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The Catholic Register

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TORONTO, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1904

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Chronicles of An Old-Timer

The Controversy Over General Lord Wolseley's Attack on the Memory of Archbishop Tache—Librarian Griffin's Defense of the Archbishop—Father McCarthy's Assertion that Lord Wolseley Owe the Safety of His Life to the Archbishop of a True Tale—How the Attack on His Invading Column was to be made, and how a Similar Attack was successful in the Instance of "Braddock's Defeat" in the Old American Colonial Days—Biographical Sketch of Louis Riel.

Chicago, Feb. 6, 1904.

Dear Register,—I notice there is a bit of a controversy at the present time over General Wolseley's attack on the memory of the late Archbishop Tache of Winnipeg, in his new book, "Story of a Soldier's Life." General Wolseley was lately commander-in-chief of His Majesty's forces, but I believe, is now devoting himself to military literature. He was the commander of the column that was sent in 1870 to Fort Garry from Toronto to subdue the half-breeds that had there risen in rebellion on account of the Canadian Government having deprived them of their lands, but for which they had received no patents. Those half-breeds were led by one Louis Riel, a French-Canadian, who from motives of chivalry espoused their cause and was guilty of some violence, during the existence of which one Thomas Scott, who was opposed to the half-breeds and was guilty of some act of opposition for which he lost his life. Riel was charged with this man's death, and was tried long afterwards for murder, convicted and hanged.

Riel and his rebellious force took possession of Fort Garry and held it for some time until a body of soldiers under the command of Sir Garnet Wolseley, was sent there to suppress them and recapture the fort. In the meantime the Government of Sir John A. Macdonald commissioned Archbishop Tache to act as a mediator between the rebels and the authorities. I am not aware of the powers that were delegated to the Archbishop, but Riel was of opinion they were ample. The military, under Wolseley, succeeded in making their way successfully to the scene of hostilities, recapturing the fort and making prisoners of a few of the hostiles.

It was the intention of Riel and his men to put up a fight against the military invaders, hold the fort and carry on a conflict until their alleged rights were acknowledged. Bishop Tache persuaded them from this course, giving assurance that they would be fairly dealt with if they only laid down their arms. They acted on his advice, but his promises were not fulfilled, General Wolseley behaving harshly, killing some of the malcontents and arresting others, but Riel made good his escape. Consequently a rather acrimonious condition sprung up between the ecclesiastic and the commander. The former endeavored to carry out the conditions promised by Sir John A. Macdonald and grant them an amnesty if they returned to their homes and stopped their hostile demonstration. Nothing in the world was more natural than that the bishop should endeavor to enforce those conditions, as he knew the people had been wronged. He was by profession a man of peace and the half-breeds were nearly all members of his flock. But Wolseley insisted on extreme measures, as it appears a soldier must always be unmerciful, to show that he has earned his spurs and made his reputation. You know that Wolseley was a swashbuckler anyhow, and that it always seemed to give him satisfaction to antagonize Catholics and their religion and injure them wherever he could.

The exact language in which he has disparaged the Archbishop I cannot now quote, because I have failed to find a copy of his book in the libraries or bookstores of Chicago, but from what I have seen stated in some Canadian newspapers, it was objectionable enough for Mr. Griffin, the

parliamentary librarian at Ottawa, to take cognizance of it and point it out in a letter to the London Times. A Father McCarthy, who must be cognizant of the facts, sustains Mr. Griffin, and asserts that General Wolseley ought to be thankful to Bishop Tache in place of finding fault with him at this distant date on the ground that he was the means of saving the general's life and the lives of his men, as he guarded them from attack at a time and place where escape would be hardly possible. This statement, I notice, has been sneered at by some of your Toronto editors, but it, nevertheless, covers a truth.

I have not the data at this writing to present all the facts of the case, but I will be able to do so, I think, a little later on, as I know a man here in Chicago who was in the midst of the fray and is cognizant of all the particulars, and I know he will entrust me with them. He is a Canadian and was educated at Toronto University, and is moreover a newspaper man. He will, I think, throw new light on the whole matter, as he once informed me the side of the Metis or half-breeds had never been half told.

But as to the probability of the success of the proposed attack on Wolseley's column there are examples of such attacks having been successful. I do not now, I fear, remember aright, but I think it was four hundred men that the General had under him in that Red River expedition.

