How they Celebrate the Great Feast of the Flowers.

Father Malo, a missionary among the Indians at Wheeler, in Dakota Territory, has sent to *The Homeless Child* this vivid sketch of customs among the Catholic In-

dians of the far West. In the very midst of the Rocky Mountains, as well as on the immense plains east and west of them, in the fine season of the year, when provisions are plentiful, the Indians love to assemble in large numbers, in order to deliberate and decide on all the important questions that arise among them. Sometimes it is to solemnly declare war against some hostile tribe or

Then they are heard singing and raising their terrific war-whoop, and dancing their their terrific war-whoop, and dancing their horrible war dance. Every warrior is painted black all over his almost naked body, and is seen shaking a scalp of a vanquished foe at the point of his spear. Women dare not take part in these war dances, but are also painted black in token of mourning for future dead warriors. They stand around, yelling and looking on. These awful performances, carried on every night, often last for weeks and months before war actually commences. Sometimes these large gatherings of the Indians are held altogether in the interests

of peace, and to bury deep in the ground
THE DREADFUL TOMAHAWK.
On these occasions occurs the most solemn act of worship found among the Indians.

All the chiefs of the different tribes of one nation come together to hold their great council, the opening of which is always in-augurated with their favorite rite, the augurated with their favorite rite, the smoking of the great calumet, or pipe of peace. The chiefs are seated on mats arranged in a circle on the grass, with the people of their tribes seated behind them. The oldest chief, or the one most prominent for his bravery, first lights the great pipe of peace, and then solemnly stretching forth his hand, holding the smoking calumet with the stem pointing to Heaven, says: "Smoke first, you Great Spirit, the Master of our lives!" Then he turns the sacred pipe towards the ground, and says: "Smoke next, you Mother Earth, that gives us everything to eat and drink!" After a short pause the warrior lifts the pipe to his mouth, and draws from it two or three mouthfuls of smoke, which, in the simple belief of the Indian, ascends to

THE GREAT SPIRIT like the incense of prayer. He next passes the sacred pipe to the other chiefs who, in turn, all smoke after the same manner. This great rite of worship being over, they

into the deliberation of affairs. Again, on other occasions, the Indians assemble in large crowds and worship with mere Pagan rites and dances, as great numbers of the warlike Sioux do in their famous yearly Sun-dance. At these dances the most barbarous cruelties are engaged in, such as cutting the flesh of their bodies in various places with sharp knives, then passing through the flesh, from one wound to another, some sticks, or ropes made of hair or rawhide, whose ends are tied to a tree. Thus fearfully mutiare tied to a tree. Thus fearfully muti-lated, dozens of these savage warriors will dance for hours, with a backward strain on the ropes, until the flesh breaks off, or until they fall senseless to the ground. At this the frantic crowd, who

have been dancing all the time UTTER SHOUTS OF THE WILDEST JOY, and yell themselves hoarse with applause

Pacific Coast, during the line season. In those immense Territories it is a common thing to see a missionary attending to ten or fifteen camps or stations, which he visits in turn, two or three times a year. I know several missionaries who have visited annually for a score of years twentyfive or thirty different posts and stations. It is evident that, under the circumstances, it is evident that, under the circumstance, it is impossible for one priest to pay more frequent visits to his scattered flock, Even in this case the poor missionary has to start early in spring, and come home late in the fall, after having travelled on horseback 1,000 or 1,500 miles. The great missionary

answering devoutly; in another group blate in the fall, after having travelled on borseleack 1,000 or 1,500 miles, a year. When the poor wandering apostle draw have from the travelled 9,000 or 3,000 miles a year. When the poor wandering apostle draw have from an Indian, sif they receive intimation of his coming, will travel on borseleack long distance to meet him; when arrived, the old chiefs, followed by all those who are at home, hasten to welcome the missionary. Their first words to him invariably, are: "All: Black Grown (Shina Jape), you are come again to visit us, and out hearts are full of joy! But have you come this time to stop with us! We wany you to stay among us, for the last time you were here, a long time ago (a year), you are come again to visit us, and out hearts are full of joy! But have you come this time to stop with us! We wany you to stay among us, for the last time you were here, a long time ago (a year), you to draw among us, for the last time to stop with us! We wany to to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We wany to to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We wany to to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We wany to to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We want you to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We want you to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We want you to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We want you to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We want you to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We want you to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We want you to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We want you to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We want you to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We want you to stay among us, for the last time to stop with us! We want you to stay among us, for the last they think that those shall be approached to be a proposition to be a proposition to the deserts and

you;"—now using the primitive style of Indian expression, the missionary continues: "When the moon will have run over twice around the sky (meaning two months) then you shall come on such a river, or at the foot of such a mountain, and there we will give you great instructions—a good Mission of ten or fifteen days. Of such tell all the Indians, your friends, that you may see." And, sure river, or at the foot of such a mountain, and there we will give you great instructions—a good Mission of ten or fifteen days. Of such tell all the Indians, your friends, that you may see." And, sure enough, the good news is soon spread far and wide. When the appointed time comes, two or three of us, missionaries, try to be there, so as to give the poor Indians a fruitful Mission. To our great joy and edification we find assembled on the place intimated, never less than 1,000 Indians, and often 1,500 or 2,000—all awaiting the arrival of the Black-Gown. Our first occupation is to go around from tent to tent, visiting onr poor people and

