

devotedness and self sacrifice of the Catholic priests and nuns in relieving the pest stricken natives irrespective of creed or position opened the eyes of a great number of pagans to the true faith. We might further say that it was from the great zeal manifested by the new apostles in trying circumstances such as the cholera rage and direful famines that the movement of conversion sprang and this movement has steadily increased day by day. A measure which greatly helped the forward progress of the faith was the acceptance by the Oblates of the new diocese of Colombo. The greater part of the island has thus become the field of labor of the sons of De Mazenod. When in 1856 the mission of Ceylon was accepted by the Congregation of the Oblates their work was limited to the diocese of Jaffna. Bishop Lemeria was the first Bishop of this diocese. After the death of this devoted laborer, Father Bonjean was selected to replace him in that see and governed it till the establishment of the new diocese of Colombo to which he was transferred in 1885, Father Melizan succeeding him as Bishop of Jaffna. Under those two active and devoted men the work of conversion progressed rapidly. It is consoling to note that the number of Catholics who were left at the time of the conquest of Ceylon by the English has in the space of eighty years increased from 50,000 to 250,000. This number when

compared to the 2,500,000 comprising the whole population of the island is not great, but is sufficiently large for encouragement. The national difficulties are many. The missionaries are often in straitened circumstances, their chapels are poor, so are the Catholic natives. Poverty added to the great obstacles that lie already in the way of conversion is no slight cause of anxiety to the Fathers, but the apostolic spirit of the Church has never been damped by trials and hardships. Visitations and crosses of all kinds are the seal of the conversion of the world. So it shall be in Ceylon. In the dioceses of Colombo and Jaffna there are 80 Oblates engaged in the work of conversion. Churches and chapels are erected in many localities on the coast and in the interior. Schools are established and efficiently taught by missionaries and by devoted nuns from France and England. A flourishing College in Jaffna is also under the direction of the Oblate Fathers. The success of the past few years is a guarantee of future prosperity. The self-sacrifice of the missionaries and of the nuns, the ardor put forth by the new Cingalese converts in the conversion of their still benighted brethren, and above all the powerful grace of God will soon, we hope, make of Ceylon a land as famous for Christianity as it is for the luxuriant beauty of its landscape.

The *Ottawa Citizen* of August 31st contained the following item :—Of the fifteen members of the Dominion Cabinet it is curious that no less than seven are "Johns." They are Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir John Thompson, Hon. John H. Pope, Hon. John Carling, Hon. John Costigan, Hon. John Haggart and Hon. John J. C. Abbott.

Commenting upon this a correspondent wrote the following letter to the next day's paper :—

*Editor of the Citizen :*

SIR :—In to-day's issue you draw attention to the fact of the number of "Johns" in the present Cabinet. There is a similar curious coincidence in connection with the recurrence of the same name among

the four members constituting the Headquarters Board of Examiners for the Military College. They are all "Johns," but the most curious feature of it is the way in which the second initials occur, viz., John Thorburn (chairman), John A. MacCabe, John B. Balland, John C. Glashan; and that is the order of their appointment and the order in which they sign their names to their reports.

READER.

August 31st.

This accidental reference has been the means of making known to many of us for the first time the fact of Father Balland's being a member of the above Board of Examiners.