

ON LAKE AND PRAIRIE.

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ERE one of our missionaries from the North-West to fall in with the reporters of the large newspapers of New-York or Chicago, he would after repeated cross-examinations, and before he were aware of it, have told them more than he knew himself. The following morning he would be astonished to see in the daily papers an account of most wonderful and thrilling adventures amongst the savages, ascribed to him. According to the reporters the missionary would be pictured as having undergone innumerable hairbreadth escapes, and that if he was not scalped it was simply a miracle.

Up this way, however, our reporters and journalists are not so enterprising, nor do they need to be, for the plain, unvarnished recital of their lives amongst the Indians as told by the missionaries who visit us at times, is so exciting and interesting that it requires none of the high coloring and imaginative additions of the quill-driver to make it read like a romance. We have lately been honored by a visit from one of these intrepid missionaries, who after a quarter of a century spent in civilizing and ennobling the "noble Red Man" has come to take a few months needed rest amongst his brethren. Twenty-five years of prairie and forest life; of a meagre existence among savages, of severe northern winters; of days without food, and nights spent on beds of snow have told on the health of good father Legoff. This good Oblate must have a remarkable love for the poor savages; else, educated and talented as he was, he would not have left the centre of civilization, when everything pointed to a brilliant career for him; and taken his abode in an obscure corner of the Lord's vineyard.

Even during this visit to the East he is busily working for his children of the forest. His long stay among the Montagnais tribes, has not only given him a thorough knowledge of their language, but it has also given him an opportunity for a more than ordinary study of it. This knowledge, he has embodied in a grammar, the first grammar of the Montagnais tongue. He has also written several other works amongst which may be mentioned

a catechism of Christian Doctrine, a translation of the Scriptures, and a prayer and hymn book. Father Legoff is endeavoring to have these books printed. They will be a great aid to him in teaching the Montagnais children how to read and write, not only in their own language, but also in that of the white men with whom they are coming into contact more and more; but by far the greatest advantage to be gained from these publications will be that the young will more easily learn the truths of religion.

Father Legoff left his station at Cold Lake some time before Christmas last. He set out on horseback and travelled as far as St. Albert where he saw Bishop Grandin, one of the pioneer missionaries of the Saskatchewan and Mackenzie regions. It was at the express desire of Bishop Grandin that Father Legoff finished his manuscripts so as to render them fit for publication. Having rested a few days at St. Albert, where he left his horse, Father Legoff took a seat on a conveyance that is there styled a sleigh, but which, in reality, does not differ from a massive low box made of heavy timber, and thus reached Calgary. On his way thither he was seized with bronchitis. His already much exhausted condition greatly aggravated this ailment and soon there set in violent coughing and spitting of blood. He reached Calgary more dead than alive, and there he was warmly welcomed by his brother Oblates, who carefully nursed him so that in a few weeks he was able to continue his journey eastward on the Canadian Pacific Railway. He could scarcely realize the progress that had been accomplished since the time that he traversed these same regions, a quarter of a century before, on his way to the Indians; then, all was a wilderness, now, it is assuming the appearance of a civilized country.

Though Father Legoff's life has been one of toil and hardship, he still possesses considerable vitality, and speaks of his adventures and sufferings as ordinary occurrences, never failing to dwell wittily on their humorous side. In our next number we hope to present to our readers some of the incidents of Father Legoff's missionary career.