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THE LAND OF THE BOERS.

A MISSIONARY'S VIEW.

The Tablet.

Father Gidrol, one of the Oblate Fathers who, it will be remembered, have spiritual charge of the regions of South Africa—Natal, Transvaal, Orange Free State, besides Bechuanaland and Basutoland—in which the present war is being waged, commences in the current issue of the *Missions Catholiques* of Lyons an interesting series of articles upon "The Land of the Boers." The following extracts will be found of interest at the present moment:

When trekking, the Boers were careful not to forget their bibles and their ministers. For a long time Catholics were outlawed. They could not aspire to governmental functions, they had no rights of franchise, active or passive, they were not even allowed to practise their form of worship. This was an old souvenir of the persecuting laws of Holland. A story is told of the visit of the first Romish priest to the capital, Potchefstroom, which threw the huguenot camp into confusion. "Woe to thee!" cried a fanatic minister, "Woe to thee, Potchefstroom! For Satan hath fallen into thy midst in great wrath!" The city magistrate feared for a time that the Republic was in danger. He sent for the missionary, read the laws of the country to him, and forbade him to exercise his ministry under pain of immediate expulsion. The priest calmly replied that, having come to Potchefstroom to visit his co-religionists, perform a marriage service, and baptize some children, he thought it his duty to perform his duties to the end. "When I have finished," he added, "if you will kindly transport me to the frontier, I shall be extremely obliged. I am very poor and unable to afford the expense of a horse, much less of a waggon." And he was as good as his word.

The discovery of the gold mines brought about the influx of foreigners of all nations, and certain relaxation has been the consequence. Men's minds are gradually losing their old Calvinistic rigidity. Prejudice and fanaticism seem to be diminishing, but this improvement is rather to be attributed to a certain indifference in religious matters and a profound disgust for the despotism and mercantile spirit of the ministers. Here is a fact. "One day," writes Father Guiller, a Transvaal missionary, "I was asked to baptize two Boer children. I asked some questions about them. 'We won't go to our ministers,' was the answer, 'because in our religion you always have to pay, and as we are poor the minister always refuses us. Our children can't be baptized, because we can't pay five shillings to become Christians. We can't be confirmed, because we cannot afford ten shillings. For a wedding, we are asked £2.'"

Our hopes of converting the Boers are slight. Nevertheless, in many circumstances we have met with real sympathy towards the Catholic priest in quarters where a few years ago we found nothing but contempt or even hatred. We must attribute this change, at least in great part, to the influence of our schools, especially to convent schools,

which admit Protestants as well as Catholics. The Boers, knowing the superiority of our education, now come to us to entrust their children to our care, and the children, being brought into contact with Catholic masters and mistresses, are later on able to correct and efface the innumerable false and mischievous ideas of their parents and friends, which have been entertained for centuries against the Catholic Church.

It is to be feared that the present war between the English and the Boers will be ruinous to our works. Many of our establishments will probably suffer, especially during the sieges of towns like Kimberley, Mafeking and Ladysmith. In many places the churches have been abandoned by the people, who have either fled or taken up arms. The missionaries are busy in various directions, acting as military chaplains to the Catholic soldiers, both in the Boer and English armies.

GOLDWIN SMITH ON CECIL RHODES.

Mr. Lecky, the historian, is noted for impartiality and calmness of view. As he is a great admirer of Lord Palmerston, he may be taken to be sound on the imperial and military questions. In his new book, "The Map of Life," he says of Cecil Rhodes: "When holding the highly confidential position of prime minister of the Cape Colony, and being at the same time a privy councillor of the Queen, he engaged in a conspiracy for the overthrow of the government of a neighboring and friendly state. In order to carry out this design he deceived the high commissioner, whose prime minister he was. He deceived his own colleagues in the ministry. He collected under false pretences a force which was intended to co-operate with an insurrection in Johannesburg. Being a director of the Chartered Company, he made use of that position without the knowledge of his colleagues, to further the conspiracy. He took an active and secret part in smuggling great quantities of arms into the Transvaal, which were intended to be used in the rebellion; and at a time when his organs in the press were representing Johannesburg as seething with spontaneous indignation against an oppressive government, he with another millionaire was secretly expending many thousands of pounds in that town in stimulating and subsidizing the rising."

