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TORONTO, DEC. 24TH, 1908.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!

According to a privilege accorded by Pope Honorius III. and confirmed by his successors, all the faithful are permitted to eat flesh meat on Christmas day, when it falls on Friday, as it does this year.

Another permanent step in the direction of Church Extension in the city of Toronto was made on Sunday last, when the Polish people were accorded a regular pastor in the person of Rev. Bartholomew Jasiak, a young and zealous priest from the Motherland who was driven into exile in Siberia with his Bishop, Mgr. Kapp, by the Russian Government, a couple of years ago. The Poles of Toronto under a faithful priest of their own, will doubtless soon become, as in Chicago and elsewhere, one of the strongest parishes in the archdiocese. The Lord will bless abundantly this latest endeavor of Authority to extend His Kingdom.

In view of all the reports and rumors in the daily press and telegraphic news of the country concerning the vacant Bishopric of London, we deem it well to state on the highest authority that no appointment to this See has yet been reached by Rome, and that none such is likely to be effected before we have well entered upon the new year. The Register hopes to be able to give the first authentic announcement of this and all such important ecclesiastical matters in the future, and it would be as well for all concerned to look to our columns for reliable information before placing any great confidence in that emanating elsewhere.

Another one of God's anointed was added to the noble band of priests now laboring under their most zealous Archbishop in the ministry of Toronto diocese. On Monday last in the presence of a number of clergy and a great concourse of the faithful laity, William Albert Egan was raised, in St. Patrick's church, to the Holy Priesthood, by His Grace Archbishop McEvay. The ordination of a priest is always an event of great importance to the Catholic community; it is especially so here in Toronto, where so much of the Lord's work awaits his pious endeavors. That the promising young Levite so happily set apart for the sacerdotal life may be faithful to every duty of his high calling is the fervent prayer of all. *Ad Multos Annos!*

Such a hold have the great Christmas festivities upon the minds and hearts of a Christian people that little else than the interchanging of acts of charity and expressions of good-will fill up the days immediately preceding it. What a pity the simple faith and love of this time could not persevere throughout the entire year! In any case, its spirit indicates that we are all within the influence of the Infant Saviour's message, and should, conformably to His desire, purify ourselves for full communion with Him in the Feast of His Love. Many more than ever before according to our Holy Father's instruction on frequent Communion, will approach the Altar this Blessed Christmas and ravish their souls with the true joys brought to us through the Nativity.

O let us all around the Crib
Protest our Faith and Love;
And let us in the lives we live
Reflect the things above.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS.

The dawn of another day shall bring us the anniversary of the greatest and most momentous fact that the world has ever known, the event heralded by the angelic messenger to watching shepherds on Galilean hills, in the ever inspiring words: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, for this day is born to you a Saviour who is Christ the Lord." No grander message, no sweeter tidings, were ever waded to the tired sons of men. It was the one for which the world had waited four thousand years; the tidings for which prophets longed and patriarchs sighed, that for which the Jewish people in their families and as a nation had watched, and the import of which is as salutary with us to-day as when first sounded on Galilean hills, for He Who was born is as much the Saviour of the people of the twentieth century as He was of that which saw

His birth in Bethlehem. So for the readers of the Catholic Register there can be no more gracious message than that contained in the angelic salutation, and with it we greet them one and all. And whilst we announce the glad tidings the voices of other celestial messengers are borne in upon us down the cycles of time, and the burden of their song is "Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace to men of good will." Joining all together: in this grand pean of praise, we naturally breathe the blessing with it allied—the message of Peace on earth to men of good will. This blessed wish we send out everywhere to the four quarters of the world.

Since we last greeted our readers at Christmastide, our outlook has been somewhat changed. Whilst heretofore we claimed no special mission or message for the people beyond that of assisting in the general good work of the Catholic press, that of giving to our Catholic homes, doctrine, literature, and news of a true Catholic, elevating character, we have now assumed an additional and particular mission, that of extending in a special manner these benefits and blessings to neglected places of the Lord's vineyard. We purpose doing this by coming to the assistance of many who even now sit in darkness and the shadow of death. The Catholic Register, as has been already announced, is now the special mouthpiece of the great Canadian missionary plan known as the Catholic Church Extension Society of Canada, and as such it hopes ere long to intrude its beneficent message into every Catholic household in Canada between the two great oceans, and more especially in those of the great lone West, where the knowledge of the Gospel of our Divine Lord is either altogether unknown or is withering up for want of that nourishment which can only be given through the active presence of the Sacraments of the Church. The task which Extension has set for itself is no light one, and to its best fulfillment the co-operation of every Catholic to whom a knowledge of its existence comes, is necessary. It is a work in which all may share. It is something, too, which in its merits and rewards is unsurpassable, for it is a continuation of that for which our Lord Himself took flesh, the work of effecting in the fullest sense man's redemption.

