

Northwest Review

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 1905.

Calendar for Next Week.

- 20—Tenth Sunday after Pentecost.
St. Joachim, father of the Blessed
Virgin. Solemnity of the Assump-
tion.
- 21—Monday—St. Jane Frances de
Chantal, Widow, Foundress of the
Order of the Visitation.
- 22—Tuesday—Octave of the Assump-
tion.
- 23—Wednesday—St. Philip Beniti, Con-
fessor. Vigil.
- 24—Thursday—St. Bartholomew,
Apostle.
- 25—Friday—St. Louis, King of France.
- 26—Saturday—St. Bernard, Abbot,
Founder of the Cistercians (trans-
ferred from the 20th inst).

MASSACRE ISLAND

As we publish this week, under the heading, "That Long Pull," an account of a visit to Massacre Island in the Lake of the Woods, and as His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface, accompanied by Father Blain, S.J. Hon. Judge Prud'homme and others, leaves next week to explore more thoroughly that historic scene of the violent death of Father Aulneau, S.J., Jean de la Verendrye and nineteen other white men in June 1736, we think it advisable to relate the little that is known of this terrible tragedy. Our account is taken chiefly from Miss Laut's "Pathfinders of the West," pages 210-214, with some additions based on information still more accurate than Miss Laut's carefully collected details.

When Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Verendrye, who ultimately discovered the Red River Valley, left Montreal on his second journey to the west, in 1735, he took with him as chaplain Father Aulneau, S.J., who had come from France to Canada the previous year and who was then thirty years of age. They reached the Lake of the Woods in September and spent the

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winter at Fort St. Charles, the ruins of which were discovered in September, 1902, by Mgr. Langevin, Rev. Dr. Beliveau, Father Blain, S.J., Fathers Beaudin and Thibaudeau, O.M.I., and Judge Prud'homme. During the winter of 1735-6 food was scanty. By spring De la Verendrye and his men were reduced to most slender rations. His sons Jean and Pierre arrived on June 2 from Fort Maurepas with the sad news that De la Jemmerie had died three weeks before on his way down to aid De la Verendrye. The latter decided to send back three canoes with his son Jean and nineteen voyageurs to Michilimackinac for food and powder. Father Aulneau, S.J., who was extremely conscientious, and who, not having seen a fellow priest for the greater part of a year, wished to go to confession, accompanied the boatmen. They embarked hurriedly on the 8th of June, 1736. The Crees had always been friendly, and when the boatmen landed on a sheltered island twenty miles from Fort St. Charles to camp for the night, no sentry was stationed. An early start was to be made in the morning and a furious pace to be kept up all the way to Lake Superior, and the voyageurs were presently sound asleep on the sand. Seventeen Sioux, who, having seen the camp-fire casting its long lines of light through the darkness had reconnoitred, stepped from their canoes and looked out upon the unsuspecting sleepers. Then the Indians as noiselessly slipped back to their canoes to carry word of their discovery to a band of marauders.

Something had occurred at Fort Charles without M. de la Verendrye's knowledge. Hilarious with their new possession of fire-arms, and perhaps, also, mad with the brandy of which Father Aulneau had complained, a few mischievous Crees had fired from the fort on wandering Sioux of the prairie. "Who—fire—on—us?" demanded the outraged Sioux.

"The French," laughed the Crees. The Sioux at once went back to a band of one hundred and thirty warriors. "Tigers of the Plains" the Sioux were called, and now the tigers' blood was up. They set out to slay the first white man seen. By chance, he was one Bourassa, commanding four men,

who had started from Fort St. Charles for the east on June 2. Taking him captive, they had tied him to burn him, when a slave squaw rushed out crying: "What would you do? This Frenchman is a friend of the Sioux! He saved my life! If you desire to be avenged, go farther on. You will find a camp of Frenchmen, among whom is the son of the white chief." The voyageur was at once unbound, and scouts scattered to find the white men. These were the Sioux who discovered the party asleep on the island, and immediately carried the news to the marauding warriors. Not one of the victims survived to tell the tale. But a few days later some Indians of the Sault (Sautaux) came upon the camping ground of the French. The heads of the white men lay on a beaver skin. All had been scalped. Father Aulneau was on his knees, as if in prayer. An arrow projected from his head. His left hand was on the earth, fallen forward, his right hand uplifted, invoking Divine aid. Young Jean de la Verendrye lay face down, his back hacked to pieces, a spear sunk in his waist, the headless body mockingly decorated with porcupine quills. "So died," writes Miss Laut, "one of the bravest of the young nobility in New France."

