



Letter from the Priest at Dawson City.

The New York CATHOLIC NEWS of last week says that the Very Rev. J. B. René, S.J., Prefect Apostolic of Alaska and Superior of the Jesuits there, is now in New York on his way to Rome. After quoting his plan of an agricultural settlement between the Yukon and Kuskokwin Rivers, the NEWS continues as follows:

Since Father René has been in this city he has received a letter from the Rev. William H. Judge, S.J., who is stationed at Dawson. The letter is dated Nov. 15, and therefore was two months on its way. Father René is quartered at Juneau, which is 1,000 miles from Dawson, and is the nearest Jesuit mission to that place. Some extracts from the letter, which are quoted, prove the truth of the newspaper stories as to the difficulty of getting food, and the fabulous prices paid for the necessaries of life. Father Judge is the only priest at Dawson, and his letter gives an idea of the immense amount of work devolving upon him. He has built a chapel, a house and a hospital within the last six months, and all are under his direct superintendence. Father René secured some Sisters for the hospital in Dawson, but, as Fr. Judge's letter shows, they were forced to give up the journey until spring. His letter is an interesting one. He says:

"The first and most important news is, that the Sisters did not get here, they came up on the Alice as far as Fort Yukon, but the water was too low for the boat to pass, and they, with Brother Cunningham, returned to Nulato, as I have heard, or perhaps to Holy Cross. In fact, I received nothing from below except mail matter, not even Mass wine. But, thank God, I have enough of that, although you might doubt of its sweetness, I think it is all right, as we have had the same kind several years, and Mr. McKannon's son tells me it is the same as the Bishop uses in Victoria.

"I was forced to open the hospital on the 20th of August, and have had an average of about twenty sick persons ever since. At first I took temporary help, but when I found the Sisters were not coming I arranged a permanent staff of cooks, nurses etc., and everything is working as well as could be expected. All the sick are most agreeably surprised to find so much comfort, and all are loud in their praise of the good we are doing and the great blessing the hospital is proving to the camp.

"The steamer's not being able to get up on the last trip has left provisions very short here. Many have gone down the river, not having food for the winter, and many are paying as much as \$100 for a sack of flour, and it is hard to get it even for that. Many also intend to go out on the ice, but I fear some of them will perish. I need not tell you how they have been pouring in all the summer and fall, as you see them passing Juneau, and they are still coming every day. We see by the papers and letters that the whole world is excited over the place and that tens of thousands intend coming next spring. There is only one thing spoken of here, and that is 'grub.' For the last two months every one has been trying to secure enough of the essentials for the year, but many luxuries (?) which I ex-

pected, in case the boats came, will be wanting.

"The hospital building is finished except the doors for the rooms, which we had no lumber to make, but we have curtains which do equally well, if not better. The Sisters' house adjoining the hospital building, is also finished and in use. The church is also finished, but the windows are not made yet, nor is it lined, but we are using it, having windows covered with white muslin. We cannot line it till spring, as there is no stuff to be had at the stores. My house adjoining the church is also closed in and being used for carpenter shop, laundry and quarters for those working around the hospital.

"I had a slight attack of chills a few weeks ago, but was not laid up at all. I have not missed Mass a single day nor been prevented from attending to my duties. There are a great many Catholics here; we have from 75 to 100 at Mass every Sunday. We have high Mass and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament every Sunday, and a fair number of communions day by day during the week. Of course I have to superintend everything about the hospital myself, seeing that the doctors' orders are carried out in regard to medicine, food, etc. This, together with the finances and the duties of the priesthood, doesn't leave much spare time. I hope to keep everything in order until you come in the spring, when, no doubt, the Sisters will be up and some good father will come to help me or replace me, as you may think best.

"Humbly recommending myself and my work to your holy sacrifices and prayers, I remain your humble servant in Christ,

"WILLIAM H. JUDGE, S.J."

Mexico's Progress.

Two Protestant Views of Catholic Mexico.

The New World.

An incident which occurred recently in the Ohio State Penitentiary has given rise to a good deal of discussion regarding the present condition of Mexico in the papers of that state, and more especially in the weekly Catholic papers.

