

REVEREND A. M. GARIN, O.M.I.



LAND-MARK of a thrilling period of Canadian history has just been removed in the person of Reverend A. M. Garin, O.M.I.,

whose death occurred at Lowell, Mass., on the 16th of February last. Pioneer laborer, as was the venerable old Oblate, in the Missionary fields of Labrador and the Hudson Bay, benefactor of the Irish and French Canadian races, spiritual father, guide and counsellor to many of our readers, his life and works claim more than a passing notice in the columns of the Owl.

André Marie Garin, was born in 1822, at St. André, a town of the department of Isère, in eastern France. The education afforded him by the parish school and the College of his native town was supplemented by the teachings of a pious mother until André left the home of his childhood to complete his studies at the University of Grenoble. Student life at length came to an end and the young graduate found himself on the banks of the Rubicon that flows across the heaven ward route of every Christian—what state of life should he choose? The world allured him with the brilliant vista it opened up before his eyes. Issue of a noble family, endowed with rare talents which had been cultivated by a serious application to study, pleasing in manners and appearance, and blessed in an unusual degree with the faculty of winning the esteem and affection of all with whom he came in contact, he could have looked forward to a signal, secular career. But his deeply religious soul turned instinctively towards the calm and quiet of the cloister, and donning the habit of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, he took his place among the novices of Notre Dame de l'Osier on the eve of All Saints Day, 1841.

During his time of novice-ship, the departure of a handful of Oblates for the Canadian missions enkindled in the

heart of the young novice a burning desire for missionary life in the New World—a longing that became more and more ardent in succeeding years as he read the letters from his religious brethren, telling of their labors and privations, their consolations and joys, in the land beyond the seas. It was, therefore, with inexpressible joy that, in the spring of 1844, immediately after his elevation to the diaconship, he received from his Superiors the order to accompany Father Guigues, the future bishop of Ottawa, to Canada. He sailed at once, reaching Montreal towards the middle of August. The succeeding winter was spent in the pursuit of his theological studies, and in the immediate preparation for the priesthood to which dignity he was raised by the saintly Bishop Bourget, April 28, 1845. Shortly after his ordination he was appointed to the Indian missions of Lakes Temiskaming and Abitibi. Every spring, for the next five years, Father Garin, accompanied by another member of his religious family penetrated into the heart of this wild and rugged region, confirming the faith of the Christian natives and bearing light to those that still sat "in darkness and in the shadow of death." The time and place of each mission were always arranged at the previous visit, so that the fathers on their arrival never failed to find their little congregation already assembled. Every morning the holy sacrifice of the Mass was celebrated, while the rest of the day was spent in catechizing, hearing confessions, performing the marriage ceremonies, baptizing the infants, and in the other hundred and one duties of the pastor who sees his little flock but once a year.

After a sojourn of one or two weeks the fathers would proceed in their frail bark canoes to the next appointed station, where in turn they performed the same exercises and the same duties as in the preceeding mission.

In the year 1851, Father Garin was recalled to Montreal and was placed in charge of the construction of the beautiful