

NORTHWEST REVIEW

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At St. Boniface, Man.

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Northwest Review.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 3 1899.

CURRENT COMMENT

"La Vérité" of Quebec, after mentioning, as we did some time ago, that Mgr. Martinelli, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, denied any knowledge of any recent decree permitting the burial of Catholic Freemasons, adds that Archbishops Ryan, of Philadelphia, Kater, of Milwaukee, and Kain, of St. Louis have repeated the same denial, and remarks upon the silliness of those who imagine that Leo XII., who has been more unsparing than any of his predecessors in denouncing Freemasonry, would now stultify his past record. Evidently this decree is, like the bogus encyclical to the Chilian hierarchy, a pure invention. The cablegram people seem to have a mania for these Papal inventions. Still more recent than the supposed Freemason decree is the rumor that the Holy Father was preparing an encyclical against anarchism, followed by a denial based on the well known fact that Leo XII. has spoken his mind about anarchism plainly enough already in several of his encyclicals.

The Gordon Memorial College at Khartoum which General Lord Kitchener is trying to found is a project that ought to be frowned upon by Catholics. The memory of Gordon is a very fine thing to preserve: he was a real hero; but the way in which his avenger wishes to preserve it is distinctly unchristian. We are informed that not only will it not be a Christian college but that the religion of Mohammed will be taught therein. Consequently, whosoever contributes to the fund opened on the 19th ult. by Major Drummond, secretary to the Governor General of Canada, will be co-operating in the spread and maintenance of an antichristian sect. True, Major Drummond, in his letter to the Montreal Star, merely says that "there will be no interference with the religion of the inhabitants"; but we know, from British experience in India, what that euphemism means. Under pretext of liberty every facility will be given for incul-

cating the tenets of the False Prophet.

This project of General Kitchener's is purely and simply a bluff to choke off Mr. François Deloncle's proposal to establish French schools at Khartoum and Fashoda. Though this proposal is dismissed by the "Courrier des Etats-Unis" as a personal fad of Mr. Deloncle's ("cette fantaisie tout individuelle"), it looms very large in the eyes of the English who are quite aware, as this gentleman reminds them, that "France has been, for more than a hundred years, the educator of the East, and particularly of Egypt, while there issue, from her schools, every year more than six thousand Egyptians who speak and write French," and that "there were French schools in Khartoum before 1884." Moreover, the difference is all in favor of the French schools and colleges which, being in the hands of Catholic religious orders, undermine by historical Christianity the fictitious basis of Islamism.

Quite a number of people will live through this year 1899 under the fond persuasion that they are witnessing the last year of the nineteenth century. Countless newspaper hints and innumerable advertisements, all taking it for granted that the 99th year of this century is its last, keep up the curious delusion. One hardly knows how to account for such a manifest blunder. It ought to be plain as a pike-staff that 1900 is the hundredth year of the nineteenth century and that that century is not complete till its hundredth year is over. The mistake may perhaps have arisen from a confusion between cardinal and ordinal numbers. People forget that Jan. 1st, 99, is only the first day of the 99th year, which, though it will be labelled 99 (i. e. the 99th year) for a twelve-month, will not be completely and truly 99 years till Dec. 31st is finished. Similarly, a centenary enters upon his hundredth year as soon the 99th is completed, but he is not really a hundred years old till his hundredth year is ended. This era will be 1900 years old just as the clock strikes midnight between Dec. 31, 1900 and Jan. 1, 1901.

BEGINNINGS OF ST. MARY'S PARISH, AND OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN WINNIPEG.

As in this year 1899, the Catholic Institutions of Winnipeg enter the thirtieth year of their existence, it may be interesting to record some facts and data connected with their inception. Up to 1869 the English speaking Catholics on the west side of Red River, or Fort Garry Settlement, opposite St. Boniface, belonged to and attended the cathedral parish of that town. Their children frequented, as regularly as possible, the St. Boniface schools. The crossing of the river was attended with great difficulties except in winter. The late Archbishop (then Bishop) Taché, feeling their awkward situation, desired to give them church and school facilities on their side of the river. But his resources were small, and he had not an inch of land on the other side.

