

From the U. S. Catholic Magazine.  
MISSION OF RED RIVER.

Letter of the Rev. Mr. Bellecourt to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Loras, Bishop of Dubuque.

PEMBINA, June 16, 1848.

MONSEIGNEUR.—Since my departure from Du-  
fouque, I have had no opportunity of writing to  
you, except from St. Paul's, where I was very  
much pressed for time. I left this place, on my  
way to Red river, with a Canadian journeyer; but  
after one day's travel one of our horses was so  
seriously injured by a blow from another horse,  
that I was obliged to send back the Canadian and  
his family to St. Paul's. The loss of their com-  
pany, however, was compensated by that of two  
half breeds, who had just arrived from Red river,  
and were to return without delay. We proceed-  
ed happily on our journey as far as the crossing  
of the river of Red Lake; but, finding that the  
stream had over-run its banks in consequence of  
the heavy rains, we were compelled to construct  
canoes of tarpawing for the transportation of  
our baggage, and to make a raft for the convey-  
ance of the waggons, harness, and other effects.  
But such was the rapidity of the current, that  
the men who had charge of the raft, perceiving  
that they could not conduct it safely to the shore,  
abandoned the whole concern, and reached the  
opposite bank by swimming. On this occasion I  
lost upwards of fifty dollars, besides the expense  
incurred by sending for the effects which had  
been saved, and which the loss of our vehicles  
had prevented us from bringing with us. For-  
tunately, we experienced no other disaster, al-  
though the crossings, at all the other rivers, as  
far as Pembina, were as difficult as that to which  
I have just alluded.

The news of my design to establish a mission  
in this place having preceded me, a large num-  
ber of men or half breeds had collected to-  
gether, and on my arrival received me with an  
indescribable joy. Having left behind me at the  
river of the Red Lake, as already stated, the  
requisites for celebrating mass, I immediately  
set out for the mission of St. Paul, on the As-  
sainboin river, to get the articles which I left  
there last autumn. On the 6th of June, the  
feast day of the bishop of Joliotopolis, I happened  
to be at his residence, and I stated to him that  
Pembina was likely to become an important post  
for the interests of religion; that it would be  
easy from this point to evangelize the surround-  
ing nations, and that a number of missionaries  
might find here a wide field for the exercise of  
their zeal. He seems to be much pleased with  
the idea of this missionary station. A numerous  
band of Santeux were now waiting for me, and  
you would have supposed, from the reception  
they gave me, that they were Christians; but  
they are all infidels, and emigrants from the Red  
Lake. I was acquainted with them, and they  
were much attached to me; but, having no juris-  
diction within the limits of the United States, I  
have never undertaken to instruct them on reli-  
gious matters.

There is at this place a population of nearly  
five hundred souls, and before next autumn it  
will be upwards of one thousand. I rejoice in  
being located here, for I have every reason to  
believe that God will deign to make use even of  
so feeble an instrument as myself for the glory  
of his name. The language spoken here is the  
Santeux. Some indeed understand French, but  
the Santeux is universally used. I intend to  
establish a school, in which both languages will  
be taught, together with the catechism. Mea-  
sures will be taken also for the erection of a  
chapel. As a temporary affair, we are about  
putting up a shed, made of the bark of trees.

Oh! how I wish that those good people of  
Paris and Lyons, who so often and so generously  
devote their means to the propagation of the  
faith, could witness the happiness which these  
poor creatures around me experience in having a  
priest residing among them! How rejoiced  
would they be at the prospect of the good which  
their charities might accomplish, if they would  
only appropriate a small portion of them to this  
distant mission! The rule which I can com-  
mand for this important object, was contributed  
by some generous-hearted Canadians. Our  
expenses are enormous, besides the necessity of  
transporting everything in carts, for a distance  
of six hundred miles, and over a desert which it  
is very difficult to traverse. Have the goodness,  
Monseigneur, to use your influence with the So-  
ciety for the propagation of the faith, that they  
may turn their attention to this portion of your  
work. Next year I shall have the assistance of  
two priests, whom I selected among the clergy  
of Montreal, and I flatter myself that your diocese

