

"A man is not born completely until he is dead. Why then should we grieve that a new child is born among the immortals." (Benjamin F.) In spite of the validity of this statement, human as we are, we feel the loss of those who have been near and dear to us.

I too felt sad yesterday as I heard of the death of our dear Fr. Wollaston. He has been the first Indian Salesian of N.E. India. Soon I found joy in the thought that he has been relieved of his long sufferings and pains which he had to bear up for several years. I have been close to him these last four years and have talked to him and listened to him. Often I used to hear him say "Father, I wish to die, I want to go to God." God has heard his prayer and he is with God now having had his long purgatory here on earth. From what I know of him I can say that he was a great man with a large heart and a candid soul.

Douglas Wollaston was born on Dec. 11 1902, at Akyab, a coastal town of Burma, of Joseph Wollaston and Margaret Perry. His father was a teacher. He had three brothers and two sisters. He was the second in the family. He joined the Salesian congregation in Jan. 1925. He left a job that he was holding to join the Novitiate. While learning philosophy he taught it to others. He made his Perpetual Profession three years later in 1928. He did his theological studies in Turin, Italy and had an Ecclesiastical degree. He was ordained on July 5th 1931. He occupied various jobs in different places - all of a teaching character. He has been

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| Assistant Head Master in Bombay | 2 years |
| Teaching Theology | 2 years |
| Director of a school | 3 years |
| Bandel | 4 years |
| Working in a school at Kurla | 7 years |
| Principal of St. Anthony's | 7 years |
| Head Master at Hundung, Imphal, Tura etc. | |

He found himself often in difficult and trying situations of work as the head of schools and college. And his life has not always been too easy. But he went on from duty to duty as an obedient Religious.

The last years of his life was one of sufferings and pains. He suffered from swollen legs due to poor circulation and an ever present infection. His memory too failed him towards the end. An intelligent and clever man, he found it difficult to accept this. He has been going in and out of hospital for quite some time. He was taken to Gauhati in Nov. for some warm climate. We brought him up on Dec. 30th as his condition had deteriorated. Confreres went to see him often, to watch over him as he enjoyed nothing more than company. He passed away peacefully yesterday at 7.15 am. The brother looking after him did not even notice his passing away. He just went off like a candle that has been burning for the Lord.

Fr. Wollaston had wonderful qualities of head and heart. This is not the time to expatiate on them.

I would like to mention only one. His great love for youth and the poor. This was his constant thought and conversation. He was a born educator. He must have inherited this trait from his teacher Father. Don Bosco is surely proud of this son of his - a Salesian for the boys and the poor. He has pupils scattered all over N.E. India who remember him affectionately. He had a personal touch in his dealings with others which endeared him to all. He has been definitely one of the widely known priests of N.E. India.

We, the Salesians miss an excellent confrere here below but have gained a powerful Intercessor in heaven.

For Christians death is not a sword that cuts but a key that opens. The key of death has opened for our Dear Fr.Wollaston the treasures of heaven. Jesus said on the Cross: "It is finished, it is accomplished." He had accomplished the task the Father had given. In a spirit of fulfilment he said: Into your hands I commend my spirit. Fr.Wollaston too said yesterday: "Lord, it is finished. You gave me a life to live, a task to perform, it is finished. Into your hands I commend my spirit. Jesus has promised a great reward for a cup of cold water given in his name. Fr.Wollaston has given 54 years of his life to the service of God. He gave all that he was and all that he had. Surely Jesus has given him a great reward: EVERLASTING HAPPINESS IN HEAVEN.

These few words of mine will be incomplete if I do not say my sincere thanks to the sisters of Nazareth who did everything in their power to alleviate the sufferings of Fr.Wollaston. I appreciate their selfless love and dedicated service. I also convey my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to everyone who painstakingly tried to share with Fr.Wollaston his sufferings and pains especially these past few months.

Fr.Provincial

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