

Chapter 2

THE PROVINCES OF THE ORDER - STATISTICS

Paragraph 79

General remarks on the Provinces of the Order

The natural result of the events of 1517 was a marked multiplication of provinces in the Order. Not only did the former vicariates of the Observants become at one stroke, provinces, but a number of smaller groups of convents also asked for the title and the rights of a province. In as far as these requests concerned new territories, for example, in America, they were certainly justified and were, therefore, well received by the Order. The contrary was true of the requests coming from the established provinces, which did not cover extensive territory and which, nevertheless, demanded a division. The granting of such requests must of itself impair facility of action in the Order and also hinder the achievement of those vaster tasks, which call for a strong common effort, forbidding all further divisions and by decreeing penalties on all those who were trying to bring about such divisions. In particular, the Chapter decreed that all those who were instrumental in effecting the division of any province, should be barred for thirty years from the office of provincial in those provinces, which they helped to erect, indeed, they can not even be members of those provinces. Experience had shown that only too often, friars who sought the division of old provinces or the erection of new ones, were actuated by the old principle, *divide et impera*. The Order, therefore, had chosen the best means to check the growth of unnecessary provinces. Had its decrees been observed, the provinces would never have grown to an almost unbelievable number.

As a rule, the General Chapters were not anxious to grant requests for the erection of new provinces. To overcome this reluctance, the leaders of the movement for a new province, would appeal directly to the Holy See, and, sad to say, their appeals usually met with success. This procedure was the forte especially of the reformed branches, in particular of the Discalceati, who usually had their provinces erected in this way through their agents in Rome or in Madrid. Papal confirmation was indeed prescribed by law for the legal erection of new provinces – that point, as it appears, was understood only too well during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries – but the matter should have been referred first of all to the head of the Order and then, only after the Order had passed its judgment, should the Apostolic confirmation have been sought. Instead, the General Chapters, in many instances, saw themselves confronted with an accomplished fact, to which they had to agree, whether they wished to or not. The Order recognized full well, that, in this way, its strength was being sapped and the harmony and peace of the common life was being impaired. Especially harmful was the circumstance that many provinces no longer had a territory, with strict geographical limits, which they could view as their primary and exclusive field of labor, because some other province, through these devious dealings at Rome, had intruded into that territory. As a result, the provinces were crowded together with overlapping boundaries, instead of being completely distinct and separated. This situation, already very bad after 1517, became unbearable in Italy and Spain, when the provinces of the Reformati and the Discalceati, pressed into an over

occupied territory. Almost everywhere in those countries, the same territory was claimed by two, sometimes even three or more provinces, without counting the provinces in that territory, belonging to the Capuchins or Conventuals. Much more fortunate, in that respect, were the provinces of Austria-Hungary and especially the Recollect provinces of the Germano-Belgian nation. These provinces had always insisted that the territory of each province be sufficiently extensive. Besides other branches of the Order were not competing in the same territory. The same can not be said of the French Recollects, for these had to find places wherein they might labor in the territories already occupied by the Observants. It was only in consequence of the Union of 1897, which naturally did away with the various branches within the Order, that this overlapping of the boundaries of the provinces was definitely ended.

The selfish interests of a few selfish and ambitious friars, as we have seen, usually caused the geographical division of the provinces; the same elements were also the cause of the ideological divisions within one province, among which the higher provincial offices were to rotate. The reason advanced for this division was the divergence of “nations” in one province. By “nations”, these men meant the inhabitants of neighboring villages, differing in dialect, characteristics or parochial interests from the remainder of the members of the province. It was all merely a subterfuge to hide the ambition of some disappointed office seeker. Whenever the results of some election did not please the leaders of some nation, they attempted to obtain legal guarantees that such a misfortune should not be repeated in the future. Somewhat different, however, were the conditions in a number of the American and in the Neapolitan Discalceati province, which had, indeed, been founded by Spanish friars, but whose personnel, in the course of time, had come to be recruited in ever increasing proportion from the native race or races. In such provinces, there was a genuine difference of nations. But, even there, it was contrary to the Catholic and the Franciscan way of life for the diminishing minority to demand the alternate election of the provincial and of the Definitorium. Such demands merely embittered the native born friars.

Quite different was the division of the entire Order into various nations. This division was made so that the interests of all might be justly represented and protected on the General Definitorium. Thus, since 1621, the Ultramontane Family had been divided into the *Natio Hispanica*, which included also the provinces in the Americas and in the East Indies, the *Natio Franciae* and the *Natio Germano-Belgica*. The *Natio Germano-Belgica* comprised all the German provinces, except those in Bavaria and in Austria-Hungary, the Belgian and the English provinces. The Cismontane Family was divided into the *Natio Lombardica*, comprising the States of the Church and of northern Italy, the *Natio Regni*, comprising the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and the *Natio Ultramarina*, to which belonged the provinces in Bavaria, Austria-Hungary, Poland, the Balkans and the Holy Land. This manner of division was permitted to fall into disuse after the French Revolution. In the year of the Union, 1897, the much better division of the Order into twelve circumscriptions took its place.

After the sixteenth century, the precedence of the provinces, for some unknown reasons, assumed ever greater importance in the minds of the friars. In order to settle this point, the principle was adduced, which seemed entirely natural and just, that the age of the province should determine its precedence. The principle seems simple and easy to apply, but it led to interminable difficulties. For immediately there arose a barrage of

questions: is the age of a province to be reckoned from the time of its approbation by the General Chapter, or from the time of the papal approval, or from the time of the actual erection of this province, even if years should have intervened between the actual erection and the legal erection? Does a province obtain precedence from the year when it became an independent custody? If a province had been suppressed by the authority of the Church or by some power hostile to the Church, does such a province regain its precedence upon its restoration? Is a province to be reckoned as destroyed when it ceases to have its own government, or, only then, after all its former members have died? If a new province is erected, which is composed partly of friars from an older province, does the new province enjoy the precedence of that older province? And, especially, do the reformed provinces, erected in 1517 and in 1639, enjoy the precedence of those provinces within which they have arisen, or must their precedence be reckoned only from the year of their erection? Some of these questions never received a satisfactory answer, others received many contradictory replies in the course of time. Usually, lists of the provinces were prepared only for the General Chapters. These often contained remarkable blunders and were the subject of almost continual complaint. The questions were all definitely settled in 1897, when a list of the provinces according to precedence, was added to the new General Constitutions. All provinces, existing at that time, were bound to submit to the decisions of the list.

Paragraph 80

The Provinces of the Cismontane Family until the French Revolution

In Italy, in 1518, the Province of St. Peter in Montorio was formed from the houses of the Amadeans, lying between Rome and Parma. In 1529, the Province of *Sancti Hieronymi de Urbe* was formed from the convents of the Clareneans, situated around Rome. This province soon received the name of *Sancti Bartholomaei de Insula*, from its main convent. It seems that the spirit of the old Clareneans revived in this province, so that the Pope was forced to order a strict visitation in 1567. In the following year, both of these provinces were suppressed by the Pope.

The *Provincia Tusciae* was divided in 1523 into a *Provincia Tusciae* and a *Provincia Senensis*. The latter province, in 1526, was permitted to adopt the old name, *Provincia Tusciae*, while the convents around Florence formed the *Provincia Tusciae Florentinae* and the friaries around Lucca were formed into the *Provincia Lucensis S. Crucis*. In 1530, the *Provincia Lucensis* united with the *Provincia Tusciae Florentinae*. In 1563, the *Provincia Florentinae*, resulting from the former union, merged with the *Provincia Tusciae*; but this union was dissolved in 1591. In 1603, however, there was a lasting union of the two provinces.

In upper Italy, in 1594, the convents, situated north of the Tanaro, were separated from the *Provincia Januae* and erected into the *Provincia Sancti Didaci*. The houses of this province, lying towards the west, were absorbed into the newly erected *Provincia Sancti Thomae Apostoli in Pedemontio* in 1622. Several convents were also surrendered to this new province by the *Provinciae Mediolanensis*, *Genuensis* and *Sancti Ludovici*.

In lower Italy, the convents of the *Provincia Terrae Laboris*, lying towards the east, which formed the poorer portion of that province, were united into the *Provincia*

Principatus; in 1555, these convents were reunited with the mother province, but in 1575, a permanent separation was effected. The tiny province in Calabria soon followed the bad example. The southern part (*Calabria ulterior*) retained the ancient name, *Provincia VII Martyrum*; the northern portion (*Calabria citerior*) was called simply the *Provincia Calabriae*. Conditions were still worse in Sicily. In 1622, the Reformati forced through the formation of three Custodies within the single Sicilian province. This event was the signal for the division of the province itself into three parts within that same year. Where a year before a single province had been found adequate, now there were six administrative units of the Order. The northeastern part of the island retained the ancient name of *Provincia Siciliae* (*Vallis Daemonis* or *Nemoris*), the northwestern part was now called *Provincia Vallis Mazzariae*, and the rest, together with the island of Malta, was called *Provincia Vallis Nethi*. The confusion was increased when in 1639, the three Reformati Custodies were elevated to the rank of provinces. Thus, in Sicily, from the former lone province, six provinces had been formed within seventeen years!

