



Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres
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SISTER OF ST PAUL DE CHARTRES
Hong Kong

Wanchai
1848-1918

1848

September 12 Arrival of first Sisters from France - Sr **Alphonsine Forcade**, Sr **Auguste Gallois**, Sr **Gabrielle Joubin**, Sr **Louise Morse** (English) - accompanied by Mgr **Augustin Forcade**, Vicar Apostolic of Japan and Pro-prefect of Hong Kong. They stayed at the house for the seminarians on the Wanchai hillside. [[Attachment 1 \(Map\)](#)]

October 1 First abandoned child accepted by the Sisters. The Sisters named their work in Wanchai *Asile de la Sainte Enfance* in honour of the Association of Holy Childhood, their main source of financial support, in France.

"By the end of the first year, Sr Alphonsine had received, baptized and accepted 170 children." (Vaudon, p 11)

1850

January 111 babies died [letter of Sr Alphonsine to Mother Thais dated 26 Feb]
February 26 babies died. (Vaudon, p 12) [[see Attachment 2 \(Statistics\)](#)]

March Arrival of 2nd group of Sisters: Sr **Sainte-Marcelle Carette**, Sr **Theodora Schnitzphan** and Sr **Sainte-Foi Court**.

October 13 Death of Mere **Alphonsine Forcade**, aged 37, followed by Sr Gabrielle Joubin, aged 33 on November 1. Mere **Sainte-Marcelle** replaced Mere Alphonsine as 2nd Superior.

1851

The Sisters moved to Marine Lot No. 23 bought from Fr Feliciani which is near the sea. With more space the Sisters must have started giving the children basic education - reading, writing, arithmetic, and religious instruction - and later skills training, eg sewing, embroidery, lace-making, etc. Many children were also physically handicapped. [[see Attachment 1 \(map\)](#), 3 (Wanchai photo), 4-5 (orphans photo)]

1856

November 1 A French/English class for expatriate children was opened in Spring Garden. (The school probably closed in 1859 after the departure of Mere Louise Morse, English Sister)

1862

September 8 Opening of Novitiate in Saigon, Vietnam, where Chinese candidates were sent for formation. **Sr Maria Benjamin Dei**, first Chinese Sister, entered the Novitiate. The Sisters went to Saigon in 1860.

1863

August 20 Death of three Sisters, including the Superior, during cholera epidemic.

1876

Nov 1 Class for expatriate children opened. [see Attachment 6]

1878

December **Sr Maria Benjamin Dei**, first Chinese Sister, died during a fire in Wanchai.

1883

Construction of new buildings in Wanchai doubling its capacity. [see Attachment 7]

1894

Almshouse: The Sisters opened the Asile to poor old women who came to the Asile for refuge during and after the Hong Kong plague. [see Attachment 8]

1895

The school began accepting boarders.

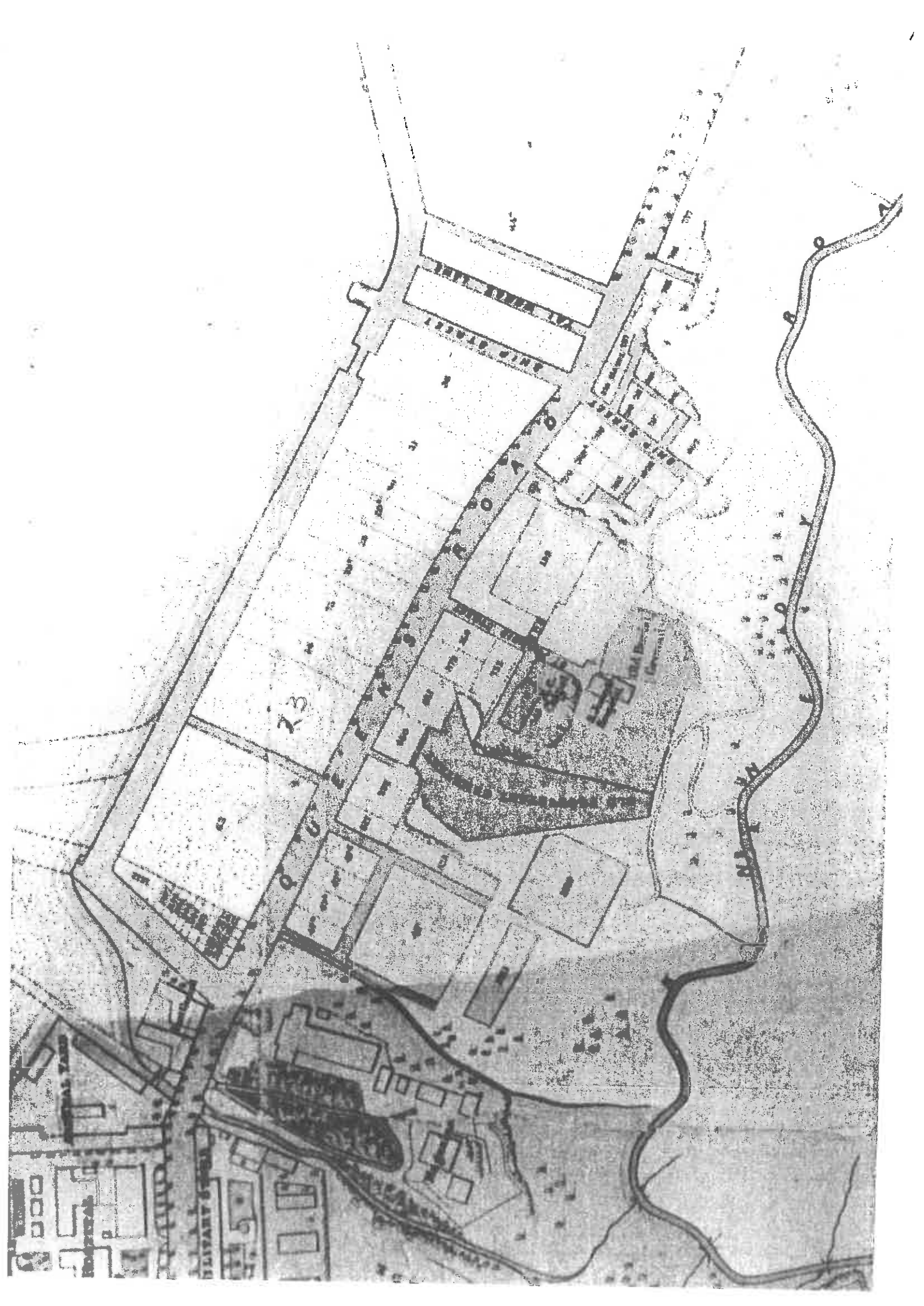
1898

Jan 1 Opening of Hospital for Chinese Women and Babies and dispensary. [See Attachment 9]