This does not mean that the Church has made any fresh discovery, or that she is setting out on new paths. The mission of carrying the Gospel to the heathen and extending its light even at the risk of life itself to the messengers, has from the first dawn of Christianity been always hers. It means, however, that in America and Canada, for many years past, people had been so busy with their own home-making that their sympathies had become more or less localized, and so their brethren of the remoter regions were for a time forgotten. Now, however, the cry of the lonely ones has penetrated our unconscious selfishness and we have awakened to their needs, and Catholic Extension is to be the handmaid that will bear the necessary spiritual gifts, which it is the privilege of all to contribute to those now bereft of them.

With these Christmas greetings, then, we ask all to co-operate in this work in the manner intimated from week to week in our columns, and with such assistance cordially given, success is already assured. And to all those who respond to Extension's pressing appeal, it is easy to promise a participation in that joy and peace which surpasseth all understanding even in this life.

A GREAT CANADIAN INDIAN MISSIONARY.

It is wonderful how the Missionary Centre attracts from even the ends of the earth those whose lives have been spent in apostolic work. We have had during these late days, the visit of one of the most venerable and experienced Oblate Missionaries of the great Northland, where only the Indian, the Half-Breed, and a few English traders at the outposts have so far penetrated. Auguste Louis Lecorre was born in Brittany in the village of Morbehan, France, in 1845, and made his primary studies in the seminary of St. Anne d'Auy in that country. In 1870 he responded to the appeal of the great Indian missionary prelate, Mgr. Clut, Vicar-Apostolic of Mackenzie, and came out to this country as a sub-deacon. Ordained deacon at Montreal on his arrival, he at once proceeded to Providence Mission at the outlet of the Great Slave Lake, in the Mackenzie Vicariate and was there ordained priest. From that time on nobody travelled or labored more assiduously among the numerous, widely-dispersed Indian tribes of the North than Father Lecorre. Thirty-seven long years, of unflinching service under the most trying circumstances was given to their conversion and civilization before he thought of respite, and in that time he traversed on foot or in canoe a territory large enough to make many empires, and rejoiced in being spent in the interests of these poor, benighted children of the forest and the plain. During fifteen years of that time he tasted no bread, the only nourishment obtainable being dried fish, potatoes when they could be produced, and some barley, out of

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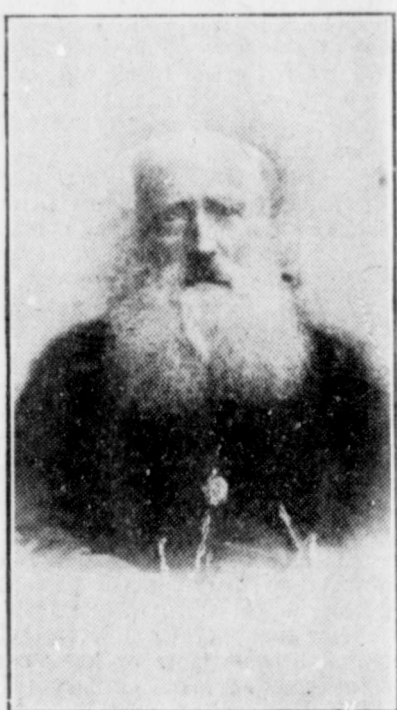
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which at the orphanages and homes of his Order, a palatable soup for the pupils was made. He was not the first missionary, however, in this great lone land. Fathers Grollier and Seguin were the pioneer missionaries of the Indians of this region. Then came Bishop Clut and shortly after Father Lecorre. Bishop Clut died a few years ago at Little Slave Lake Mission, among the whites, Half-breeds and Crees. His work he committed to other hands.

Of the different tribes spread over that great north land, all but the first of them being now entirely Christian, are the Crees inhabiting the Athabasca region; the Chippewas with their ramifications of Yellow Knives and Reindeer Eaters; the Slaves along the Mackenzie River, from the Slave Lake to Lake Simpson, and called thus from the fact that they were always subjugated to some other nation; the Montaignais inhabiting the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains; the Bad Men, also a western tribe, named from the fact that they had been guilty of perfidy towards some of the early English traders; the Rabbit Skins, near the mouth of the Mackenzie River, latitude 69 to 72 degrees; the Loucheux or Squint Eyes, who inhabit the Mackenzie River, from the Rabbit Skin region to its mouth, and, also, the confines of the Macpherson River.