In 1639, the number of provinces in the rest of Italy was doubled in the same way by elevating the custodies to the rank of provinces. More divisions were made during the eighteenth century. In upper Italy, the Observant *Provincia Mantuae* was separated from the *Provincia Veneta* in 1767. This Observant province seems to have disappeared entirely during the French Revolution. The convents, belonging to the Venetian Reformati Province, which was situated in the territory of Mantua, had been incorporated into the Milanese Reformati province in 1753, at the wish of the Empress Maria Theresa. The same thing happened in that year with the houses of the Reformati Custody of *Sancti Paschalis Papiae*.

In lower Italy, the Observant province of St. Nicholas was divided in 1733, *ex amplitudine provinciae ac diversitate regionum*. The convents, situated around Lecce were formed into the independent *Provincia Observantiae Sancti Antonii Lyciensis*. The neighboring Observant Province *Sancti Angeli* was also divided in 1776. The convents, lying in the plain formed the *Provincia Apuliae inferioris* with the old title of *Sancti Angeli*; the houses in the mountainous region formed the *Provincia Apuliae superioris*, with the title of *Sancti Ferdinandi in Molisio*.

The Province of Sardinia had belonged to the Ultramontane Family since 1511, but afterwards it returned to the Cismontane Family. In 1581, it rejoined the Ultramontane Family upon the urging of the King of Spain, who was also ruler of Sardinia. At the wish of this same power, the Pope in 1631, lowered the province to the rank of custody and then joined it to the province of Catalonia. That degradation, however, did not last very long, for by 1639, instead of but one province of uncertain status, there were two Sardinian Observant provinces: *Sanctae Mariae de Gratiis* in the northern part of the island, which enjoyed the precedence of the former lone province, and *Sancti Saturnini*, in the southern part. Reformati were not to be found in Sardinia, since they were not allowed in the lands ruled by the Spanish Crown.

In the Balkans, in 1590, was erected the *Provincia Albaniae* (more rarely called *Macedoniae*) from the convents situated in the territory of the ancient *Provincia Graeciae*. These convents had either been newly erected or had continued to exist, despite the persecutions of the Turks. The neighboring *Provincia Bosnae Argentinae* lost in 1676 its eastern portion to the newly erected *Provincia Bulgariae* and its western part near the Adriatic Sea to the Province *Sancti Caii, Pappae, Martyris*, erected in 1735, also

called the *Provincia Sanctissimi Redemptoris*. In a westerly and northerly direction extended another daughter province of the *Provincia Bosnae Argentinae*, the *Provincia Sancti Heronymi*, erected in 1478. On the eastern border of the *Provincia Bosnae Argentinae*, there was likewise a daughter province: *Provincia Bosnae Croatiae*, independent since 1514. Since the seventeenth century, this last province was called simply *Provincia Carniolae Sanctae Crucis* or *Croatiae-Carniolae*. In 1688, it joined the Reformati. Despite the losses, enumerated above the mother province of *Bosnae Argentinae* extended over the broad territory of Slavonia, Sirmia, Temesvár, Bosnia, and Serbia and numbered at the middle of the eighteenth century about 800 friars. Therefore, in 1757 another division was made and the convents in eastern Slavonia, in Temesvár and Sirmia formed the *Provincia Sancti Ioannis Capistrani*. The remainder of the old province, now composed mostly of mission residences among the Turks, was lowered to the rank of a Custody. This grave injustice was rectified in the following year, when the ancient title and precedence was restored to the now tiny *Provincia Bosnae Argentinae*.

In Hungary, a vicariate of the Observants had existed alongside the ancient province of the Reformed Conventuals since the middle of the fifteenth century. Since this province of Reformed Conventuals was joined to the Observance by the Union of 1517, the General Chapter of 1523 decided that it should be called the *Provincia Sanctae Mariae in Hungaria*, to distinguish it from the more recent Observant province, which was named the *Provincia Sanctissimi Salvatoris*. Due to the losses suffered during the Reformation and the Turkish wars, the union of the two provinces was decreed in 1606, but apparently never executed. In the course of the seventeenth century, both provinces joined the Reformati. The southwestern part of the *Provincia Sanctae Mariae*, which lay partly in Croatia and Slavonia, was separated in 1661 as the Observant *Provincia Sancti Ladislai*. The convents of the *Provincia Sanctissimi Salvatoris* in Transylvania, which were formed into a Reformati Custody in 1640 were raised to the rank of a province in 1729 with the title of *Provincia Transylvaniae*.

The large province of Poland was divided into two Observant provinces in 1630. The larger province, situated in the north, occupied Lesser Poland and received the name of *Polonia minor*, the other was called *Polonia major*. In 1639, the Custodies of the Reformati already existing in both provinces, were also raised to the rank of provinces. In 1637 the houses of the *Provincia Polonia minor*, lying towards the east in Austrian Galicia, were formed into the *Provincia Russiae (Immaculatae Conceptionis)*. Thus, within nine years, five provinces had been formed from the former lone Polish province. Further divisions took place in the eighteenth century. The convents in Lithuania had demanded their independence already in 1529, but in vain. Despite the refusal, a province was begun there, but in 1571, it was again united with the Polish province. Not until 1729, was the *Provincia Lituaniae* legally separated from the Observant province of Lesser Poland. In 1746, the Reformati province in the same territory of Lesser Poland lost its friaries in Austrian Galicia. These houses were formed at first into an independent Custody, and then, in 1763, into the *Provincia Beatae Mariae Dolorosae Russiae*. Shortly before, in 1750, the Reformati province in Greater Poland had surrendered a number of its convents, scattered over West Prussia, Posen and Silesia, to the newly erected *Provincia Beatae Mariae Assumptae Prussiae*.

In 1754, there was the *Provincia Sanctae Hedwigis Silesiae* in Upper Silesia. Naturally, it was a Reformati province, since its mother province in Bohemia had joined

the Reformati in 1660 as the *Provincia Bohemiae Sancti Wenceslai*. Its neighbor to the south, the *Provincia Austriae*, had transferred to the Reformati in 1632 and enjoyed the same privileges as the *Provincia Bavariae*, erected in 1625 (cfr. par. 70). Anthony of Galbiato, reformer and first provincial of the Bavarian province, introduced the Italian reform in 1628 also into the *Provincia Sancti Leopoldi* in north Tyrol, which had been founded in 1580 as an Observant province. Its convents had belonged formerly partly to the *Provincia Argentinensis* and partly to the *Provincia Austriae*. At first, this province belonged to the Ultramontane Family, but in 1583 it became a member of the Cismontane Family.

The present-day south Tyrol was occupied by the convents of the Reformati *Provincia Veneta*, but in 1643, they received their independence as the *Provincia Sancti Vigili*.

Table of the Cismontane Provinces

1517	1639	1789
1. St. Francis	1. St. Francis	1. St. Francis
	2. <i>St. Francis Ref.</i>	2. <i>St. Francis Ref.</i>
2. Roman	3. Roman	3. Roman
	4. <i>Roman Ref.</i>	4. <i>Roman Ref.</i>
3. Marches of Ancona	5. Marches	5. Marches
	6. <i>Marches Ref.</i>	6. <i>Marches Ref.</i>
4. Tuscany	7. Tuscany	7. Tuscany
	8. <i>Tuscany Ref.</i>	8. <i>Tuscany Ref.</i>
5. Bologna	9. Bologna	9. Bologna
	10. <i>Bologna Ref.</i>	10. <i>Bologna Ref.</i>
6. Genoa	11. Genoa	11. Genoa
	12. <i>Genoa Ref.</i>	12. <i>Genoa Ref.</i>
	13. St. Didacus	13. St. Didacus
	14. <i>St. Didacus Ref.</i>	14. <i>St. Didacus Ref.</i>
7. Milan	15. St. Thomas in Piedmont	15. St. Thomas in Piedmont
	16. <i>St. Thomas Pied. Ref.</i>	16. <i>St. Thomas Pied. Ref.</i>
	17. Milan	17. Milan
	18. <i>Milan Ref.</i>	18. <i>Milan Ref.</i>
8. Venice (St. Anthony)	19. Venice	19. Venice
	20. Mantua	20. Mantua
	21. <i>Venice Ref.</i>	21. <i>Venice Ref.</i>
9. Brescia (Brixienensis)	22. Brescia	22. Brescia
	23. <i>Brescia Ref.</i>	23. <i>Brescia Ref.</i>
10. St. Bernardine	24. St. Bernardine	24. St. Bernardine
	25. <i>St. Bernardine Ref.</i>	25. <i>St. Bernardine Ref.</i>
11. Terra Laboris (Naples)	26. Terra Laboris	26. Terra Laboris
	27. <i>Terra Laboris Ref.</i>	27. <i>Terra Laboris Ref.</i>
	28. Principatus	28. Principatus

