

DOVANAN AND THE BOERS.

An Irish Pedagogue in the Transvaal.

INTERESTING ANECDOTE TOLD BY A JESUIT MISSIONARY.

An episode told by the Rev. Father Charles Cronenberg, S. J., of the Zumbesi Mission will be read with pleasure.

It was in the South African winter of dry season, in the last day of April, 1879. The missionary caravan had plodded its weary way among sands and rocks, rivers and forests, and was camping in the midst of the immense plains of Western Transvaal. The sun was calmly setting on the level horizon, and the evening breeze brought with it that blissful freshness which under the burning mid day sun the mirage had made us dream of by its imaginary bowers and pictured lakes. All was quiet and silent around us, the cattle were feeding; the Fathers, walking, said their beads.

In the glimmering sky a spot appeared that grew little by little; a dark human form was making towards our wagon. It was dark already, when we received the greetings of the strange visitor at our camp fire. A man of middle stature with rough shoes, a corduroy suit long worn, a broad felt hat on his gray hair, stood before us. His features bore the strong marks which that scorching climate speedily leaves on the faces of men, and on his shoulders he carried a stick from which was hanging a pair of top boots. He had all the appearance of a regular tramp, but a tramp in an African desert is a god send.

"Good evening," he said abruptly to the tallest of us, whom he rightly supposed was the "Biss of the party," "don't you Catholic priests? I heard Fathers were coming up country, and I came up to make my confession!"

"We are here, and we are rich. We have a house that will be built, a team of oxen, a cow and a calf, milk and butter, six sheep and seventeen cows in the treasury; and with you will live. When we should you will abound with us, and when we fast you will fast with us." It took some time for Donovan to recover from this happy surprise.

"Yes," he finally answered, "and a god send it to be received here by the Fathers, and to find a home for me who have known none since I left my mother in King George's time."

"And now, Donovan, you will be a missionary schoolmaster as long as it will suit your age; and then, when the day of your reward will have dawned, close to the Church of the Immaculate Conception on your chalk hill, we will bury you, and over your grave we will pray the Gospels whom you will have taught the law of Christ our Lord."

Here Donovan burst out in tears of ecstasy. "To live here with the priest," he exclaimed, "to work for God yet awhile and then to sleep in the shadow of the Church of the Immaculate Virgin Mary until the everlasting resurrection! Oh! this is the best of happy dreams; thanks to God and to you, his servants and priests."

Together we started our building afresh. The kitchen was erected, and a church dominates peacefully over the dark forests of Teeni Teeni Valley; and the thoughts of youth, having resumed the thoughts of youth, he taught the heathen, until at last, full of days and of merit, he will sleep in peace, having had his hundred in this world and found eternal bliss in the other.

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"The next morning old James Donovan received Holy Communion with a pure Irish devotion. After taking breakfast, he exclaimed, 'Oh, what a beautiful day! I was so many years since I had seen the Sepoahs again!'"

"We moved on, but Donovan followed yet another day. The third day, at evening, when he saw the oxen ready for another start, the good old man gathered his bundle, took his stick and his top boots, and, being ready for the home march, he spoke:

"Dear Father Superior, I am but a poor man, but soon will be poorer than I am. Here I have all that I have, take it for the love of God," and out of the inside of his coat he pulled £2 sterling and a half-sovereign.

The Superior refused to take the money saying: "God will provide."

Then the Irishman, throwing the gold piece on the ground with decision, said: "There lies the money. It is no longer mine, I have given it to God. If you don't take it, there it will remain," and he hurried off.

Father de Pelchin hesitated a moment, then, taking up the three gold pieces, said: "Stop a minute; I accept the money in the name of God, but this is my prayer: May it please Our Lord some day to give one of us the occasion of restoring it to you a hundredfold on this earth, and may He give you eternal life hereafter."

James Donovan then disappeared in the darkness of the plains. In May 1884, I had gone back to Europe for the interest of the mission, and had returned in October of the same year to Africa. I was then ordered to open a mission in that very extremity of the north-western Transvaal. My only companion, Father John Temming, and myself had secured a new station in the Dwaarsberg amongst the Batlapin Cstira. We had built our house, but when about to cover it, a storm and deluge of rain brought three of the four walls to the ground.