These people have all been brought under the influence of the Catholic Faith, Father Lecorre tells us, and are certainly in good dispositions, equal to any of their pale-faced Christian brothers. In order to serve effectively, he learned four distinct languages and numerous dialects of language and taught almost all of his poor rude children to read and instruct themselves in special characters which they were able to quickly understand—most of them learning to read accurately in three weeks, the prayers, canticles and other religious instructions afforded them. Their lives were very pure, he says, and their disposition inclined towards virtue. They were temperate in their



REV. AUGUSTE LOUIS LECORRE, O.M.I.

habits and even if not a capital offence to introduce liquor among them, under government regulation, they seemed to have no natural taste like most other Redmen we read of, for the fire-water of the Pale Face.

Father Lecorre spent some time with the great Eskimo tribe which inhabits the whole coast line of the Arctic Ocean from the Behring Strait east to the Atlantic, but says he was unable to make any progress towards their conversion and civilization because of the prominence and power of the Medicine Men among them. He spent one winter at Point Barrow, sleeping in their underground huts, endeavoring to teach them the truths of the Christian religion, and always in danger of his life from the jealous medicine men of the tribe. This is the most obstinate family of Indians so far as Christianity is concerned, that the great missionaries have yet encountered. Of all the Northern Tribes, too, those of the mountain and forest, seemed, in the experience of the venerable Father, to be much easier formed into good Christians than their more contaminated brothers of the prairie.

It should be enough to arouse the missionary interest and sympathy even in the most callous, to be told that this good Father, in these exacting excursions which he made over the country, could carry with him on his own back or by the agency of the small dogs, which are common to that region, only the bare essentials for celebration of Holy Mass, fish for himself and the dogs (two fishes per day for each dog), and a small portion of dried meat. Without dogs

too, no matter how exacting on provisions, transportation was next to impossible. In winter he slept in the snows near some place where wood supply was convenient, digging out a deep recess, strewing it with spruce branches and there, with the glass down to anywhere between 45 or 60 degrees, stretching himself under the blue canopy of heaven, and committing himself into the hands of the Great God he served. The winter with all its severity was even a more acceptable time than summer, on account of the great heat—no sunset in forty days at a time, super-heating everything, and immense clouds of mosquitoes rendering miserable all those who sought comfort in the shade of the forest.

Assuredly in thirty-seven years this good missionary has done apostolic work for God and his reward will be with the Just. He is now concerned only in procuring vocations to continue the work which he has taken up and as they are necessary to God and His Church, the Holy Spirit must inflame with missionary fire and priestly vocation, a sufficiency of young levites of whatsoever nationality, to take up the great work done by those real apostles and insure to the poor, simple Indian He redeemed, as precious in His sight as the most cultured in the world, all the joys and consolations of His Holy Gospel. And the great work of Church Extension is now established to render proper succor to this and all kindred missionary endeavors. We shall gladly send to the Indian Missions any assistance transmitted to us.

MISSIONARY WORK OF THE SISTERS.

Every week we have been publishing the appeals through the Extension Society, of bishops, priests and brothers for aid for the missionary work of the great Northwest. Some want assistance to build churches, others support for students, and still others vestments, chalices and other necessities for the carrying out of sacred functions; and there have been and continue to be, many petitions for Mass intentions, as a means of keeping up poor pioneer priests and their various enterprises. The Sisters of the different congregations have never flinched when the call of duty came to even the hardest and most uninviting places in our pioneer regions. They have followed the missionary into the far north and ministered like angels to the orphans, the aged, the sick and the needy of the Indian tribes and the colonist communities; they have kept the schools and hospitals in the towns and villages of the plains; they have borne equally with the priest everywhere, the burden of the day and its heats, and their reward, like his, will be exceedingly great with Almighty God. At the Missionary Congress in Chicago the other day, Archbishop Christie assured us personally that in his own sparsely populated diocese of Portland, Oregon, there was no better means of anchorage for the Catholic settler than the Sisters' Hospital; and, therefore, was he desirous of borrowing money to locate them where there was even no immediate prospect of church or pastor. Without any doubt they do a great work for Christ and His Church, in encouraging the poor wayfarer of their own faith and conciliating those who are not, and should be encouraged by everybody with any missionary spirit whatever. The following letter makes an appeal for the Northwest, then, from the Sisters' standpoint, and we are glad to insert it and to say that any designated gifts for the school in question will be gladly forwarded to the Mother Superior, who promises special prayers for all her benefactors:

