

Missionary Life in West Newfoundland.

(Written for the "True Witness" by R. J. Louis Cuddihy.)

THE West coast of Newfoundland extends from Belle Isle to St. Jacques, Port au Choix, Straits of Fortune Bay. The vicariate at present is under the charge of Right Rev. Dr. McNeill, formerly president of St. Francis Xavier College, Antigonish. He has ten priests under his jurisdiction, and each one has an immense territory to cover. Even His Lordship himself has to work on the missions, and face the hardships and privations, which are many, like the strongest and most experienced missionary in the place. The parishes are St. Jacques, Codroy, St. George's, Port au Port, Stephenville, Bay of Islands, Bonne Bay. One of the parishes that of Codroy, embraces nine different places, and covers a distance of over one hundred miles. The parish where His Lordship resides comprises six places and covers quite a territory. Only a few days a priest in one of the parishes, Stephenville, was called to Bonne Bay on a sick call, and had to journey over two hundred miles, the greater part of it on foot. To-day the situation is somewhat changed. Up to a few years ago there were no roads in many of the places, nothing but a bridle path. The noble missionaries set to work, and with little government aid, also some free labor from the parishioners, put their shoulders to the wheel and got rid of that great drawback. But while a large portion of the different missions can be covered by land there is a very large portion that has to be done by boat. Imagine yourself in a little frail open boat, a fishing punt, or a dory, exposed to all kinds of wind, and weather. Herein lies the danger to which nearly all of those pioneer missionaries of the West coast of Newfoundland have to encounter. A few months ago the sketch of the late Rev. Dr. O'Regan, given at the end of this article, lost his life in a little schooner while returning from a little island called Ramea, where he had gone to pay his annual visit to his flock for the purpose of holding the stations, that is, to hear their confessions, say Mass and collect the dues. The following examples will serve as an illustration of the awful hardships to which a poor is subjected to on those missions.

FIRST SICK CALL.—I remember my first sick call, said a missionary to me only a few days ago, and will never forget it. I was called to attend a sick woman that lived many miles from where I was stationed. The first seven miles of the journey nothing eventful took place as I rode on horseback, there being no roads except to a place called "The Creek." I had to finish the remainder of the journey by boat. A dory was procured, and taking two men with me, we set off on our perilous voyage. The night was pitch dark the sea rough and the weather cold. The men plied their oars steadily against the raging sea, when we lost our bearing. While groping around in the darkness the sea upset our boat and we were washed ashore in the very spot to where we wished to go. Reaching the house, the only one in the place, I administered the dying woman. After finishing I sat down to dry my wet clothes. In a short time supper was ready, consisting of herrings and potatoes. There were no knives, no forks, we had to use nature's cutlery. Two families resided in this hut, consisting of two rooms. Night approached and sacks were thrown upon the floor for each one to sleep on. I slept next the stove, and every three hours one of the men remained on watch to keep the fire going. During the night I was disturbed by something rubbing up against me, and on awakening found it was a large dog, who probably knew where the most comfortable spot was. In the morning we partook of mutton for breakfast, and then left to return home. When I reached "The Creek" I was fatigued and feeling unwell after my several soaking in the water. After a few days I was myself again and ready to face even still worse hardships.

ON ANOTHER OCCASION I was called to attend a sick call, a distance of 51 miles. The first seven miles I walked on snowshoes, but after that my awful suffering commenced. I travelled all night and suffered a dreadful thirst. There was nothing to do except to eat the snow which only made me worse. When I reached Black Duck Brook I

received a luxury in the shape of a cup of black tea. That night I slept on the floor and returned home after a most trying time thinking of the awful hardships of the Sahara desert.

The worst one in my experience was on an occasion in which I went to visit one of my missions. It was a blustery, stormy night. We had taken passage in a little dory. We battled nobly against the storm until we were washed ashore at a place called Sheeve's Cove. I lost the vestments which I had taken with me for the purpose of saying Mass, but saved the holy oils. Reaching a shelter, I slept that night in my wet clothes. The next day I had six baptisms to attend, but was so fatigued that I had to administer the sacrament seated. I returned to my parish where I took sick and was laid up for quite awhile.

The following extracts are taken from a sketch of the late Dr. O'Regan contributed by "Com" to the "Western Star":

Death is inexorable. Ruthlessly it drags its baneful shadow across the stage of humanity. Its victims fall to right and left and sorrow spreads its sombre mantle over the scene. No age, no sex is safe. Wealth cannot purchase immunity; power cannot hedge itself with an impenetrable barricade; the wisdom of the hoary sage reels on its pedestal before the fierce onslaught of death. Even the indelible character of the eternal priesthood so familiar with death to all its manifold forms has in turn to do homage to the majesty of the Grim Reaper. To all comes the summons: "unarm, the long day's task is done." Under every circumstance death is a sad legacy to humanity; but when old age has consumed the energy and vitality of a man, then we consider death as a happy consummation for a well-spent life. It comes to summon:

"Out of the shadow of sadness
Into the sunshine of gladness
Into the light of the blest."

It is different when a young life—a life of much usefulness, a life inseparably associated with the temporal or spiritual welfare is brought to a premature end. Humanly speaking, it is a calamity and the human heart vibrates with profound sympathy. Among this class we may place the good Dr. O'Regan, the late pastor of Grand River. Never since the Vicariate of the West Coast, began its chequered career, has it received such a staggering blow. Its best priest, the man of the future as we thought, the most beautiful character it has ever been the lot of some of us to meet, has found a grave in the fierce waters of Rose Blanche. He is gone—that young man of promise, the idol of his own people and of his fellow priests—in the full bloom and vigor of manhood and at the dawn of a brilliant career, and we who loved him well, shall never again grasp that strong hand, nor gaze on the smiling face and laughing eyes; those "outward signs of all the warmth within." He is gone!

