco, now known to Italians as "Don Bosco" and to English-speaking Catholics as St. John Bosco. This successful missionary, born of poor parents near Turin in 1815 started with little except his own imagination, zeal and love of children. His interest in reclaiming and teaching children began when he saw a ragged youngster driven out of a church by a stuffy sacristan. Soon he was taking groups of children from the tenements of Turin on country walks and talks, and by the time he was thirty he had founded his first night school.

Bosco was one of the first in the Church to decide that boys had to be taught trades as well as religion. Like the Salvation Army contemporary, William Booth, in the "Darkest England" of those days, Bosco looked through the dirt, the rags and the misery of youngsters in the Turin slums, and saw the makings of good Christians and good citizens. His tactics were patterned on the advice of Francis of Sales to "do all by love and nothing by force."

"As far as possible, avoid punishing," Bosco once told his disciples. "Try to gain love before inspiring fear." These were to be Morrow's tactics a hundred years later.

Another of Bosco's techniques was to encourage music among his young charges. Since he was an Italian dealing with Italian boys, it was natural for Bosco to organize a brass band in his first school. He thought music would help to tame the spirits of his youngsters, and would get them off the streets into a school of useful work. So Bosco scrounged around Turin and assembled some old brass instruments for his band. The bands multiplied, and so did the instruments. The lusty brass band at Morrow's mission, with instruments made in Italy, follows Bosco's precedent.

By 1859, when Bosco had set up vocational schools and bands throughout the Turin area, he interested Pope Pius IX, the relatively liberal "Pio Nono," in his work, and with Papal support organized the Society of St. Francis of Sales.

The work of the society was divided into four main branches: first, the education and training of boys, as students and artisans; second, missionary work; third, the education of adults for the priesthood; and fourth, the diffusion of "good Catholic literature," a task that sprang from the effective pamphleteering, two centuries earlier, of St. Francis of Sales. In 1874 the Salesian Society became one of the recognized Orders of the Catholic Church. And by the time Bosco died in 1888 there were 250 centers of the Salesian Society in all parts of the world, teaching 130,000 children, of whom 18,000 were being graduated as apprentices every year.

One of these centers was the school outside Mexico City where the future Bishop Morrow, the "rather naughty boy" of a few years earlier, was studying under disciples of Francis of Sales and Bosco.

"I remember that I did very well during those years in school," the Bishop wrote many years later, in India. Perhaps because of the advantage he had in his English classes, he was able to finish high school when he was sixteen.

"About that time, after a spiritual retreat, I thought I might become a Salesian priest," he recalled. "I asked the Father Prefect, who, I thought, loved me very much, if he believed I could become a priest. Evidently he did not think much of me; he said he would let himself be beheaded if I ever became a priest." Morrow then asked the opinion of another priest in the school. "And he remarked that he would eat up a whole donkey if I ever became a priest. Then, in a very friendly way, he said I was being tempted by such thoughts."

The future Bishop given up being "tempted" by the priesthood for a time, and thought he would become an electrical engineer instead. Without his mother's permission, he found a vacation job as errand boy, at fifty cents a day, for an American businessman and with the American's help planned to go to New York to study electrical engineering. When his mother heard of his plan, she objected and persuaded her son to go for one year to the Salesian Seminary at Puebla City. The boy agreed, and stayed a second year, taught by the Rev. Albert Pattini, who had converted his mother to Catholicism.

The second year was decisive: young Louis LaRavoire, then nineteen, resolved to become a Salesian priest. He finished his novitiate in 1912, just before his twentieth birthday. Soon afterwards, a shortage of priests gave him his first practical training, for he was put in charge of a church recreation center about two miles outside Puebla.

During his next five years at Puebla, Mexico's violent revolution put young Louis through a series of tests that he recalls with a certain grim humor.

"Between 1914 and 1917, we had some experiences with the revolutionaries in Puebla City," he has said. "The city was occupied by the rebel forces of Zapata, and then it was suddenly taken by Government forces under General Gonzales. All the priests who were foreigners were ordered to Vera Cruz. Among those priests who had to march to Vera Cruz was Father William Piani, who became Apostolic Delegate to

Mexico. As a young cleric, I had to let all my mustaches grow and act as Director of the Salesian Seminary.”