Religious trouble is always rife in the Ohio penitentiary. Freedom of worship is denied the Catholic prisoners, who are forced to attend services conducted by the state paid chaplain. While this man, who is named Winget, confined himself to expounding the Gospel—with what ability or effect on his compulsory audience, we will not stop to question—perhaps he might be tolerated; but when he set himself to calumniate the teachings of the religion professed by some of his hearers, he reached his limit, and the convicts hissed. In the face of certain punishment, they hissed and hissed until, as the Columbus papers state, he was obliged to sit down with his sermon unfinished. The address in question was delivered Dec. 19, and recounted his impressions of Mexico, through which he recently took a flying trip. Knowing that before him were many professing the same faith as the Mexicans, that they were helpless to utter one word in denial of his falsehoods and insults, the Ohio preacher, in disregard of the common instincts of a gentleman, to say nothing of the charity that is supposed to especially characterize a disciple of the Savior, and which should have restrained him, even if his statements had been true, openly declared: "We visited eight states and the degradation and superstition we witnessed appalled us. * * * I tell you I was glad that I was born in free America, and that the civilization I knew was of a refining and Christian (?) character. The difference, brethren, in the two civilizations is that between superstition and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Mexicans know nothing about the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Another Ohioan, General Brinkerhoff, president of the National Prison Congress, and a member of the Ohio Board of State Charities, also took a trip through Mexico at the same time with Chaplain Winget, and as a refutation of the latter's ignorant and bigoted statements, hear what President Brinkerhoff, whose simple word will outweigh the other's oath, has to say on the Mexican, his life, civilization and reform works:

"Mexico was a revelation to me, as indeed it was to the majority of our party. We labored under a wrong impression of the country, as do also the great bulk of the American people. What we found was surprisingly and interestingly unique and instructive. The conditions were entirely different from what we had expected, and the country as a whole at no point what had been generally promised. Americans regard Mexicans solely from the peon standpoint, forgetting entirely that these same peons are the native Indians and that the enterprising, advancing, intelligent public of to-day are the descendants of the early Spaniards, who risked all in claiming this wondrous country as their own.

"The peons of Mexico represent in their different sections the unlettered native Indians, whom the Spanish treated vastly different from the plan adopted by the English. We killed our Indians, utterly wiped them off the face of the earth, until now we have yet among us but a handful in comparison with the English-speaking population of the United States. On the contrary, the Spaniard protected the Indians of his country, intermarried with them and perpetuated their early friendships. The result was a bond of family and fraternal union that will never be broken; a bond that is civilizing a savage race; that has engrafted a Christian religion upon the native superstitions, and which will finally evolve from a chaos of savageness one of the grandest nations on the globe.

"The new federal penitentiary at the City of Mexico, which is to be opened the coming spring, is the finest prison, undoubtedly, upon American soil to-day. In this I found one of the greatest surprises of the trip. In its every appointment, principle and object, the prison is pronounced in advance of anything that we can offer to-day. It is a creation of Diaz. The commission under whose recommendation the prison was built was appointed by the president. I have been all over the United States and western Europe, visiting the principal prisons of each, and, barring the St. Petersburg prison, the new Mexican penitentiary leads them all in point of modern convenience, arrangement and objects to be accomplished. The intent is on the radiate order of advancement of prisoners by grade until they have reached a point where parole is advisable. If carried out in administration and management upon the lines indicated in construction, the prison will be, beyond all question, supremely in advance of anything in America to-day. Another but a more elaborate and complete prison, much upon the same plan, is being built in the city of Pueblo.

"Mexico is one of the most promising countries on the globe for industrial investment, and in every line of industry and commerce there is lively and decided advancement. Cotton and woolen goods are being manufactured there and in every line Mexico is increasing her home output. Manufacturing in clay and iron is increasing and coal has been found in abundance. No country has approached it in railroad building in the last five years. At all points Mexico is advancing and in no wise more than in the matters where the government interest is at stake. Just now work that is to cost an aggregate of \$50,000,000 is being done on the harbor at Vera Cruz, while at all the seaport towns similar improvement, though upon a smaller scale, is being made. Subsidies are paid upon each mile of railroad constructed and development of every sort is substantially encouraged. I am full of Mexico and her wonderful future and I believe honestly that it is the one country for the man who has some modest capital and an unbridled energy."

The State Journal of Columbus, referring to the appearance of Chaplain Winget in the pulpit of the penitentiary last Sunday, says: "Rev. Winget, as usual, was not so warmly received. The chaplain has succeeded most emphatically in

incurring the wrath of a liberal number of the prisoners and they show it only too often." The Catholic Columbian of that city demands his removal from office, as it is an "outrage that Catholics of Ohio should have to help to pay him to preach his Gospel of Hate and of Calumny to the prisoners of the Ohio penitentiary." It remains to be seen whether the demand of the Columbian will have any effect. For a long year, or more, that paper weekly demanded equal rights for the Catholic prisoners in the state penitentiary, but without any good results. No body of Catholic men came forward to strengthen the cause advocated by the Columbian. It is the voice of the voter that carries weight.

Gathering of Indians.

Chiefs and Councillors in Conference with Commissioner Forget.

Free Press, Jan. 20.

It was a peculiar assemblage that might have been seen in the largest room of Indian Commissioner Forget's department in the postoffice building Tuesday, where a large number of Indian chiefs and councillors gathered to discuss a proposition to concentrate various scattered bands on two large reserves. Though from a white man's point of view it is of minor importance yet to those concerned it was the momentous occasion of the year. They had travelled miles and miles by rail and other ways to meet the great representative of the government and to discuss very weighty matters pertaining to their future welfare and that of the tribes they represented. At the head of the room sat Commissioner Forget and Messrs. McColl and Marlett, of the Indian department; Archbishop Langevin, Canon O'Meara and Rural Dean Burman. Seated on both sides of the room were the chiefs and their councillors, with looks of dignity on their countenances that vividly recalled the "councils of war" so ably described by Cooper, Bannatyne and others.

