

LETTERS FROM ALASKA.

INTERESTING ACCOUNTS OF THE BOREAL REGION.

Correspondence of a Missionary Nun— Descriptions of the Country, of the Indians, and of the Catholic Schools in That Far-off Land.

Through the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Salley, of Lachine, we are enabled to publish extracts from letters which they received from their daughter, Sister M. Winifred, who has been over a year on missionary work in Alaska. The Rev. Sister is stationed at Holy Cross Mission, Kosoriffsky, and her first letter is dated Nov. 27th, 1892. The first pages of the letter being more of a private nature than of any public interest, we will commence with that part in which she tells of her missionary work. In this issue we also give a letter from "Aloysius," one of her pupils. We might remark that the penmanship of Sister M. Winifred's letters is equal to anything found in our Catholic school exhibit at Chicago; while the pupil seems to copy the mistress closely, for the little Alaskan's writing is superior to any we have ever seen for a boy of his age. We give the boy's letter exactly as written without any corrections or changes.

The letters that Rt. Rev. Mgr. Clut sent us sometime ago seems to have proved most interesting, and have been largely copied by our Catholic American contemporaries. We trust that these letters from Alaska will also serve to give an idea of the great and noble work being done by our Catholic missionaries—priests and nuns—amongst the untutored children of these wild and distant regions. Next week we shall give others of increasing interest.—EDITOR TRUE WITNESS.

J. M. J.

HOLY CROSS MISSION, KOSORIFFSKY, November 27, 1892.

VERY DEAR PARENTS,— I look at the date of this journal and say with reason, is it possible, I am a year in Alaska, and have not found time yet to write to my dear beloved parents? But it is the last time, dear loved ones, that I will be caught like this. The salvation of souls will not make me forget the consolation of hearts. Do not get discouraged though, for dear Sr. Superior has just given me two hours to write to your own dear selves. Experience teaches. This dear sister has been telling me to write my letters and leave other things aside, but I always counted on having time in spring when the days are long, and I have been nicely caught. I have forgotten that the longer the day the more the work. Nevertheless, although there will be no dates I will try to remember things as well as I can. I will make no promises in future, but I will do. The fact that a year has passed is like a dream to me. I never enjoyed better health than this year. What is more than extraordinary for me, I remember only having a headache twice, and I have not had even as much as a cold in the head. And for happiness it cannot be surpassed. A sad thought never crosses my mind, much less penetrates the heart. I imagine I hear papa say as usual that the world is ill divided. But I know my dear parents will not be surprised at this, for they know and have often said that I have chosen the better part. Now for the news! A day or two after I came here I went out to weed turnips in the garden with the boys or rather I oversee the work. I said to myself Indian children are harder to manage than a flock of geese. I think they found me pretty green in that trade and I did not find them very intelligent, so our impressions were about the same. They have queer ways of talking English, they always say I will go, yis, for shall I go? You will be our teacher, yis? My needle is go upstairs, etc. I think I spoke already about my class. The boys and myself did not take long to get acquainted, so we are real good friends, so much so that when anyone slights them they offend me. Every month they have a picnic, and they are very fond of hunting. I told them I would ask you for a gun and I would lend it to them every holiday. They never forget when we promise them anything, and they will certainly expect it. The children here are all boarders, so that we never have vacation. The children have no class during the month of July and have a little more liberty, but we have the pleasure of enjoying their amiable company and do all in our power to give them all the pleasure we possibly can. Apart from class I take care of the boys' clothes and keep them in order. Every morning I am generally greeted as follows: "Sister, my pants is hole." "I too, Sister, I too, Sister," repeat a number of timid voices. Then I gather them around my treasure box which contains a number of patched trousers, jumpers, etc., and each gets according to his needs. Towards the end of September we brought in the potatoes, turnips, etc. We had about 180 bushels of potatoes in all, that is counting the Fathers' and Sisters' garden. They were just as big as in our own country, but somewhat watery on account of the wet season we had. The supply of cabbage, carrots and turnips was also quite abundant; so you see we are not so much to be pitied after all. This winter has been milder than any yet experienced in the Yukon. The month of December was like a Spring month, that is although the snow was deep the thermometer did not attain freezing point for several days. The month of February however was not so pleasant. Some days the cold was intense: so much so that I had to break the ice on my dish of water in order to make my toilet. The Sisters often tease me over this and say this is a poor excuse to relieve me from the discomfort of washing my-