From the windows of his school, Morrow could see the bodies of soldiers killed in the street fighting. When the Federal troops reoccupied the city, they commandeered the school building as a barracks, but exempted the chapel. A captain came to Morrow soon afterwards and ordered him to open the chapel as additional quarters for men and horses. Young Morrow, then only twenty-four, stood at the chapel door and refused to open it.

The captain threatened to have him shot, and told the young cleric that he could have a few hours to change his mind. Morrow replied quietly that the troops could enter the chapel “over my body.” The troops did not move in, but kept Morrow a prisoner in his school building, where twenty of his boarders were still living. One of Morrow’s assistants managed to get word of his plight to William Jenkins, the American Consul, who was worried at Morrow’s disappearance.

Jenkins had him released, but gave the future Bishop a piece of advice that may also have helped to save his life. He urged him to add his mother’s surname, Morrow, to his father’s name, LaRavoire. It would be easier to prove American citizenship, the consul said. The use of the mother’s surname after the father’s is common in Mexico and the Philippines; moreover, the Mexican revolutionaries of those days had made trouble for their country by killing Americans, and the Federal Government forces, at least, were careful to confine their reprisals to their own people.

Young Morrow had to shoulder responsibilities that were to fit him for many grim assignments in India. He was alone as never before, a foreigner in a revolutionary land. His father, Joseph LaRavoire, had died in San Francisco in 1913, when Louis was 21; his mother and his fifteen-year-old sister Margarita, born in Mexico, had gone back to the United States for good in 1915, and made their home in Norwood, Cincinnati, where the mother lived until her death in 1957. Louis stayed in Puebla to complete his studies for the priesthood at the Catholic University of Palafox, and was ordained in 1921 in the magnificent sixteenth-century cathedral of Puebla.

The next year Morrow’s old teacher, Father Piani, who had been ordered to Vera Cruz during the revolutionary days, was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Puebla. When the Vatican suddenly changed signal and assigned Piani to the Philippines as Apostolic Delegate, a message came to Morrow asking him to go with Piani as his major secretary for two years in Manila. The Philippines assignment lasted for seventeen years instead of two.

Morrow was much more than a secretary. True to his Salesian teachings, he found time to preach at schools and convents and help in the religious education of thousands of young Filipinos. He also took his first step in the literary footsteps of Francis of Sales.

The impetus came when Bishop William O’Brien of Chicago sent him a round trip ticket to Chicago to attend the Eucharistic Congress of 1926. At the Congress, Bishop O’Brien and 34-year-old Father Morrow from the Philippines put their heads together and discussed the founding of a “Catholic Truth Society” to publish and spread Catholic literature among the Filipino children. This idea started Father Morrow on a writing career that was to make him the author of a complete set of illustrated text books for

young Catholics of all school ages, with a circulation of millions of copies in eighteen languages.

To supplement his own works, Morrow also began a begging campaign—his first—to collect old Catholic periodicals from Americans interested in missionary work. He put a small advertisement in a church magazine asking readers not to throw away their discarded periodicals but to mail them to the Catholic Truth Society in Manila. The friends and correspondents Morrow collected in all parts of the United States through these appeals were to rally to the support of his Krishnagar mission in later years.

MEANWHILE Morrow got to work on the first of his writing ventures, and in 1929 the Society published “My Friend,” a prayer book for children. He began it with this letter to his readers:

My dear Friend:

Receive this little prayer book which I have prepared for you. It is called “My Friend” because I should like it to be *your best friend* during the first years of your life.

If you are good now while young, very likely you will always continue to be good; but if you are not good now, it will be very difficult to become good afterwards.

Life is much shorter than we think. At any moment we may die, and so we must always be ready to have a happy death. The only way to be ready is to be in the grace of God.

To be in the grace of God, you must obey the Commandments of God, say your daily prayers, hear Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation, go to Confession and to Communion often, and have a tender devotion for the Blessed Virgin.

The child that is in the grace of God, that has no sin, is always happy. You must always try to be happy.

