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THE STIKINE TRAIL TO KLONDIKE.

REV. FATHER CORBEIL WRITES TWO LETTERS TO HIS GRACE.

[First Letter.]

En route for Teslin Lake, June 26, 1898.

To His Grace the Right Rev. L. P. A. Langevin, O. M. I., Archbishop of St. Boniface.

My Lord Archbishop,

I am on my way to Teslin Lake, on the more or less serviceable trail which is trod by thousands of miners. I had left Vancouver with the military detachment, and Rev. Father Gendreau was to join me at Glenora on the Stikine river; but after waiting in vain for two weeks, I received a postcard informing me that he had taken another route and telling me to meet him at Fort Selkirk. It was easier said than done. Colonel Evans, commander of the force, had warned me that the instructions he had received from Ottawa were not sufficiently definite to allow him to assume the expenses of my journey, but he said he would take me with him from Teslin Lake to Fort Selkirk. As the freight from Glenora to Teslin was forty dollars a hundred-weight and I had 200 lbs. of baggage, I left the bulk of my belongings at Glenora, taking with me only a small valise and paying ten dollars for the carriage of my portable chapel.

Mr. A. St. Cyr, a government surveyor, generously offered to take me with him to Teslin and to board me on the way. I gladly accepted this offer, for I was at a loss to know how to get there. Mr. St. Cyr has seventeen horses to carry his outfit, and even so he has not enough. I myself lead two or three horses by the lead one behind the other, and I trudge along in this fashion, in all weathers and over all sorts of trails, ten or twelve miles a day. This would be no great hardship, were it not that I have to carry about thirty pounds on my back. We have still a hundred miles to walk, and then the worst of the journey will be over.

I hope the good God will bless my labors over there and prosper them as a compensation for the fatigues and hardships of all kinds which I am enduring on this journey. To be sure, it is for Him alone that I am doing this; I am seeking His glory and my own sanctification. I feel that I ought to be happy in spite of a thousand difficulties, most of them unforeseen, in the fulfillment of a mission that is to be fruitful for the salvation of souls.

At Glenora there were about sixty Catholics for whom I said Mass and preached on two Sundays. All are on their way to the Yukon. On the trail are hundreds of miners, carrying their outfits on their back or in impossible wheelbarrows. The

trials of these poor people are unimaginable. Many get disheartened and go back; but the majority of these miners are goaded on by the mirage of nuggets, and the road is gilded, shortened in the dreams of a heated imagination, despite the dust, the sweat, the stumblings, the stiffening of overstrained muscles, which are their daily portion.

At Glenora I wrote to Mgr. Dontenville giving him an account of this part of the diocese of New Westminster.

French Canadians are very numerous here; I am meeting them all the time. They are the bravest, the strongest, the gayest of all. It is a great treat when I come across them. I get them to tell of their greatest hardships and then we all burst out laughing.

The common opinion among the miners is that the Government has been shamelessly deceived by those who boomed this route.

I beg Your Grace to excuse the uncouth appearance of this letter; I am writing on my knees.

Kindly present my best respects to Mgr. Grouard, and believe me

Ever gratefully yours in Christ,

O. Corbeil, priest.

[Second Letter]

Teslin Lake, July 18, 1898.

My Lord Archbishop,

Here I am at last on the shores of the great lake, after walking almost two hundred miles, after fording rivers, tramping through marshes, miles of mud and moss, happy, suffering, but not, I trust, in vain. This is, I hope, the necessary atonement for every human life that is not blameless. It is a sort of novitiate for the life of self-denial which one must lead in ministering to the spiritual wants of a mining country. Deo Gratias. Besides, the good God knows the strength of each one and metes out trials accordingly; mine have not exceeded my courage and my determination to do my duty fully.

I have already given spiritual help to poor disheartened miners, and they have told me how touched they were on seeing a priest travelling in the same way as they do, eating, sleeping and walking just as they do and for their sakes. It was also a great consolation for me to be able to say to them: "Your hardships I have borne, your fatigues I have felt, your sufferings I have endured." In order to earn my bread on the trail I have all along led two or three horses, which I often had to lug out of the mud into which they sank under their loads. But I shall soon forget all that when, about twelve days hence, I shall join Rev. Father Gendreau at

Fort Selkirk. It will not be a complete rest, but it will be quiet, strengthening labor in common, under a beloved chief.

Before my departure Rev. Father Gendreau asked me if I had a fixed salary or if I was to keep what I might collect among the miners. I replied that all I wanted was food and raiment, that was all I would ask for a couple of years, whatever else I might receive I would hand it over to him to help build his chapels.

I hope, Monseigneur, that your voyage has been a prosperous one and that you did not forget me when you prayed at the tomb of the Apostles. I commend myself to your daily prayers. Fraternal regards to all the priests in your house.

Ever your grateful son in J. and M. I.,

O. Corbeil, priest.

PROTESTANT CONTROVERSY.

Sacred Heart Review (Boston)

In modifying the title of these papers, and beginning upon a new series, I do not wish it understood that I intend to give over dealing with POPULAR Protestant controversy. Hereafter, as heretofore, I am likely to be principally occupied with this. Among us, at least, it is much the more mischievous and dangerous, as it naturally would be in a democratic country. As a scholar, I often feel ashamed to deal with such vulgar misrepresentation and abuse as prevail in this range of discussion. Yet a scholar has no business to detach himself aristocratically from the general interest, and in a country such as ours there seems to be no better way than to follow the style of Donnybrook Fair, and hit a head wherever it shows, be it that of butcher or bishop.