Who has not read of "Braddock's defeat" in American colonial history? It was the most disastrous reverse British arms ever suffered in the colonial wars, and out of a force of twelve hundred men and officers only four hundred and eighty-six escaped! They were marching through a wilderness to attack and capture Fort Duquesne in the Ohio Valley from the French and were caught in an ambush in the woods, from which there was no escape but to fight at a terrible disadvantage. The loss of the French and Indians was only sixty-seven. The date of this encounter was July 9, 1755, and one of the British officers in command at that great disaster was Major George Washington, but even that great soldier could not avert the calamity.

Let it not be forgotten that Riel's men knew every foot of their ground, that they had their scouts out that watched and reported every movement of Wolseley's little army, its wants and its sufferings, and could fall upon it stealthily where the ground best suited them at any moment and could deliver an exterminating volley before their presence would be known. The Indians had possession of Fort Garry as a base of operations and were possessed of abundant arms and ammunition and needed but little provisions so that they would not be encumbered like a regular army marching through a hostile country.

Riel had selected his place of attack. It was on a depressed path through a morass in the woods, where the brambles were thick and dry and only needed the touch of a match to envelop that little column of brave men in a fiery furnace, from which probably not one man would be able to make good his escape. And the first man to fall from a rifle ball would be Wolseley! Yet here is the gratitude that man displays for the good priest that turned away the wrath that was about to destroy him! His conduct at the time of the trouble was such that the mediator was unable to keep his promise to the men whom he had persuaded to desert from their unmerciful enterprise, and therefore was placed by him in a false position. I have been told Wolseley's army marched on the fort when they reached it with fixed bayonets and when Riel and his men, who were there waiting to deliver up the fort to the commanding officer, witnessed this demonstration, they made good their escape, and there was nothing for the soldiers to wreak their vengeance on but a copy of a Catholic Bible which was lying on a table, and which they bayoneted to fragments!

Perhaps it would be well in this connection to give your readers a biographical sketch of Louis Riel, the insurgent leader of the Metis half-breed Indians of the Northwest Territory, as it may be instructive at this point of the controversy.

Louis Riel was born at St. Boniface, Manitoba, Oct. 23rd, 1844. His father's name was the same and he once led a revolt against the authority of the Hudson's Bay Company. He got his education at the Jesuit College in Montreal. In Oct., 1869, he was appointed Secretary of the Committee National des Metis, an organization founded in the interest of the native people to resist the establishment of Canadian authority in the territory which had then been lately acquired from the Hudson Bay Company. Riel, on behalf of the half-breeds, demanded a part of the money that had been paid by Canada to the company, which was refused, he then opposed the entrance of William McDougall, the first lieutenant-governor under the Dominion Government, by force of arms. On December 8, 1869, he was elected president of a provincial government that was established at Fort Garry, after his followers had taken possession of that place and captured John Christian Schulz, a loyalist leader, and forty-four Canadians. In July, 1870, Archbishop Tache, who had been sent for while in Rome, was authorized to promise Riel and his followers a general amnesty. On 17th of Feb., 1870, Riel captured Major Bolton and 47 men, and on March 4th, one of his prisoners, Thomas Scott, an Orangeman, was executed by his order. On the approach of the expeditionary force under Sir Garnet Wolseley, Riel evacuated Fort Garry and left the country. A reward of \$5,000 was offered by the Ontario Government for his apprehension for the part he took in the killing of Thomas Scott. He