will possess in them two generous apostles. I  
shall probably locate them among the Mandans,  
to whom I intend to write by an early opportu-  
nity. I have already notified these Indians, that  
the period of their happiness was drawing near.  
It afforded me great pleasure to learn that they  
had concluded a peace with the neighbouring  
nations. The way seems to be opening for the  
instruction of this people. Eternal thanks to  
the supreme Shepherd, who thus designs to  
bring all these tribes into his fold! I will report  
to you whatever success may attend my efforts  
in this new field of labor. Your solicitude for  
the salvation of these Indian nations makes it  
unnecessary for me to commend to your kind at-  
tention either them or their poor missionary,  
Your devoted priest,  
G. S. BELLECOURT.

P. S. Have the goodness, Monseigneur, to  
furnish me, as soon as possible, with the most  
ample facilities. It would be well also to obtain  
for me powers from the bishop of Milwaukee, in  
case I should need them. These facilities, with  
such as I have received from the bishop of Ju-  
liopolis, would enable me to exert, without any  
restriction, my feeble capabilities.

BELGIUM.

We find in the London Daily News of Oct.  
20, the following remarks on Belgium. It is un-  
necessary to remark that what the writer attri-  
butes to King Leopold is in fact due to the sober  
and intelligent principle of the great body of the  
people, and this principle they have learned from  
the Catholic Church, to which the great majority  
of the people are so profoundly attached:

"Amidst the political convulsions of the con-  
tinent there is much to be shocked at and to  
shun, but little to envy or imitate. In the latter  
rare distinction one country stands pre-eminent.  
That one is Belgium; and we should gladly see  
the attention of all Europe, even for a short time,  
centered on that point. The eyes of the world,  
like those of individuals, are too often turned to-  
wards objects of meretricious interest. The  
startling and strange are far more attractive than  
the calm and wise. And, putting this morbid  
longing for excitement in its very best aspect,  
men are more prone to gaze on the dangers they  
should avoid than the examples they should fol-  
low. It is thus that the conflicts in Paris, Nap-  
les, or Frankfort, have greater fascination than  
the *faits* of Brussels. But the latter, after fur-  
nishing four days of pleasure to large multitudes,  
carrying their enthusiasm to the utmost verge of  
sane enjoyment, speak a loud and deep lesson to  
countries of more general importance, but, in the  
present state of things, of far less consequence.

"We will not stop to combat the too common  
notion that the influence of nations must be pro-  
portioned to their geographical extent. We  
need not dive into historical research for proofs  
to refute that delusion. The Holland of two cen-  
turies back and England at this day are speci-  
mens enough of the narrow limits which suffice  
for a nation's power when the principle of union  
prevails. And even while we write, Belgium,  
under theegis of that principle, shows a front  
of constitutional force which frowns to shame the  
feebleness of population seven or eight times  
greater than hers. While France and Germany  
seem breaking up into the primitive chaos of so-  
cial existence, Belgium, small, compact, and  
firm, shows a solid mass of patriotism, ready to  
meet, and certain to repel, the rush of hostile in-  
fluences, come they from within or from without.  
When the revolution of February threatened to  
run not over Europe, Belgium was the first and  
nearest country reckoned on for sympathy, if not  
for conquest. The world, ignorant of the old  
traditional antipathy of the Belgian people  
against France, looked with certainty to their  
adoption of the institutions so hurriedly and loosely  
raised on the broken throne of Louis Philippe.  
And it is a most important fact that the dis-  
couragement given by the Belgians to the emis-  
saries of the Provisional Government of Paris,  
and the prompt defeat of the band of ruffians on  
the outskirts of the Belgian soil, gave a decisive  
check to the efforts of that party which still fills  
the rest of Europe with horror and affliction.

