

Northwest Review

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REV. A. A. CHERRIER,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

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SATURDAY, SEPT. 10, 1904.

Calendar for Next Week.

SEPTEMBER.

- 11—Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost. Feast of the Holy Name of Mary. Solemnity of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin.
- 12—Monday—Of the Octave of the Nativity.
- 13—Tuesday—Of the Octave.
- 14—Wednesday—The Exaltation of the Holy Cross.
- 15—Thursday—Octave of the Nativity.
- 16—Friday—Saints Cornelius and Cyprian, Martyrs.
- 17—Saturday—The Stigmata of St. Francis.

THE IMMACULATE BIRTH.

"From the beginning I was created."—(Eccli. xxiv, 14).

When the great Deep was glooming,
By light's swift steps untrod,
The world's wide heart entombing,
Beneath the feet of God:

No mountain-summits hoary
Had struck their roots and
stood;

The Ocean's endless story
Broke not the Solitude:

Life's crowded courses, filling
The avenues of Time,
Lay silent, unfulfilling
The Maker's Word sublime.

Yet in the light Supernal,
Stood stretched the mighty Plan,
The Archetype eternal,
The wondrous ways of Man;

And in God's presence, gleaming,
Wisdom and Bounty played,
Rejoicing and foreseeing
The World that would be made.

But not that rapt revealing
Of all-creative Art,
Could still Sin's footsteps, stealing
Along the mystic chart;

The blight in Nature's blooming,
The canker in Life's wreath;
The burden of Man's dooming,
The prophecy of Death;

Another Deep enfolding
The issue of God's will;
Another Night withholding
His love and wisdom still.

Then o'er the Empyrean,
And vested with the sun,
Hailed by the ceaseless paean
Of myriad years that run,

Pure as morn's beams that smother
Night's darkling shadows wild,
Uprose the Virgin Mother;
The Mother and the Child.

W. A. Reynolds, S.J.

St. Boniface,
Feast of the Nativity of Mary.
Sept. 8, 1904.

WOULD NEED X-RAYS.

In the course of his evidence before a judge in Limerick City, Ire., recently, a farmer who was sued for the price of a rick of hay, was asked why he had not noticed that all the hay was not of the same quality.

The witness created considerable merriment in court by saying, "Yerra, is it the X-rays you'd want me to get to see through the rick?"

A MOST INTERESTING LETTER WRITTEN BY MGR. TACHE MORE THAN 45 YEARS AGO

An Extract from the Report on the Exploration of the Country between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement, and between the latter place and the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan, by S. J. Dawson, Esquire, C.E.

Printed by order of the Legislative Assembly, Toronto.

Folio 42.—Letter from the Bishop of St. Boniface, Red River Settlement.

(Continued from last week.)

ST. NORBERT.

This new parish has a population of 700 souls. The Rev. P. Lestanc is the pastor of this little flock. The chapel, built of wood, is an edifice of 90 feet in length, by 33 in breadth. At one end are the apartments of the priest, and the teacher, who in this case also, is happily a Brother of the Christian schools.

This good Brother has 31 children to teach. The girls, 29 in number, are confided to the care of the Sisters of Charity, who have their dwelling near the Church; a happy symbol, reminding us that the only true and solid education is that which is based on religion.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER.

This Parish dates from 1824. The population consists of nearly 1,200 souls, permanent residents, not including several hundreds of hunters who pass the year on the prairies, but at certain times visit the colony. Some, no doubt, take up their abode in other parishes, but most of them stop short at St. Francis Xavier. The parish is known by the name of the White Horse Plains. The old wooden chapel, now too small for the population, threatens to fall. We have accordingly begun to collect material for a new church. The senior of our Missionaries, Mr. Thibeault, my Vicar-General, is the cure of this parish. He has exercised his sacred office in this diocese for twenty-six years, speaks the Cree language very well, and understands that of the Sautaux. This knowledge is indispensable in his situation, as a great number of those who require the exercise of his sacred functions know no other language. The parish of St. Francis Xavier has only one school, which is kept by the Sisters of Charity. Here 13 boys only and 26 girls receive instruction.