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soon afterwards returned to Manitoba, but was not arrested. In October, 1873, he was elected to the Dominion Parliament for Provencher District, but was not permitted to take his seat. At the ensuing election, in January, 1874, he was re-elected and suddenly appeared in Ottawa and signed the roll of membership, after which he disappeared. He was expelled from Parliament on the 16th of April, but was again returned for the same constituency by acclamation on September 3, 1874. On 5th of October following a warrant of outlawry was issued against him by the Court of Queen's Bench of Manitoba, and in February, 1875, he was sentenced to five years' banishment and forfeiture of political rights. In 1877 he was confined for several months in Beaufort Lunatic asylum, Quebec, under an assumed name. He afterwards removed to Montana, where, in the summer of 1884, a deputation of half-breeds invited him to lead them in an agitation for their rights in Manitoba. On July 8, 1884, Riel arrived at Duck Lake with his family, and at once began a systematic agitation among the half-breeds and Indians. On September 5th he stated the claims of his followers, which were not granted, and in March, 1885, he established for the second time a provisional government in the Northwest. On the 18th the rebels made prisoners of the Indian agents at Duck Lake and several teamsters, and on the 25th they seized on the government stores. On the following day a collision occurred between the insurgents and a party of Maj. L. N. F. Crozier, in which the insurgents were successful. After the arrival of Major-General Frederick D. Middleton, with Canadian troops the rebellion was speedily suppressed. Riel, who had been taken prisoner after the capture at Batouche, was conveyed to Regina, where he was tried and convicted of treason-treason and sentenced to death.

The execution of Riel was followed by great public excitement, especially in the Province of Quebec, and the Government was bitterly denounced for not recommending the commutation of his sentence on the ground of his insanity.

WILLIAM HALLEY.

St. Nicholas Institute At Home

The boys of St. Nicholas Institute were at home to a large number of their friends on Tuesday evening of last week. An excellent musical entertainment was provided in which many of the visitors assisted. It was a most enjoyable evening, wind-up with a supper. Rev. Mother Stanislaus has reason to be proud of the accomplishments of her boys, who, as Father Hugh Canning remarked, have many of the advantages of college life and are able to show that they profit to the utmost thereby. Mr. J. J. Murphy, an old friend of the Institute, took a directing part in the entertainment and Father Canning acted as chairman, delivering a brief address, marked equally by wise counsel and manly encouragement. Songs were rendered by Messrs. Cyril Costello, J. J. Seitz, Mrs. McNaughton and Messrs. Iamra and Barrak (Syrian character sketches). Charming piano selections were played by Miss Murphy, and the boys sang choruses led by Messrs. Leonard and Patton. Mrs. Seitz and Ungaro rendered piano and violin selections and Mr. Ginn gave a recitation. Speeches by Messrs. J. J. Seitz, E. J. Hearn and P. F. Cronin followed. Among the ladies present were Mrs. Murphy, Miss Hart and Miss O'Brien.

Dashing Japanese Victory

Official despatches from St. Petersburg and Port Arthur describe the first naval engagement in the Russo-Japanese war. Japanese torpedo boats attacked the main Russian fleet at Port Arthur, torpedoed the battleships Tsarevitch and Retzivan, as well as the cruiser Pallada, putting them out of use. At the same time the cruisers Variaz and Koreitz were attacked in the harbor of Chemulpo and destroyed. In subsequent engagements six additional Russian ships were put out of action.

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De La Salle Dinner

The annual reunion and dinner of the students and old boys of De La Salle was held on Tuesday evening in the large hall of the De La Salle Institute. Two hundred and fifty sat down to the banquet, which was excellently served and most successful in every respect. The students had a sleigh ride in the afternoon to Elantyre. Rev. Brother Rogation was toast master and Rev. Father Canning, a great favorite with school boys of all ages, was chairman of the evening. His address to the students encouraged them to advancement in Canadian patriotism in their school days, in order that they should carry this spirit into the world and make it felt both in their business affairs and social life. He complimented the corps and thanked Major Mason for what he has done and is doing for this movement. Father Canning also dwelt upon the new programme drawn up for the De La Salle four years' course by Rev. Brother Odo Baldwin, and said he expected great things to result from it. The Catholic people of Toronto should study the advantages of this course and see that their boys received all its benefits.

The law lecturer of the School, Mr. W. T. J. Lee, delivered an admirable address in response to the toast of Canada, and Major Mason followed him, encouraging the boys to increase their interest in the cadet corps, the condition of which he said is very promising. No school in Toronto supplied better physical material for a fine corps than De La Salle.

Inspector Odo Baldwin replied to the toast of the school, and told of its early days and steady growth. The education of the Christian Brothers is thoroughly appreciated in Toronto, and the new programme is certain to meet the hearty commendation of the Catholic people. The veteran son of De La Salle was loudly applauded when he declared that 90 per cent. of all the pupils of the school have succeeded in the commercial pursuits to which their education directed them.