1899

Feb 11 Canonical erection of Novitiate in Hong Kong. The first postulant, Canton-born **Sr Celine Yu** made her profession on her deathbed in Sept 1905

[See Attachment 10]



**SISTERS OF ST PAUL DE CHARTRES
ASILE DE LA SAINTE ENFANCE, WANCHAI**

ORPHANAGE - rescue of unwanted and abandoned babies

- many children were in such weak and miserable condition that they die.

mortality rate:

1850 = 74%

1851 = 52%

1852 = 68%

1853 = 82%

1854 = 57%

1855 = 73%

- those who survived were taken care of - fed, clothed and educated
- wet nurses were hired to take care of very small babies
- children were taught reading, writing, catechism, sewing, embroidery
- later, the young girls were put in good Christian families as servants or when they become of age, marriage with Catholic young men, usually introduced by priests, were arranged for them

[girls = 88%]

1848-49 170 children received

[Figures represent actual children at the end of the year, excluding those who died]

1850-54 350, 170, 138, 341, 191

1855 288 (85 girls; 6 boys)

1856 356 (55 girls; 10 boys)

1857 186 (63 girls; 9 boys)

1858 200

1872 500 baptisms

1881 928 baptisms

1889 1,062

1890 1,082 baptisms

1904 104 [2,033 baptisms; 844 deaths; 11 marriages]

1905 99 [1,819 baptisms; 757 deaths; 6 marriages]

1906 105 [1,558 baptisms; 946 deaths; 1 marriage]

1907 104 [1,625 baptisms; 945 deaths; 4 marriages]

1908 103 [1,580 baptisms; 712 deaths; 9 domestic servant]

