

THE PEOPLE OF MY MISSIONS.

(By Rev. Charles Serodes, O.M.I., in the *Extension*.)



HIS missionary is a Mexican, not by birth, but by vocation. He left his "douce France" five years ago. Since then he has been jogging along with the Mexican people of this border.

To make me the right kind of a Mexican missionary, it seems, Providence wanted to keep me moving on, as He does my people. So I have been running for a good while, not in the Rio Grande waters, but along its crooked shores.

Last year Obédience tried to settle me in Del Rio. Here I found a 90 x 35 ft. adobe church, recently built, though not paid for. You know already about this church which, on the day of its dedication, was called Maria de Guadalupe, for you gave \$250.00 towards reducing its indebtedness. And for your kindness we will be eternally grateful. Poor Mother Church! She has to feed, in my district, more than 5,000 souls, all spiritually weak and hungry. I wish you, dear Fathers, could drop into Del Rio some Sunday. Rosy-cheeked babes, "Grandma" type widows, patriarchal grandfathers, black-veiled mothers, full-bearded men; neat, brown-faced boys; black-eyed, black-haired girls,—you will see them all represented in large numbers around their well loved church. Many, too many, in the parish, did not yet approach this tender-hearted Mother; but before long, such is our hope, their number will diminish at least in the proportion that it has lately.

Much could be said about the general religious feelings and practices of our people, but please hold me excused if to-day I give you rather a bird's-eye view of our missionary field and work. Some other day I intend to entertain you and the *Extension* family on the moral, social, and religious character of the Mexican of this border.

I suppose you would be pleased to know something about Del Rio and vicinity. I wish I were an artist, to picture all the beauties of this Texan oasis in which Del Rio is growing. I went several times up on the roof of our church and looked at the many marvels which the Creator has bestowed on this tongue of land. Just at my feet, looking south, runs San Felipe creek, the clear water of which has been partly drawn off through several canals, to irrigate fields where grow sugar-cane; also rice and some vegetables. Across the