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"Truth is Catholic; proclaim it ever, and God will effect the rest."—BALMEZ.

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BISHOP JAMOT.

Reminiscences of the First Bishop of Peterborough.

A GREAT MISSIONARY BISHOP.

Near Rhodéz amid the wild scenery and rugged mountains of Auvergne in Southern France, Bishop Jamot was born in May of 1828. His parents were of that sturdy, honest farming class of robust Catholicity that distinguishes the populations of Auvergne and Brittany from the inhabitants of almost every other province in the French Republic.

It was at the Grand Seminary of Perpignan Bishop de Charbonnel first made his acquaintance. The lately consecrated Bishop of Toronto visited several ecclesiastical colleges on his way from Rome to take possession of his See in Canada. He generally asked for volunteers among the students. Young Mr. Jamot was one of the first who offered his services for the Canadian missions. He was then finishing his course in theology. By directions of the Bishop he remained at Perpignan until the completion of his studies and his elevation to the priesthood. He was then advised to proceed to Ireland and spend one year at All Hallows, Drumcondra, in order to study canon law and acquire thorough knowledge of the English language. His success in mastering both was very marked, but although he spoke and wrote fluently in English, he could never get rid of his French method of accentuation. He reached Toronto city in June, 1855, and was not long a guest at St. Michael's Palace in Church street, when he received his appointment to the vacant parish of Barrie in North Simcoe, at that time a mere village. No priest had so far resided in that locality. It was visited sometimes from Penetanguishene and again from Newmarket or Adjala. Stayner was not in existence, nor Collingwood. Orillia had no sta-

tionary pastor, and both Flos and Medonte were dense forests in which the wild deer and bear roamed at large, and where the early pioneers were making clearances, and erecting log cabins and saying the Rosary in common in lieu of public worship on Sundays. The year previous to Father Jamot's arrival, cholera was decimating the towns and cities. Lest the Catholics north of Toronto should be afflicted with the plague, and incur risk of dying without the sacraments, Bishop de Charbonnel sent two young priests from St. Michael's College to provide the needed spiritual assistance. They were Fathers Vincent and Flannery,

of whom the former is now reaping his rich reward in a better world and the latter still holds out "possessing his soul in patience" in the parish of St. Thomas, Diocese of London. They spent July and August preaching missions and administering the sacraments in Barrie, Medonte, Orillia, Penetanguishene, Nottawasaga and other places, where the Catholic settlers had not seen a priest for some years. The Northern Railway was then in course of construction, and Nottawasaga was reached by a gravel train as far as the clearing, where Stayner now stands, and then on horseback twelve or fifteen miles through the woods by a bridle path.

Father Jamot soon established stations and regularly attended missions among the hardy pioneers who were then securing homes along the new route by rail to Collingwood and by the distant shores of Georgian Bay on Lake Huron. Towns and villages sprang up in a few years; but his priestly zeal and tireless energy kept pace with the rapidly advancing growth of the country and the requirements of the daily increasing centres of Catholic populations. Besides erecting temporary frame churches in the several townships where required, he built in Barrie a very fine presbytery capable of accommodating several priests, who, from this town, as headquarters, would be able to attend to missionary work in all the outlying districts.

Father Jamot was tall, muscular and athletic, with dark complexion, straight black hair and piercing eyes that recalled Caesar's description of the typical Gaul. He was hardy and capable of enduring extreme heat or cold, fatiguing journeys or sleepless nights without complaint or ill consequence. In collecting the necessary funds to accomplish the difficult task assigned him of laying the foundations of several parishes, he spared neither his own time or health nor the pockets of his people. Regardless of self and a stranger to private indulgence of any kind, he inculcated, more by example than precept, the necessity of self sacrifice as a factor in the erection and maintenance of schools and churches.