"I have come to place before you an undertaking which at the present time is interesting to all since it is a question of colonizing the North-West of Canada. "People of every nation and creed are scattered over these cold but healthy regions lured by the hope of finding a home away from the overcrowded and unhealthy cities of the East. They find here large tracts of uncultivated soil, far away from any habitation; no School, no Church and often partial starvation; the children growing up without the possibility of receiving even elementary instruction, and still less any religious knowledge. Many who are of good families deplore their inability to give their children the facility of being prepared for the Sacraments, and of being taught to read and write. We have impoverished ourselves by taking all the pupils that we can possibly accommodate, and feel that we can conscientiously do no more for want of space. To enable us to continue and extend this charitable work we come to ask a little assistance from you to-day. "We have erected a modest build-

ing where we can board and educate a certain number of these poor children who are more to be pitied than orphans, for the latter are provided with homes where they can be instructed in all that is necessary, while the great distances which separate the colonists from each other render it impossible to have schools placed at a convenient distance where all can attend.

"I ask all for the love of the Sacred Heart and our Blessed Mother to consider this petition, and contribute to a work on which the salvation of many souls may depend, for after the Bread of Life is not the bread of Christian education the most essential in these days when evil men are seeking to drive God out of His own creation."

REV. MOTHER SUPERIOR,
Convent of Our Lady of Zion,
Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

ADVENT READING.

We have pointed out with what profit the pages of Isaiah could be read as a preparation for Christmas because of the thrilling power with which he describes the fallen condition of mankind and the need of a Redeemer. But this great prophet does more than expose wickedness and denounce woe to the nations steeped in iniquity. Terrible indeed as the thunderstorm and the whirlwind is he when he attacks the horrible moral condition which prevailed in his time at home and abroad; but he is at his grandest when he foreshadows the peace and joy and salvation the Saviour would bring. The music and majesty of the songs of praise of the morning stars when they made joyful melody in honor of their Maker are in the exquisite outpourings of Isaiah concerning the Saviour. He sings how when the Redeemer shall come: "The land that was desolated and impassable shall be glad, and the wilderness shall rejoice and shall flourish as the lily. It shall bud forth and blossom and shall rejoice with joy and praise; the glory of Libanus is given to it the beauty of Carmel and Sharon." Then he cries to the faint-hearted who are sinking beneath the burden of their misery: "Take courage and fear not; God Himself will come and will save you. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free; for waters are broken out in the desert and streams in the wilderness." And not only shall the blessings of the Messiah transform the earth, but their true greatness shall be experienced only when this present life has passed away; the redeemed of the Lord shall return and shall come into Zion with praise and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." (Isaiah xxxv. 1-10.) Gladly would we quote from page after page of those prophecies concerning the blessings the Messiah shall bring, which gleam like shafts of Heaven's light against the dark background of denunciation of wickedness. We would refer our readers particularly to chapters 2, 7, 9, 11, 25, 46, 53, 60. Indeed everywhere in those wonderful pages we catch glimpses of the glory of the Saviour. As we read we seem to feel the brightness of God shine round about us after the manner of the shepherds of Bethlehem on the night of the Nativity. And we can imagine no better preparation for that most blessed of nights which ushered in the Daystar from on high than a study of the prophecies of Isaiah during the Advent time.

THE PROGRESS OF CHURCH UNION.

During the past five years there has been in existence a commission or joint committee composed of members of the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational Churches in Canada, authorized to bring to a successful termination the negotiations which have been carried on for the union of these bodies.

It has now been definitely announced that so far as the commission is concerned, the negotiations have been brought to a successful issue. All difficulties have been removed, even those which were doctrinal, and were considered to be the greatest obstacle in the way of a union.

Dr. Patrick, Principal of the Manitoba Presbyterian College, Winnipeg, one of the most prominent members of the commission, gave an interview to a representative of the Toronto Globe a few days ago in which he set forth the result of the negotiations from the Presbyterian point of view, and from the standpoint of the Congregationalists, the Rev. F. J. Day of Montreal, gave also an interview to a representative of the Montreal Witness. Both gentlemen are enthusiastically in favor of the basis of union reached by the commission, and judging from the utterances of many of the clergy and laity of all three churches during the past couple of years, we are of the opinion that it will be adopted by a large majority of the congregations of all three churches as soon as it will be possible to lay the matter before them. The time which will be needed to accomplish this is set at three years, as this period will be necessary before the Presbyterian Church can have the matter voted upon, according to the usual course of procedure in that Church. The other Churches concerned have agreed to conform

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