Mr. Lecky further charges Cecil Rhodes with complicity with what he calls the shabbiest incident in the whole affair, the concoction of a letter representing the women and children at Johannesburg as in danger of being shot down by the Boers, which was kept in reserve to work upon opinion at the time of the raid.

Such were the influences which brought about this war and have sent a thousand young Canadians at the risk of their own lives to shed the blood and desolate the homes of a community of simple farmers which has not done them or their country any sort of wrong.

LETTER FROM VERY REV. FATHER LESTANC, O.M.I.

BISHOP'S PALACE,
ST. ALBERT, ALTA.
Nov. 25, 1899.

Rev. A. A. Cherrier.
Dear Friend—While sending you my subscription to the very interesting NORTHWEST REVIEW I beg of you to accept at the same time the expression of my gratitude for your devotion to the great cause of Catholic schools and to the prosperity of the REVIEW.

May this word of encouragement and approval from a friendly heart be agreeable to the brave champion of our rights. May you meet with success in a struggle of such importance. May the Lord preserve you ad multos annos to fight the good fight.

A little prayer, if you please, for an ex-missionary of St. Boniface.

J. J. M. LESTANC, O.M.I.

STE. ROSE DU LAC.

On 25th Nov., our good and dear old friend, Mr. Benjamin Neault, departed this life, leaving a void which can never be filled. He passed quietly away fortified by the rites of Our Holy Mother, the Church.

Mr. Neault, one of the pioneers of Ste. Rose, was of pure Canadian descent, being grandson of Mde. Lajimodière, the first white woman who came to dwell in the Northwest.

Seven sons and four daughters were grouped around him here, not to speak of his other children, grand-children and great-grand-children. He was 68 years of age, and would have celebrated his golden wedding had he lived two years longer. Ste. Rose never saw so grand a funeral, every family in the neighborhood was represented, testifying to the great respect in which Mr. Neault was held, our fine new church being filled as on Sundays—the church he and his four sons had helped to raise.

R. I. P.

FROM ST. ALBERT.

Nov. 25, 1899.

His Lordship Bishop Grandin is pretty well and all the Bishop's household are in excellent health.

The weather is very mild. Our little Sturgeon river is as free as in July. There are not even any pieces of ice along the banks.

On all sides we hear nothing but the jerky hum of the threshing machines. The firmament is ravishingly beautiful; I have never seen at this season the sky so clear and unclouded.

The harvest is very good, in spite of damage done by hail in certain parts of this country and in spite of the almost continuous rains of July and August.

We are constantly hearing of new railways, of a charter for such and such a place. We shall believe when we see.

J. L.

General debility and a "run down" state calls for a general tonic to the system. Such is The D. & L. Emulsion. Builds you up, increases your weight, gives health. Made by Davis & Lawrence Co., Ltd.

THE BELLS OF THE IMMACULATE.

A delay in going to press allows us to report the solemn blessing of the bells in the Church of the Immaculate Conception at 7.30 this evening. The beautiful edifice was crowded to the doors. Among the clergy present we noticed Vicar-General Dugas, Rev. Father Guillet, O. M. I., Rev. Father Albert Kulawy, O. M. I., Rev. Dr. Béliveau, Rev. G. S. Lebel, S. J., Rev. A. Rousseau. The pastor, Rev. Father Cherrier, opened the proceedings with an interesting address describing the use of church bells in connection with the sacraments and the Holy Sacrifice, and explaining the various ceremonies of the ritual for the blessing of bells. This ritual was fully carried out in an impressive manner by the venerable Monsignor Ritchot, of St. Norbert, whose improved health stood the strain fairly well. The bells were placed near the chancel rail, and at the close of the "christening" each one in the audience advanced and struck each of the three bells. Their mellow, silvery tones were much admired. The largest bell, weighing 1,200 pounds, and giving the note B flat, was christened Josephina Norbertina (Mgr. Provencher), Alexandrina (Mgr. Taché), Adalardina (Mgr. Langevin) in honor of the three successive Ordinaries of the diocese; the second bell, weighing 700 pounds with note C, received the name of Mary; the third bell, weighing 500 pounds, with the note D, being the gift of Messrs. Joseph and Antoine Bernhardt, bore the names of their wives, Catherina, Brigitta, added to the female forms (bells are always feminine in Latin) of the names of Fathers Lebret and Cherrier, the two successive pastors of the parish, viz., Louisa Alphonsina. These three bells were made to Father Cherrier's order by Mr. Causard, of the celebrated bell foundry at Tellin, Belgium. They will be hung to-morrow in the belfry and the chime will be heard for the first time on Friday, the 8th, the patronal feast of the church and parish.