On the 1st of May '69 a Protestant school was to be opened

in the Settlement by Archdeacon McLean, the late Bishop of Saskatchewan, for the children of his more numerous flock. Bishop Taché desired to give his little flock the same advantage. Moreover, the Governor of the Colony, Hon. Mr. MacTavish, insisted on his Lordship opening a Catholic school simultaneously with the other, as an easier means of having a separate one for his own children.

At the end of April, Bishop Taché sent Father McCarthy, an Irish Oblate, whom he had ordained priest at St. Boniface the 24th January previous, and who is at present at St. Mary's Church, across the river to find a place to rent temporarily, for a school. All suitable and available places in the village were held by persons of such strong anti-Catholic feeling, that the sight of a priest would shut off any arrangement. The Rev. Father called on a young Irish Catholic merchant (Mr. Kennedy), who was popular among the settlers, to see if he could help him in the matter. Mr. Kennedy, full of zeal for the cause, undertook the task of getting a place. He went to a friendly neighbour of his, William Drever, Jr., to rent two rooms in his house, (the present old cottage standing next to St. Mary's Academy (N. Dame Street East). Mr. Drever had rented the east half of the house to Mr. Lusted, (former carriage maker), both landlord and tenant being very pronounced Protestants. Mr. Drever hesitated, and inquired of Mr. Kennedy his object in renting the rooms, in spite of his irreproachable standing in the community. Mr. Kennedy said he would not press his request as Mr. Drever seemed to fear him, and added jokingly that there was nothing very strange in a young bachelor looking for rooms. However, Mr. Drever gave him the keys of the west side of the house for six months, for which Mr. Kennedy paid the rent in advance. Having this place he returned to Fr. McCarthy with the keys, who immediately placed them in the hands of Bishop Taché. His Lordship made known his project of opening a school on the west bank of the river, to the Sisters of Charity of St. Boniface, and requested them to take charge of it. This devoted community accepted the arduous task. Father McCarthy lost no time in notifying parents in the locality of the good news. Sisters St. Theresa (at present in St. Boniface) and the late Sr. McDougall were appointed by their Superiors to inaugurate the school.

On the morning of the 1st of May '69 these two ladies started on foot for Mr. Drever's cottage. At that time they had to cross the Red River above the junction, then cross the Assiniboine, and then walk from Fort Garry to their destination, often in mud and water. (Sidewalks are a modern institution). After the day's school work they returned home to St. Boniface. Thus these two sisters had the same route to walk twice every school day in fine or bad weather. The other Sisters who replaced the two first named, during the five years the Grey Nuns kept this school, were Sisters Curran, (now in Montreal), Sr. Allard (Sister of Very Rev. Fr. J. Allard) now in the U. S., Sister O'Brien

(now at St. Boniface), the late Sr. Lafrance, and the late Sr. Mary Catherine Davitt. We are happy to record the names of these ladies, heroines of charity, and pioneers of Catholicity in Fort Garry Settlement, now Winnipeg.

The difficulties the Sisters had to contend with in conducting the school were increased by the bigoted incivility of the occupants of the house, who deprived these ladies and their pupils of access thereto through the front entrance. Other indignities were borne patiently by the nuns, till Mr. Drever offered to Bishop Taché the purchase of the whole house, and lots belonging to it. This purchase was willingly accepted by the Bishop and effected in the beginning of the following month of June. The Sisters, being thus proprietors of the house, took a Catholic revenge on their fellow tenant persecutors, by allowing them to remain, rent free, till they could conveniently procure lodgings elsewhere.

When these tenants left, the house was rearranged to serve as a chapel as well as a school. Here then was the origin of St. Mary's parish. The Bishop, desiring to inaugurate this first regular place of worship in Fort Garry village before he started for the Ecumenical Council in Rome, celebrated himself the first mass in the same house on the 15th of June 1869. His Lordship further constituted this same chapel the place of worship for the people on that side of the river, under the pastoral charge of Rev. Fr. McCarthy, who celebrated the second and every daily mass thenceforward, while residing at the Bishop's palace. Owing to the disturbances caused by the Riel insurrection in November following, it was not possible to carry out all the Sunday religious services. It was only in August 1870, after the arrival of Col. Wolseley's expedition, that regular Sunday services were resumed. Rev. Fr. McCarthy continued to be pastor of the new parish of St. Mary's till September 1872 when he was transferred to Lake Manitoba, and was replaced by Rev. Fr. J. B. Bauduin O. M. I., who in 1874 was replaced by Rev. Fr. Lacombe, O. M. I.