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1517	1639	1789
12. St. Nicholas (Apulia)	28. <i>Principatus Ref.</i> 29. St. Nicholas 30. <i>St. Nicholas Ref.</i>	29. <i>Principatus Ref.</i> 30. St. Nicholas 31. St. Anthony, Lecce 32. <i>St. Nicholas Ref.</i>
13. Basilicata	31. Basilicata 32. <i>Basilicata Ref.</i>	33. Basilicata 34. <i>Basilicata Ref.</i>
14. Sant' Angelo	33. Sant' Angelo 34. <i>Sant' Angelo Ref.</i>	35. Sant' Angelo 36. St. Ferdinand 37. <i>Sant' Angelo Ref.</i>
15. Calabria	35. VII Martyrs 36. <i>VII Martyrs Ref.</i> 37. Calabria 38. <i>Calabria Ref.</i>	38. VII Martyrs 39. <i>VII Martyrs Ref.</i> 40. Calabria 41. <i>Calabria Ref.</i>
16. Sicily	39. Sicily 40. <i>Sicily Ref.</i> 41. Vallis Mazzariae 42. <i>Vallis Mazzariae Ref.</i> 43. Vallis Nethi 44. <i>Vallis Nethi Ref.</i>	42. Sicily 43. <i>Sicily Ref.</i> 44. Vallis Mazzariae 45. <i>Vallis Mazzariae Ref.</i> 46. Vallis Nethi 47. <i>Vallis Nethi Ref.</i>
17. Corsica	45. Corsica 46. <i>Corsica Ref.</i>	48. Corsica 49. <i>Corsica Ref.</i>
18. Candia	47. Candia 48. Albania	50. Candia 51. Albania
19. Ragusa (Dubrovnik)	49. Ragusa	52. Ragusa
20. Dalmatia	50. Dalmatia	53. Dalmatia St. Jerome
21. Bosnia Argentina	51. Bosnia Argentina	54. SS. Redemptor. Dalmatia 55. Bulgaria 56. Bosnia Argentina 57. St. John Capistrano
22. Bosnia Croatia	52. Croatia-Carniola	58. <i>Carniola Ref.</i>
23. Hungary	53. Hungary St. Mary 54. Hungary SS. Salvatoris	59. <i>Hungary St. Mary Ref.</i> 60. St. Ladislao 61. <i>Hungary SS. Salv. Ref.</i>
24. Poland	55. Poloniae Minoris 56. <i>Poloniae Min. Ref.</i> 57. Russia 58. Poloniae Maioris 59. <i>Poloniae Maioris Ref.</i>	62. <i>Transylvania Ref.</i> 63. Poloniae Minoris 64. Lithuania 65. <i>Poloniae Min. Ref.</i> 66. <i>B.M. Dolorosae Russiae Ref.</i> 67. Russia 68. Poloniae Maioris 69. <i>Poloniae Maior. Ref.</i> 70. <i>B.M. Assumptae Prussiae Ref.</i>

1517	1639	1789
25. Bohemia	60. Bohemia	71. <i>Bohemia Ref.</i>
		72. <i>St. Hedwigis Silesiae Ref.</i>
26. Austria	61. <i>Austria Ref.</i>	73. <i>Austria Ref.</i>
	62. <i>Tyrol St. Leopold Ref.</i>	74. <i>Tyrol St. Leopold Ref.</i>
	(<i>Prov. Venice Ref.</i>)	75. <i>S. Vigili Tyrol Ref.</i>
(<i>Prov. Argentinensis</i>)	63. <i>Bavaria Ref.</i>	76. <i>Bavaria Ref.</i>
27. <i>Terrae Sanctae</i>	64. <i>Custodia Terrae Sanctae</i>	77. <i>Custodia Terrae Sanctae</i>

Paragraph 81

The Provinces of the Ultramontane Family until the French Revolution

In western Spain, in the territory of the venerable *Provincia Sancti Jacobi*, there arose in 1517 the *Provincia Sancti Jacobi* and the *Provincia Portugalliae* as well as the two Custodies of *Pietatis* and *Gabrielis*. The *Custodia Pietatis* was made a province in 1518; the *Custodia Gabrielis*, in 1520. In 1533, the southern part of the *Provincia Portugalliae* was separated as the *Provincia Algarbiorum*. This province included also the convents on the Azores, until they became an independent province in 1639 with the title of *Provincia Sancti Joannis Evangelistae Insularum de Azores*. In 1717, this already small province was divided and the independent Custody *Immaculatae Conceptionis* was formed, which is also called *Sancti Michaelis* after the island of that name. The *Provincia Portugalliae* suffered a further loss in 1560 as a consequence of the separation of its Houses of Recollection, which were formed into the *Provincia Arrabidorum* (cfr. par. 66). After 1568, these same houses formed the *Provincia Sancti Antonii in Lusitania*. Finally the convents on the island of Madeira were taken from the *Provincia Portugalliae* in 1683 and joined together as the independent Custody *Sancti Jacobi in Madera*. For these manifold losses, the *Provincia Portugalliae* was but poorly compensated by the absorption of the former Conventual Custody of Porto (*Custodia Portuensis*), which had joined the Observants in 1584.

The *Provincia Sancti Jacobi*, now pushed back into northern Spain and called for a time the *Provincia Galiciae*, had surrendered its houses in the south in 1548 to the new *Provincia Sancti Michaelis in Estremadura*, which lay along the eastern boundary of Portugal. In 1770, the *Provincia Sancti Michaelis* was divided into the part lying above and the part lying below the Tajo, and called therefore *Sancti Michaelis supra et infra Tagum*. Northeast of this province was the *Provincia de Santoyo*, which was enlarged in 1518 by the addition of the Custody *de Abrojo* and was called thereafter *Provincia Conceptionis*. The other neighboring province of Burgos lost the convents situated in its northwestern portion in 1555, when these houses were formed into the *Provincia Cantabriae*.

In southern Spain, the *Provincia Baeticae* was divided in 1583 and the western half became the *Provincia Granatensis*. Previously, the convents of this province on the Canary Islands had gained their independence and, after 1553, were known as the *Provincia Canariarum* (less frequently referred to as the *Provincia Palmarum*).

There were also many changes in the provinces of eastern Spain. In 1520, the Custody of Murcia separated from the mother province of Castile to become the *Provincia Carthaginensis* or *Murciae*. On the south, this province was bounded by the *Provincia Granatensis*. The large neighboring *Provincia Aragoniae* was divided into three parts in 1559: of these three provinces, the *Provincia Valentiae* and the *Provincia Cataloniae* were situated along the sea shore, while the new *Provincia Aragoniae* was pushed farther inland with its main strength around Saragossa.

Besides the provinces already mentioned, there was a series of Discalceati provinces on the Iberian peninsula. In the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, arose the *Provinciae Pietatis*, *Sancti Gabrielis*, *Arrabidorum*, *Sancti Antonii in Lusitania*. These provinces, three of which were in Portugal, had transferred from the Observants to the Discalceati. By frequent division, the number of Discalceati provinces was greatly increased. In Portugal, the *Provincia Solitudinis* was separated in 1670 from the *Provincia Pietatis* and probably embraced the convents in northern Portugal. In 1704, the *Provincia Sancti Antonii* surrendered its northern houses to form the *Provincia Immaculatae Conceptionis de la Beyra*.

The Spanish Discalceati were even more active than their Portuguese brethren in the matter of dividing provinces. With the exception of the *Provincia Sancti Didaci in Baetica*, which was formed in 1620 from the southern part of the *Provincia Sancti Gabrielis*, all the Spanish Discalced provinces have a common mother and leader, the *Provincia Sancti Josephi* (cfr. par. 66). This province included all the convents, scattered over Old and New Castile up to the vicinity of Valencia. In 1577, the eastern part was separated as the *Provincia Sancti Joannis Baptistae Valentiae*. In 1594, the northwestern part was separated as the *Provincia Sancti Pauli*. Finally, in 1744, the convents farther removed from Madrid were formed into the *Provincia Immaculatae Conceptionis in Nova Castilia*. On the east, the territory of this new province extended to the sea and on the north to about Saragossa. The *Provincia Sancti Joannis Baptistae* from time to time also surrendered portions of its territory to form new provinces. On the south, the *Provincia Sancti Paschalis* was erected in 1744, while the *Provincia Sancti Petri de Alcantara in Granata* was erected in 1659. The latter province had existed for a short time after 1640 as the *Provincia Sancti Raphaelis*.

The Discalceati of Spain sought to establish themselves also in Italy. The Province of Granada tried first of all and failed; but the Province of St. Joseph, more experienced in this matter of establishing new provinces, succeeded in 1675 in establishing the *Provincia Sancti Petri de Alcantara in Neapoli*. In 1742, the part lying in Apulia was separated as the *Provincia Sancti Paschalis Lyciensis*. In order to put an end to the continual ill-humored bickering and difficulties, both provinces were foolishly incorporated in 1745 into the Ultramontane Family. The change, however, did not bring the hoped for results.

Besides the provinces already enumerated, the *Natio Hispanica* embraced also all the provinces in the Americas and in the Far East, since in the beginning, practically only Spaniards or Portuguese were allowed to labor in those lands. The oldest province in the Americas was established on the mainland of Venezuela and on the neighboring islands. It was called the *Provincia Sanctae Crucis Caracarum*, after Caracas, the chief town of Venezuela. However, by 1524, this province had been restricted to the Antilles. In 1534, it was lowered to the rank of Custody and finally, in 1559 it was entirely suppressed. In

1565, however, it was restored as a province, although the opposition to its existence had not ceased.