I hope this little book will help you to be always a happy and good child of Jesus and Mary.

This book, in a pocket-sized format of three by four and a half inches, with 108 color pictures, was a quick and fabulous success, both in the original English edition (with translations into Spanish, Chinese, and Six Philippine dialects) for the Philippines, and in a subsequent edition for the United States. By 1949 it had gone through ten printings, totaling 700,000 copies, and was being sold in six alternative bindings.

From his study in Manila, Morrow poured out a stream of other books. In English, and then in translation to the different dialects as well as Spanish and Chinese, he issued “My First Communion,” for children of five or six years. Morrow justified its simple style and content by writing, in an introduction: “It is not so important that the child memorize theological terms; it is very important that he learn to love God.”

The English edition, promptly adapted for the United States by the Edward O'Toole Company, has run through thirteen printings totaling about two million copies. Translations have been made all over the world, in forty languages and dialects, including: Italian, Hungarian, Portuguese (in Brazil), Spanish (in Mexico, Chile, and Argentina), Chinese (in Hong Kong and Formosa), Japanese and Burmese. In India English reprints are made almost annually; there are translations in Bengali, Malayalam, and Gujarati. In Africa the booklet is being distributed in sixteen different dialects.

Morrow then turned out "My Mission Book," to guide "those who are making a mission or retreat"; it had gone through seven printings, totaling 850,000 copies, by 1949. In miniature size also, came "My Baptism," written "with the purpose of helping the faithful towards a greater understanding of the sacrament of Baptism;" "My Wedding Day," to help Catholics realize the beauty and significance of the ceremonies connected with the sacrament of matrimony;" "My Last Sacraments," written "with the hope of helping Catholics to realize more deeply the significance of the prayers and ceremonies connected with the last sacraments for the sick and dying," and "My Beloved Dead," in black cover with white lettering, an attempt to reach and reassure "those Christians who, when someone near to them dies, not only murmur against God and question His goodness and justice, but also speak as if they had no more hope of ever meeting the loved one again."

In larger format, spectacularly successful like the others, was "My Jesus and I," a picture-book primer "for tiny tots to take around"; and a large wall chart of forty pictures on "My Jesus and I," visible from any part of a classroom," in colors "for tiny tots who can barely read." More pretentious was "My Bible History," 130 pictures and stories from the Old and New Testaments; and, finally, Morrow's most ambitious work, "My Catholic Faith," a layman's manual of theology," which is, in effect, a small encyclopedia of the Bishop's faith and creed. He wrote the 407 double-columned pages in question-and-answer form, seeking to answer every conceivable question a layman might ask in the daily practice of the Catholic religion.

When Morrow visits rectories in the United States he is usually introduced as "the Bishop of Krishnagar." The welcome he receives in many places is polite but noncommittal until the priest in charge discovers that the Bishop is also the author of "**My Catholic Faith.**" At once he becomes a celebrity to those who have never heard of Krishnagar. The sideline of the Bishop's writing—for he concedes that it is only a sideline—has brought him more renown among Catholics than the hard, wearing work in India to which he now devotes his life.

Morrow wrote most of these books while he was still a rather obscure secretary to the Apostolic Delegate in the Philippines. He remembers those years as the happiest of his life.

ONE evening in June, 1939, while he was at supper in Manila, a cable arrived from Rome. The Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Piani, opened the letter, smiled and said that as it was in cipher it would have to be worked on in the morning. After Mass the next day, when his secretary had had a good night's sleep, Archbishop Piani handed Morrow the cablegram—not in cipher. It said:

“LaRavoire Morrow appointed Bishop of Krishnagar. Congratulations.”

“I thought it was a joke,” Morrow said afterwards. “I had never heard of any place called Krishnagar.”

After locating it on the map, he resolved to have a quick look at Krishnagar on his way home to Rome and the United States. On September 5, 1939, just as the war was starting in Europe, Morrow sailed from Manila for Singapore on the American liner *President Harrison*, then flew to Calcutta, where he arrived toward the end of the sticky, steamy rainy season. He took the local train that clatters out of Sealdah Station for Krishnagar, two hours away, and was appalled at what he found there. The diocese had been without a Bishop from 1928 to 1934; the prelate appointed in 1934 could hold office for only one year, and from 1935 to 1939 the diocese had again been without a head. There was no money to pay for the electricity and water available in the town. Few children were attending the two schools. Buildings urgently needed repairs. The boys' dormitory had neither doors nor windows; between the ground and second floors, there was only a shaky ladder, because money for a staircase was lacking.