Through inadvertence an error, corrected since, appeared in the columns of our contemporary "Le Manitoba" of Xmas, saying that Rev. Fr. Lacombe was the founder of the parish. From the foregoing authentic records this is easily rectified.

There are many other interesting incidents connected with those early times, which we intend some day to relate.

WRITTEN CONFESSIONS.

Missionary Record, O. M. I.

In a letter to a LES MISSONS CATHOLIQUES, Father Bonnard, of the Saskatchewan Vicariate, relates a touching incident of his missionary career. An epidemic that had been raging in the glacial regions wherein his lot is cast had prevented him for some weeks from visiting one of the villages entrusted to his spiritual care. When he was finally enabled to harness dogs to his sledge and visit the village in question, he found sickness and death reigning supreme. The missionary writes: "I found eleven

bodies stretched out on the cabin mats, rigid in death, with the temperature 40 degrees below zero. I approached the remains to recite a prayer, and found, to my astonishment, that in the right hand of each corpse was clasped a little package—a piece of birch-bark folded in two. On the outside was written: 'Only our Father [the priest] may read the enclosed lines.' It was a confession. My poor people, feeling death approach and unable to confess their sins to God's minister, had written them on a piece of bark—the papyrus of these Northern latitudes. At the bottom of each sheet was some such request as, 'Pray, Father, say a Mass for the repose of my soul. I leave to you, in gratitude for this service, a beaver skin.' &c.

MR. NICHOLAS BURKE.

Mr. Nicholas Burke, of Burke Bros., Winnipeg, died on the last day of the year, fortified by the last rites of Holy Church. The funeral took place yesterday morning, Jan. 2nd. The Requiem Mass was sung in St. Mary's Church by Rev. Father Guillet, O. M. I., and the Libera by Rev. Father Dandurand, of St. Charles, an intimate friend of the late Mr. Burke. Rev. Father McCarthy conducted the services at the grave at St. Boniface cemetery. Wreaths were sent by the employees of the firm to which Mr. Burke belonged, from the Cercle Canadien, from Kilgour, Rimer & Co., and Mr. and Mrs. Chevrier. The pallbearers were J. Dumouchel, C. A. Gareau, H. A. Russell, H. L. Chabot, A. Gareau, and Jos. Bernier. The deceased came to this country 18 years ago from St. Jean Port Joli, Quebec. He conducted a general merchandise business at St. Charles for many years, moving to this city about five years ago. His devoted family has our warmest sympathy in their bereavement.

MR. M. A. KEROACK.

St. Boniface mourns the loss of one of its most respected citizens, Mr. M. A. Keroack, who died this morning after a painful illness borne with Christian fortitude and comforted by the last sacraments. He was 59 years of the age and leaves a large family. The funeral will take place next Thursday morning.

A PRETTY GOOD WORLD.

This world's a pretty good sort of world,
Taking it all together.
In spite of the grief and sorrow we meet,
In spite of the gloomy weather,
There are friends to love, and hopes to cheer,
And plenty of compensation
For every ache, for those who make
The best of the situation.
There are quiet nooks for lovers of books,
With nature in happy union;
There are cool retreats from the noon-tide heats,
Where souls may have sweet communion;
And if there's a spot where the sun shines not,
There's always a lamp to light it;
And if there's wrong, we know ere long
That the God above will right it.
So it is not, for us to make a fuss
Because of life's sad mischances,
Nor to wear ourselves out to bring about
A change in our circumstances
For this world's a pretty good sort of world,
And He to whom we are debtor
Appoints our place and supplies the grace
To help us to make it better.
—Josephine Pollard.

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