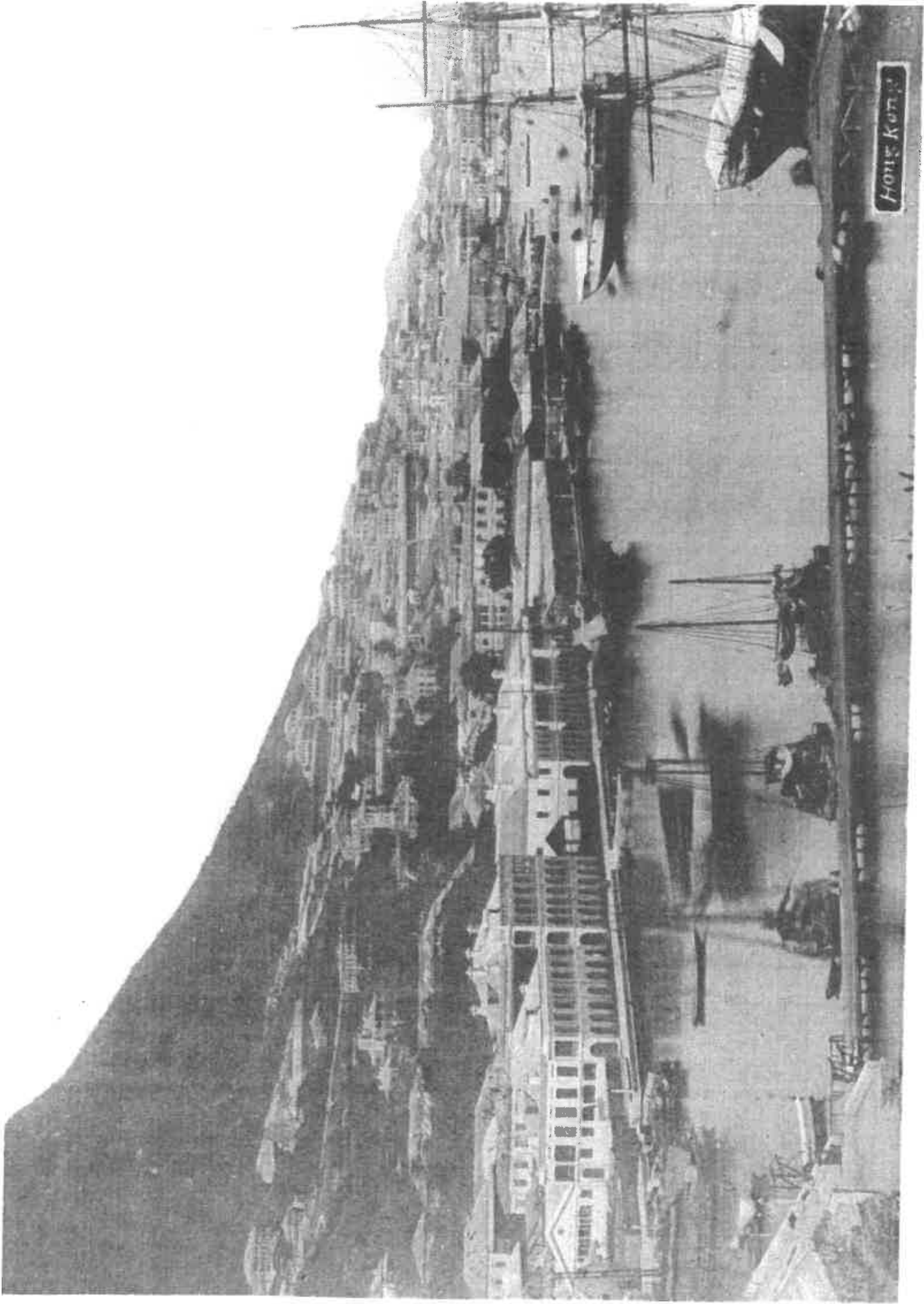
1909 100

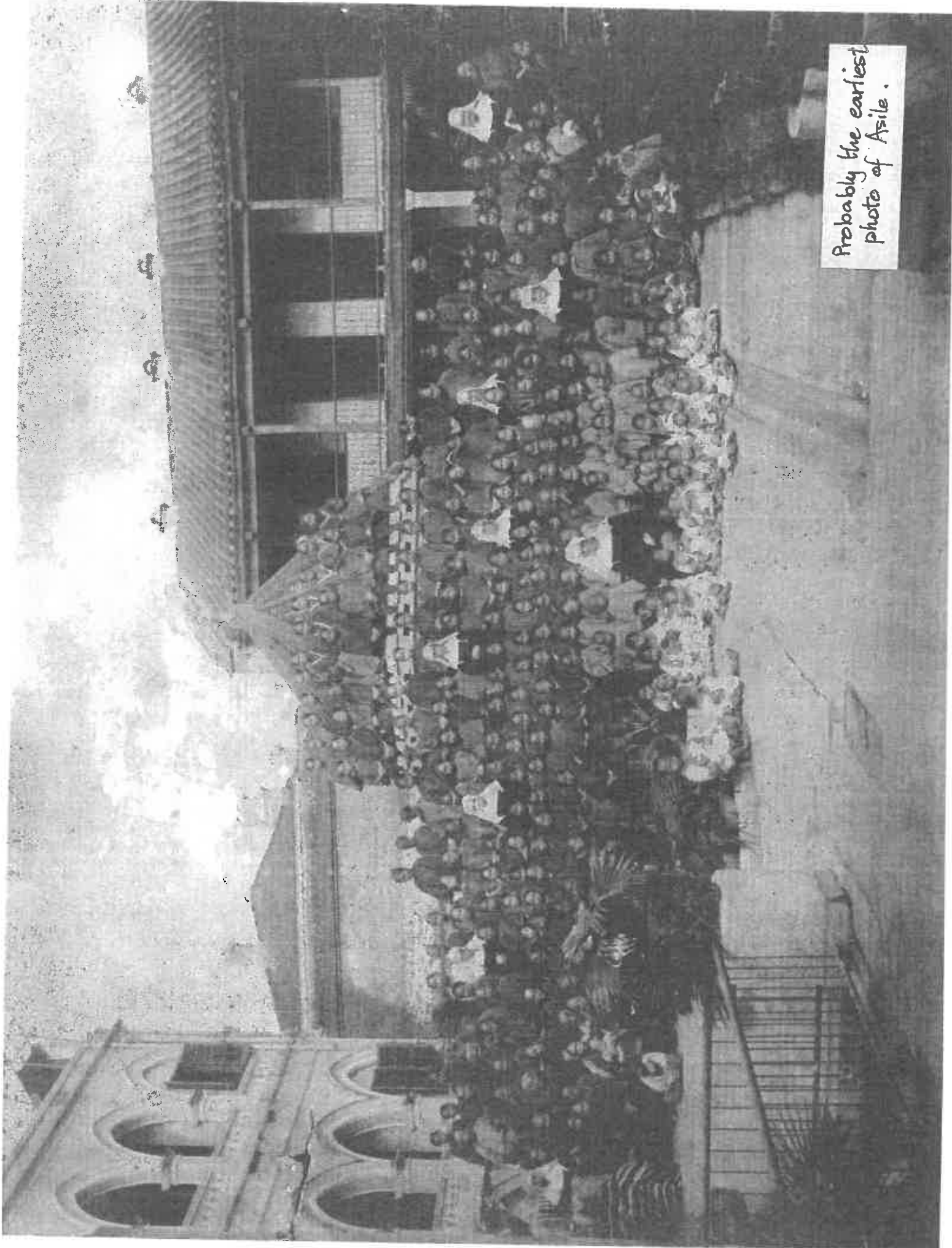
1910 100 [1,981 baptisms; 6 marriages]

1912 110 [1,252 baptisms; 3 marriages]

