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ALEXANDER TACHÉ, O.M.I.



GR EAT Canadians, either in Church or State, are not so numerous that we can afford to allow their memory to die out in a day, and hence it is that, though more than three months have gone by since the death of Archbishop Taché, we feel it a duty to briefly relate the story of his life, and to seek the lesson which that life has taught.

Alexander Antoine Taché was born at Riviere du Loup on the 23rd of July, 1823. From his earliest years he showed himself possessed of deep religious feeling, and gave signs that later on he would be found amongst those who were fighting the battle of truth and morality under the shadow of the cross. He was but eighteen years old when the conviction forced itself upon him that the priestly life was the one that best accorded with his tastes. Having sought the counsel of a wise director, he entered the Montreal Grand Seminary, and there remained during three years, at the end of which time he heard again that internal voice speaking to him of the security, peace and tranquility to be found in the religious life. To the Order of Oblates of Mary Immaculate his eyes immediately turned, and at the door of the Longueuil Novitiate he knocked and asked permission to enter. The favor was granted, and thus was commenced Alexander Taché's career as a missionary. How the decision to devote his time and energy to the evangelization of the North-West Indians was arrived at is best told in his own words: "It was in the silence of my cell that a

voice, which could come only from on high, made itself heard, and this voice indicated to me the North-West, inviting me to repair thither without even the thought of being ever able to return. My superiors approved and blessed this idea. My mother was first advised of my intention, and afterwards I went to see her. We embraced each other while our tears commingled. After some moments of silence, stronger than I, notwithstanding her illness, she again embraced me and said: 'My Alexander, I owe something to nature, but I owe more to God; since it is his wish that you go to the North-West, go and be a devoted missionary.' Then I left, believing a return impossible." It is hard to appreciate the generosity and heroism shown by the young novice in leaving home, friends, and sweetest domestic ties, to take up his abode amongst illiterate savages. And to do this at a time when no crimson cushion of a palace car was at his disposal. displayed a courage that must have been heaven-sent. More than two months were occupied in making the journey to St. Boniface. The hardships endured did not shake a resolution which God had blessed, nor did mental suffering over the condition of a virtuous and affectionate mother, cause young Taché to hesitate about undergoing the worry and toil which a sixty days' trip in a birch bark canoe meant. Shortly after his arrival he was ordained priest, and the first religious vows ever pronounced in that far off country were those that fell from the lips of the youthful apostle. Then it was that he entered heart and soul into the work of christianizing the unbelieving savage. Often did he travel alone hundreds of miles in order to be at