The very evening of the disaster, late at night, we were disheartened under our wagon, sheltering ourselves from the drizzling rain and cooking our porridge. On one side was the slope of the mountain, on which was the Batlapin town, on the other a dozen wells, dug out in the chalk stone, a wonder-work for the Cstira. Suddenly a voice was heard far beyond the wells.

"Are there white men here?" was the question.

"Yes," I answered, "but stay, don't you through the plain. I will send you a Caffir to see you through the plain."

A few minutes later, in the glare of our fire, and in the dim light of the growing moon, we saw a man of middle stature, with gray hair and grizzled beard, a broad brimmed felt hat, a corduroy suit, and on his shoulders a stick and a pair of top boots.

"Are you Father Cronenberg?" was the question.

"And aren't you James Donovan?" was the quick reply.

We heartily clasped hands, and many questions followed in quick succession. A spoonful of oatmeal was added to the porridge, and more water to the coffee

A DAY WITH THE MISERECORDIE.

(From "Chambers' Journal.")

It is Sunday morning, and our ship steams slowly into Leghorn Harbour under the banners of Italian skies. We lie a wherry, and go ashore, glad to escape for a time the monotonous roll of the wave-washed vessel. Hardly have we crossed the city's threshold when we come upon a weird procession of hooded men, carrying on their shoulders an empty litter. We are told they are the famous Miserecordie; so we follow until they reach their chapel, and go in after them. Our questions are kindly answered by a brother, whose face we cannot see, and we are soon investigating for ourselves the mysteries of this solemn brotherhood. It goes without saying that no religious body anywhere is held in more respect and veneration than the Italian Miserecordie.

THE INCENSE SWINGERS PERFUME THE AIR, AND OUR KARS ARE HAVISHED WITH ENCHANTING MUSIC SUNG BY THE CHOIR OVERHEAD. The priests go round the people and distribute candles; and we light ours, that we may not appear singular, and gaze curiously at the bumble bee, as if it were a wonder. As we pass out, the grey-haired sexton tells us it is the festival of All Souls, and a day of mourning. He advises us to visit the cemetery, telling us the sight is worth the trouble; and we resolve at once to go. It is the custom in Italy to mourn eight days from the 1st of November for the souls of the dead.

THE GRAVE-YARD GATES ARE VISITED AND COVERED WITH FLOWERS AND WREATHS OF PRETTY GIFTS, WHILE MISSES ARE SINGING FOR THEM IN ALL THE CHURCHES. At the end of eight days the decorations are removed, the priests put off their brooded robes, and the grave yard gates are closed again until next year's mourning time comes round. A drive of fifteen minutes through pretty hedgerows, banked with reddish sand, brings us to the cemetery. The road is covered with pedestrians, and at some points blocked with vehicles. So great, indeed, is the confusion that special squads of police are strung out to preserve order, while mounted gendarmes, resplendent in plumes and clanking sabres, gallop about to direct the throng. The women's dresses, in spite of the solemn occasion, are of the gayest colors;

THE PLEASANT GIRLS, WITH THEIR UNCOVERED HEADS, STRIPPED PETTICOATS, AND DANCING EARRINGS, BEING PARTICULARLY CONSPICUOUS. There are beggars, too, by the score, exhibiting mutilated limbs and festering sores, and calling loudly for the alms not often refused. An Italian festival of any kind without its beggars would be incomplete. When they come from where they go to, how they live and who they are, nobody knows; but they are the most persistent and irrepresible class of beings to be met with in the wide world. They will positively not take a refusal, and this is well illustrated by a lame man, who, forgetful of his lameness, runs a mile beside our carriage for the sake of a penny. We lose him, and still find breath to bless us for our charity. At the gate stand two of the Miserecordie, clad in their sombre robes shaking their poor boxes at the passing multitude. So weird and silent are they that but for their eyes, which peer and twinkle through the holes cut in their hoods, they might be taken for statues. The burying-ground into which we pass lies just outside the Leghorn gates, and almost under the shadow of the Monte nero heights. It is laid out with charming nicety, and kept with scrupulous care. The boxwood thickets which form the avenues are neatly trimmed; and above them tower high cypress trees, which yield a grateful shade and cool the gravel footpaths underneath. Of this ground work and architecture within, too much cannot be said; not that it is in any way aims at or approaches grandeur, but because it is FULL OF BEAUTY AND ALWAYS FAIR TO SEE.