The Sautaux erected a cairn of stones over the bodies of the dead. All that was known of the massacre was vague Indian gossip. The Sioux reported that they had not intended to murder the priest, but a crazy brained fanatic had shot the fatal arrow and broken from restraint, weapon in hand.

Father du Jaunay, S.J., writing from Michilimackinac to Madame Aulneau, the bereaved mother, in 1739 (the Aulneau Collection, 1734-1745, edited by the Rev. A. E. Jones, S.J., Montreal, 1893), adds that "scarcely had the deed been perpetrated when a deafening clap of thunder struck terror into the whole band of Sioux. They fled the spot, believing that Heaven was incensed at what they had done." Father de Gonnor, S.J., relates that one of the Sautaux who found the bodies took possession of Father Aulneau's calotte (skull-cap), remarking that, poor as he was, he would not part with it for a thousand crowns.

It was the twentieth of June when the afflicted father got the first news of his son's death. On the 17th of September he sent six men to disinter the bodies of Father Aulneau and of Jean de la Verendrye, which he, on their return, interred in the chapel of Fort St. Charles with the heads of the other Frenchmen. Probably the reason why all the other bodies were not disinterred was the difficulty of transporting so many corpses in canoes. At any rate the bodies of the nineteen others are supposed to be still buried somewhere on the real scene of the massacre, which, by the way, is not what is generally marked as "Massacre Island" on the maps of the Lake of the Woods, but another island not marked on the maps and situate at 49° 17' N. latitude and 94° 46' W. longitude, a mile west of Bay Island and four miles north of Bear Island. A party of Jesuits, among whom was Father Blain, planted on the real scene of the massacre, in 1890, a large cross which is still standing. One of the objects of His Grace's exploring expedition next week is to discover, if possible, the bones of the nineteen Frenchmen buried there in 1736. Father Belcourt, a celebrated missionary, stationed at Pembina, visited this island in 1843, and gathered on the spot the tradition of the massacre from the lips of an Indian whose father had helped to prepare a sepulchre for Father Aulneau's remains. Father Belcourt says he saw a tumulus or mound marking the tragic spot. This mound must have been made by the six men who unearthed the bodies of Father Aulneau and Jean de la Verendrye and the heads of the others, for the process of disinterment must have scattered the cairn built by the Sautaux. All lovers of Canadian history will eagerly await the result of the exploring party's labors next week.

NO LEGALIZED UNION LABEL FOR CANADA

The efforts of the Labor Unions of Canada to secure legislation similar to that in force in the United States have not met with much encouragement, in fact, the results of advanced labor legislation across the line have given to the Canadian Parliament the very best reasons for refusing to pass the Union Label Bill.

The Unions never made a harder fight to have their label legalized than they did this session. This was necessary because the danger of the legislation is becoming more fully appreciated. But in spite of the favorable consideration labor legislation is always entitled to, and always receives, the Unions have again been given notice that Canada is a free country, and that class legislation of this nature will not be tolerated.

The Label Bill was before the Dominion Parliament from January 30th to June 27th, on which date the Banking and Commerce Committee decided to report to the Senate that it was not expedient to pass the Bill. For this five months the Labor Unions have been continuously represented at Ottawa, and they have spared no effort.

When it was before the House of Commons the discussion showed that it was regarded as dangerous, and its application was limited by making it apply only to incorporated unions. It did not, however, in its amended form, find favor with the Senate, and the Banking and Commerce Committee, after listening to the argument on behalf of the Unions, and on behalf of the

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