The Bishop's first decision was to order drinking water piped in from the city at once. Then he collapsed with malaria and high fever for the first time in his life. For eight days he was too weak to leave his bedroom. He could not even visit the town and get acquainted with the municipal officials.

Weak in body and depressed by the size of his new assignment, he said good-bye to his staff and journeyed by train for thirty-six hours to Bombay, to resume his trip to Rome. He had not had a happy introduction to India. He had seen enough to know that his mission needed everything: staff, equipment, money, and, above all, the driving force of a leader.

In Rome, the consecration—“a grand ceremony,” Morrow called it—took place on October 29, 1939. It was the first such ceremony at which Pius XII had officiated since becoming Pope seven months before. Morrow was one of two Americans out of the twelve new Bishops who were consecrated on that day.

Remembering what he had seen of the needs at Krishnagar, Morrow hurried to the United States to begin begging for his new mission. He stopped first at Cincinnati to visit his mother, who did not at all approve of her son becoming a Bishop. She thought he could have done more good as a simple priest, and she was a little afraid that as a Bishop he would put on airs. Morrow ate with her in the kitchen of her small apartment, as he always had, and in other ways tried to convince her that wearing a Bishop's hat had not gone to his head. But he was nervous about the money-raising job that lay ahead of him. In his seventeen years in Manila, as secretary to the Apostolic Delegate, he had not been supposed to do any begging.

The new Bishop laid his plans carefully. On December 5, he celebrated his first solemn Pontifical Mass in the United States at the Church of the Annunciation, on West 131st Street, New York City, where the Right Rev. Mgr. Arthur F. Quinn is still the pastor. Archbishop Spellman, now the Cardinal, presided on that occasion, and the new Bishop used the opportunity to tell Spellman something of the problem he faced in Krishnagar.

Morrow then went to Boston to visit Archbishop Cushing. There, too, and back in New York among friends in the Catholic clergy, he mapped out a “begging campaign” to start as soon as possible. His campaign headquarters was in the lower East Side rectory of the Church of the Transfiguration on Mott Street. He began on January 6, 1940, in St. Luke’s Church on East 138th Street, the Bronx, where the Rev. Robert B. Mulcahey (now a Monsignor) was the pastor.

“He saw how nervous I was when I arrived at his rectory before my begging at Mass,” Bishop Morrow remembers. “After supper he called me to his room, and in the most fatherly way gave me points to take up in an appeal. These were the few and simple things I should speak about: that the Holy Father was sending me to a poor diocese in India, where Catholics were few and poor; that I was in need of everything, and would be sincerely grateful for all help given me; and that in recompense we would be praying for our beloved benefactors.

“My appeal the next morning did not last more than five minutes. That Sunday I made it eleven times, because in the upper and lower church there were Masses every half hour. Ever since I have been repeating that sermon. I am told that it is good and to the point.

“Whenever I go for my begging campaign my legs seem to tremble as I walk up the steps of rectories, for fear of arriving at the wrong psychological moment. But usually, when I feel weak, I get a hearty welcome and a generous offering. And then I get new energy to keep on pestering our beloved pastors, the ones most responsible for our support.”

The eleven appeals in one day at St. Luke’s produced the first collection ever given to Bishop Morrow for Krishnagar. It came from the pastor, his priests and his parishioners, and because it was the first, Morrow has never forgotten it.

Between January and August, 1940, Morrow delivered his five-minute “begging sermon” in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Hoboken and Philadelphia, in Cincinnati, El Paso, Los Angeles and San Francisco. He found time to pay a two-day visit to his birthplace at Weatherford, Texas, and to Puebla, his old student home in Mexico. Out of the six hundred boys who had been in “Father Morrow’s” charge at his recreation center outside Puebla, two hundred were on hand, with their wives and children, to welcome him back as a Bishop after eighteen years.