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which it is held, when it is remembered that during the most stirring times in Italian history, when no processions or bodies dared walk abroad unguarded or unarmed, the members of the Miserecordie went every, alone.

THEIR QUIET GOOD WORK UNDER THE SHADOW OF THEIR UPLIFTED CRUCIFIX. Everything connected with the society is neat and scrupulously plain, and there is an utter absence of display, which more pretentious Orders would do well to imitate. Behind the chapel are kept the hearse, stretchers, portable beds, country ambulances, and other appliances used. All are clean and fresh and ready for immediate use. We re-enter the little chapel, where a Mass is being sung for the souls of the departed brethren, and we see on all sides glistening skulls and covered coffins to remind us of our latter end.

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Written for CATHOLIC RECORD. CATHOLICS OF SCOTLAND. BY THE REV. ANNEAS M'DONNELL DAVENPORT, LL. D., F. R. S. PART II. COLLEGE OF DOUAI. Some account of the Scotch College of Douai in connection with the status of the Catholics of Scotland and the progress of the Scotch Mission will not be out of place. In the year 1570, Dr. James Cheyne Arnae, a Scotch secular priest, placed it under the superintendence of the Father John Robb. After this it remained for the most part, in possession of the Scotch Fathers, although it governed occasionally for short periods by the Walloon Fathers of the society. There were other benefactors of institution besides Dr. Cheyne; among the rest the illustrious Mary, Queen of Scots, who settled on it an annual pension of 1,200 francs, raised soon to 400 gold crowns, and Pope Gregory XIII. The annuities bestowed by these eminent personages ended with their lives. The seminary was not, however, destitute. Many Scotch Catholic grants became contributors. Mr. V. Meldrum, Preceptor of the cathedral of Aberdeen, donated 57 thirings to the comment of four bourses. Pope Mousson was not favored with a seriously climate, and in consequence early in the year 1593 the Seminary was removed to Douai. This was done with the sanction of Pope Clement VIII. It was not only on account of the healthiness of the place, but also on consequence of the confusion of wars, that the college was removed from Mousson, as appears from a letter of Clement VIII. in favor of the institution. The college was for some time in Louvain, and also at Antwerp, where Mousson was prepared for it. But it did not till after several migrations. Various fortunes, that it was finally established at Douai, at that time a Belgium town, in the year 1612, in a house taken for it by the Walloon Fathers of Philip III. of Spain was applied to permission to purchase a site when permission was granted and, along with a donation of 100,000 francs, a few words may be now be said to the most liberal of all benefactors of the college of Douai. This was no other than P. Hippolytus Curie, son of a known historical character, Gilles Curie, Secretary to Queen Mary, Stewards of Douai College, and the end of his philosophical course in 1618 he entered the novitiate of the Society of Jesus. Before doing so, however, he disposed of all his temporal property by a testamentary deed, signed and sealed at Antwerp, Sept. 1, 1612. In this deed he declared his intention to join the Society; and a specifying certain donations to members of his own family and the college, he directed that the whole residue of his property should be given to Scotch College of Douai, subject to conditions which he desired should be exactly observed. The conditions were the education of as many students as possible, and if anything should remain over the expense of a certain number of students, that it was annually to be applied to the maintenance of another, this remainder should be devoted to the support of the persons necessary for the management of the college, and to meet the expenses ecclesiastics who should be sent to Scotland as secular priests to labour the Scotch missions. It was also provided by Curie, that the maintenance of a full number of good and suitable subjects. He also directed that the college should enjoy his endowment long as it should be under the administration of the Society of Jesus, but that if it should ever be put under other government by the resignation or removal of the society's Fathers, the Father-General should be authorized to apply the whole of the endowment to the maintenance of the Scotch students who should under the management of the Society. He desired, moreover, and earnestly requested that if the Father-General saw fit, there should always be Scotch Jesuit in the college in which said students were to reside. It was further stipulated that if the Catholic religion should ever be re-established in Scotland, the whole capital sum Curie's endowment should be transferred to that country, at the discretion of the Father-General and the Scotch Fathers of the Society; and a college of ecclesiastical students as possible should then be founded in the University of St. Andrews. The execution of this provision was entrusted to the Scotch Fathers of the Society. The endowment was to be only for students of philosophy and theology. Curie finally appointed that the deed should take effect within two years, the usual time of a testator. He also directed that if he should die before that time, the deed should be executed in the month of July.

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