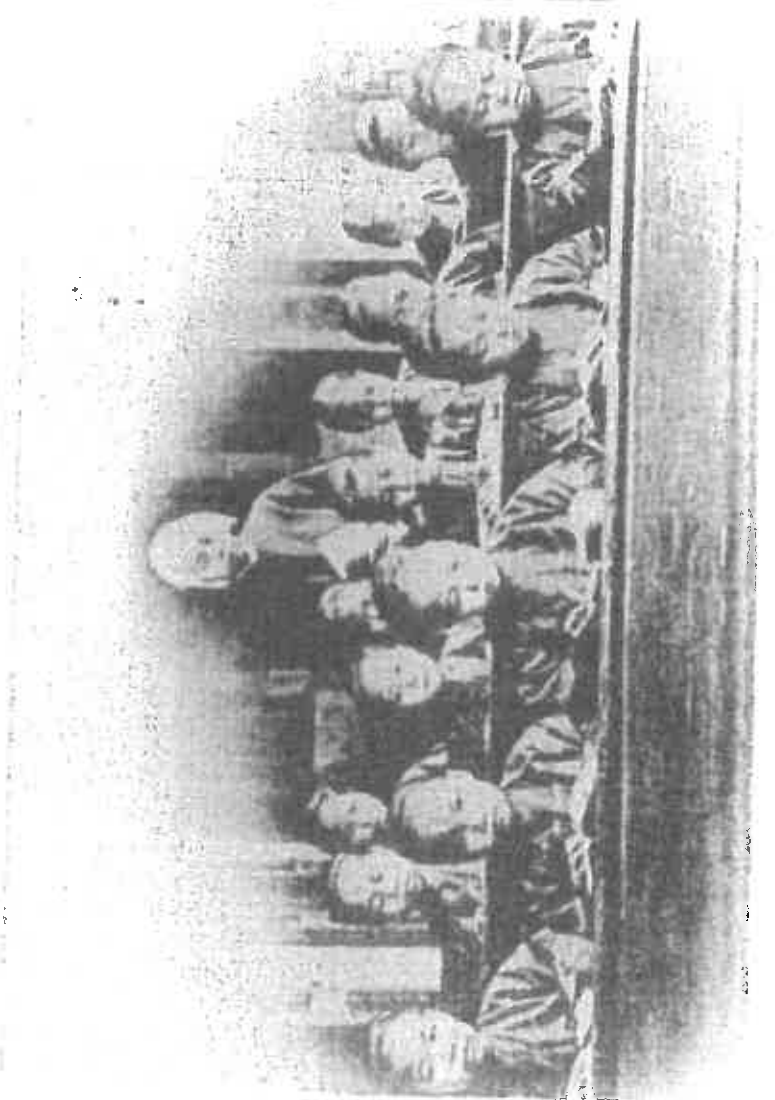
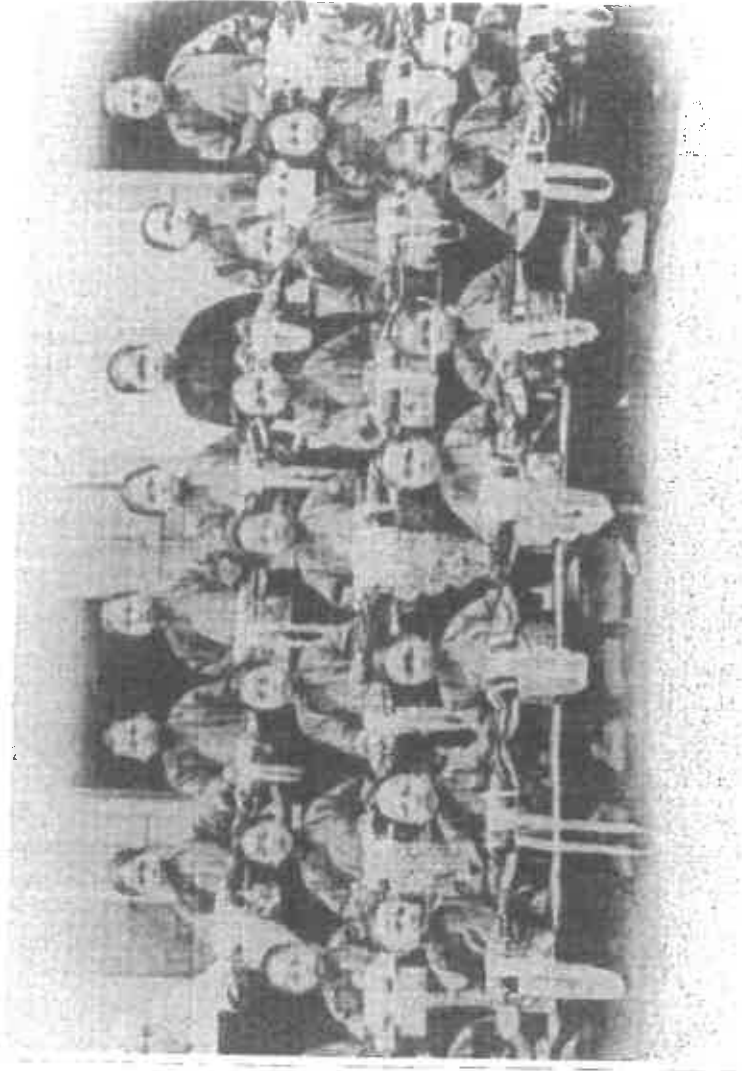
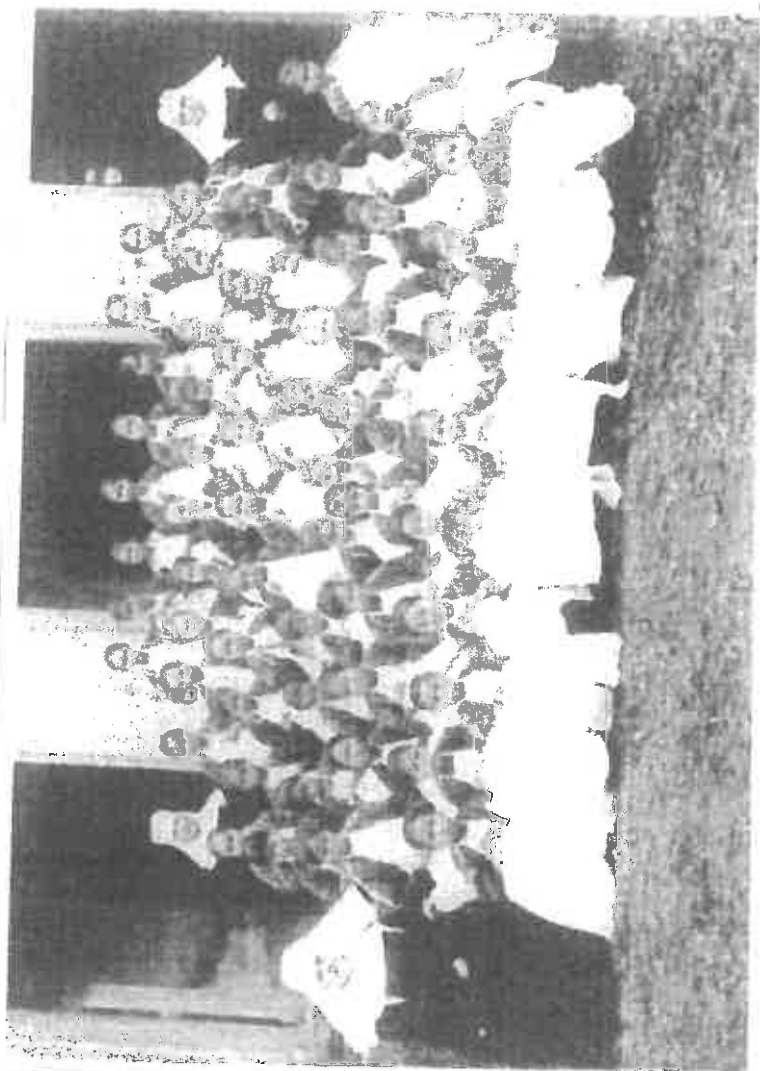
1913 127 [1,421 baptism]