self in cold weather. It is not an uncommon novelty in this country during the winter season to have Jack Frost a very near but not a dear friend. This inseparable companion frequently whitewashed the logs around my bed, and often permitted me a *little life* on the same pillow. This is all right when the cold is intense but when soft weather comes this frost melts and wets everything. All the sisters have a deerskin cloak called a parky with hood attached. I have the great honor and privilege of having the very one worn by our dear regretted martyr Archbishop Seghers. There is no difference between the men and women's parky; they are made alike. Perhaps you have seen the sample Sister M. Joseph brought with her. If not you should ask to see it. The beauty of the sunrise in this country is unsurpassed, and this especially in autumn. The sky all along the Yukon is of a dark blue, then a fiery red darts through this and reflects on the calm waters. This way you will understand better. We are situated from river about the same distance that Peter's house is from the St. Lawrence. This is the only difference; the river is not so wide at this part nor are there any villages on the opposite shore to greet the wandering eye, but these are replaced by beautiful mountains and tall trees. The sun rises in the midst of these mountains just opposite our door. Our shortest days are in December and even though the sun rises at half-past ten or later, the rising effect is equally beautiful. At this season the sun is always shining, that is we see no sun rise nor sun set. The sun is shining when we get up and it is still shining when we go to bed. In July it sets about half-past eleven and rises at one. I often go for long walks with the children along the river. There we sing beautiful hymns and songs, my favorite is "There's nothing true, nothing bright, nothing kind but heaven." I am very happy here and I often say if my dear good parents only knew this they would rejoice with me. I have the children pray very often for you, and now when they want to please me very much they say I pray for you Sister and for your father and mother too.

June 9. You see my two hours have been interrupted. I come again only to have a short chat. We expect the boats, (for there are two this year) every day, and my boys need a brushing up before they come. These boats pass the winter up here in search of furs and skins, and when the ice breaks they go down to St. Michael's to meet their Company's boat from San Francisco. They always stop here, on their way down, to receive our letters and assist at the children's examination. Their work of the year is also examined such as knitting, sewing, writing and drawing books, etc. This is an important business it appears, but I will be better able to describe the scene after it has taken place. Until this fuss is over I have hardly time to make ends meet. We shall not know if there are any of our Sisters coming this year or not until the boat comes back from St. Michael's in July. Sister Superior goes down every year to St. Michael's, either to receive our provisions or to send orders for more. I forgot to tell you last year that we had the chance of receiving news in September. The St. Paul made a second trip. It will probably be the same every year now so, that you can risk a letter in July. I received several letters in September from the dear Sisters of Worcester and also from the kind ladies in San Francisco. I would have been overjoyed to receive a letter from you or dear Sister M. Frances but I knew you did not know so I did not expect any. If I was not kept so busy I would certainly find it very long to wait two months more before getting any news from you. I hope dear Lizzie will write for you all and keep a faithful record of passing events. Do not forget to speak to me of my faithful and dear old friends Mr. and Mrs. Fallon, Father Salmon and all those whom I have no time to mention here, but for whom I pray. I wish you to tell dear Father Salmon in particular that I have a special memento for him and family in all my prayers and sacrifices, and I beg of him also that he may pray for me and for the dear souls confided to my charge. In a word remember me kindly; to every one and tell them of my happiness and a constant remembrance of them in prayer. My letter to Sr. M. Francis will be short so you might send her this when you get tired of it; she might find something in it to make her laugh. This is a particular trade of mine, to make other people laugh; and I think I never laughed so much in all my life as I did this year. I often tell the Sisters that they are advancing in sanctity and I in mischief. I often think of the grand time I had with Sr. M. Frances, in Victoria. I teased her so much. She found me entirely changed. For the better of course. Make her send you her letter too. There are certainly facts in it that I have not written here. I will write to you again in August if the boat makes a second trip like last year. Your letters will always be safe no matter when you send them. The Alaska Company always takes great care of packages or letters addressed to this country and delivers them faithfully. If you, or friend wish to send me anything as you generally do, just send a V or — to our dear intimate friends Mother St. Anastasia, Mother Mechtilda, or Sr. M. Good Shepherd. They know best what is suited to our mission and useful to myself. Wishing my dear loved ones all the happiness and consolations the Sacred Heart can bestow. I am always

Their loving and grateful child,
SR. M. WINIFRED.

An Alaskan Boy's Letter.

HOLY CROSS MISSION, Alaska, May 16, 1893.

To Sr. M. Winifred's DEAR PARENTS,— I am one of Sr. M. Winifred's boys. I am very happy at school and like the Fathers and Sisters real well. Sister often speaks of you, and asks us to pray for you. We are all very glad every year when the boat comes up. We always get something. Last year the good boys of some rich lady sent us a nice game of baseball and many other nice things. I got a painting box, and every play day I color my pictures in my drawing book. I was a prefect of the boys and I always get my good marks. The highest marks we can get is one hundred each week—fifty for conduct and fifty for application. When we do not lose a single mark during a whole month, we wear a nice badge and meddle every week at Mass and Benediction. Every month we have an examination. That is Father Superior Rev. Father Muset comes to our class to see how we are getting along. It begins by a song or a hymn then reading, spelling, counting, dictation and catechism of course for it is our first and principal study, and it ends with a recitation spoken by the best boys. Father is always pleased with us, and says we are improving each time, and so is our dear teacher. Then comes the picnic. What fun we have with the sleigh and dogs. When the weather is too cold or storming we enjoy ourselves at home. How happy we feel after having been good

boys. One day we met Sr. M. Winifred in the woods with the girls. We only had one dog pulling the sleigh. We asked Sister to get on and he pulled her all round the lake. This is for the winter. Now at this season before the ice breaks, it is the time to shoot ducks and swans. I like our hunting parties very much. Brother John and some boys started out one morning at one o'clock, and came home at six in the evening and they killed seven geese. They were fat and big and heavy, they were very tired, when they came home. The small boys do not go to shoot, but they come only to bring home what the big boys kill. They kill chickens and rabbits and squerrel and birds with their bow and arrows.

