

opinions prevalent, one that the century began Jan. 1, 1900, the other that it will begin Jan. 1, 1901. These both, as numbering the centuries since Christ's birth, are absolutely wrong, since it is a well known fact that Christ was actually born B. C. 4, that is, when the world began measuring time from Christ's birth, about 530 A. D., it made a mistake in calculation of four years. This error was discovered about ten centuries later, but to avoid the untold inconvenience of the change it was never corrected. According to the true chronology, then, it is now 1904 years since Christ's birth, and we have been living in the twentieth century for at least three years. Hoping that Archbishop Ireland, Emperor William, His Holiness the Pope and Gene Fretz will take notice

THE OBLATE FATHERS AND THE WAR.

The Oblate Fathers are in the thick of the fight. They have missions in most of the towns and districts wherein hostilities are proceeding, as well as in adjoining territories. There are Oblate Fathers at Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Estcourt, Ladysmith, Newcastle, Oakford, Kokstad, and Umtata. Two of the Fathers at Pietermaritzburg and Ladysmith have charge of about a thousand Catholic soldiers. Bishop Gaughran, O.M.I., who has jurisdiction over the Orange Free State Vicariate, is speaking from the point of view of episcopal duty, in a curious position. His Vicariate extends not only over the Free State but likewise over British possessions, so that his spiritual subjects are in one place loyal to Great Britain and in another loyal to its enemies. Indeed, the Oblate Fathers are to be found as chaplains in the opposing camps. Whilst Fathers Murray and O'Donnell are with the British forces in Natal, Fathers Hammer, and Leon Marshal are with a portion of the Transvaal army. Father Ogle is shut up in Mafeking, and Bishop Gaughran and others in Kimberley with Mr. Cecil Rhodes. It is to be feared that many of the missions, especially those at Kimberley, Mafeking and Ladysmith, will suffer severely.—Catholic Tribune.

THE BOERS AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

In the Transvaal Vicariate, which is under the charge of Father De Lacy, O.M.I., there are about fifteen Oblate Fathers, with some Trappist and Marist Brothers, Sisters of Loretto, Sisters of the Holy Family, Dominican nuns, and Ursulines. The Catholic population numbers over six thousand. Just half of them live, or we should rather say used to live, at Johannesburg, which possesses a fine church, a Marist boys' school, and a girls' school, taught by the Holy Family nuns, both these institutions training eight hundred pupils. The Sisters of the Holy Family, who are affiliated to the Oblate Congregation, have been placed in charge of the Government hospital, where the average number of patients is 250. The Boers preserve a great deal of the Calvinistic spirit of their forefathers. Still, thanks to the free and unrestricted immigration of representatives of other nationalities their exclusiveness in religious matters is rapidly diminishing. There often exists real sympathy for the Catholic priest where a few years ago hatred and distrust were strongly felt. The change is in a great measure due to the influence of the Catholic schools. The Boers knowing the excellence of these schools send their children to them, and the pupils, owing to contact with Catholic teachers, are able to remove many ridiculous notions respecting the Church from the minds of their parents.—Catholic Times

The continued absence of snow in the eastern part of the province is causing a decided scarcity in the visible supply of cordwood for fuel and if the "beautiful" fails to descend in reasonable quantity shortly there will be a shortage in wood, and a consequent increase in the price. A gentleman interested in the business who has just returned from a trip over the South-eastern railway, states there are thousands of cords cut and ready for hauling to the railway but that the roads have frozen up very rough and without snow it is practically impossible to deliver it at the siding.—Free Press, Jan. 5.

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THE BOER COMMANDER.

Jean Joubert, the present commander of the Boer army in South Africa, is a native of Louisiana, where his family is one of the oldest in that State. His brother and a large clan of relatives are still living there.

Joubert is a giant, being about six feet nine inches in height, stoutly built. He fought on the Confederate side during the American Civil War. As Colonel, he commanded a regiment in General Dick Taylor's brigade and was one of Stonewall Jackson's most trusted officers.

After the close of the Civil War, Col. Joubert accompanied Gen. Loring to Egypt and took service under the Khedive. Thence he drifted to South Africa and organized the frontier police against the savage negro tribes. As far back as 1881 he already had complete control of all the Boer forces, Kruger in all the battles taking his orders from Joubert and obeying them without question.

General Joubert now has a bushy grey beard and a face tanned by the African sun. There is not an ounce of superfluous flesh on him, and he is as strong as an ox. He knows every inch of the Transvaal and adjoining countries, and now, in his sixty-eighth year, he is as full of fire and fight as he was in 1881, when first he defeated the British.