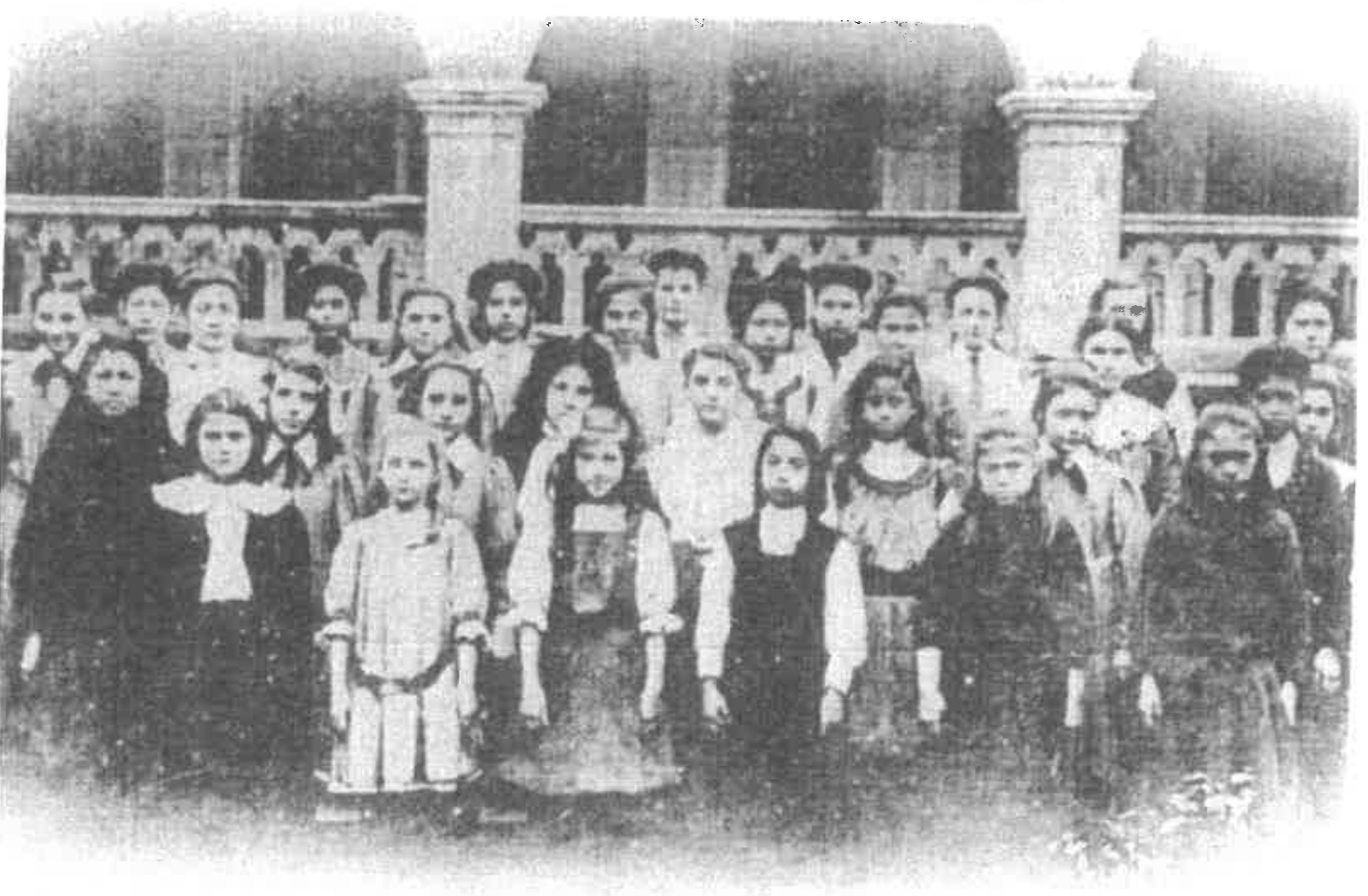
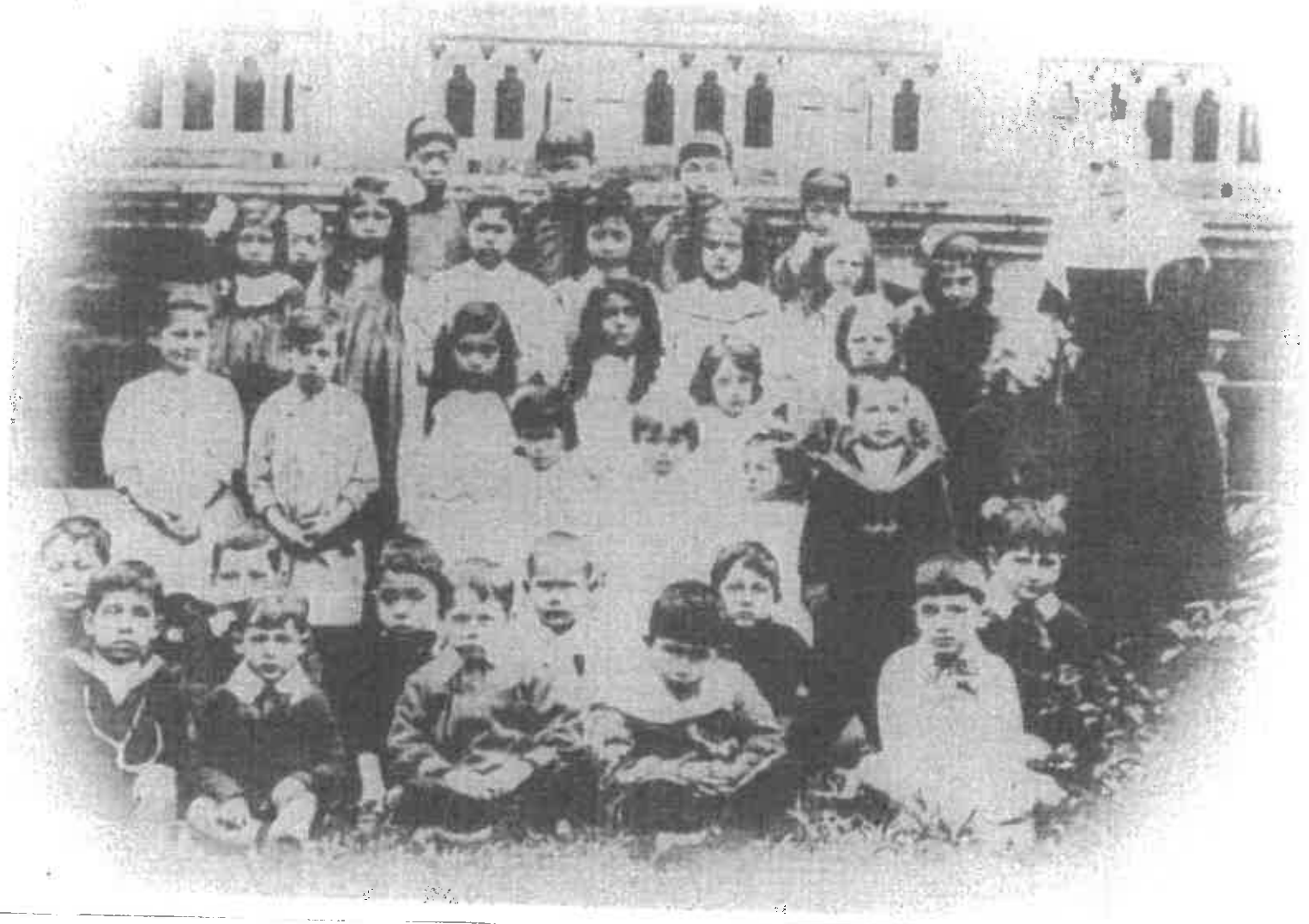
1914 134 [1,477 baptisms]