"From the day that saw that furling hope of  
humanity's refuse dispersed at the village, bear-  
ing the bizarre but appropriate name of *Risquons  
Tout*, the Belgian people, rousing as from a le-  
thargy of prosperous inaction, started into new  
life, and commenced in real earnest the work of  
national consolidation, and this not merely by the  
assembling of a numerous military force, by the  
arming of their fortresses, or the enrolment of

their civic soldiery. A bold irruption by a hos-  
tile army might have overwhelmed those insuf-  
ficient defences. But the Belgians did far better  
than all this. They upheld their crippled finan-  
ces by the prompt payment of a large forced  
loan, they roused the national mind, smothered  
provincial rivalries, and instinctively adopting  
the most obvious measure of safety, they unani-  
mously rallied round the King, their true and  
never failing tower of strength. Much as the  
despots of Europe owed to Leopold for his ac-  
ceptance of the throne, which, in 1831, saved the  
continent from a bloody struggle and a doubtful  
fate, more is assuredly now due to him by the  
constitutional monarchies, whose best chance ex-  
ists in following the example which he and his  
subjects are shown forth. Had the marauders  
of *Risquons Tout* succeeded, in March last, to  
force the juices of Belgian neutrality, where  
would the sea of red republicanism have found  
limits for its ensanguined waves?—Would not  
Holland be now submerged in a flood more dis-  
astrous than if the living waters had borne  
down her dykes and swept across her surface?  
Would not Prussia and the lesser German states  
have seen the Rhine outswollen by the fierce  
tide of anarchy and blood that would have  
swamped them all? And what would now be  
the actual situation of England herself, were the  
unchecked hordes of France marshalled in  
threatening attitude or even in dubious amity  
on the banks and at the mouth of the Scheldt?  
Belgium, we do not hesitate to say, is at this  
moment, next to England, the surest bulwark of  
constitutional liberty. A good position. And  
while she may safely look to seek the unquiet  
mind of France turning its views towards the  
mountains of the south, less difficult to pass, or  
mayhap to appropriate than the plains of Fran-  
ders and Brahan, we on our part, should give  
no niggard heed of applause to the new formed  
barrier of European well being."

EDUCATION OF CATHOLIC CHILDREN.

In some of our last numbers, we have noticed,  
as occasion has been presented to us, the flour-  
ishing condition and the encouraging prospects  
of several of the educational institutions which  
this diocese possesses. Thanks be to Divine  
Providence, to the zeal and exertions of the Bish-  
ops and of the Clergy of Kentucky, this diocese  
is now rich in institutions of this kind; and  
parents of every class and rank have thus an  
ample and fine opportunity of procuring to their  
children a proper education. It is for them to  
appreciate its duty, to avail themselves of it, and  
to discharge conscientiously the momentous ob-  
ligation which they have contracted. Their  
children are next to themselves, they are in the  
sight of God responsible for them, and they will  
be asked a severe account of what they have  
done or omitted doing for the eternal welfare of  
their children, as well as for their own. They  
must therefore take a proper care of them—  
They owe it to God, they owe it to society,  
they owe it to themselves, and the consolations  
which they fondly anticipate will be in propor-  
tion to the cares bestowed upon their offspring,  
whilst they are young, and to the sacrifices they  
make for them. But it is evident that the obli-  
gation on the part of parents to take a proper care  
of their children, implies that of procuring them  
an education suited to their condition, and above  
all a Christian education.

It is particularly on this state that the future  
destinies of the child depend. Generally speak-  
ing, he will be in his manhood, and in his old  
age, what the education of his youth has made  
him—virtuous or vicious, according as he has  
received a good or a bad education.

To procure to children a good, a Christian  
education, it is necessary to place them in insti-  
tutions, and to send them to schools in which this  
education is given, and let them enjoy that pre-  
cious advantage during a proper length of time.  
We may say as a general thing, that the teach-  
ings received at home from parents, are not suffi-  
cient, and that it is not enough to send the chil-  
dren to school only until they know how to read,  
and to write, on the ground that they can after-  
wards receive sufficient religious instructions at  
home. Some parents, particularly in this coun-  
try, where there is no school at hand, find it ex-  
pensive to send their children to distant boarding  
institutions; and the poor may find it hard to  
be deprived for three or four years of the weekly  
earnings of their children even when they can  
send them to gratuitous schools.  
This, however, should in no way deter them,  
and they should look to the result, to the

happiness of their children, to the great advanta-  
ges that will accrue to their souls, to their daugh-  
ters, and to themselves, from the sacrifices they  
make, to the merit they have in the sight of Al-  
mighty God and before society, by their zeal and  
their exertions; and to the sorrow and bitter-  
ness they would prepare to themselves by their  
negligence and their wrong spirit of economy—  
Parents, at their death, can leave to their chil-  
dren nothing so precious as a truly Christian  
education; and far better would it be for these  
to be poor with a religious education, than to be  
rich without it.