The girls have their holy day also. In summer they go on the mountains to get some berries with Sister and bring their baskets with them. You see we live very happy here. Sr. M. Winifred says she will ask you to send her a gun and she will lend it to us every holy day. We are all waiting for the ice to break, and hoped that the big boat will bring us some more Sisters and Fathers to make us happy. I will write a longer letter next you. I will try to be one of Sr. M. Winifred's best boys.

ALOYSIUS.

He is really one of my best boys, although they are all very good. They enjoy nothing better than to give me a sleigh ride with the dogs. Whenever they catch me out in the woods they run up to me and say Sister! you never come for a walk with us. I take care of their clothes and try to make gentlemen of them, but it is no small task. Paper is scarce in Alaska. I fill up the spaces.

SR. M. W.

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MILK GRANULES. The perfect equivalent of Mother's Milk.

It is the solids of pure cow's milk of the very best quality so treated that, when dissolved in the proper amount of water, it yields a product which is practically identical in composition, re-action, taste and appearance with Mother's Milk. It is absolutely free from starchy matter, which is present in barley, flour and other infant foods, and contains no glucose and no cane sugar.

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THE MARTYR OF CHARITY.

A Memorial Cross Erected at Molokai in Father Damien's Honor.

A beautiful tribute was paid to the memory of Father Damien at Molokai on Sept. 10, when the beautiful cross presented to the Catholic mission in his honor by the National Leprosy Fund of Great Britain, of which the Prince of Wales is honorary president and Sir Somers Vine secretary, was unveiled in the presence of the chief dignitaries of Hawaii.

The Daily Bulletin of Honolulu gives a lengthy and interesting account of the ceremony from which the following is taken:

About 4.15 p.m., Sunday the 10th, Mr. Edmund Stiles, Under Secretary of the Foreign Office, arrived at the cross, which was veiled, and around him were standing the Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Honolulu (Protestant), and Mrs. Willis; Mr. J. A. King, Minister of the Interior; Mr. W. O. Smith, Attorney-General; Father Conrady, the Franciscan Sisters with their leper wards, and a large assemblage of the lepers. The leper band was also in attendance, arrayed in new uniform. At 4.30 the Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Panopolis and Vicar-Apostolic of the Hawaiian Islands, walked from the Bishop's Home (for leper girls), robed in his episcopal habit, attended by Father Wendell, and preceded by two acolytes bearing incense and holy water, to the cross, and then the leper band struck up "Nearer my God, to Thee." After which Mr. Stiles approached the Bishop, and in the presence of the large assembly of natives as well as foreigners, and those stricken with that dread disease which the skill of the present generation cannot grapple with, delivered the address of presentation to which the Rt. Rev. Bishop responded briefly in these words:

"MR. STILES:—In the name of the Catholic Mission, I accept this beautiful monument, sent here by a committee of English people, presided over by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and erected by the Hawaiian Government. I beg you to convey my hearty thanks to both His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and the Hawaiian Government for their appreciation of the good deeds of Father Damien. I knew him very well because I spent the five first years of my missionary life with him, and I was present when he knelt down and asked the Rt. Rev. Bishop Malgrat to grant him leave to come here and spend his life for the consolation of these poor afflicted ones. So of him and of the Fathers and Sisters now living here, we can truly repeat the words engraved on this monument, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.'"

The Bishop of Panopolis also spoke in Hawaiian to the assembly. After the addresses the Bishop proceeded with the church ritual of dedication. He walked around the cross, sprinkling holy water upon it, and, after incensing it, read a prayer of blessing, after which the band played another air. Thus ended the ceremony of unveiling and dedicating the memorial of one whose name has become the theme of kings and rulers everywhere. "The curse a blessing shall be found." The cross is erected at Kalaupapa, in a very prominent place, where passers-by on the main road can easily see it, and just beneath the Bishop's Home for Girls.—Catholic Columbian.

IMPORTANT TO WORKINGMEN.

Artizans, mechanics and laboring men are liable to sudden accidents and injuries, as well as painful cords, stiff joints and lameness. To all thus troubled we would recommend Hagyard's Yellow Oil, the handy and reliable pain cure, for outward and internal use.

She: Am I the first girl you ever proposed to, darling? He sincerely: No; but you are the only girl who ever accepted me.

DIZZINESS CAUSED BY DYSPEPSIA.

Dizziness is a symptom of dyspepsia. "I have used Burdock Blood Bitters for dizziness, which came over me in spells, so that I had to quit work for a while. The B.B.B. entirely cured me." James Wright, Chesterfield, Ont.

The blonde: I wonder if I shall ever live to be one hundred. The brunette: Not if you remain twenty-two much longer.

ON THE PLATFORM.

Public speakers and singers are often troubled with sore throat and hoarseness, and are liable to severe bronchial attacks which might be prevented and cured by the use of Hagyard's Pectoral Balsam—the best throat and lung remedy in use.