Mr. David Carey spoke in behalf of the School Board and referred to the inclination of Catholic boys to leave school rather too soon and enter the battle of life. The new programme of De La Salle is well designed to counteract this tendency. The history of the school in the past has been highly creditable to the Brothers, but the members of the Board realized that the school must keep abreast of modern progress and maintain its enviable reputation and eminence in regard to commercial education. No praise was too great for the plans of the Brothers to maintain the lead so long held by them, but they needed the co-operation of the Catholic people and that they were sure to have.

Short addresses were delivered by Mr. P. F. Cronin, C. J. Read and the presidents of the Literary and Athletic Clubs of the School. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Father Canning.

C. M. B. A.
At a meeting of Branch 15, C.M.B.A., at Toronto, held on Thursday evening, February 4th, 1904, it was moved by the First Vice-President, Bro. H. E. R. Stpek, seconded by the Chancellor, Bro. F. J. Walsh, and unanimously carried, "That the charter of this Branch be draped in black for thirty days, and it was further resolved that this Branch place itself on record as expressing its deepest sympathy and regret for the loss sustained by the death of our esteemed brother the Rev. Father Bergin, and that a copy of this resolution be published in the Canadian, The Catholic Register, and The Catholic Record."

T. F. CALLAGHAN, President.
EDWARD V. O'SULLIVAN,
Recording Secretary.

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The Church in Newfoundland

Article III.
(For The Register.)

There are many such examples that could be recorded similar to that of the late lamented Rev. Dr. O'Regan. The deceased young priest was a personal friend of mine, and I met him about two or three years before the sad event took place, at St. Patrick's Presbytery of this city, on a visit with His Lordship Right Rev. Dr. McDonald, Bishop of Harbor Grace, who is at present still confined to his room at the Hotel Dieu.

The case of Rev. Father Whelan, who was lost on the Northern Coast while on a sick call, was a very sad one indeed. The remains, it is said, were found in the water, the position of his body being perpendicular, and having his right hand still clasped on the Blessed Sacrament which he was carrying to some poor soul for the last time. It is not known whether he ever reached his destination or whether it was on his way homeward that he met his untimely end. But the treacherous waters of the Newfoundland coast engulfed him, and like young Dr. O'Regan, he sacrificed his life at the call of duty, a brave and noble soldier of the Cross. The mighty ocean swept its billows upwards and onwards, the howling wind tossed the little boat to and fro, until finally the waves swallowed them up and they (for there were three or four besides the priest) were gone from this world forever. A few days afterwards the body of the priest was washed ashore near a dangerous place called Baccalieu—a place where many a hardy and brave mariner of Newfoundland, and of other countries, met a sad fate. Some seven years ago I was at the point of being drowned myself near where the remains of poor Father Whelan were washed ashore. Another priest who was a prisoner in the early days was Father Duffy.

Father James Duffy was born in the parish of Anemullen, County Monaghan, Ireland, in the year 1802, and was ordained priest in All Hallows College for the Newfoundland mission in 1832, being then 30 years of age. There were three brothers priests. The elder, Father Peter, was pastor or parish priest of Tydavnet, County Monaghan, and the youngest brother, Father Michael, died shortly after being ordained. It appears that Father James, shortly after his ordination, sailed for the scene of his early labors, taking up his abode at St. Mary's, Newfoundland, then a small fishing station, and his mission extended over an area of 300 miles. In a short time he built a fine church, parochial house, and entered a large and valuable farm. St. Mary's was about 100 miles from St. John's, and in those days there was no road connecting them; the only conveyance was by dog-sleds or on horseback, the line travelled having only the blazed trees along the way to guide travellers to their destination. Halfway between St. Mary's and St. John's stood a little cabin, or halfway house, where weary travellers would call and cook a scanty meal and rest their tired limbs. Here often the zealous priest prepared his supper after a long and tiresome journey—and after reading his breviary with the light of the fire, rested for the night. Father Duffy exerted himself to have a road opened between the two towns, and before leaving St. Mary's he had the satisfaction of seeing 40 miles of the road completed. He spent about 10 years in St. Mary's and surrounding missions, often travelling on snowshoes and carrying on his back the vestments and other things necessary for the celebrating of the sacrifice of the mass, and attending to the spiritual wants of his people, undergoing many hardships and privations and incessant labors.

