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SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 1904.

Calendar for Next Week.

- JUNE.
12—Third Sunday after Pentecost.
St. John of St. Fagondez
(Spain), Confessor.
13—Monday—St. Anthony of
Padua, Confessor.
14—Tuesday—St. Basil, Bishop,
Doctor.
15—Wednesday—St. Germaine Cou-
sin, Virgin.
16—Thursday—St. John Francis
Regis, Confessor.
17—Friday—St. Bede the Venerable,
Confessor, Doctor.
18—Saturday—Votive office of the
Immaculate Conception.

THE SACRED HEART.

We go to press on Friday, the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the feast that closes the cycle of movable feasts, the feast that sums up, as no other does, the scheme of the Incarnation—the Godhead united personally and substantially to our poor humanity for the purposes of suffering love. Devotion to the Heart of Jesus is the most comprehensive, the deepest and the most powerful of all devotions. For that Divine Heart is, literally and truly, not metaphorically, a boundless ocean of mercy, the source of all graces. No conversion was ever brought about, no salvation ever obtained except through the pleadings of the Sacred Heart. The intention of this month is Diffusion of the Apostleship of Prayer, which is the most practical form of devotion to the Sacred Heart. The Apostleship now numbers 30 millions of members, at least one tenth of whom read their Messenger every month. May this year bring an increase of fervor among old members, and a multiplication of new ones.

FATHER JETTE, ALASKAN MISSIONARY.

Talks to a Free Press Reporter
About his Original Indian
Prayer Book and the
Ten'a Customs.

About to leave St. Boniface College after ten months' residence there as Mathematical Professor, is a missionary from the far north, Rev. Father Jette, S.J., whose field of labor in the Upper Yukon, on the Alaskan side of the Boundary, is the farthest north mission of the Roman Catholic Church on this continent.

To a representative of the Free Press, who called upon him, Father Jette very kindly told a great deal about the Indians of Northern Alaska, their peculiar customs and difficult language, and about the work being done among them. While here he is guiding through the press the first complete translation into the language of the Indians of his wide parish of the prayer book, catechism and hymns. Translations have already been made into a dialect somewhat akin to this one by Archdeacon Macdonald, of the Church of England. The excellence of these books encouraged Father Jette in attempting translations into the more difficult language of his Indians. The completed work, in many a ream of beautiful penmanship, has been for some time in the Free Press job department, whence it

will issue in a few days in book form. The only printing previously done in this dialect was done on a small hand press away up on the Upper Yukon, with the assistance of Indian boys.

The first job in Father Jette's translation was the making of an alphabet. This is phonetic, each symbol representing one sound only. Most of the letters of the English alphabet are retained, though with a use somewhat different from the English. The French "e" (with acute accent) and "u" are employed. There being no "r" sound in the spoken language, and the letter "r" consequently out of work, it has been given new employment, and stands for the guttural "ch" as used in German or Scotch. Finally the Welsh or Polish "l" sound, a common one in the language, is represented by an ordinary "l" with a cross stroke.

This language Father Jette calls the Ten'a, this being the word for "man," and the nearest approach the Indians have to a tribe name. The early explorer, Alexander Mackenzie, found near the mouth of the river bearing his name, a similar word in use, which he wrote "tinneh." The Oblate Fathers in still another district write it "Dene."

The language is unusually difficult, and not until he had been three years among the people could Father Jette speak it with fluency. "After one or even two years," he said, "I could say only a few of the things I wished to say, and the Indians could speak among themselves without my understanding them. Now, however, I can say all I wish and I can also understand everything they say."

How he Learned the Language.

He had only a very little instruction from an English-speaking man, and had practically to learn the whole language from the Indians themselves. His way of doing this was very ingenious. "I had with me," he explained, "the back numbers of a good many magazines. These I would give to the men to look at. I listened to the remarks they made to one another about the pictures. I wrote these down as well as I could. Then I rehearsed these sentences to an intelligent Indian boy, who, being blind, and a paralytic, was given a home at the mission. He spoke only his own language, but still managed to help me by making corrections, giving synonyms, and patiently explaining by signs and in simpler words. In this way I gathered a vocabulary. Then in my third year I was ill, and so was able to give time to the verb, and master it. Then my work was done.

There is a distinctly humorous aspect to this method of acquiring language as Father Jette illustrated by a story about Father Barnum, of St. Michael—a nephew, by the way, of the great showman—and his effort to get the different parts of the Eskimo verb "to paddle," the Eskimo equivalent of

First person.....I paddle.
Second ".....you paddle.
Third ".....he paddles.