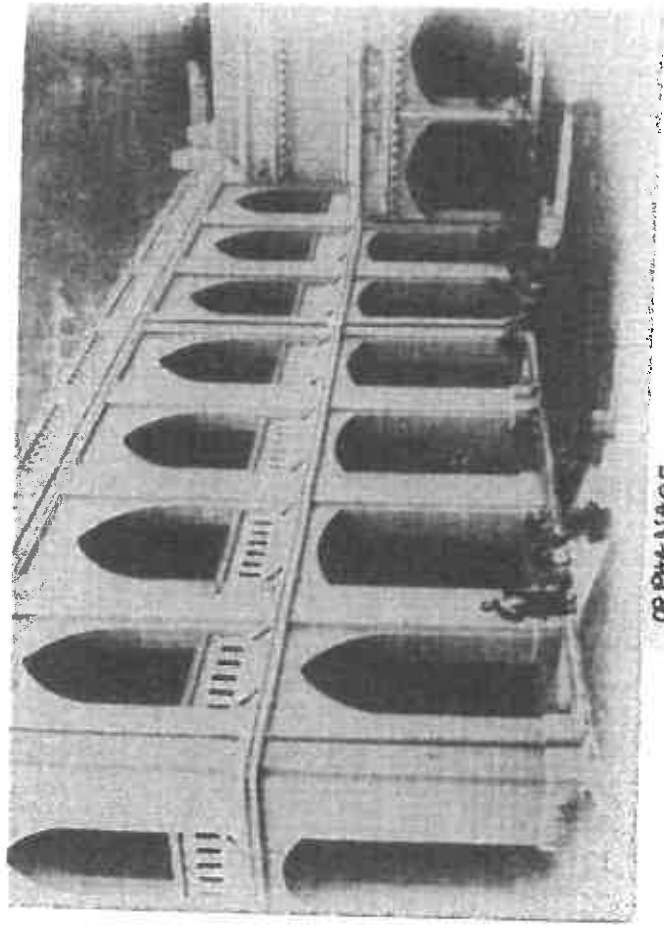




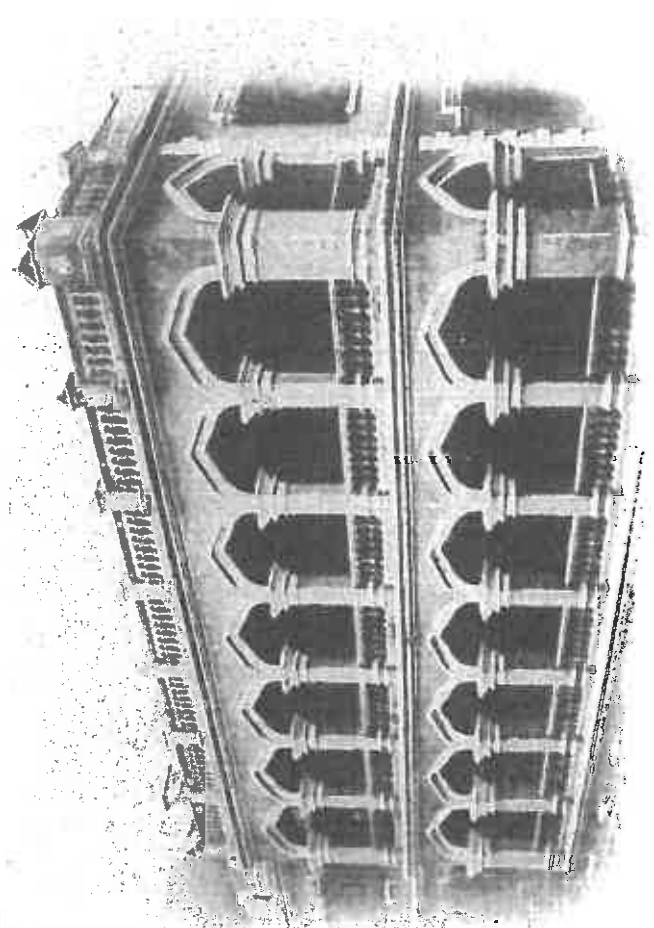
Probably the earliest photo of Asile.