EDGELEY'S WONDERFUL WELL.

St. Paul Pioneer Press.

For many years Edgeley, N.D., has boasted one of the finest flowing artesian wells in the State. The water comes gushing out with high pressure in a stream as large as a man's arm. The well is 1,370 feet deep, and the water is too saline for domestic use. A beautiful lake has been made at a small cost, which in the winter time furnishes a splendid skating rink for the young people. The water has been placed under control, and is piped through the streets, affording a system of waterworks, the most cheaply of any town in the country.

For many years it has been known that the water was mixed with gas, but no effort had been made to separate the two till this fall. C. J. Sturgeon, a druggist, has at last succeeded in accomplishing this after many experiments, and now secures gas for lighting and heating purposes, in his store and residence. The separation of the gas is to be accomplished on a larger scale, and the streets and residences are to be lighted and the business houses all heated at a minimum cost, from the same source that furnishes the town a free water works system. The well is on the experimental farm, under control of the State Agriculture College.

A number of the larger farms in the State are equipped with such wells, and in the future their farmhouses may be lighted and heated at the cost of putting in gaspipes.

The installation of the St. Mary's Branch, No. 52, C.M.B.A. for 1900, took place at the meeting Wednesday evening. The following officers were installed by Chancellor George Germain: President, D. Smith; 1st vice-president, E. Cass; 2nd vice-president, L. O. Genest; recording secretary, R. F. Hinds; assistant recording secretary, J. L. Hughes; financial secretary, D. F. Allman; treasurer, Wm. Jordan; Marshall, W. J. O'Neil; guard, L. F. X. Hart; trustees, G. Gladnish, M. Conway.

RAILROAD MEN TOO BUSY TO THINK.

Railroad Gazette.

In the admirable round up of President Clark, which appeared in the Railroad Gazette last week Mr. Deming says "stockholders complain of sinecures, of improvements too aesthetic, of two men who do one man's work, in a corporation whose growing revenues have never yet felt the pressure of close economy." We have no sermon to preach from the several texts contained in this sentence, but would say one word about the matter of two men to do one man's work. We are not closely acquainted with the administration of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. There are, however, several railroads whose administration we do know about in a more or less superficial way, and we have yet to find a railroad in the United States that is not undermanned. So far as we can see, the one railroad system that comes nearest to being sufficiently manned is the Pennsylvania, and we venture to say that the somewhat ample force provided on that railroad is one of the most important elements of its economical and successful administration. So far as we can observe, every railroad runs too short handed for economy. The working staff is so absorbed in the routine of daily duty that it does not have time to study and think. Work is carried on in the old costly way because there is nobody who can sit down quietly and spend a few weeks or months carefully studying the elements of any given situation and devising a better way of handling the work. This is not a mere theoretical statement; it is the statement of a fact which often comes before us, and it is probable that nine out of ten general managers and general superintendents in the United States will confirm what we have said. It is often remarked that only the rich can be really economical, and it is a fact that only the adequately officered railroad can be worked with efficiency and economy. We should not wonder if it would be a good plan for the officers of the railroads to develop this theme a little in their reports, for the education of directors and stockholders.

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SOCIAL PROGRESS.

From the Detroit Journal.

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"Yes?"
"Oh, yes, indeed! She is snubbed by a better class of people each succeeding year."

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W. H. COMSTOCK, Brockville.
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The Sisters of Charity of St. Boniface, yielding to repeated requests from various quarters, have determined to undertake the management of a boarding-house for boys between the ages of six and twelve. Special halls will be set apart for them, where, under the care and supervision of the Grey Nuns, they will be prepared for their First Communion, while attending either the Preparatory Department of St. Boniface College or the classes of Provencher Academy. This establishment will be known as "Le Jardin de l'Enfance" (Kindergarten). The results already attained in similar institutions of the Order give every reason to hope that this arrangement will fill a long felt want.
Board and lodging will cost six dollars a month. For the boys who attend Provencher Academy there will be an additional charge of fifty cents a month; and for those who take music lessons, \$3 a month.
Bedding, mending and washing will be extra. The Sisters are willing to attend to these extras on terms to be arranged with them. The boys who attend the Preparatory Department of St. Boniface College will have to pay the tuition fees of the College.
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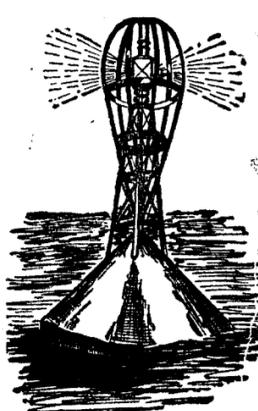
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