In Mexico, a Custody was formed in 1523, which became the *Provincia Sancti Evangelii* in Mexico in 1534. This province had spread out from all sides of the Yucatan peninsula, so that a division was a necessity. In 1565, therefore, two custodies of the province became the *Provincia Sancti Josephi de Yucatan* and the *Provincia Sanctissimi Nominis Jesu de Guatemala*. These two new provinces had formed for a few years after 1559 the *Provincia Sancti Josephi*. As a result of the division the venerable *Provincia Sancti Evangelii* receded farther inland towards the district lying south of the capital city. North of this province were formed gradually the Custodies of Michoacan, in the districts of Morelia and Guanajuato, of Jalisco, in the territory west of Michoacan touching the Pacific Ocean, and to the north of both custodies, the Custody of Zacatecas. The custodies of Michoacan and Jalisco were united in 1565 to form the *Provincia Sanctorum Petri et Pauli*. In 1606, the province was legally divided, although the actual division took place only in the following year. The older province was called the *Provincia Sanctorum Petri et Pauli de Michoacan* and the younger, the *Provincia Sancti Jacobi de Jalisco* or *Novae Galiciae*. The Custody of Zacatecas was raised to the rank of a province in 1603 with the title of *Provincia Sancti Francisci de Zacatecas*.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the *Provincia Sancti Evangelii* founded convents also in the southern part of the present United States of North America. A custody was begun in Florida in 1609 with convents also on the Antilles. In 1612, it was made a province with the name of *Provincia Sanctae Helenae* in Florida. A Custody *Sancti Pauli novi Mexici* was begun in New Mexico in 1633, in dependence upon the mother province. Of short duration was the Custody *Sanctae Catharinae Fluminis viridis*, which bordered upon the Province of Michoacan. It gained its independence in 1621, but it was reunited with the *Provincia Sanctorum Petri et Pauli* in 1645. The provinces mentioned thus far in Mexico all belonged to the Observants. The Discalceati in 1580 founded a custody within the territory of the *Provincia Sancti Evangelii*. For a time it was governed by the province in the Philippines, but in 1599, it became the *Provincia Sancti Didaci* in Mexico.

In Central America, the *Provincia Sancti Georgii de Nicaragua*, with convents in Honduras and Costa Rica, was separated in 1575 from the province of Guatemala. The convents in Honduras again became subject to the jurisdiction of the Province of Guatemala in 1587 as the *Custodia de Honduras*.

In South America, the *Custodia Peruviana* was separated from the *Provincia Sancti Evangelii* in 1535. In 1553, it became the *Provincia XII Apostolorum de Peru*. On account of its enormous extent, this province was divided in 1565 in the following manner; the Custody of Colombia, which some say was independent already in 1550, became the *Provincia Sancti Fidei in Nova Granata*, the Custody of *Sancti Pauli* of Ecuador, became the *Provincia Sancti Francisci de Quito*, the convents along the southwestern coast of the continent formed the *Provincia Sanctissimae Trinitatis de Chile*, and the Custody of Bolivia became the *Provincia Sancti Antonii de las Charcas (Charcarum)*. Finally, a custody was erected on the *Terra firma*, that is, in Venezuela, dependent upon the mother province, which now styled itself *Provincia Limensis XII Apostolorum*. The spread of this province, despite the losses enumerated above, was still so enormous, since it still included Peru, Tucuman (Argentina) and Paraguay, that the

custodies of Tucuman and Paraguay were united in 1612 into the *Provincia Assumptionis de Paraguay et Tucuman*, also called the *Provincia Fluvii Platensis*.

Thus, within a comparatively short time, Franciscan provinces had been erected by the Observants throughout the largest part of South America. The eastern part of the continent was reserved for the Portuguese Discalceati, since that colony was ruled by Portugal. The *Custodia Brasilis*, which was founded there in 1584, became the *Provincia Sancti Antonii in Brasilia* in 1657. In 1675, the southern part branched off as the *Provincia Immaculatae Conceptionis in Brasilia*. Since the territory of this province was situated about Rio de Janeiro, it was also called for a time the *Provincia Fluminis Januarii*.

East India also was claimed by Portugal and hence it was evangelized by Portuguese missionaries. The convents founded there, especially along the west coast around Goa and Cochin and on the island of Ceylon, formed at first a custody and in 1583 the independent *Provincia Sancti Thomae in India orientali*. Due to the opposition of the mother province in Portugal, provincial rank was withdrawn shortly after; but, in 1612, the province was again restored. In 1633, the southern part of Cochin and the island of Ceylon were separated from the *Provincia Sancti Thomae* as the *Custodia Sancti Antonii de Cochin*. The Province of St. Thomas was restricted to the west coast around Goa.

In the Spanish East Indies, that is, in the Philippines, the Discalceati of the Province of St. Joseph had obtained a firm footing by 1577. Nine years later, the *Provincia Sancti Georgii Philippinarum et Chinae* was erected with convents, in the beginning, also in Mexico. The friars of this province set out on expeditions from the Philippines, not only for China, but also for Farther India, where they founded a convent in Malacca. Since, however, this territory was claimed by Portugal, this convent was surrendered to the Portuguese Discalceati of the *Provincia Sancti Thomae* of India proper. After these friars had built a number of friaries in the East Indies, the *Provincia Matris Dei de Malacca* was erected in 1622. Besides, about 1700 the Observant *Custodia Sancti Francisci de Malacca* was founded.

In France, the union of 1517 brought special difficulties in its train. A remedy was attempted at the General Chapter of 1518, when it was decided to grant the Reformed Conventuals permission to form distinct provinces. The *Provincia Franciae* and the *Provincia Turoniae*, formed by these Reformed Conventuals were ranked as Observant provinces alongside the *Provincia Franciae Parisiensis* and the *Provincia Turoniae Pictaviensis*. Only in the *Provincia Burgundiae (Sancti Bonaventurae)* could the fusion of the two parties be effected, with the former Conventuals, as it seems, retaining the upper hand. In 1729, the *Custodia Sabaudiae* branched off from the *Provincia Burgundiae*, but it was reunited with the mother province in 1750. The Conventuals in Aquitaine joined the Observance in 1532. To distinguish them from the Observants, who had their own province in that territory for some time, they took the name of *Provincia Aquitaniae recentioris*. Thus, there were in France four large provinces, formed for the most part, of former Conventuals. In the future history of the Order, these provinces, together with the Grand Couvent of Paris, whose Guardian was partly exempt from the jurisdiction of the Provincial, were to act as a unit and were known as the *Provinciae confederatae*. In the end, they drew the other Observant provinces over to their side, and in 1771, all joined the Conventuals (cfr. par. 74). Several portions, which had belonged to

the *Provincia Franciae*, were saved for the regular Observance, because they had been separated from this province, before it transferred to the Conventuals. These parts were the *Provincia Flandriae*, erected in 1523, as well as the former Custody of Artois, which had become the *Provincia Sancti Andreae in Artesia* in 1558. Both provinces had been assigned to the Germano-Belgian nation and in the seventeenth century had joined the Recollect reform.

Besides the two provinces just mentioned, a number of other Recollect provinces also arose in the *Natio Franciae*. The *Provincia Britanniae (Bretagna)* joined the Recollects as a unit. In 1612, the *Provincia Sancti Dionysii* was founded in northern and western France, as well as the *Provincia Sancti Bernardini* in the Provence and Aquitaine, and in the *Custodia Sancti Antonii in Delphinatu*, whose convents were situated in Burgundy. In 1620, this custody became the *Provincia Sancti Francisci in Gallia*. Since the Recollects of Aquitaine were not satisfied with their state of dependence upon the *Provincia Sancti Bernardini* of Provence, they formed in 1614 their own *Provincia Immaculatae Conceptionis in Gallia*. This province was later restricted to the northern part of Aquitaine after 1635, when the *Provincia Sanctissimi Sacramenti* was erected in the southern part around Toulouse. The *Provincia Sanctae Mariae Magdalenae* branched off from the *Provincia Sancti Dionysii* in 1619. It occupied the territory from about Tours and Orleans to the eastern border. Finally, in 1643 the *Custodia Sanctissimae Trinitatis* arose within the *Provincia Turoniae*. However, this custody did not last very long.

In Germany, the difficulties encountered as the result of the Union of 1517 were similar to those met in France. The Reformed Conventuals formed the *Provincia Saxoniae Sancti Joannis Baptistae*, while the Observants formed the *Provincia Saxoniae Sanctae Crucis*. In 1520, the *Custodia Holsatiae* was united with the latter. As a result of the storms of the Reformation, both provinces perished. The *Provincia Sanctae Crucis* was united for a time with the *Provincia Argentinensis* after 1606, but it was restored in 1625. The venerable *Provincia Sancti Joannis Baptistae* never revived although it was re-erected in 1633. However, its daughter province in Thuringia had a happier fate. It was declared independent in 1523 in the very midst of the chaos of the Protestant revolution and although suppressed for a time, it was able to develop mightily after 1633. In 1762, because of petty quarrels, the convents on the Rhine and around Limburg separated from this province to establish the *Provincia Thuringiae Inferioris Sanctae Elisabeth*. The mother province was now restricted to Thuringia and Franconia and its name was modified to the *Provincia Thuringiae Superioris Sanctae Elisabeth*.

On the lower Rhine, in present Holland, the *Provincia Germaniae Inferioris* (less frequently styled the *Provincia Brabantiae*) was separated in 1529, from the *Provincia Coloniensis*. In 1790, the civil authorities divided this province into the *Provincia Brabantina* and the *Provincia Mosana*, but the Revolution soon completely nullified the effects of this intrusion. In present Belgium, the *Provincia Sancti Josephi in Comitatu Flandriae* was taken from the *Provincia Flandriae* in 1629. It became a Recollect province.