Morrow remembered that every Sunday night he had sent them home with an informal five-minute homily, full of fatherly advice. This time, he started his speech to them by saying, “Boys, as I was saying last Sunday.....”

Back in New York, Morrow happened on a windfall that was to help him throughout his years at Krishnagar. This was the Krishnagar Guild, founded by men and women who had been corresponding with him and sending him discarded magazines while he was “Father Morrow” of the Philippines. A small group of businessmen and working girls—stenographers, saleswomen, young housewives and others—most of whom had never met one another or the bishop, got together and arranged a send-off for him before he left the United States for his new and distant diocese in India.

With the help of the Bishop's address book, the group was alerted, and on May 21, 1940 the anniversary of Morrow's ordination as a priest, about 200 men and women assembled to wish him well at the old Center Club, on Central Park South. A few of the women had gone there that afternoon to dust the chairs and to put up some gay decorations. The Bishop was astonished when he arrived and found two hundred friends and supporters on hand. Since there was no dais or stage the Bishop had to balance on a folding chair to give a little farewell talk.

What he said there must have been effective, for the group has held together as the Krishnagar Guild ever since. Each year since 1940 the Guild has met, first at Midston House on Murray Hill, then at the Carroll Club nearby, and recently at the Hotel McAlpin. Each year it has grown in numbers and in helpfulness to the Bishop's work.

"We made one rule from the very beginning," said one of the founders, who lives in the upper Bronx. "Everything we did as individuals would be anonymous. We felt that nothing produced so much jealousy and friction in any charity group as the use of the letter "I" so whatever we did was done by the Krishnagar Guild."

In its first year the Krishnagar Guild raised two hundred dollars. The Bishop had many larger gifts that year, but none that cheered him more.

HE needed all the cheer he could get when he sailed across the Pacific, in August of 1940, to start his work as Bishop of Krishnagar. All the news from the mission had been gloomy; one of his priests had died of malaria; one of the nuns and some of the children were seriously ill. He stopped off in Manila, where he had spent his happiest years, and wondered once more, as he said later, "why God had sent me to that diocese in Bengal."

When he arrived in India, as Bishop for the first time, he walked straight into a crisis—the first of a series that was to afflict him and his mission for the next seven years. The war was on. The British authorities were getting ready to intern his fourteen Italian priests and helpers. Throughout 1941, Morrow persuaded the British to let the Italians stay in return for his personal guarantees of their good behaviour. But in 1942, as the Japanese advanced through Burma toward the Indian frontier, these enemy nationals in Morrow's mission began to look dangerous.

The British had set up a radar station seven miles from Morrow's mission; their officers and men were living, in deeper secrecy, in the Protestant mission down the road from Morrow's church. It was natural that they should be skittish about the presence of Mussolini's fellow-citizens nearby, even though those Italians happened to wear white cassocks instead of black shirts. But it was natural, too, that Morrow should fight against their internment, which would have left him without a staff, without a mission worthy of the name.

One day Morrow got orders to produce his Italians within a week for the three-day train journey to the British internment camp at Dehra Dun, north of Delhi. Quarters had already been allotted to them at the camp.

The Bishop swung into agitated action. He told the local British authorities they could cut off his right arm if they found one of the Italian priests doing anything detrimental to the war effort. He hurried off a telegram to the Governor of Bengal in Calcutta, and another to the Viceroy in New Delhi.

In desperation he sent a cable to Her Majesty the Queen at Buckingham Palace.

"You," he cabled, "are the mother of all people in distress. I beg you not to let this group of missionaries be interned. I beg you, in the name of God, to intercede,"

The day the priests were to start on their trip to internment camp, Morrow got a forty-eight hour reprieve. At last a letter came from Conrad Smith, then Home Minister of the Government of India, telling Morrow that because of his "splendid work" the British had decided to let him keep the Italians at Krishnagar.

Morrow believes it was the only such exception granted to any Catholic mission in India. Two Italian Bishops, 300 Italian priests and forty Germans were interned at Dehra Dun for the duration of the war, while Morrow's staff remained untouched.