Our first occupation is to go around from tent to tent, visiting onr poor people and SHAKING HANDS WITH THEM ALL, for they are very sensible of this sign of real friendship. After this we begin the great work of the Mission. One missionary gives instructions to all the neophytes who had not as yet been baptized. Another missionary has charge of all preparing to receive their first Holy Communion. A third will take charge of munion. A third will take charge of those who should attend to their yearly, or Easter, duties. We call it so, though it is often late in the summer, yet it is the only chance for many to avail themselves

of such a blessing.

Ayproaching the close of the Missio Ayproaching the close of the Mission, we set apart one day for the solemn administration of holy baptism to the children and adults. The children are baptized first—the adults afterwards. They are all seated in a circle on the grass, under the shade of large trees, when convenient. The remainder of the people also sit around and behind this circle on the ground so as to have a view of the the ground, so as to have a view of the imposing ceremony in which the three black gowns, in their white surplices and black gowns, in their white surplices and stoles, are now busily engaged. One acts as master of ceremonies, whilst the senior priest, standing at the foot of a tree, reads aloud the solemn words of the ritual, and now and then goes around the pious and happy lines of people to perform the sacred unctions, and to pour upon the heads of the neophytes the regenerating water that makes them

CHILDREN OF GOD.

CHILDREN OF GOD. The third priest is busily engaged, also, giving to each joyous, newly-made Christian a written certificate of the name and baptism, with a medal of the Immaculate Mother of God, as a token of her motherly

Another of ood, as a tochor her notherly protection over them,

Another day is rendered extremely interesting by the solemn distribution of the first communion to the happy recipients, among whom is a large number of the twice-happy ones who had been re-generated the day before by holy baptism. The last day of the Mission is one of great and universal joy. It is the day of a general Communion, and also the great Feast of the Flowers. We tell the poor Indians of the splendid demonstrations made in honor of the Blessed Sacrament among the white Christians in the East, and also in Europe; of the solemnities of the forty hours' devotion, and of the beautiful

FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI the magnificent processions in and around the churches, etc. Then the poor Indians the churches, etc. Then the poor indians are very anxious to see something of the kind. We have only to tell them, and they go into the woods where they cut down a number of young trees, which they carry on their shoulders, often a long distance. These they tastefully plant along the route of the forthcoming procession, and build arches and canopies of greens, wherein large crowns of flowers down a number of young trees, which they surround the prostrate braves, and wash and refresh them, and seek to woo them back to life again. They break forth into a new dance of congratulation, and chant in prophetic song the future prowess of each brave, his glory as a chief, his bravery in war, and his dexterity in the chase. These great pagan exploits are performed during a fast of three days and three nights, from sundown to sundown, because the Indians look upon the sun as the image and representative of the Great Spirit, Wakam Tauda, whom they pretend to worship with such inhuman barbarities.

Now, if in these vain and cruel ostentations of the poor infidel, there is a great subject of grief and sorrow for the apostolic heart of the missionary, yet his charitable soul is frequently comforted by the spectacle of such Christian demonstrations as render manifest even to poor Indians the divine work of Christian faith, its excellence in real joy and conscious happiness over the vain poisy and very end.

tions of the poor infidel, there is a great subject of grief and sorrow for the apostolic heart of the missionary, yet his charitable soul is frequently comforted by the spectacle of such Christian demonstrations as render manifest even to poor Indians the divine work of Christian faith, its excellence in real joy and conscious happiness over the vain, noisy and very cruel practices of their old heathenish juggleries. The following

BEAUTIFUL INSTANCE is one of another kind which occurs every year in several of our good old Indian Missions of the Rocky Mountains and Pacific Coast, during the fine season. In those immense Territories it is a common thing to see a surviving service of the poor in the season i hesitate to come hundreds of miles on horseback or in canoes to be present at the close of these Missions, in order to encourage the good Indians by their presence, as also to confirm all those that are prepared for Confirmation. Then the Bishop presides at the grand ceremonies of the Flowers; he carries the Blessed Sacrament himself, and the procession proceeds with admirable order. In one group we hear some one—a Black-flown group we hear some one—a Black-Gown
—saying the beads aloud, the others
answering devoutly; in another group

Charity, for it is the general name they go by here among the American people, and the Indians, also. I really think our the Indians, also, the poor Indians, all richly deserve the thrice-hallowed name of Sisters of Charity. I remain ever gratefully, your servant in Christ.

J. F. Malo, Missionary Priest.

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