Bishop Lynch recognized all these

commendable traits in the character of the zealous and indefatigable pastor of Barrie. It was exactly a man of this aggressive fearless and unselfish nature his Lordship was looking round for, at a time when monetary difficulties stared him in the face, and a clear way to meet them did not appear in view. Bishop Lynch was possessed of a poetic imagination. Niagara River and the mighty cataract had always charms to fascinate that he did not even make an effort to resist. When a missionary priest he conceived, in his far seeing and poetic fancies, the Lazarist College of the Holy Angels, as it now towers over the raging torrent. He was drawn towards the steep and frowning precipices that etch in its eddies and whirlpools. With the aid of a few boys whom he gathered round him, and who since have become priests and bishops, and with a few dollars he collected in Buffalo, he laid the foundation and gave a name to the famed seat of learning and piety that looks down upon Niagara River, and that like Clonmacnoise and Landesfarne of old, is now equipping found priests and doctors who graduate in her halls, for every honor the Church may confer, while sending out Lazarist missionaries to every distant field of apostolic work and enterprise.

When taken from the college halls and consecrated Bishop of Toronto, the attractions Niagara had for him, in no wise diminished. He had succeeded in gaining for God a portion of the fascinating river on the American side. He was determined to secure for the Church, now that he resided in Toronto, a larger portion still on the side of Canada. No sooner conceived than executed. Land was immediately purchased, regardless of cost or the means to meet expenses. Twenty thousand dollars had to be found or a heavy and burdensome interest should be met every year. Rev. Father Jamot who had wrought miracles of finance in North Simcoe was called from Barrie and put in charge of the difficulty. Another task awaited him on his arrival in Toronto. The Bishop had signed a contract for the erection of a tower and steeple, of which St. Michael's cathedral had been lacking since its erection, between eighteen and twenty years. Father Jamot threw himself into the work; he visited the house and business place of every family in Toronto, soliciting, urging, entreating and finally commanding. He let no house without a good round sum. He visited every parish in the diocese, and every house in every parish; he preached in every church and took up the collection personally.

Tempestuous weather, horrible roads, rain or snow were never considered, he went on und' forward and left no stone unturned, no family in the diocese unvisited. God always blesses such work, fatigue, trial and, disappointment endured willingly for Him must have its reward. The real, substantial monuments of Father Jamot's giant work are to-day seen in St. Michael's cathedral tower and spire, in Loretto Convent at Fall's view, Niagara, and in the Carmelite Monastery, with its rising hospice beside the rushing rapids that are now and shall be for generations objects of wonder and admiration to sight seers and tourists from every distant land.

So many laborious tasks faithfully done, such formidable work cheerfully undertaken and carried to a successful and triumphant issue, could not long remain unrequited even in this unfaithful world. Bishop Lynch had been created Archbishop in March, 1870, and had long since named Father Jamot Vicar General of the diocese. It was four years later when his Grace succeeded in obtaining for his faithful vicar general the title and exalted dignity of Bishop. The district of Algoma, in North Ontario was separated ecclesiastically from the dioceses of Kingston and Toronto and a vicariate apostolic established in 1871, when Father Jamot was consecrated Bishop of Sarepto and Vicar Apostolic of Northern Canada on the 21th February of that year. The title of Bishop although pleasing to many, and considered a recompense for past labors, brought to the new bishop neither cessation from hard work nor a term to mental anxieties. The region over which his jurisdiction extended was in a primitive state of settlement and colonization. Bracebridge, Parry Sound and Sault St. Mary's, were but villages, while the districts of Muskoka, Algoma and Nipissing were in an incipient state of civilization. Bishop Jamot was by no means disheartened. He visited the hardy pioneers of every new township and broke the bread of life to the nomadic Indians in their encampment and wigwams. He brought cheer to the shanties of the suffering colonists, and gave hope and encouragement to all.

In July, 1882, the counties of Peterborough, Durham, Northumberland and Victoria were taken from the Diocese of Kingston, and placed under the care and jurisdiction of Bishop Jamot. His diocese was no longer a Vicariate Apostolic, but a canonically established see under the title of "The Diocese of Peterborough." Four years of toil and hardships by journey over almost impassible roads, four years of dreariness and solitude coupled with pinching poverty, did Bishop Jamot spend amid the Indians and colonists of his vicariate. He was permitted by God to enjoy four years of comparative ease and worldly comfort, no doubt as compensation for the past, in the beautiful city of Peterborough, with a fine cathedral and palace, and a numerous and devoted clergy to cheer and sustain in every effort to advance the causes so dear to his heart—of religion and Catholic education.

In the summer of 1885 he went to Rome on his visit ad limina and obtained many favors from the Propaganda and our present glorious High Pontiff with whom he had the privilege of several interviews. He took advantage of the occasion to stop

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