Father Barnum selected an intelligent looking native, and, taking up a paddle, went through all the motions of using it. Then he said to his chosen teacher: "Cha?" "What?" which is the one word ever on the tongue of a beginner. "Cha?" The Eskimo in good faith gave him a phrase corresponding to the labored paddle movements. In as good faith Father Barnum wrote it down, though he wondered why "you paddle" should be so long in Eskimo. He then gave his instructor the paddle, urged him by signs to go through the motion of paddling, and again asked "Cha?" "What?" Again the Eskimo in good faith gave it, and the priest wrote it down. This was the first person of his verb. There remained now only the third, "he paddles." The white man pointed to a native approaching in a canoe, paddling of course, and again asked "What?" The phrase the instructor in all good faith gave him for this was quite different from the other two, and very long to be simply the third person singular indicative of a commonly used verb. But this was no more queer than many other phrases of the language, thought the priest, and, well content, he began to practise his verb. And this, as he sometime afterwards discovered, was the verb he practised—

"First person—I paddle well.
Second—you paddle very poorly.
Third—That man wants some tobacco."

As he began to acquire the language somewhat, Father Jette began in a small and imperfect way to translate it into the prayer book and Psalms. With correction after correction, made in untiring patience, he perfected the work until an intelligent Indian said to him: "Now at least I can understand your prayers. Huretofore I have not understood them." The exquisite satisfaction such a statement would bring to the patient missionary must have been well nigh indescribable. The translation thus made is the one now issuing in book form from the Free Press job department. It is by no means complete. Publishing books is an expensive undertaking. When additional funds are secured Father Jette intends having other books printed.

Upper Yukon Parish.

The Parish in which Father Jette is the only missionary lies along the Upper Yukon, within the boundaries of Alaska. There is in it territory enough for a very fair sized kingdom, the length being four hundred miles and the width two hundred. The mission headquarters are at Nulato, on the Yukon river, and of this place the missionary is postmaster. The neighboring missionaries are two, of the Church of England, one two hundred miles up the river from Nulato, the other two hundred miles down. Away out, even beyond this, well up within the Arctic circle, is a mission maintained by Moravians.

Over his immense parish Father Jette is travelling almost continuously, in summer by canoe, in winter by dog train. He visits each settlement at least once a year, but some of the nearer and more accessible can be given two or even three visits a year.

Such a visit extends over a week or some times two weeks according to circumstances. If the season is a busy one the visits are shorter. In the winter visits are often shortened by the difficulty of carrying food sufficient to maintain seven ravenous huskies and the wise missionary is determined not to make himself burdensome to the people. When the dogs can be sent away while the missionary remains in a village, winter is the best time of all for this visiting.

Almost every day during the visit Mass is celebrated in the morning. Half the people attend one day while the other half look after the fish traps. Next day the fishers of the day before are at Mass while the other half take up the work. Three or four times during each day the missionary gathers old and young for instruction. The catechism and hymns of the church are taught. In the evening the people are all assembled in one of the larger lodges and taught. In some of the villages practically all the inhabitants come to this evening instruction, in others only a few.

On Saturday there is no teaching. This is the housecleaning day. Father Jette says he thinks there is not a house in his parish the floor of which is not carefully scrubbed every Saturday. On Friday the people will say: "You will not teach tomorrow, Father, it is the washing day," and the father is very glad to let cleanliness instead of Godliness occupy the minds of the people for one day.

In this respect the Alaskan Indians are very different from the Eskimos, who are very dirty. They could scarcely be otherwise, living as they do underground. The Indians formerly lived after the same fashion, but now have well built log houses. To enter an Eskimo dwelling, says Father Jette, you must first jump down into a tunnel about four feet deep, then crawl along on hands, and knees for about twelve feet, when you come to the hanging skin called by courtesy a doorway. This you draw aside and enter—if no fire is burning. But the fireplace being located exactly opposite the door, entrance or exit must be made across it; a rather troublesome proceeding when a good fire is burning.

Baptized by Russians.

The Indians throughout Alaska were baptized by the Russians when the country was under the



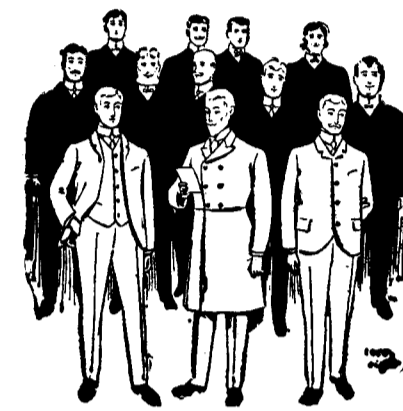
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High Mass, with sermon, 10.30 a.m.
Vespers, with an occasional sermon, 7.15 p.m.
Catechism in the Church, 3 p.m.
N.B.—Sermon in French on first Sunday in the month, 9 a.m. Meeting of the children of Mary 2nd and 4th Sunday in the month, 4 p.m.
WEEK 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.

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Agent of the C.M.B.A. for the Province of Manitoba with power of attorney, Dr. J. K. Barrett, Winnipeg, Man.

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