"Congratulations, Bishop." the Chief of Police of Bengal said when he visited Krishnagar soon afterwards. "You were always one step ahead of us; why, you even sent a message to the Queen!" Morrow does not know for sure, but he thinks that his message was delivered to Buckingham Palace, and that it turned the tide.

The next crisis was the famine that all but overwhelmed the mission along with the rest of stricken Bengal.

There was little time in those agonizing days to do anything about improving the mission or expanding its work. Roofs and walls were crumbling; all that mattered was to keep the mission staff and children alive. In any event, there were no materials in wartime for repairing old buildings or constructing new ones. That would have to wait until after the war, and until the Bishop could go on another begging expedition to the United States.

Toward the end of the war, with the famine receding and the Japanese in Burma on the run, the Bishop's cares lightened and his optimism returned. American troops in charge of the great supply depot at Ranaghat, a dozen miles away, visited the mission in droves, showered the children with candy and left truckloads of potatoes to help feed them.

The Bishop's talks with these Americans cheered him and turned his thoughts homeward. In 1945 he flew off to Rome, in an American army bucket-seat transport, to report to the Pope at the end of the first five years. Then he hustled off to New York to start fund-raising once more.

From his austere room at the Rectory of Mary Help of Christians, at 440 East Twelfth Street just west of Avenue A, he took off for New England and the Middle West to beg for his mission, and his efforts did not go unrewarded. In Detroit a street car conductor and his wife sent him a check for \$500 for a chapel; the donor wrote that he would be retiring soon, that his years of work as a conductor had been blessed, and that he wanted to give "a little house to God in thanksgiving."

On Long Island a non-Catholic wandered into the church where Bishop Morrow was speaking about Krishnagar. The next day came a check, and the explanation that "I have been a traveling representative of my firm, and have a real knowledge of conditions in your mission." The Krishnagar Guild was active, the Bishops around the country were receptive, and Morrow began to look back on the war years as a nightmare that had passed.

He was to face still another crisis after his return to India in 1946; the partition of India and Pakistan, the sudden amputation of two-thirds of his diocese and more than half of its population, the flood of refugees that poured across the new frontier, just fifteen miles from his cathedral. But by this time Morrow was ready for any crisis. His mission was thriving, his schools had grown, his staff had been strengthened, and he was a power in the community, respected and honored by Christians and non-Christians alike. The mission was almost entirely dependent, as it still is, on private contribution, and Morrow never had more than a year's operating funds in hand; but his fund-raising was enabling him to make many of the improvements he had been planning during the frustrating war and postwar years.

WHEN he came home in 1949 on his third round of appealing for funds, he benefited in his "begging" from the traffic-control system through which the Catholic Church regulates appeals by returning missionaries. Uncontrolled and unregulated, missionaries might make a nuisance of themselves in some parishes and leave others untouched. Wherever he went to beg, Morrow had to check in with the diocesan office of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the organization which coordinates Catholic missionary activities all over the world.

The Society office assigned him five parishes in the diocese in which to appeal for funds. Morrow turned back each collection to the Society, which gave him a check for the amount and also credited the amount to the quota fixed for the parish. If a parish had not met its quota after making its contribution to Morrow, other fund-raisers could go there with other appeals. If, on the other hand, a parish had done handsomely by the Bishop and had met its quota, the Society made sure that no more fund-raisers would go there within the year.

Sometimes friends would invite Bishop Morrow, like other begging missionaries, to appeal for funds in their churches, although they were not on his list of five parishes. In such instances Morrow would have to ask permission from the diocesan office of the Society. Usually the Bishop got permission for such additional appeals, and he made full and fervent use of it. On his 1949 begging campaign, the most successful he ever undertook, he spoke in the Boston, New York and Newark dioceses; in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis and St. Paul. In eight five-minute appeals in the church in Chicago on one Sunday he raised \$1,827.

"That," says the Bishop with a twinkle in his eye, "is nearly as much as a television star would get for forty minutes' work."

His annual letters from India to the Krishnagar Guild in New York reflected the changing fortunes of his mission. In 1941 he had written that “we are truly in need of hospitals, schools, running water.” By 1952 he was able to look back upon those early years with some detachment.