Miss McLean, who speaks the Indian language fluently, acted as interpreter and, through her, Commissioner Forget, explained the object of the calling together of the chiefs and wise men and explained the details of the scheme of amalgamating the nine reserves, recounting the advantages that would be derived therefrom by the Indians themselves. Then a chief was called upon to speak. Making his way to the front, he shook hands with Commissioner Forget, and all those sitting on either side of him. He spoke with the bearing of a man addressing a multitude, while nods and grunts of approbation came from his red brothers. The gist of his speech was that they would like to discuss the matter with the other Indians before giving an opinion on the matter at all. Several others, who followed him and went through the same hand-shaking process, spoke to the same effect, so that it was decided to let them talk the matter over in the afternoon. At the close the commissioner made them each a present of a plug of tobacco, and they adjourned to the outside of the building, going down the elevator, where they were to have their pictures taken. The photographer did not turn up, however.

INDIAN ELOQUENCE.

Chiefs Discuss Moving to a large Reserve.

Many favor the Plan and others oppose it—Conference Ended—Leave for Home

Free Press, Jan. 21.

It has been said that the Indian is a born orator, but to the casual observer to attribute great language power to the stoic being who seems to lose no opportunity of making a grant express a whole sentence and never talks except as a matter of necessity is to use the story writer's license. Such an opinion would have been dispelled had the person been present at the Indian conference held yesterday between Commissioner Forget and the chiefs and councillors of Northern Manitoba Indian reserves. Speeches were made by most of the braves present and although many of them contained the same ideas, they were all couched in different language. That they were

eloquent was plainly visible even to those who had to take them second handed, that is through the interpreter. Miss McLean, who occupied this difficult position, acquitted herself splendidly, as the thoughts were not only conveyed accurately, but with much of their natural eloquence. The speechmaking did not conclude until half past seven and the signing of a document expressing the views of those consenting to the proposals of the department occupied considerable time after that.

Commissioner Forget opened the debate by explaining the proposed step—to consolidate the Indians now on scattered reserves, on two large ones to be given at Fairford and Pine river. The advantages to be derived were several, for it was impossible to give a school to each reserve when these were so small, nor could farm instructors be given. They had discussed the matter among themselves, and he asked for their decision.

The first speaker was Mwayway-ah-sung, of Lake Manitoba reserve. He would not say anything beyond what he had come to state on behalf of his people. They had been a long time on their reserve. They appreciated very much the advantages that would be derived by moving and knew that the government wanted to do what was best, but his people had lived there for a long time and they wanted to remain. He was very glad to have a church and school on the reserve and had told them that if they would build a church they might have whatever portion of the reserve they desired for its location.

Antoine Mousseau, of Sandy Bay, said the matter had not been sprung on him. It had been discussed on the reserve. His people had lived there until it had become a home to them. They had no interest outside of their reserve; their home, all was there. They saw around them all that was necessary to secure a livelihood. They were happy, and their only want was for oxen. They did not want to move. When he had made the first treaty the officer of the government had said: "Look around and choose where you will have your reserve." He had looked, and had chosen, and the officer had said that as long as the sun would shine it should be his. He asked only to have that promise kept.

Alexander Levasseur, of the same place, spoke in the same way.

The next speaker favored the scheme. His reserve was not at all a nice place, but quite the reverse. When he had chosen it he had been as one walking in the dark. He would move, on condition that he were given a better place.

Ahangekeesegowenin, of the Crow River reserve, favored the plan. His children were being educated in industrial schools, and he realized that things had changed, and they needed reserves where they could farm. He did not want to be put in a muskeg, nor to take what others had cast off.

A tall and dignified representative from Crane River said: "My father when he was dying told me never to desert the reserve, so that the generations coming after me might have it." It was good land, and he saw plenty to keep them. He wanted the commissioner to say then and there that they would keep their reserves, that he might carry the news to his people.

Many others spoke, most of them in favor of moving, and many signed the document to the effect that they were willing to go. Before any further steps are taken the matter will be discussed on the reserves.

The Indians leave for home at 8 o'clock this morning. Yesterday afternoon they went to Parkin's studio and had their photos taken, as a memento of the occasion. A copy of this will be presented to each of the chiefs.

Home Rule.

It is not for the likes of us Saxons and West Britons to formulate the measure which will give effect to the aspirations of our Irish fellow-subjects. That is their task. We have tried twice and failed, because we put the cart before the horse. The first step towards Home Rule for Ireland is for the Irish representatives to frame and submit the next Home Rule Bill. We shall wait for its appearance.—

W. T. Stead in
January Review of Reviews.