After Artois had become French territory, the *Provincia Sancti Andreae* ceased to be a member of the Germano-Belgian nation. The same was true of the *Provincia Sancti Antonii in Artesia*, established in 1668 or 1667, which lay to the south of the *Provincia Sancti Andreae*. As a result of territorial conquest, the French nation also absorbed the

Provincia Sancti Nicolai in Lotharingia, which had become independent in 1727 and, whose convents had belonged partly to the *Provincia Franciae* and partly to the *Provincia Argentinensis*. The same is true of the *Provincia Sancti Petri de Alcantara Alsatae*, which had branched off from the Strasbourg province in 1750.

The provinces in the extreme northern countries of Europe were the heaviest sufferers from the Reformation. The *Provinciae Daciae* and *Scotiae* were entirely destroyed, despite the fact that they were formally restored and titular provincials were appointed for them for a long time. Happier was the fate of the *Provincia Angliae*, which, after being restored in 1633, was able to survive despite the gravest trials until well into the nineteenth century. The *Provincia Hiberniae* also suffered much during the many persecutions, but it was never completely destroyed. In 1645, a division of this province was approved by the General Chapter but, according to all appearances, it was never carried out.

Table of the Ultramontane Provinces

1517	1639	1789
1. St. James	1. St. James 2. St. Michael in Estremadura	1. St. James 2. St. Michael in Estremadura north of Tagus 3. St. Michael in Estremadura south of Tagus
2. Portugal	3. Portugal 4. Algarbiorum 5. St. John Evangelist Azores 6. <i>Arrabidorum Discalced</i> 7. <i>St. Anthony Discalced</i>	4. Portugal 5. Custody of St. James of Madeira 6. Algarbiorum 7. St. John Evangelist Azores 8. Cust. St. Michael Azores 9. <i>Arrabidorum Discalced</i> 10. <i>St. Anthony Discalced</i> 11. <i>Immaculate Conception de la Beyra Discalced</i>
3. Custodia Pietatis	8. <i>Pietatis Discalced</i>	12. <i>Pietatis Discalced</i> 13. <i>Solitudinis Discalced</i>
4. Burgos	9. Burgos 10. Cantabria	14. Burgos 15. Cantabria
5. De Santoyo	11. Conception	16. Conception
6. Castile	12. Castile 13. Cartagena (Murcia)	17. Castile 18. Cartagena
7. Custody of St. Gabriel	14. <i>St. Gabriel Discalced</i> 15. <i>St. Didacus Baetica Disc.</i>	19. <i>St. Gabriel Discalced</i> 20. <i>St. Didacus Baetica Disc.</i>
8. Holy Angels	16. Holy Angels	21. Holy Angels
9. Baetica	17. Baetica 18. Granada	22. Baetica 23. Granada

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1517	1639	1789
	19. Canaries	24. Canaries
10. Aragon	20. Aragon	25. Aragon
	21. Catalonia	26. Catalonia
	22. Valencia	27. Valencia
11. Majorca (?)	23. Majorca	28. Majorca
- St. Joseph	24. <i>St. Joseph Discalced</i>	29. <i>St. Joseph Discalced</i>
		30. <i>Immaculate Conception in Nova Castilia Discalced</i>
	25. <i>St. John Baptist Valencia Discalced</i>	31. <i>St. John Baptist Valencia Discalced</i>
		32. <i>St. Peter of Alcantara Granada Discalced</i>
		33. <i>Custody St. Paschal Murcia Discalced</i>
	26. <i>St. Paul Discalced</i>	34. <i>St. Paul Discalced</i>
		35. <i>St. Peter of Alcantara Naples Discalced</i>
		36. <i>St. Paschal Lecce Disc.</i>
12. Sardinia	27. Sardinia S. Mariae Gratiis	37. Sardinia S. Mariae Gratiis
	28. Sardinia St. Saturninus	38. Sardinia St. Saturninus
13. Holy Cross Hispaniola	29. Holy Cross Caracas	39. Holy Cross Caracas
	30. Holy Gospel in Mexico	40. Holy Gospel in Mexico
	31. Custody of St. Paul in New Mexico	41. Custody of St. Paul in New Mexico
	32. St. Helen in Florida	42. St. Helen in Florida
	33. St. Francis Zacatecas	43. St. Francis Zacatecas
	34. Sts. Peter and Paul Michoacan	44. Sts. Peter and Paul Michoacan
	35. Cust. St. Catherine Fluminis Viridis	
	36. St. James of Jalisco	45. St. James of Jalisco
	37. St. Joseph of Yucatan	46. St. Joseph of Yucatan
	38. <i>St. Didacus New Mexico Discalced</i>	47. <i>St. Didacus New Mexico Discalced</i>
	39. Holy Name of Jesus in Guatemala	48. Holy Name of Jesus in Guatemala
	40. St. George in Nicaragua	49. St. George in Nicaragua
	41. Sta Fe in Nueva Granada	50. Sta Fe in Nueva Granada
	42. St. Francis of Quito	51. St. Francis of Quito
	43. Lima XII Apostles	52. Lima XII Apostles
	44. Holy Trinity Chile	53. Holy Trinity Chile
	45. St. Anthony in Bolivia	54. St. Anthony in Bolivia
	46. Assumption in Paraguay	55. Assumption in Paraguay
	47. <i>Custody of Brazil Disc.</i>	56. <i>St. Anthony Brazil Disc.</i>

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1517	1639	1789
		57. <i>Immaculate Conception Brazil, Discalced</i>
	48. St. Thomas in East Indies	58. St. Thomas in East Indies
	49. Custody of St. Anthony de Cochin	59. Custody of St. Anthony de Cochin (?)
	50. <i>Mother of God Malacca Discalced</i>	60. <i>Mother of God Malacca Discalced</i>
	51. <i>St. Gregory Philippines Discalced</i>	61. <i>St. Gregory Philippines Discalced</i>
14. France	52. Grand Couvent of Paris	
	53. France	
	54. France Paris	
	55. Flanders	62. <i>Flanders Recollect</i>
	56. <i>St. Joseph in Flanders Recollect</i>	63. <i>St. Joseph in Flanders Recollect</i>
	57. St. Andrew in Artesia	64. <i>St. Andrew in Artesia Recollect</i>
		65. <i>St. Anthony in Artesia Recollect</i>
	58. <i>St. Dionysius Recollect</i>	66. <i>St. Dionysius Recollect</i>
	59. <i>St. Mary Magdalen Recollect</i>	67. <i>St. Mary Magdalen Recollect</i>
15. Touraine	60. Touraine	
	61. Touraine Pictaviensis	
16. St. Bonaventure	62. St. Bonaventure	
	63. <i>St. Francis Recollect</i>	68. <i>St. Francis Recollect</i>
17. St. Louis	64. St. Louis	
	65. <i>St. Bernardine Recollect</i>	69. <i>St. Bernardine Recollect</i>
18. Bretagne	66. <i>Bretagne Recollect</i>	70. <i>Bretagne Recollect</i>
19. Aquitaine	67. Aquitaine antiquioris	
	68. Aquitaine recentioris	
	69. <i>Immaculate Conception Recollect</i>	71. <i>Immaculate Conception Recollect</i>
	70. <i>Holy Sacrament Recollect</i>	72. <i>Holy Sacrament Recollect</i>
20. Argentinensis	71. Argentinensis	73. <i>St. Nicholas in Lotharingia Recollect</i>
		74. <i>St. Peter Alcantara in Alsace Recollect</i>
		75. <i>Argentinensis Recollect</i>
21. Saxony	72. Saxony St. John Baptist	
	73. Thuringia (St. Elisabeth)	76. <i>Thuringia superior Rec.</i>
		77. <i>Thuringia inferior Rec.</i>
	74. Saxony Holy Cross	78. <i>Saxony Holy Cross Rec.</i>
22. Cologne	75. Cologne	79. <i>Cologne Recollect</i>

23. Dacia	76. Lower Germany	80. <i>Lower Germany Recollect</i>
24. England	77. Dacia	
25. Ireland	78. England	81. <i>England Recollect</i>
26. Scotland	79. Ireland	82. <i>Ireland Recollect</i>
	80. Scotland	

Paragraph 82

The Provinces of the Order after the French Revolution

The French Revolution, and its repercussions in the various lands, had violently destroyed many provinces of the Order. However, most of the provinces were able to survive, even though with difficulty, and were restored later often with modified boundaries. In fact, the list of provinces, drawn up for the General Chapter of 1856, shows only insignificant gaps, if one excepts the destroyed Spanish provinces. A more far-reaching reorganization of provinces was necessitated by the Union of 1897, which demanded the fusion of numerous provinces. Many mistakes of the past were now rectified at one stroke and that was done within the incredibly brief time of hardly three years.

The history of the changes, which have taken place in the provinces since the French Revolution, must henceforth follow the order of the zones of circumscriptions, as in force today.