ST. CHARLES.

This parish contains only 210 persons. There is neither church nor chapel. Divine service is performed in a house which serves as a temporary chapel. The congregation have neither school nor resident pastor. When it is practicable a priest proceeds thither from this place to officiate. In other circumstances, the worshippers are obliged to go to St. Boniface or to St. Francis Xavier.

LAKE MANITOBA.

To these details I may be permitted to add a few words concerning another establishment, commenced last summer at the extremity of Lake Manitoba, for the convenience of 30 or 40 families who are settled there. This small community have built a chapel. Father Gascon resides at the post, and has so much the greater merit in his good deeds, that although connected with the colony he derives no advantage from the connection.

I have thus, my dear sir, given you a full account of the religious comforts afforded to the Catholic population of the Red River. Far, then from being neglected in this respect, they possess a full measure of this essential blessing. Considering the sparse character of the settlements, the schools would need to be increased in number in certain districts, but the absence of any law relative to education, and of zeal in the people themselves, renders it utterly impossible

to do more. I venture to assert that all reasonable and impartial persons must, in view of what is done, acknowledge, that the result far transcends the means which we can command. The truth is that, but for the unselfish zeal of those who devote themselves without fee or earthly reward to the arduous and meritorious task, it would be absolutely impossible to keep up the schools. So far scarcely one child in ten has paid for his schooling, although the charge does not exceed ten shillings per annum, and I am certain that if we insisted on the payment of even that trifling sum, many of the scholars would leave the schools, such is the carelessness and indifference of the parents in that respect, notwithstanding our oft repeated entreaties and the sacrifices which we have made in that behalf. This indifference concerning the education of their children, and the neglect of the many advantages afforded them is a standing reproach which may be justly cast on our population. I do not say that this is their only fault. Alas! the history of mankind, study it where we may, gives us much food for regret on the score both of omission and commission. I am desirous here to correct an error sorely injurious to us, into which nearly all the writers on this country have fallen. A fixed idea seems to have been entertained by them generally at least a stereotyped expression of it appears in all their works, intended to establish a humiliating and unjust comparison between the half-breeds of French Canadian parentage, and those of a different origin. I have neither the wish nor the time to controvert all the absurd things that have been said on this subject. One word only I shall say relative to this idea, as it is propounded in one of the best books which I am acquainted with on this country. In his Arctic Searching Expedition, Sir John Richardson remarks at page 273-4:

"In character the half-breeds vary according to their paternity; the descendants of the Orkney laborers being generally steady, provident agriculturists of the Protestant faith; while the children of the Roman Catholic Canadian Voyagers have much of the levity and thoughtlessness of their fathers, combined with that inability to resist temptation, which is common to the two races from whence they are sprung."

It is not necessary either to have been the inventor of gunpowder or to have enriched the domain of science by any important discovery, in order to detect, at a glance, the tendency of these remarks, and the spirit which dictated them. For my own part I have been in the country nearly fourteen years. I have come in contact with half-breeds of every extraction, and I have as yet failed to discover the grounds for any such distinction. I repeat once more, that my affection for our Canadian half-breeds does not make me look upon them as perfect or free from defects, but it is also true that I have not found any greater degree of the same perfection among the others.

Every nation has its weak side, but counterbalanced by qualities which others do not possess, and in judging of a people it is not wise to select one particular point in its character which may be defective. It is necessary, on the contrary, to estimate the good or bad inclinations of that people, as a whole, making every allowance for the cir-

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High Mass, with sermon, 10.30 a.m.

Vespers, with an occasional sermon, 7.15 p.m.

Catechism in the Church, 3 p.m.

N.B.—Sermon in French on first Sunday in the month, 9 a.m. Meeting of the children of Mary 2nd and 4th Sunday in the month, 4 p.m.

WEEK DAYS—Masses at 7 and 7.30 a.m. On first Friday in the month, Mass at 8 a.m. Benediction at 7.30 p.m.

N.B.—Confessions are heard on Saturdays from 3 to 10 p.m., and every day in the morning before Mass.

C. M. B. A.

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