

RECENT DEATHS

BASÍLIO RÖWER, O. F. M.

Fr. Basílio was born in Hardenberg in the diocese of Cologne, Germany, on November 2, 1877. He went to Brazil as a cleric seminarian as one of the group of Franciscans sent to revive the dying Province of the Immaculate Conception after the proclamation of the new Republic of Brazil and of separation of Church and state in 1891. He was ordained there in 1901. As a young priest he became interested in the history of the early Franciscans in Brazil and devoted a great part of his life to unearthing the documents necessary for the writing of this history. Fr. Basílio never studied history formally at a university, but more than made up for this lack of formal training by a certain Teutonic persistence and thoroughness in all his works. Recognition for his labors came from many societies. He was a *sócio honorário* of the *Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro*, and a corresponding member of the Academy of American Franciscan History.

This writer had the privilege of knowing him as a friend and confrere in 1953 and again in 1957. I was also graciously permitted to copy most of the manuscript sources he had so painfully collected over the years. The stories he told of his long and arduous journeys to the sites of ancient convents and Indian *aldeias*, always in search of material or background, made for many a fascinating hour.

The last fifteen years of his life were made more difficult by his failing eyesight, but he continued to work as long as his health permitted. He died on August 19, 1958.

Among his numerous works are the following: *Páginas de História Franciscana no Brasil* (1941; new ed. 1958); *História da Província Franciscana da Imaculada Conceição do Brasil, através da atuação de seus Provinciais de 1677 a 1901* (1951); *A Ordem Franciscana no Brasil* (1947); *O Convento de Santo Antônio do Rio de Janeiro* (3rd. ed. 1945); *Dicionário Litúrgico* (3rd. ed. 1947), and hundreds of musical scores for Masses, litanies, motets, and songs. (M. C. K.)