

which I then, as now, wished to be as lasting as my life."

The journey to St. Boniface occupied sixty-two days, and St. Boniface was a thousand miles East of the first scene of the young missionary's labors. After his ordination to the holy priesthood, which took place on the 12th of October, 1845, Father Taché was appointed to accompany Father Lafleche, afterwards Bishop of Three Rivers, to Isle a la Crosse. They started for their station the next summer on the 8th of July, and reached it after two months. Here nothing seemed to daunt his zeal. At one time he is away a hundred miles in one direction baptizing a dying chief. No sooner does he return home, if the mission house could be so called, than he is away in another direction carrying the glad tidings of God's word to Lake Caribon, 350 miles east of Isle a la Crosse. His next mission was to Athabasca, still farther away, where he spent three weeks, baptizing that time 194 Indians. Few could stand the rigors of the winters, the fatigue of the long journeys, the unpalatable food, for they had only pemmican, and, what was severest on the constitution, the want of shelter. Such difficulties try but do not overcome apostolic men. Father Taché counted these years as amongst the happiest of his life, and left a very interesting account how his heart thrilled with joy when at the end of his journey he was welcomed by the untutored savage. Sometimes the picture was reversed. After travelling for hundreds of miles under the most trying difficulties, on arriving at the expected place of meeting he would find the tribe had left a few days before, and had gone further on. Thereupon his own guides would abandon him, seeing that his stock of provisions was low. In order to save his team of dogs he must starve himself, for his safety depends upon them. He starts upon his return and goes days at a time without food. What was the spirit of self-denial and courage which animated this apostolic man may be clearly seen from the following letter written in 1849. Having been informed that owing to lack of funds the missions would have to be abandoned, he writes:

"The news which your letter brings us afflicts us profoundly. We cannot reconcile ourselves to the thought of abandoning our dear neophytes and our numerous catechumens. We will confine our demands upon your assistance to the narrowest limits. We hope that you will always be able to provide us at least with altar breads and wine for the holy sacrifice. We ask only one further favor, which is that we be allowed to continue our present labors. The fishes of the lakes shall supply us with the food we shall require and the wild beasts of the forests with clothing. Again we beg of you, Reverend Father, not to call us away from a work to which our hearts are so much attached."

But God had His providence over both the missions and the zealous missionary whose talents and character had not escaped the notice of the venerable Bishop Provencher. This saintly prelate was now in failing health, and looking about for a coadjutor and future successor his eye rested upon Father Taché, then only 26 years of age. His Lordship called him to St. Boniface, where a letter from his religious superiors instruct-

ed him to sail for France for his consecration. Bishop Taché received his episcopal consecration at Viviers, November 23rd, 1851, from the hands of the Bishop of Marseilles, Mgr. de Mazenod, assisted by Mgr. afterwards Cardinal, Guibert and Mgr. Prince, Bishop of St. Hyacinthe. A brief visit to Rome, and, on his return to America, a few weeks in Lower Canada, occupied the winter, so that it was June before the young Bishop reached St. Boniface. Here Bishop Provencher thought to keep him, but in vain. Bishop Taché again took up his residence at Isle a la Crosse to devote himself with all the greater zeal and success which the unction of his dignity imparted.

Nearly two years after he was raised to the episcopate, Bishop Taché returned to St. Boniface to take possession of his see, rendered vacant by Bishop Provencher's death on June 7, 1853. He entered upon his extended field of labors with his accustomed zeal, and opened convents, colleges, schools and homes of charity. He shared his very table with the orphans, and denied himself of everything that they might want for nothing. As years went on religion advanced; missionary posts were established, the diocese was divided and afterwards sub-divided. It was while on a visit to one of these outlying bishoprics that Bishop Taché suffered the loss by fire of his episcopal residence and cathedral, December 14th, 1860. Following closely upon this trial a terrible inundation flooded the district leaving the people desolate. A few years afterwards the crops of the Red River settlement were destroyed by grasshoppers, the buffalo chase failed, and famine ensued. Bishop Taché bowed with loving submission to these severe trials, but displayed at the same time the greatest energy in affording relief. His subsequent difficulties were of a severer form and came from other than material loss.

During the political troubles arising out of the transfer of the Red River Territory from the Hudson Bay Company to the Dominion of Canada, Archbishop Taché took a very prominent part in restoring peace. He was at the time (1869) attending the Vatican Council at Rome, and on receiving a communication from the Canadian Government hastened home. Upon reaching Ottawa he had a conference with the Ministry, when he received instructions to proceed at once to the North-West and grant a general amnesty for past offences. As the murder of Scott had occurred in the meantime between his Grace's conference and his arrival at St. Boniface, he was severely criticised for having unconsciously exceeded his instructions. He ably justified himself, and showed that his offices for peace were successful, and that he had acted throughout with the utmost good faith for the general welfare of his people.

But the introduction of Manitoba into the Dominion was to cost the zealous prelate further