He then left Newfoundland and went to Nova Scotia, being stationed at Guysboro, attending, also, another mission about 15 miles distant. He built a fine church at Guysboro, and labored for 8 years in these two missions with much success.

He next went to Charlottetown, P. E. I., and after assisting Rev. Thomas Phelan in Charlottetown for a few months, he succeeded Rev. Father Reynolds, who was in poor health, in the missions of Southwest, now Kinkora, Kelly's Cross, and St. Ann's, Lot 65, in 1858. While in charge of these missions, he built parochial houses in Kinkora and St. Ann's, and had St. Joseph's and St. Ann's churches plastered, painted and repaired. He also had the Stations of the Cross erected in them at his own expense. But he did not confine his zeal to the temporal advancement of his churches, but bent his energies and put his whole soul in the work

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of spiritually advancing his people, and succeeded in imbuing them with a deep spirit of devotion, and the result of his labors, in this respect, may yet be seen amongst these congregations. On one extremely cold Christmas eve, known as "the cold Christmas," he celebrated midnight mass at Kinkora, then drove eleven or twelve miles over a bad road and said mass of the Aurora at St. Joseph, Kelly's Cross, and finished his morning's work by driving seven miles further to St. Ann's and singing High Mass and preaching there at 10 o'clock. But it was too much for his constitution, and he contracted a severe cold from which he never recovered. In the autumn of 1860 he was forced to resign his missions, and retired to the Bishop's residence, Charlottetown, where he died on the 8th December of the same year at the comparatively early age of 58 years. He desired to be interred in St. Joseph's, and that his remains should rest between the churchyard gate and the church door, so that his people going to and coming from the church would pass by his grave and offer a prayer for the repose of his soul. His wish, for one reason or another, was not carried out just then, but lately a handsome new church has been built in a more commanding situation, and the good priest's dying wish is fulfilled, and a magnificent monument erected by his old parishioners to perpetuate his memory forty years after his death.

The ceremony of removing the remains of the late Father Duffy took place on Sunday, the 10th day of September last. On Saturday the grave was opened and on removing the lid of the coffin the remains were found to be in a state of almost perfect preservation. His vestments were quite sound, and his features could be easily recognized by those who knew him while living. The remains were carried to St. Joseph's new church, close by, and remained in state all night and until mass on Sunday, during which time hundreds of his old parishioners and those who knew him came to pay a last tribute of respect to his memory. At ten o'clock solemn High Mass was celebrated by His Lordship Bishop McDonald, of Charlottetown, assisted by Rev. Dr. Doyle, of Vernon River, High Priest; Revs. James Aeneas McDonald, of Hope River, and John J. M. Donald, of Kinkora, as deacons of honor; Rev. John T. Murphy, of St. Dunstan's College, and Mr. McQuillan, Esq., acted as deacon and sub-deacon of the mass; Rev. Dr. Monaghan, of Charlottetown, and a native of Kelly's Cross, master of ceremonies; and the pastor, Rev. D. B. Reid, assistant master of ceremonies. The sermon of the occasion was preached by Rev. Dr. Doyle, who spoke of the dignity of the priesthood, and dwelt on the virtues and missionary labors of the deceased. After mass the Bishop and the above-named clergy surrounded the catafalque, together with the altar boys, the Bishop pronouncing the absolution. The remains were then borne from the church to their last resting-place, between the gate and the church, there to await the final resurrection. The beautiful new monument, the work of Mr. Duffy, of Belfast, Ireland, was then unveiled, and the Bishop and clergy retired to the church.

And so these noble pioneers still sleep on, but their heroic deeds are recorded year after year. The present generation are reaping the reward of their devoted and self-sacrificing labors.

"We know, in divinest fulfillment
Our vain hopes are gathered at home;
The jewels we mourn here are hoarded
Where the moth and the rust cannot roam.
And oft when the sunset is fairest,
We catch, through a rift in the blue,
A far away glimpse of the glories
Of the land where our dreams come true."

"Then weeping, we part from our priests,
And bury them all after their fight
Though we know, in our hearts, we shall find them,
By and by, in the Mansion of Light."
FELIX.
Montreal, Feb. 9th, 1904.

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