

picture more frightful than I have painted it. All that I might say, would convey but a very feeble idea of the reality."

II.

MISSIONS OF THE SHANTIES.

In the preceding chapter we have seen what Bishop Guignes did for the Indian Missions of Ottawa. We shall now review the part which he took in the work at the shanties, a work which he himself, in view of the important results obtained, called the "first of the diocese."

To do this we must go back some thirty years. We find M. Desautels, now one of the most distinguished members of the clergy of Montreal, then a humble but zealous missionary of the district of Ottawa, struggling with the greatest difficulties, and contending with all the apostolic energy which he is known to possess, against the obstacles which he had to encounter, and against which his generous efforts were ever directed.

"The spectacle presented by the shanties," he wrote to his superiors at Montreal, on the 3rd May, 1842, "is an afflicting one. But too often the most disgraceful crimes are common there; the most horrible blasphemy is there a daily amusement. Yet I would not say that there are not excellent people in the shanties; no, there are such; there are even shanties where there is none of this evil; but alas! how rare they are! and the number of these shanty-men is so great! But according to an estimate which has just been made, the number of persons employed during each season in the shanties of the Ottawa and its tributaries, exclusive of foremen, clerks, and keepers of provision shanties, would reach 5,000 men, of whom only about 250 do not belong to the Catholic Church. I am of opinion that much good might be done amongst those poor people; for the little that I have been able to do for them has, thank God, succeeded beyond anything that I could expect.

"But we must have priests in robust health, who could visit the shanties in the winter, and who, in the spring, would come and attend to the men at the Chaudiere and at the mouth of the Gatineau. I am well aware that there is nothing to be done in the shanties themselves; but there are always near them houses or outbuildings where it would be easy to collect them together; and I do not now think that any master would refuse to grant two or three days to his men for the purpose, when requested to do so by a priest."

Another missionary, the reverend Father Clement, wrote in Sept., 1849, to the *Mélanges Religieux* of Montreal: "Allow me to give you