For us, Catholics, which are the institutions  
and the schools in which our children can re-  
ceive an education truly worthy of them—a re-  
ligious education! Catholic schools, Catholic  
colleges, and Catholic academies alone.—Be-  
cause in these alone they can imbibe the princi-  
ples and maxims; in these alone they can ac-  
quire a knowledge of the sublime dogmas; in  
these alone they can be trained to the practice of  
the precepts—our holy religion. In scarcely  
any others would they receive even moral in-  
structions, and in some their morals would be in  
danger. Catholic parents, we entreat you to  
remember this. Hence would it be most desira-  
ble that there should be in every congregation  
in the diocese, if possible, a Catholic school to  
which the poor as well as the rich could send  
their children; and indeed this should be sought  
even at great sacrifices on the part of the Catho-  
lic population. All Catholic parents, therefore,  
should send their children to Catholic schools, if  
it be in their power; and if they neglect doing  
it, they do not discharge as they ought to do, the  
important obligation of taking a proper care of  
their children, because they do not give them a  
proper opportunity of receiving the education  
which becomes them. Some unreflecting parents  
do not, perhaps, see any important difference in  
the result, whether their children frequent the  
city day schools or Catholic day schools, so long  
as they have them under their own care; but we  
know it to be great. We know it is so even in  
places where they can attend divine service  
every Sunday and festival day, and receive once  
a week catechetical instructions; and we know  
it to be deplorably so in country places which  
are visited but once or twice a month by the cle-  
rgymen. The few children (and we rejoice to  
say they are very few) who do not frequent our  
Catholic schools are found at the ages of twelve,  
fifteen, and sixteen, totally unprepared for their  
first communion. They know not their cate-  
chism, they know not their prayers, which others  
know at the age of eight or ten. There is no  
piety in them, no spirit of religion; and you  
begin to perceive in them something worldly,  
a pride, an indifference towards the Church, a  
spirit of insubordination, a love for amusements,  
which are not found in those who are educated  
by Catholic teachers, and which seems to fore-  
tell what but too often happens—their falling off  
from their religion.—*Louisville Catholic Advocate.*

"It is characteristic of heretics not to confine  
themselves long to the errors which caused their  
departure from the Church, but daily to grow  
worse, and by adopting worse errors to split into  
many sects, so as by contention and confusion  
to be subdivided among themselves."—*St. Gre-  
gory.*

CONFIRMATION.—On last Sunday morning at  
8 o'clock, the Right Rev. Bishop Hughes, ad-  
ministered the Sacrament of Confirmation, in St.  
Mary's Church, to upwards of two hundred per-  
sons, of whom twelve were converts to our holy  
faith. The Bishop also preached at half-past  
10 o'clock, to a large audience, in his usual im-  
pressive and happy style.—*Truth Teller.*

SISTERS OF CHARITY.—HOSPITALS.—We find  
in a French paper, a statement which shows the  
great advantage of entrusting hospitals and all  
institutions of the same kind to the care of the  
Sisters of Charity.

The National Establishment for the insane, at  
Charenton, near Paris, had been conducted by  
persons hired, until about two years ago, when  
the Government placed it under the management  
of the Sisters of Charity. From the annual re-  
port of the state of the house, it is seen that,  
since the Sisters have the care of it, the expenses  
are every year about 30,000 francs less than  
before, although the number of patients is  
greater. And yet the establishment is found  
far better kept, and its inmates are far better  
attended. What large sums of public money  
would be saved in this country, by placing our  
hospitals and our asylums in the hands of the  
Sisters of Charity.—*Catholic Advocate.*