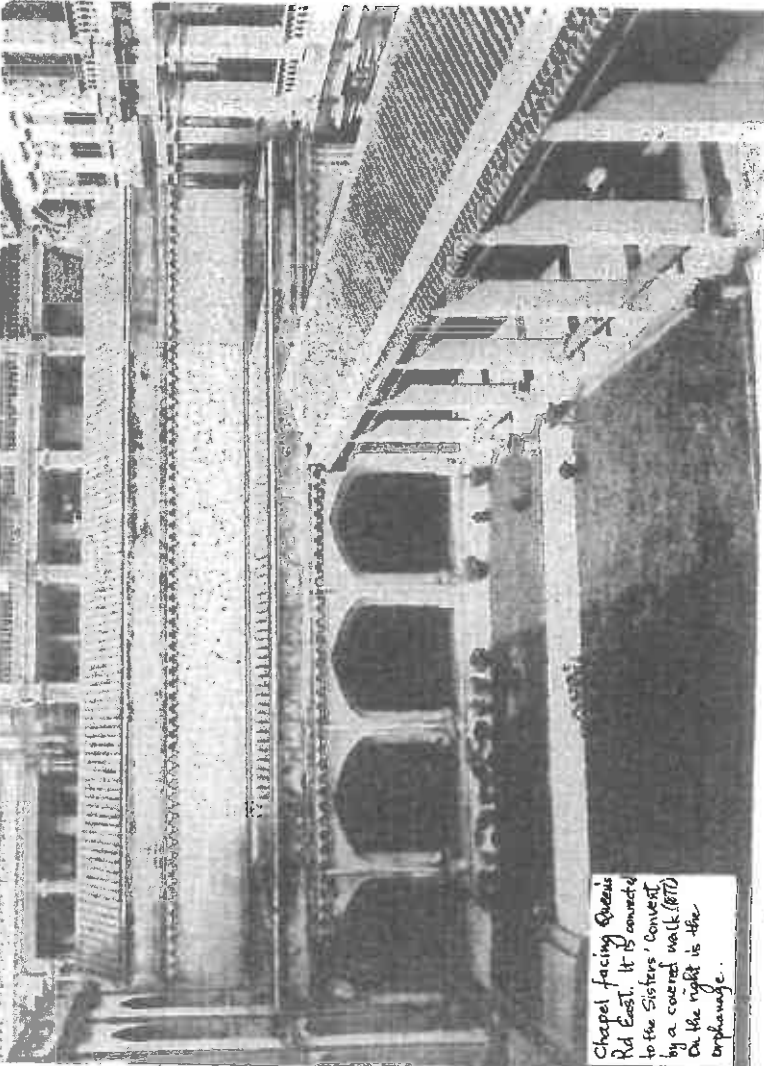




ORPHANAGE
(right side-chapel)

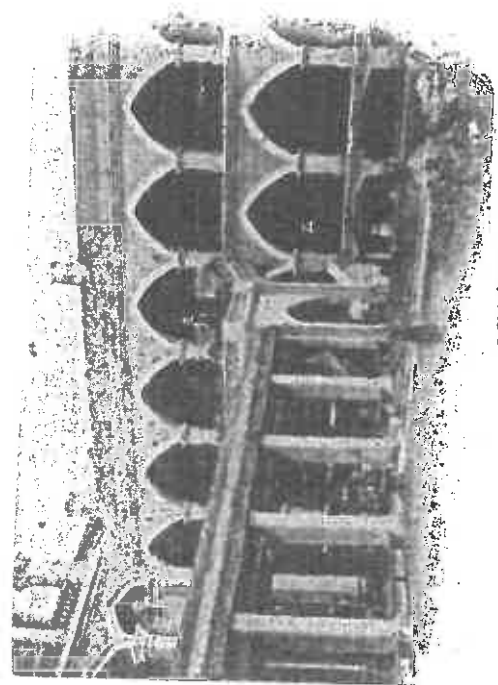


ORPHANAGE



Chapel facing Queens Rd East. It is connected to the Sisters' Convent by a covered walk (RTD) on the right is the orphanage.

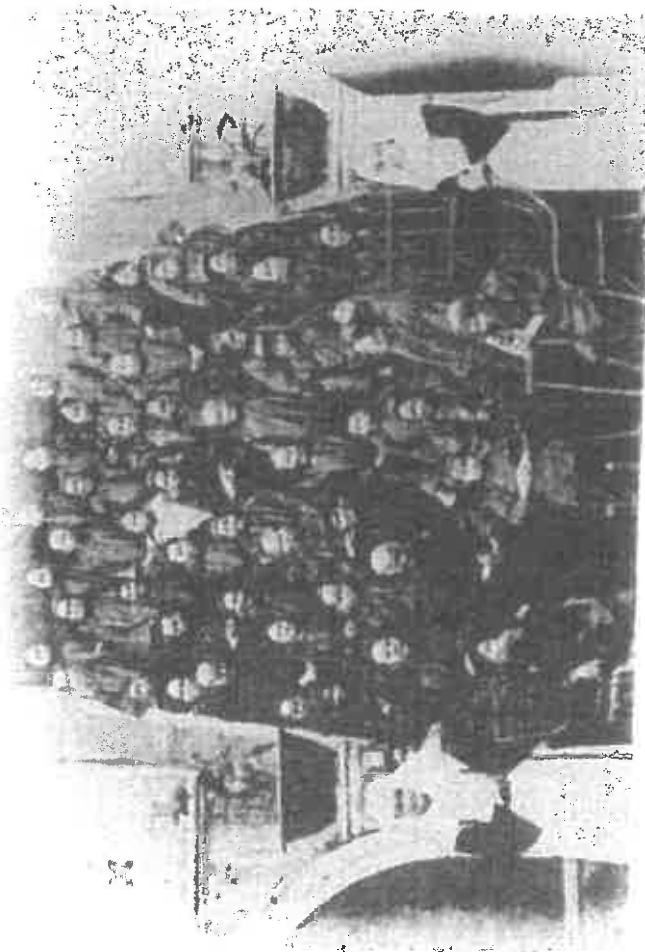
ca 1883 ?