The provinces of Italy, which constitute the first four circumscriptions, had not quite recovered from the wounds inflicted by the Revolution, when they were smitten with the decrees of suppression of the new government. In Piedmont, the suppression began in 1854, in the other parts of Italy in 1866, and in the Roman provinces in 1875. While no province was entirely destroyed during this period, all were more or less weakened. On this account, the fusion of neighboring provinces in Italy had become a necessity. This was true especially of those provinces whose boundaries had become inextricably entangled, and whose separate existence, after the union, no longer had any significance. After the former titles of Observant and Reformed had been abolished in 1897, some sought to distinguish the provinces, occupying the same territory, by the addition of *antiquior* (for a former Observant province) and *recentior* (for a former Reformed province). Such titles did not last long, for the new General Definitorium proceeded with the Union in all such provinces, with unrelenting energy.

In the first circumscription or zone, this process of union was entirely completed by 1899. The *Provincia Seraphica* was formed from the two Umbrian provinces, the *Provincia Picena* from the two provinces in the Marches of Ancona, and the *Provincia Bononiensis* from the two provinces around Bologna. Finally, a new *Provincia Romana* was formed from the two former Roman provinces together with the *Custodia Recessuum Sancti Bonaventurae*, established in 1845.

Greater changes were necessary in the second zone, especially in Tuscany. Besides the Observant province, *Provincia Tusciae Sancti Bonaventurae* and the Reformati province, *Provincia Sacrorum Stigmatum*, there was also in Tuscany the *Provincia Lucensis Sancti Josephi*, formed in 1891 from a Reformati Custody of several

decades existence. Since the territories of these provinces overlapped, a new arrangement was decreed in 1898, as follows: the *Provincia Tusciae Sancti Bonaventurae* received the territory around Pistoia, Florence and Siena, the *Provincia Tusciae Sacrorum Stigmatum* retained the territory of southern Tuscany around Arezzo and Chiusi, while the third *Provincia Sancti Josephi* was restricted to the western part around Pisa, Lucca and Livorno. In the same year, the provinces of Genoa, the Observant province of St. Bonaventure and the Reformati province of St. Anthony were united into the one *Provincia Januensis* with the title of *Sancti Leonardi a Portu Mauritio*. In the following year, the two Venetian provinces were united into the one *Provincia Veneta*.

In Piedmont, the former Reformati Province of St. Thomas had been suppressed in 1849 and later two Custodies were erected to take its place: the *Custodia Maritima*, which became the mother of the new French Reformati provinces, and the *Custodia Pedemontana*, which was united in 1898 with the Observant province in Piedmont to form the *Provincia Pedemontana Sancti Thomae Apostoli*. It will be up to the immortal glory of this province, that the request for this union first came from it. Out of the three other double provinces of upper Italy, *Mediolanensis*, *Brixiae*, and *Sancti Didaci*, there were restored after the Revolution only the Reformati *Provincia Sancti Didaci*, the Reformati *Provincia Immaculatae Conceptionis in Longobardia*, erected in 1845, in place of the *Provincia Brixienensis*, and the Observant *Custodia Longobardiae* or *Sanctae Mariae Angelorum*, established in 1861 in Milan. In 1898, one province was formed from the three just mentioned with the ancient title *Provincia Mediolanensis*. Finally, the *Provincia Sardiniae* also belonged to the second zone. Since 1899, this province embraces the territory of both former provinces in Sardinia.

In the third zone or circumscription, conditions were especially complicated. Geographically, no serious difficulties were encountered in uniting in 1898 the two provinces in the Abruzzi into the one *Provincia Aprutiorum Sancti Bernardini*. The same is true of the union during that same year of the Observant province of St. Anthony, situated around Lecce, and the Reformati Province of St. Joseph, which had branched off from the Reformati Province of St. Nicholas in 1835, and the Discalced Province of St. Paschal. Henceforth, these three provinces formed the one *Provincia Lyciensis Sancti Antonii*. But between these provinces, there were in the heights around Naples ten other provinces, extending athwart the peninsula, overlapping each others' boundaries in an almost unbelievable manner, so that, for example, in Naples there were convents belonging to six distinct provinces. A reapportionment of territory was more necessary here than anywhere else in the entire Order. The job was done in 1899 and only three provinces remained where ten had existed before. These were the *Provincia Terrae Laboris (Sancti Johannis Josephi de Cruce)* in the northern section of Naples, together with the districts of Caserta and Benevento; next, the *Provincia Apuliae (Sancti Michaelis Archangeli)*, comprising the eastern districts of Foggia, Bari and Campobasso; and finally, the *Provincia Principatus (Sancti Jacobi de Marchia)*, occupying the southern part of Naples, together with the territory of Salerno and Irpino.

The last province mentioned, the *Provincia Principatus*, belongs to the fourth circumscription. In this zone, in 1898, the two provinces of the Basilicata were united, the same was done with the three provinces in Calabria, which were fused into the one *Provincia Calabriae (VII Martyrum)*. Finally, the three double Sicilian provinces were also consolidated, each pair forming one province, thus: the *Provincia Vallis Nemoris*,

Provincia Vallis Mazzariae, and the *Provincia Vallis Nethi*. The island of Malta, which had been under the jurisdiction of the last named province, had become an independent *Custodia Melitensis* in 1838.

In the fifth zone, the union of the *Provincia Sancti Hieronymi* and of the *Provincia Ragusae* was a necessity. The resultant province received the title in 1899 of *Provincia Sancti Hieronymi in Dalmatia*. In 1892, the *Provincia Herzegovinensis* was established from a custody of that same name, begun in 1852 in the territory of the *Provincia Bosnae Argentinae*. In 1906, the *Provincia Albaniae* was restored, after it had been reduced to the status of an Apostolic Mission in 1832, due to lack of adequate personnel. The Reformati Custody of Constantinople, which was listed during the seventeenth century and again from 1856 to 1882, was not able to support itself.

The provinces of the sixth zone underwent in 1900 a complete rearrangement, because their boundaries, despite the great expense of their territories had become hopelessly confused. The *Provincia Sanctissimi Salvatoris* and the *Provincia Sancti Ladislai* were entirely suppressed and their convents were distributed among the other provinces, in the following manner: the *Provincia Sanctae Mariae in Hungaria* received the middle and the northern portion of Hungary, while the *Provincia Transsylvaniae* retained the eastern part, that is, Transylvania. The *Provincia Sancti Joannis Capistrani* retired to the southern part of Hungary and surrendered its convents in Croatia and Slavonia to the new *Provincia Croatiae Sanctorum Cyrilli et Methodii*. This same province absorbed also the friaries in Croatia and Slavonia, belonging to the *Provincia Sancti Ladislai* and to the *Provincia Carniolae*. The *Provincia Carniolae Sanctae Crucis*, a member of the fifth zone, occupied Carinthia and parts of Styria, while the *Provincia Austriae Sancti Bernardini* comprised eastern Styria and Lower Austria. It was no more than just this province of St. Bernardine should be restored, since its convents, for the most part, had never been destroyed, but had been merely handed over to other provinces, due to the violent intervention of the State. In the year 1785, for instance, by a royal decree, the convents in Carinthia and Styria were separated from this province and in 1791, they were joined into an independent *Provincia inferioris Austriae*, which lasted till 1839. The convents of the province, then still in existence, instead of being returned to the mother province, were handed over to the North Tyrolean Province as the *Commissariat Styriae*. The six convents remaining in Lower Austria after the separation in 1785, formed the *Provincia Austriae* until 1825, when they were given over to the *Provincia Sancti Joannis Capistrani*. This same province received in 1851 the *Provincia Bulgariae*, but in 1869, the few houses still existing in Bulgaria were surrendered to other provinces.

Greater misfortunes, however, were in store for most of the provinces of the former kingdom of Poland. After a period of uncertainty, they were entirely suppressed in 1864 by the Russian government. Only the two provinces in Austrian Galicia, the Observant *Provincia Septem Dolorum* and the Reformati *Provincia Immaculatae Conceptionis*, continued to exist. In 1899, they were united into the *Provincia Galiciae Immaculatae Conceptionis*.

The former *Provincia Prussiae Beatae Mariae Assumptae* in the seventh zone, assumed in the nineteenth century, the title of *Provincia Immaculatae Conceptionis in Borussia (Posnania)*. It had much to suffer from the displeasure of the times. The same is true of the other provinces within the German Empire. Entirely suppressed at the

beginning of the century, these provinces soon revived for the most part; only the *Provincia Thuringiae inferioris* and the once flourishing *Provincia Coloniensis* were to remain crushed. A part of the Cologne convents were given to the *Provincia Saxoniae*, and, on this account, it bore for a while the title of *Provincia Rhenano-Westphalica*. Of the venerable *Provincia Argentinensis*, only the houses in Swabia and Franconia survived and these were absorbed by the *Provincia Bavariae*. In Germany, just as in the neighboring countries, the boundaries of the Franciscan provinces were severely modified as a result of the political disturbances of the nineteenth century. The *Provincia Thuringiae superioris* lost all its convents, which were situated in present Bavaria. The two convents remaining to the province were formed into a custody in 1855. These convents had just begun to recover when they were struck by the storms of the Kulturkampf. The friars were driven not to secularization and destruction, as the authorities hoped, but to a new field of activity in America. So well did their interests prosper than shortly after the end of the Kulturkampf, the *Provincia Thuringiae Sanctae Elisabeth* was restored in the fatherland in 1894, while the foundations had been laid for a new province in America. During the same crisis, the *Provincia Saxoniae Sanctae Crucis* not only maintained its strength intact outside Germany, but, it also founded three new provinces, one in North America and two in Brazil. In 1902, the *Custodia Silesiae Sanctae Hedwigis* branched off also from this province, while the former province of that same name became a part of the Bohemian province.