“Thirteen years ago,” he wrote, “we had no schools, no water, a few mud chapels and huts, a small, poor cathedral.... Dearly beloved friends, Our Lord dropped our pleas into your own responsive hearts. Can you realize in a tiny way why we promise that you will never, never be forgotten in Krishnagar?”

The Bishop now knew his Guild supporters well enough to be alternately solemn and impish in his closing lines:

“As always, we raise our right hand in heartily blessing each one of you. Can you also see that left hand of ours slipping out in constant begging?”

By 1953 he was thanking the Guild not only for food, clothing and medicines, but for a more sophisticated gift. “As I sit in this small room, made comfortable,” he wrote, “by God’s mercy and your gift of an air-conditioner, I try to think of all the things that would be of so much interest to you...”

He reminded his New York friends that “the cross atop the belfry of our beautiful white cathedral stands out against the sky, blessing not only our Mission but other areas.” What could any priest do, at home or abroad, the Bishop wrote, “without loving friends and benefactors who open their hearts and piggy-banks every time he extends his begging hand for alms, not for himself but for his poor people?”

Indians, on the whole, prefer self-help to charity, and their self respect demands that they become independent of charity from abroad. But in Morrow’s diocese the refugee problem is so acute, the need is so overwhelming, that charity from outside is justified even in Indian minds. Therefore, when barrels of dried milk come from America, sent out of Government surplus by the Catholic Relief Services of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, Morrow gets all he can for his diocese. His own priests distribute it in the outlying villages, where the arrival of the 240-pound barrels causes a sensation every time. With the cooperation of Indian Government authorities, 150,000 school children in the diocese have been receiving milk regularly.

As Morrow stands on the balcony of his Bishop’s House and looks out at his cathedral, his dispensary and his schools, he cannot help but direct his thoughts into the future. Who will take his place and that of his non-Indian missionaries? There already is one Indian priest: in two or three years three others will be ordained, from Morrow’s own diocese. The Salesian order to which he belongs now has over 300 Indian aspirants to the priesthood, studying in Indian seminaries; many of them are to be assigned to Krishnagar.

For himself and his mission, Morrow wastes no time or energy in worrying. Whatever happens, the Bishop is ready to spend the rest of his life in Krishnagar, if his Church lets him stay. He has resolved already to make his connection with the town permanent. In

a side chapel of his new cathedral, visitors are shown a slab of concrete in the tiled floor. Under it, they discover, is to be the tomb of Bishop Louis LaRavoire Morrow. He wants it there, among "his" Indian people

At the moment he has a small ambition and a big one. The small one is to acquire from America a prefabricated airplane hangar to serve as an assembly hall and recreation center for his children at the mission. The second ambition, far more difficult to attain, is to get a new water system for his city of Krishnagar.

The old system was started in 1923 for a city of 22,000. It was a good one as far as it went, and still better when a filtration plant was added in 1938. But the town has now mushroomed to a population of 70,000; the 200 public water hydrants, the only source of "safe" water for the people, are so besieged that every day, the Bishop says, there are at least 200 fights and brawls among the women waiting in line to fill their water jars.

Krishnagar needs two new eight-inch tube wells and three small storage reservoirs. In addition, the capacity of the filtration plant will have to be tripled. Technically, the project is sound. The problem is to get the approval of New Delhi and to find the money.

The Bishop has joined the quest for the waterworks with all his customary energy and skill. At this writing, the prospects seem anything but good. It looks as though the people of Krishnagar would have to wait years for more water.

Yet those who know the Bishop, who have seen what he has accomplished by begging, pleading, praying and driving ahead against all obstacles, are willing to wager that the town will get its water in the end.

NOTE: *Since this booklet was written, Morrow has obtained his recreation hall, a converted airplane hangar, 80 by 140 feet. And the new water system is almost finished. Today the Bishop's hopes and dreams are no less ambitious: a seminary building for the training of priests, four new schools for girls, two for boys, six new chapels, a maternity hospital, a Bishop's House for his successor and a sewage system for Krishnagar.*

