

but possibly I may not be able to do so before the mail closes, in which case I shall enclose them to you by the next mail.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed),

ADAMS G. ARCHIBALD,

The Honorable

The Secretary of State for the Provinces.

Extracts of a letter from the Reverend Father Lacombe to His Lordship Bishop Taché.

MISSION OF ST. PAUL (CREES),

SASKATCHEWAN, 12th September, 1870.

You are aware, My Lord, that I spent all last winter amidst the Crees and Blackfeet. Having left the Reverend Father Dupin and Brother Scandon with the Crees, I came back here for the purpose of Monseigneur Grandin. After taking leave of His Lordship, I set out for the camp of the Blackfeet, where I arrived after a journey of twenty days, and remained until spring. It was there that I first became acquainted with the terrible epidemic disease of which we still continue to suffer. At that time the contagion was not so dangerous as it is now, particularly in the camp in which I was stationed, but information reached me that at "Rivières des Ventres," and near the Missouri, a great number of the Piegas and Bloody Indians were cut off by it.

After a long and trying journey to Little Slave Lake and Peace River, I arrived at Lac la Biche in the middle of July and considered myself entitled to a few days rest, but the time had not yet come. I received intelligence that the Indians were on the eve of arriving at St. Paul stricken by the disease. Bidding farewell to rest, I hastened to the relief of my dear neophytes. En route, I met Reverend Father Dupin on his way to Lac la Biche, to be attended,—he was dangerously ill. I got here on the 18th July. None but those who witnessed it can form an idea of the spectacle offered to my view. Upwards of one hundred and thirty families were busily occupied pitching their tents around my dwelling. Hardly alighted from my horse, I had to respond to the cries of the poor sufferers, calling on me with all their might. When I now recall to mind the two months I passed, exposed to the plague, and worn out with fatigue, I most gratefully acknowledge the visible and special protection of Providence. Poor Indians! What a pitiful sight they then offered, and still offer, as a great number still labor under this painful disease. Every one implored my aid and charity,—some for medicine, others for the benefit of the last sacraments. Day and night I was constantly occupied. Scarcely had I time to say mass. I had to instruct and baptize dying infidels, confess and anoint our neophytes at the point of death, minister to different wants, give a drink to one and food to another, and kindle the fire during the cold nights. This dreadful epidemic has taken all compassion from the hearts of the Indians. The lepers of a new kind are removed to a distance from the others and sheltered with branches. There they witness the decomposition and putrefaction of their bodies several days before death. I cannot define the nature of the contagion; some say it is small-pox, others scarlatina. For my part, I am led to believe that it is a complication of several diseases or putrid fever. The patient is at first very feverish, the skin becomes red and covered with pimples, these blotches in a few days form scabs filled with infectious matter, then the flesh begins to decompose and fall off in fragments. Worms swarm in the parts most affected. Inflammation of the throat impedes all passage for meat or drink. While enduring the torments of this cruel agony, the sufferer ceases to breathe, alone in a poor shed with no other assistance than what I can afford. The hideous corpse must be buried, a grave must be dug, and the body carried to the burial ground. All this devolves on me, and I am alone with Indians, disheartened and terrified to such a degree that they hardly dare approach even their own relatives. God alone knows what I have had to endure merely to prevent their mortal remains being devoured by dogs. On the other hand, my toils are amply

repaid U
Indians
more un
arrived
me to c
Indians.
They al

I h
two nig
whom I
had left

At
were ser
less inte
the dolor
there, be
to this,
Roveren
afflicted
two day
Sisters c
reduced
assist th
Father J
much ex
poor suf
Camp o
producece

Yo
at Carle
emergen
prodigio
Mission
Venerab
Ho cann
from his
when wo

P.
the Sask
a day a
rending
Bishop C
ently rec
who are
"populo

WE
the Vall
United S