The *Provincia Germaniae Inferioris*, which has now been restricted to the territory of present Holland, and therefore was also called the *Provincia Hollandiae*, flourished exceedingly. The *Provincia Sancti Josephi* also began to prosper. This province was erected in 1844 by Gregory XVI from the remains of the provinces formerly existing in Belgium

The Belgian friars were also instrumental in restoring the *Provincia Angliae*. They restored this province in 1887 as a custody. In 1891, it was constituted the *Provincia Immaculatae Conceptionis*. Besides this province of England and the *Provincia Hiberniae*, the eighth zone comprises also the provinces in France. The provinces in that country had to be entirely rebuilt. Besides the already mentioned *Custodia Maritima*, also called from its chief city the *Custodia Niciensis*, there was established in 1861 the *Provincia Sancti Bernardini*, which gradually spread over entire France. The northern part was separated in 1889 as the *Provincia Sancti Dionysii*. Some convents in England also belonged to this province. Besides these Reformati provinces, the Observants established in France in 1860, the *Provincia Sancti Ludovici Episcopi*, which likewise extended over the entire country. It was only in 1892 that the northern part together with the convents in England and Canada branched off to form the *Provincia Franciae*. During the recent persecutions of the Orders in France, the friars imitated the example of their Franciscan brethren and, according to the Rule, sought to do penance in other lands (Canada, Switzerland) with the blessing of God.

After Corsica had come under French dominion, its province had to share the fate of the French provinces. During the Revolution, this province disappeared entirely. In 1853, it was restored as a custody; in 1882, it was able to retake its place among the provinces of the Order.

The ninth and the tenth zones have been reserved for the Iberian peninsula, which formerly counted so many friars. However, the provinces there with but few exceptions,

have been entirely destroyed. The *Provincia Portugalliae*, destroyed in 1833, revived at first in one and then in two convents, until in 1891 it was restored to the rank of a province. The other Portuguese provinces were never re-established. In Spain, the friars, after 1834 were harassed almost continually so that the common life of religion was no longer hardly possible. Whether individual provinces were able nevertheless to maintain an unbroken existence, it is not yet known. By 1889, there are mentioned the *Provinciae Sancti Jacobi, Andalusiae* (that is, *Baeticae*), *Carthaginensis, Cantabriae, Valentiae, Cathaluniae*. In the following years, all have progressed in a heartening manner. To the tenth zone belongs also the *Provincia Sancti Georgii Philippinarum*, the only province still existing in eastern Asia. It was not destroyed during the Revolution, but it suffered severe losses as a result of the transfer of the Islands to the United States of America.

The provinces of the eleventh zone, which embraces Central and South America, were suppressed by law during the wars of Independence or the revolutions of the nineteenth century. However, none of the provinces were destroyed, except the province of Nicaragua, although all were very much weakened. The province in Ecuador was reorganized in 1903. The province in Chile was divided into two provinces in 1905, with the river Maule as the line of demarcation. The northern province took the name of the *Provincia Sanctissimae Trinitatis*, and the southern retained the ancient name of *Provincia Septem Gaudiorum Beatae Mariae Virginis*. Both Brazilian provinces had almost completely died out, when they received the desired re-enforcements from the German friars, whose *Provincia Saxoniae* had been abolished in their homeland. Thus these provinces could be re-established in 1901, with the ancient names of *Sancti Antonii* in the north and *Immaculatae Conceptionis* in the south. Finally in November 1907, the province of Peru was divided. The *Provincia Duodecim Apostolorum* was restricted to the southern part of the country, while the convents in the north formed the *Provincia Sancti Francisci Solani*.

The twelfth zone comprises the provinces in Mexico and in North America. The Provinces of Mexico were suppressed by the State in 1859 and, after that time, they were able to maintain only a precarious existence, except the *Provincia Sancti Josephi de Yucatan*. The remaining five provinces were consolidated in 1908 into three: the *Provincia Sancti Evangelii*, embracing the convents in southern Mexico and in the capital city; the *Provincia Sanctorum Petri et Pauli*, comprising the convents around Morelia and Querétaro; and the *Provincia Sanctorum Francisci et Jacobi*, formed of the friaries of Guadalajara and Zacatecas in northern Mexico.

In the course of the nineteenth century, the provinces in Florida, New Mexico and on the Antilles died out completely. But other provinces arose in that new country, whose future is very promising. The Saxon friars had a mission in the United States since 1858. Because numerous brethren went to America in 1875 as a result of the Kulturkampf, the *Provincia Sacratissimi Cordis* could be erected in 1879. The houses of this province stretch from Chicago and St. Paul westwards to California. Within that same broad territory, the *Provincia Sancti Joannis Baptistae Cincinnatiensis* also possesses some mission stations, but its main strength is concentrated more to the East, in Ohio and Kentucky. Here the friars of the North Tyrolean province founded a custody in 1859. It became a province in 1886. In the eastern states, around New York and Buffalo, the Irish Franciscans first of all, and then their Italian brethren came to labor among their countrymen. The convents of the latter were united into a custody in 1861, and again in

1901, as the *Custodia Buffalensis Immaculatae Conceptionis*. Soon friars of other nations also came to this section of the United States. Thus in 1875, the friars of the Thuringian province erected in the same territory a commissariat with headquarters at Paterson. From this commissariat and from the convents of the non-Italian friars in the custody above mentioned, the *Provincia Sanctissimi Nominis Jesu* was established in 1901. Finally, the Polish friars in 1895 founded in the diocese of Green Bay in the state of Wisconsin, the *Commissariatus Pulasckensis*.

Table of the Provinces after the French Revolution

1856	1897 (Union OFM)	1908
<i>I Circumscriptio</i>		
1. St. Francis (Seraphica)	1. Seraphica antiquior	1. St. Francis (Seraphica)
2. <i>Seraphica Reformed</i>	2. Seraphica recentior	
3. Romana	3. Romana antiquior	2. Romana
4. <i>Romana Reformed</i>	4. Romana recentior	
5. <i>Custody Ritiro di San Bonaventura</i>	5. Custody San Bonaventura	
6. Marches	6. Marches antiquior	3. Picena
7. <i>Marches Reformed</i>	7. Marches recentior	
8. Bologna	8. Bologna antiquior	4. Bologna
9. <i>Bologna Reformed</i>	9. <i>Bologna recentior</i>	
<i>II Circumscriptio</i>		
10. Tuscany	10. Tuscany St. Bonaventure	5. Tuscany St. Bonaventure
11. <i>Tuscany Reformed</i>	11. Tuscany Sacred Stigmata	6. Tuscany Sacred Stigmata
12. <i>Custody of Lucca Ref.</i>	12. Tuscany St. Joseph	7. Tuscany St. Joseph
13. Genoa	13. Genoa antiquior	8. Genoa
14. <i>Genoa Reformed</i>	14. Genoa recentior	
15. Venice	15. Venice antiquior	9. Venice
15. <i>Venice Reformed</i>	16. Venice recentior	
17. <i>St. Didacus Reformed</i>	17. St. Didacus recentior	10. Milan
18. <i>Immaculate Conception in Lombardy Ref.</i>	18. Immaculate Conception in Lombardy recentior	
	19. Custody of Lombardy (St. Mariae Angel.)	
19. St. Thomas in Piedmont	20. St. Thomas in Piedmont	11. Piedmont
20. <i>Custody Piedmont Ref.</i>	21. Custody St. Thomas Pied.	
21. Sardinia S. Mariae de Gratiis	22. Sardinia S. Mariae de Gratiis	12. Sardinia
22. Sardinia St. Saturninus	23. Sardinia St. Saturninus	
<i>III Circumscriptio</i>		
23. St. Bernardine Abruzzo	24. Abruzzo antiquior	13. Abruzzo