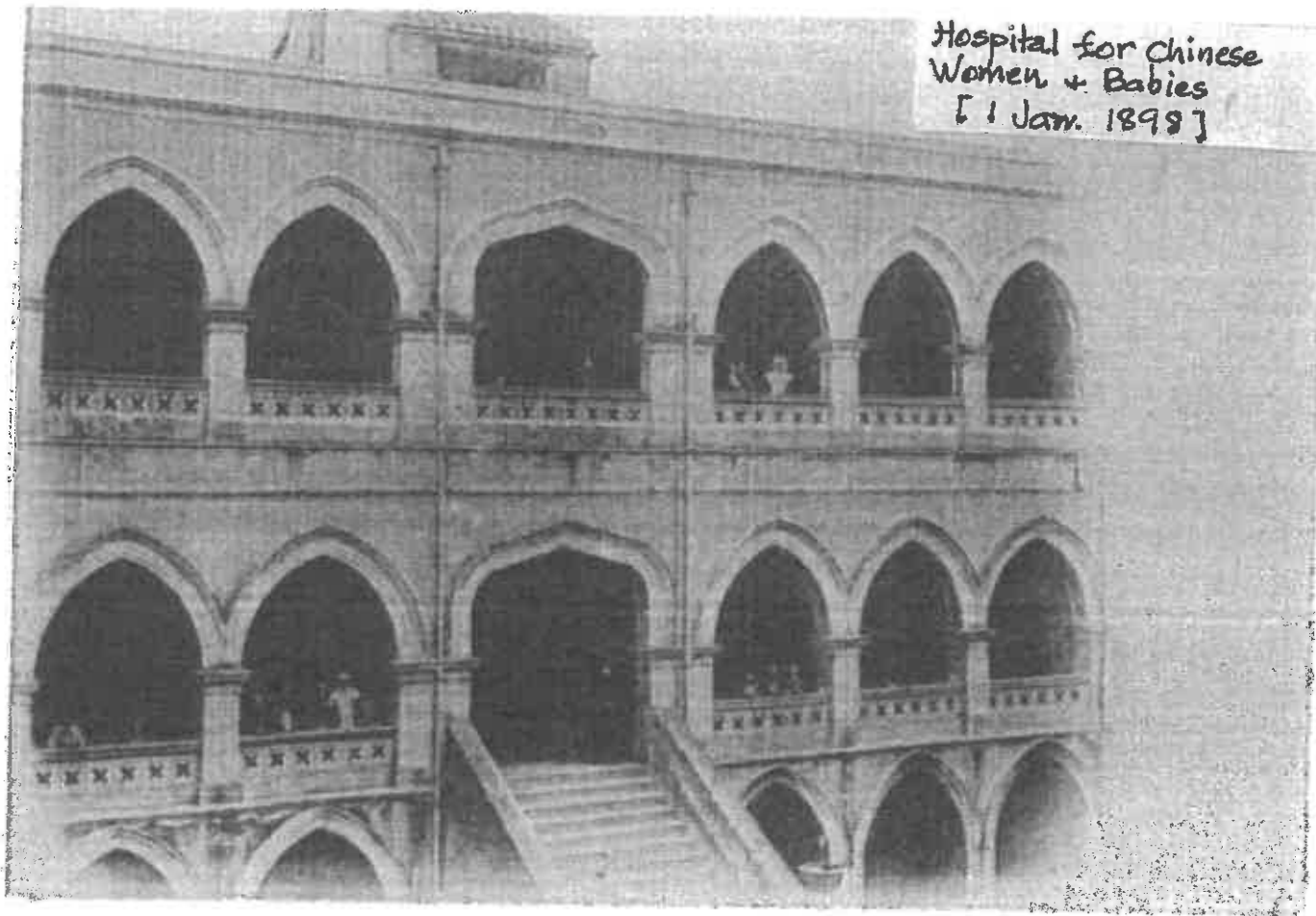
CONVENT + SCHOOL
(facing the sea)

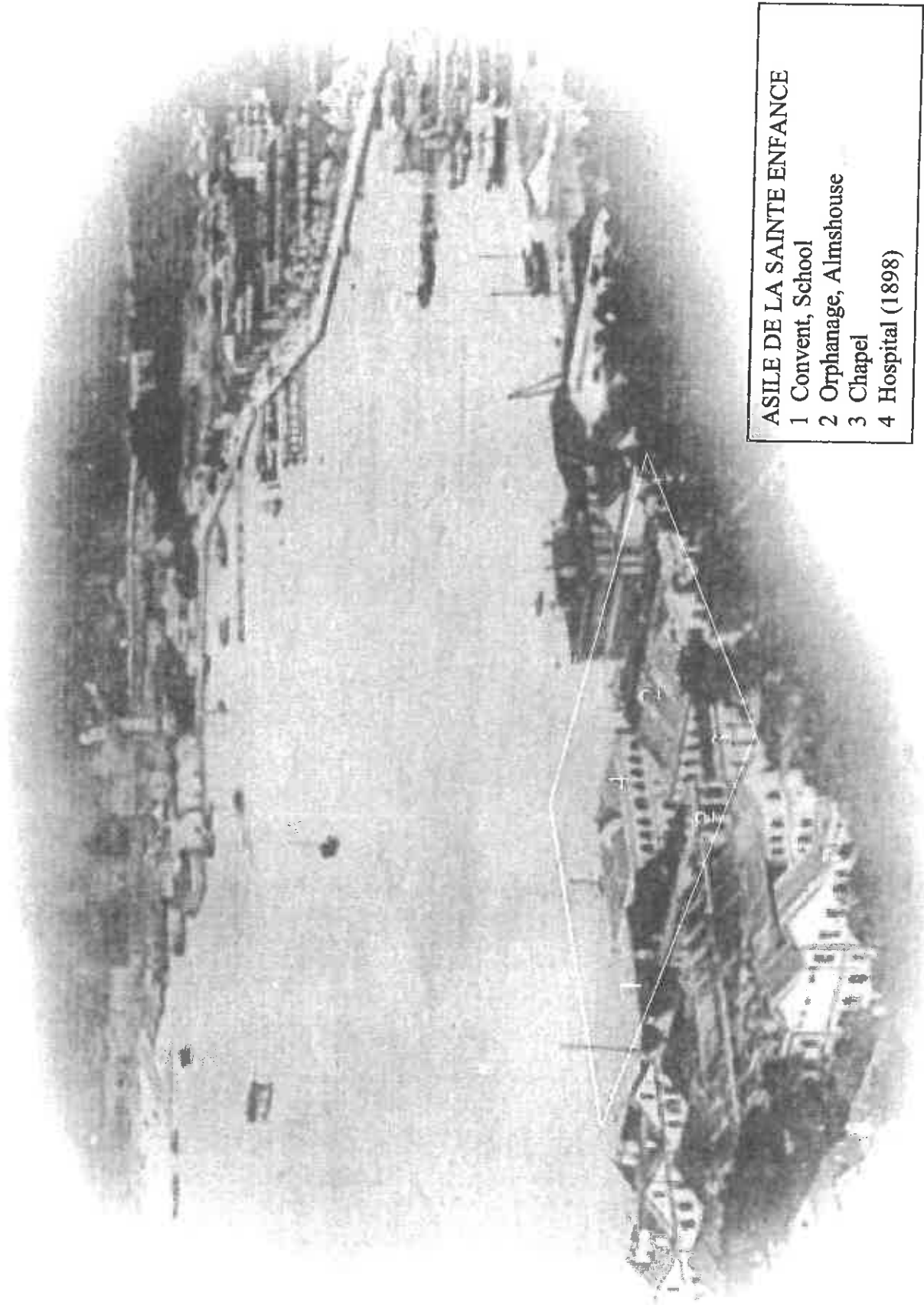


ALMSHOUSE
After the 1894 plague,
ASILE accepted old peop



Hospital for Chinese
Women + Babies
[1 Jan. 1899]





ASILE DE LA SAINTE ENFANCE
1 Convent, School
2 Orphanage, Almshouse
3 Chapel
4 Hospital (1898)

Wanchai, c. 1900s