

FROM THREE RIVERS.

To-day is the feast of St. Ursula, and in the old white monastery, built by Bishop St. Vallier of holy memory, the cloistered pupils of the Ursulines are holding high carnival. This ancient educational establishment, with its splendid record and its "long descent," is doing good service in this part of the Province of Quebec. One can easily distinguish the pupils of the Ursulines by their composed and graceful deportment, by the thoroughness of their acquirements, and by their excellent pronunciation of English, this latter trait is the more remarkable in that the tongue of the Anglo-Saxon is not the mother tongue of many of their instructresses, and that the very excellent English which one hears spoken by the daughters of St. Angele, in Three Rivers is the result of careful study, combined with a natural aptitude for languages on the part of *les dames Ursulines*.

Three Rivers is rich in Communities. Up at the 'op of the Rue Ste. Julie stands a magnificent hospital, presided over by the devoted Sisters of Providence. Here the sick are tenderly nursed back to health, the aged and infirm are cared for, orphans are trained in the path of virtue, and poor little foundlings are rescued from misery and death. In connection with this convent is a large and beautiful chapel, in which the Rev. Pere Pichou, S. J., has just preached a most successful and well attended retreat to the married ladies of the town, "*Les Dames Charitables*." These ladies well deserve their name, for I am told that the hospital owes its existence to their unceasing efforts in the cause of charity.

Opposite to the hospital is the Seminary, an imposing building, the home of three hundred persons, priests, ecclesiastics, students, and servants all told. It was a beautiful sight yesterday morning, to see the entire alumni of this college, headed by their band, march to the quay and embark on board of the ferry steamer for Cap de la Magdeleine. This pilgrimage is an annual affair. Every October these young votaries of the Blessed Virgin go on the Feast of her Purity to offer her their homage in the little church which was built on the Cape in 1714, and which succeeded the one that, many years prior to that date, the early Jesuit Fathers had "*basty sur un Cap*." In this first church a Confraternity of the Holy Rosary was canonically established in 1694. It exists, and every day of this golden October its members at the feet of Mary Immaculate, implore her protection for the Father of Christendom.

But all this is far from another Community of Three Rivers of which I wish to tell the readers of the Review. Away back of the town, where the Seminary grounds lose themselves in a dark sweet scented grove of pine and spruce, stands a small, white, two-storied house. A strange covered entrance hall runs out to meet the sidewalk. Above the door of this is emblazoned in scarlet and white the arms of the Commissariat of the Holy Land, and an inscription in letters of flaming red announces that this is the "*Commissariat de Ferre Sainte*."

Entering, the visitor finds himself in a hall on either side of which is a double row of precious old engravings—gems of the skill of artists of ye olden time. Each of these represents a saint of the Order of St. Francis of Assisium, below are two plain deal kneeling benches, and above, on a white ground, runs the legend, in scarlet letters, "All ye holy Saints of the Order of St. Francis, pray for us." The inscription is in French and reads "*Saints et Saintes*," which sets forth the superior explicitness of the tongue of the Gaul for in English we could scarcely, no matter how literal we might wish to be, say "Saints and Saintesses" pray for us!

Mounting a few steps at the far end of the corridor you ring a little bell, and the door is opened by a Franciscan Father for this is a Franciscan Monastery and the loved brown habit of the Recollet is once more seen in the Province of Quebec.

There are as yet but three in this little Community two Fathers and a lay Brother; their missions is to preach missions, to have charge of the various congregations of the Third Order of St. Francis, and to collect the monies subscribed for the pious work of caring for and protecting the

sacred places, hallowed by our divine Saviour's footprints—the sanctuaries of the Holy Land. The Superior is the Rev. Pere Frederic, already well known in Canada.

In the spring time of the year, when the buds of the red blossoms of July were forming on their stems, when the summer was dawning, and the daughters of Mary were telling their beads in the sweet May evenings, there came here from St. Hyacinthe a holy and devoted band of religious women, the Nuns of the Precious Blood. Settling down in handsome house, donated to them by the mother of one of their number, they began their devoted life of intercession and reparation in the old town of Three Rivers. Their exquisite little chapel, with its beautiful altar, and its two fine paintings of St. Agnes and St. Catharine of Sienna, is already the favourite retreat of many a pious soul, and here in the gloaming, during this month of the rosary, the public are privileged to recite their beads with the nuns and to share in the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, which is daily imparted by the Rev. Chaplain. To this little chapel, on the 15th of October, came the Bishop of Three Rivers, who, in the presence of a kneeling crowd which extended from the sanctuary to the entrance gate of the Monastery, formally opened the novitiate and admitted to the band of lovely nuns who, in their white and scarlet robes, knelt in their lattice guarded choir, three chosen souls who wish to consecrate themselves to the adoration of the Precious Blood.

While on the subject of matters religious in Three Rivers, I would like to say a word of a painting which has lately been executed here, for veneration in the chapel of the Seminary. The painting, which is life size, represents the vision of St. Francis of Assisium when our Lord bent down from the Cross to embrace him. The artist, Mr. Desiro Mattheu, a young man, and a native of Three Rivers, has certainly produced in this one of his first large studies—a work of which he need not be ashamed. The figure of St. Francis is admirably drawn, the face is most life like and devotional.

In Mr. Mattheu's studio there is also a portrait of Monseigneur La Fleche, which is not yet finished, but which promises to be one of the best, if not the very best, likenesses yet executed of that prelate in his later years. The studies in crayon and pencil which hang on the walls, show that Mr. Mattheu, unlike most artistic aspirants of the present day, gavelis mind to drawing before he attempted to paint.

It is to be hoped that the proceeds of his brush will soon enable him to go abroad and receive the thorough artistic training for the reception of which, nature has so admirably fitted him.

LORRAINE.

Three Rivers, P.Q., 21st October, 1889.

CATHOLICS AND THE CATHOLIC PRESS.

Catholic newspapers have few readers among Catholic men. Their best friends are the clergy and the women. If they depended for their support upon the laymen, they would all fail.

When a man is asked to subscribe for a religious journal, he usually replies: "I have no time to read it," or, "There's nothing in it."

Ask any ten men, into whose homes a Catholic paper goes regularly, why they buy it, and nine of them will answer, each for himself: "I take it because my wife likes to read it," or, "I subscribe for it for the sake of the children," or, "I get it because Father Blank told me to."

Why do the men not read religious journals? The blame lies, first, with the men; then, with the papers themselves.

The indictment that may be framed against the men for neglect of the church press has three counts:

1. Men are indifferent to religion. They are worldly. Their heart is in their business. Therefore the news in the Catholic papers doesn't interest them.

2. Men are most sensitive to reproof. They hate to be told of their faults, or to be reminded of their duties. On this account they avoid the religious journals, which contain articles on the wickedness of sin, the necessity of confession, the obligation of penance, the shortness of life, the terrors of hell, and other fundamental doctrines of Christianity.