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1856	1897 (Union OFM)	1908
24. <i>St. Bernardine Reformed</i>	25. Abruzzo recentior	
25. Terra di Lavoro (Naples)	26 Terra di Lavoro antiquior	14. Terra di Lavoro (Naples)
26. <i>Terra di Lavoro Ref.</i>	27. Terra di Lavoro recentior	
27. <i>St. Peter Alcantara Disc.</i>	28. St. Peter Alcantara Naples	
28. St. Nicholas	29. St. Nicholas antiquior	
29. <i>St. Nicholas Reformed</i>	30. St. Nicholas recentior	
30. Holy Angels	31. Apulia Holy Angels ant.	15. Apulia
31. <i>Holy Angels Reformed</i>	32. Apulia Holy Angels rec.	
32. St. Ferdinand Molise	33. St. Ferdinand Molise	
33. St. Anthony Lecce	34. St. Anthony Lecce	16. Lecce
34. <i>St. Joseph Lecce Ref.</i>	35. St. Joseph Lecce	
35. <i>St. Paschal Lecce Disc.</i>	36. St. Paschal Lecce	
 <i>IV Circumscriptio</i>		
36. Principatus	37. Principatus antiquior	17. Principatus
37. <i>Principatus Reformed</i>	38. Principatus recentior	
38. Basilicata	39. Basilicata antiquior	18. Basilicata
39. <i>Basilicata Reformed</i>	40. Basilicata recentior	
40. Calabria	41. Calabria antiquior	19. Calabria
41. <i>Holy VII Martyrs Ref.</i>	42. Holy VII Martyrs rec.	
42. <i>Calabria citerioris Ref.</i>	43. Calabria recentior	
43. Sicily	44. Sicily antiquior	20. Vallis Nemoris
44. <i>Sicily Reformed</i>	45. Sicily recentior	
45. Vallis Mazzariae	46. Vallis Mazzariae ant.	21. Vallis Mazzariae
46. <i>Vallis Mazzariae Ref.</i>	47. Vallis Mazzariae rec.	
47. Vallis Nethi	48. Vallis Nethi antiquior	22. Vallis Nethi
48. <i>Vallis Nethi Reformed</i>	49. Vallis Nethi recentior	
49. Custody of Malta	50. Custody of Malta	23. Custody of Malta
 <i>V Circumscriptio</i>		
50. Custody of Holy Land	51. Custody of Holy Land	24. Custody of Holy Land
51. <i>Custody Constantinople Reformed</i>		
52. Bosnia Argentina	52. Bosnia Argentina	25. Bosnia Argentina
53. St. Jerome Dalmatia	53. St. Jerome Dalmatia	26. St. Jerome Dalmatia
54. Ragusa (Dubrovnik)	54. Ragusa (Dubrovnik)	
55. Holy Redeemer Dalmatia	55. Holy Redeemer Dalmatia	27. Holy Redeemer Dalmatia
56. Custody of Herzegovina	56. Herzegovina	28. Herzegovina
		29. Albania
57. <i>Tyrol St. Leopold Ref.</i>	57. St. Leopold in Tyrol	30. St. Leopold in Tyrol
58. <i>St. Vigilio Reformed</i>	58. St. Vigilio in Tyrol	31. St. Vigilio in Tyrol
59. <i>Carniola Reformed</i>	59. Croatia-Carniola	32. Carniola

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VI Circumscriptio		
60. <i>Bohemia Reformed</i>	60. Bohemia	33. Bohemia
61. St. John Capistran in Austria	61. St. John Capistran in Austria	34. St. John Capistran in Austria
62. St. Ladislaus	62. St. Ladislaus	35. Croatia
63. <i>Hungary St. Saviour Reformed</i>	63. Hungary St. Saviour	36. Hungary St. John Capistran
64. <i>Hungary St. Mary Ref.</i>	64. Hungary St. Mary	37. Hungary St. Mary
65. <i>Transylvania Reformed</i>	65. Transylvania	38. Transylvania
66. Galicia	66. Imm. Concep. (Russia)	39. Galicia
67. <i>Galicia Reformed</i>	67. 7 Sorrows BMV Galicia	
68. Poloniae Minoris		
69. <i>Poloniae Minoris Ref.</i>		
70. Poloniae Maioris		
71. <i>Poloniae Maioris Ref.</i>		
VII Circumscriptio		
72. <i>St. Joseph Belgium Rec.</i>	68. St. Joseph in Belgium	40. Belgium
73. <i>Holland Recollect</i>	69. Germaniae inferioris	41. Holland
74. <i>Rhine-Westphalia Rec.</i>	70. Saxony	42. Saxony
		43. Custody of Silesia
75. <i>Immac. Concept. in Borussia Ref.</i>	71. Immaculate Conception in Posnania (Poznan)	44. Borussia
76. <i>Cust. Thuringia Rec.</i>	72. Thuringia St. Elisabeth	45. Thuringia
77. <i>Bavaria Reformed</i>	73. Bavaria	46. Bavaria
VIII Circumscriptio		
78. <i>Ireland Reformed</i>	74. Ireland	47. Ireland
	75. England	48. England
79. <i>Custody of Nice Ref.</i>	76. St. Bernardine France	49. St. Bernardine France
	77. St. Dionysius France	50. St. Dionysius France
(Commissariat Prov. France)	78. St. Louis in Aquitaine	51. St. Louis in Aquitaine
	79. France	52. France
80. Custody of Corsica	80. Corsica	53. Corsica
IX Circumscriptio		
	81. Portugal	54. Portugal
	82. St. James	55. St. James
	83. Cantabria	56. Cantabria
	84. Baetica	57. Baetica
X Circumscriptio		
	85. Cartagena	58. Cartagena
	86. Valencia	59. Valencia

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1856	1897 (Union OFM)	1908
81. <i>St. Gregory Philippines Discalced</i>	87. Catalonia 88. St. Gregory Philippines	60. Catalonia 61. St. Gregory Philippines
XI Circumscriptio		
82. Assumption in Paraguay	89. Rio de la Plata (Assumption Argentina)	62. Argentina
83. Chile	90. Holy Trinity in Chile	63. Holy Trinity Chile 64. 7 Joys BMV Chile
84. 12 Apostles Lima	91. 12 Apostles Lima	65. 12 Apostles Peru 66. St. Francis Solano Peru
85. De Charcas	92. St. Anthony de Charcas	67. Bolivia
86. <i>St. Anthony Brazil Disc.</i>		68. Brazil St. Anthony
87. <i>Immaculate Conception Brazil Discalced</i>		69. Immaculate Conception Brazil
88. Quito		70. Ecuador (St. Francis Quito)
89. Nueva Granada	93. Santa Fe in Bogotá	71. Colombia
90. Nicaragua		
91. Guatemala	94. Holy Name in Guatemala	72. Guatemala (Holy Name of Jesus)
XII Circumscriptio		
92. Holy Gospel in Mexico	95. Holy Gospel in Mexico	73. Holy Gospel in Mexico
93. <i>St. Didacus Mexico Disc.</i>	96. St. Didacus in Mexico	
94. Sts. Peter and Paul de Michoacan	97. Sts. Peter and Paul de Michoacan	74. Sts. Peter and Paul Mexico
95. De Jalisco	98. St. James of Jalisco	75. Sts. Francis and James Mexico
96. De Zacatecas	99. Zacatecas in Mexico	
97. St. Joseph in Yucatan		
98. Custody of St. Paul in New Mexico		
99. St. Helen in Florida		
100. De Caraca (Characarum)	100. Sacred Heart USA	76. Sacred Heart USA
	101. St. John the Baptist Cincinnati USA	77. St. John the Baptist Cincinnati USA
	102. Custody of Buffalo	78. Holy Name USA
		79. Custody Immaculate Conception USA
		80. Commissariat Pulaski

Paragraph 83
Statistics of the Order since 1517

Hand in hand with the growth of the provinces went also an increase in the number of friaries and friars. On the one side, that was a heartening proof of the vitality of the Order, on the other, it aroused grave worries in the minds of higher superiors. Had this increase shown itself only or principally in the countries across the seas or in the mission districts of Europe, there would have been no reason for the worries of the superiors. But, as a matter of fact, this growth was proportionately greatest in the provinces of Italy and Spain. Therefore, adequate sustenance and sufficient labor became subjects of much concern. Then, too, there were serious complaints that not all of the new members were sufficiently tested regarding their vocation and that the respect of the people for the friars was gradually diminishing, wherever the friars were too numerous.

The General Chapter of 1606 states expressly that especially in Spain and in Portugal, new convents had been erected *sub falso zelo pietatis*, and spoke its mind in no uncertain terms against further increase in those countries. *Religio nostra plane fatetur se ultra progredi non posse*. The same opinion was voiced by the General Samaniego in 1681 when the problem of a new foundation by the Discalceati was being discussed. However, the superiors of the Order were powerless in this matter as long as the Apostolic See gave ear to the seekers of new convents rather than to the proper superiors of the Order. Thus, permission was granted to the Discalceati to receive new convents without consulting the higher superiors of the Order. The permission of the Bishop was sufficient. The Discalceati merely had to observe the prescribed distance between convents.

But, after the evil effects of the excessive increase of the Order had shown themselves more strikingly in Spain, Innocent XIII in 1723 ordered his Nuncio there to take proper measures against any further expansion. In particular, it was decreed that the provinces of all Mendicant Orders were not permitted to receive new members, until the actual number of members should correspond to the means of subsistence. No appreciable betterment was brought about by these decrees, nor did their renewal by Benedict XIII produce any marked improvement. In Italy, the superiors strove to stem the tide of over expansion by permitting each province to invest only a limited number of novices each year. However, despite repeated renewals of this decree, the desired results seem not to have been attained. In Poland, also, there was need to hinder new foundations. Therefore, after 1755, besides the approval of the Holy See, those who wished to accept new convents had to obtain also the approval of the Procurator of the Order.

The Order reached its greatest development at about the time of the Chapter of Valencia, 1768, at which the Province of Mantua was recognized and just before the French Observants went over to the Conventuals. There were, at that time, under the obedience of the General of the Order about 77,000 friars, in 167 provinces, including a few custodies. (The Conventuals at that time numbered at the most 20,000 and the Capuchins about 30,000).

The nineteenth century, with its revolutions and secularizations, not only decimated the Order, but also caused such confusion that often one could not know with certainty whether certain provinces still existed, much less could one know the number of

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convents or friars. The Order seems to have reached the period of its greatest decline during the last decade of the nineteenth century, when the friars numbered perhaps about 14,000. Since that time, the number has risen slowly but steadily. Ten years after the Union, on October 4, 1907, the Order counted 17,092 members, of whom 8,152 were priests, living in 1,460 friaries and in 81 provinces or custodies.