In a letter written by an Irish officer in Pietermaritzburg two days before the war began, that is on October 9, and received by one of the Oblate Missionary Fathers, the writer says: "Father Murray was giving the Dublins a retreat (in Ladysmith?) when they were taken away; he went with them. We had the Manchesters here on Sunday—about 250 Catholics in church. They left yesterday with a convoy for the front. Father O'Donnell is going up from here, with Father Murray. There is a Catholic chaplain coming out with Buller. Father Delalle called on me to-day. Father Barret preached at the soldiers' Mass on Sunday. The Bishop is here; all well here. What a rush there was sending up the Indian contingent, train after train. It seems to me the largest percentage of them are Irish."

Immense increase in the sale of the D. & L. Menthol Plaster evidences the fact that it is useful for all rheumatic pains, lumbago and lame back, pain in the sides, etc. Davis & Lawrence Co., Ltd., manufacturers.

MRS. HOWARD GOULD'S SISTER A MISSIONARY.

ELLA M. CLEMMONS TO TEACH CATHOLIC DOCTRINES TO SAN FRANCISCO CHINAMEN.

San Francisco, November 17.—Ella M. Clemmons, sister of Mrs. Howard Gould, has decided to devote her life to teaching the doctrines of the Catholic Church to the Chinese, and as soon as she can lease a house in Chinatown suited to her purpose, she intends to open a Catholic Chinese mission.

This she will conduct independent of any order and she will maintain it herself.

Ella Clemmons became a convert to the Catholic faith less than two years ago. Shortly after her conversion she decided to give up her pleasant life and give her entire time to the promotion of the faith she has adopted. In looking around for some line of work she became interested in the Chinese, and saw in Chinatown a wide field for Christian endeavor.

There is no Catholic Chinese mission in this city, and the idea of founding one seemed to the young woman the right thing for her to do, so she began the study of the Chinese language, and for seventeen months she has labored to perfect herself.

She has learned enough of the language to enable her to carry on the kindergarten method, and she hopes in another year to speak fluently.

She has already established two classes of Chinese, and these she teaches during the day and in the evening.

"I shall call the mission 'Christ's Studio,'" she said, "and I hope I shall find a place so that I can open it before many weeks go by. I am going to call my line of teaching the kindergarten Bible study."

"I shall furnish the mission nicely, just as though it were my own house, and anyone who desires may join any of the various classes I shall carry on. My great hope is that the mission may open the way to my working among the Chinese women. My heart aches for these poor creatures, and I want them to enjoy the truth and the beauty of my religion."

Ella M. Clemmons is a young woman and very beautiful, like her sister, Mrs. Gould, and it will be a surprise to her many friends on both sides of the continent to know that she has taken up the work of Christianizing the Chinese.

At 6 a. m. Wednesday morning, Nov. 28, at the residence of Father Conaty in this city, occurred the marriage of Mr. J. M. Ryan to Miss Lelia Drain. The bride is a sister of Mrs. Wm. Spriggs, of this city, and is well known in the city. The groom is a son of Judge Ryan, of Portage la Prairie, and a brother of Dr. Ryan, of Grafton. The ceremony was performed in the presence of a few relatives and intimate friends. The happy couple left on the morning train for Winnipeg.—Grand Forks Plaindealer.

Winter began here on the 1st inst. The thermometer dropped yesterday to 8 below zero; it is going up to-day as if the dread era of mud and mildness were about to return.