There is sometimes not much to choose between the two. The depth of vulgar abusiveness seems to have been reached by Bishop Coxe. Mr. Lansing refrains, at least, from vulgar personal allusions to living men. He does not comment upon the articles of their diet, which Coxe did. Coxe was a much more highly educated man, yet in his attacks upon the Jesuits, and still more upon Archbishop Satolli, he almost descended below the line at which it remained permissible to allude to him. No wonder the INDEPENDENT, after quoting some of his amenities, inquired in amazement, how a man of his standing could imagine such language compatible with decency, not to say charity. It is therefore not the social standing, nor the measure of education, that necessarily draws the line between the higher and the lower range of controversy. The distinction between them may perhaps be conveniently drawn as follows. Where the instinct

of disparagement prevails over that of accurate representation, we have POPULAR controversy, tending downward to pure blackguardism. Where the instinct of disparagement is subordinate to that of accurate representation, we have scholarly controversy. This is always tending upward, out of the range of controversy into that of objective inquiry.

In this higher range oppositions do not disappear. Indeed, in some respects they become intenser than ever. Yet they become more spiritual. They let "the ape and tiger die," the moppings and mowings of the ape, and the brutish fierceness of the tiger. Moreover, candor is the medium in which, at the last, error almost inevitably dissolves. What does remain remains as little more than an expression of inevitable human limitation. The Canon Law well says, adopting St. Augustine's words, that no matter how perverse may be the opinions of Christian men, yet if they inherit them, and do not originate them, and if they hold them in the spirit of cautious candor, such Christians are in no way to be accounted heretics. The Church, he acknowledged, must deal with them as heretics, since the Church does not know the secrets of the heart; but in the view of God they are Catholic Christians.

There is much matter, indeed, not controversial, which may nevertheless be appropriately considered in connection with controversy. There are popular notions concerning Catholicism, many of which are not held polemically, yet, being misapprehensions, innocently help to feed controversy, and being rectified, help to quench it. In the prevailing temper of a great part of the Protestant world, we can hardly imagine any point so innocent and indifferent but that it might be turned into a pebble with which to pelt the Pope. If I were to give Mr. Lansing points about the pontifical cross, or the time at which mitres first came into use, I should be much disappointed if he could not make out demonstratively that they are the specific development, the legitimate flowering forth, of Antichrist. If he could not do it (and indeed, to do him justice, he does not dwell much on these secondary matters) we have but to apply to a red-hot English Evangelical. Indeed, Lord Macaulay once plumed himself on having, for a lark, proved beyond doubt that the House of Commons is the apocalyptic beast. The number of members, I believe, was then 658, and of officers of the House 8, giving the mystic 666. Macaulay tried this on a zealous Protestant gentleman in India, and so surprised him that, while still maintaining the Pope to be the beast, he seemed half inclined to allow that the House of Commons might, perhaps, be the beast too, an alternative in-

carnation of the beast. On the other hand, a Mr. Baxter of Canada once made out conclusively that the Emperor Napoleon III. was the beast, whereupon I tried my hand, and proved that Mr. Baxter himself was the beast, and two over. "Where there's a way".

On this account I always think it best not to leave a single microbe of error concerning the Roman Catholic system, so far, of course, as I recognize it myself for an error. There is no telling how soon the apparently harmless thing may develop into a new epidemic of the cursing sickness, popularly known as the A.P.A.

To be continued.

THE CHURCH IN GERMANY.

Catholicity in Germany is making generous strides according to the figures officially published in connection with the law concerning parochial incomes. We learn from these figures, for instance, that Prussia contains 4,719 Catholic parishes, 135 of which are of quite recent erection, and the total number of Catholics is about 11,000,000. Of these 160,000 Catholics reside in Berlin, and have only eight parishes among them. Bavaria contains 4,115,000 Catholics, divided among 2,800 parishes. The capital, Munich, contains nearly 370,000 Catholics. The number of Catholics in the other states is as follows: Wurtemberg, 620,000; Baden, 1,050,000; Saxony, 140,000 (as against 3,000,000 Protestants); Hesse, between 280,000 and 300,000; Oldenburg, 70,000. The "Reichsland," i. e., Alsace-Lorraine, contains nearly 1,400,000. It is reckoned that in all Germany there are about 20,000,000 Catholics. The census of 1890 gave 17,671,929 Catholics for the empire.

SAFER IN WAR.

Worcester Recorder.

The present war with Spain has incidentally developed some curious paradoxes. The lives of American seamen are in much less danger in war than in peace with Spain. During a time of profound peace an American warship and nearly three hundred lives were lost through the explosion of a mine in the harbor of Havana, while less than half a dozen lives have been sacrificed on the American side in all the naval engagements that have occurred since the beginning of the war.

Again the Spanish officers and soldiers in Cuba and on Cervera's fleet were dragging out a miserable existence until they were defeated by the United States forces, after which good cheer and the assurance of a speedy return to their native Spain made life for them seem once more worth the living.

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