Twenty-nine years ago Dr. O'Regan was born in St. John's. After completing his classical at St. Bonaventure he spent two years in France and from France he was transferred to Rome. Crowned with the highest honor of the University of Propaganda, the enthusiastic young doctor pressed with his foot the rugged shore of the West Coast some six years ago. "The harvest was vast, but the laborers few," and he came admirably equipped to take his place in the thinned ranks and to bear his portion of the "burden of the day and the heat." Grand River became vacant in '96, he was at once selected as the right man for a difficult post. And his luminous career, brief, but crowned with good works, is evidence of the wisdom of the Bishop's choice. In three years' time his indomitable energy had raised up a monument which will keep his memory green among a people who appreciate his noble traits of character, and the charms of his earthly life. One might well consider him indispensable, but he has gone and a vast capacity for goodness sleeps with him in the deep sea.

Behold the noble missionaries who give up all that's dearest to them, home and family ties, and spend their lives in braving the wind and the sea to save an immortal soul. Are they not worthy of a page in the Book of Fame? But their names are written in the Immortal Book that book from which they shall be never blotted out.

With the Naturalists.

BEARS AS PETS.—Hitherto it has been supposed that polar bears could neither be trained nor rendered docile, but now Mr. Richard Sawade, a well known European tamer of animals and notable authority on bears in particular, shows clearly that such a supposition is entirely erroneous. He secured two polar bears some time ago, and at once determined to train them. In this he succeeded beyond his expectations—so well, indeed, that these monstrous animals now follow him as obediently as dogs, ready at his slightest nod to perform any of the little tricks which they have learned from him. Their education in this respect is not yet complete, but that they have learned more than any of their ancestors is evident from the fact that a word from their master they get up on their hind legs, and in this manner follow him at a respectful distance like lackeys as he walks around the room.

A MARVELLOUS TREE.—Undoubtedly the most marvellous tree in the world grows in Brazil. It is the Carnubia palm, and can be employed for many useful purposes. Its roots produce the same medicinal effect as sarsaparilla. Its stems afford strong, light fibres, which acquire a beautiful lustre, and serve also for joists, rafters, and other building materials, as well as for stakes for fences. From parts of the tree wines and vinegar are made. It yields also a saccharine substance, as well as a starch resembling sago. Its fruit is used in feeding cattle. The pulp has an agreeable taste, and the nut, which is oleaginous and emulsive, is sometimes used as a substitute for coffee. Of the wood of the stem musical instruments, water tubes, and pumps are made. The pith is an excellent substitute for cork. From the stem a white liquid similar to the milk of the coconut and a flour resembling maize may be extracted. Of the straw hats, baskets, brooms, and mats are made. A considerable quantity of this straw is shipped to Europe, and a part of it returns to Brazil manufactured into hats. The straw is also used for thatching houses. Moreover, salt is extracted from it, likewise an alkali used in the manufacture of common soap.

HOW THE BEAVER BREATHES IN WINTER.

The beaver is really a sort of portable pulp mill, grinding up almost any kind of wood that comes his way, says a writer in "Rod and Gun." I once measured a white birch tree twenty-two inches through out down by a beaver. A single beaver generally, if not always, amputates the tree, and when it comes down the whole family fall to and have a regular frolic with the bark and branches. A big beaver will bring down a fair-sized sapling—say three inches through—in about two minutes, and a large tree in about an hour. The ability of a beaver to remain under water for a long time is really not so tough a problem as it looks. When the lake or pond is frozen over, a beaver will come to the under surface of the ice and expel his breath, so that it will form a wide, flat bubble. The air, coming in contact with the ice and water, is purified, and the beaver breathes it again. This operation he can repeat several times. The otter and muskrat do the same thing. Beavers, when alarmed, generally make up steam, so I went to the brook where a little branch came in, and I thought I would go up that a little way, and I hadn't gone more than ten rods before I came across a big male one. I had caught some time previously sitting up in the bed of the brook having a lunch on a stick he had cut. He actually looked as if he knew he was playing truant when he caught sight of me out of the side of his eye. I picked him up by the tail, brought him back, put him in the pen, supplied him with plenty of fresh poplar, and he seemed as tame as possible, and never gave me any more trouble. I brought him out to Stanley, where he lived a long time. Turnbull had a "mogrel dog, which was jealous of the beaver, and one day attacked him. He did that only once, for the beaver nipped the dog's tail off quicker than a cat would catch a mouse.

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A STORY OF THE PALMS!

(By an Occasional Contributor.)

IT was my intention to write for this week, a few paragraphs on the very interesting and instructive subject of the Palms that are blessed on the Sunday before Easter; just as I was about to set out on a pilgrimage into the domain of early Christianity, I came upon a short article, from the pen of "A. Jullien," which greatly attracted my attention. Not that it contained very much that is new regarding the time-honored custom of having palms blessed on that day, but rather because it related an incident in connection with the supplying of palms to the Pope, on that day, did I change my original plan and decide to translate a portion of that admirable contribution for the benefit of the readers of "True Witness." It would be rather lengthy to detail all that is recorded in connection with the various origins assigned to this ancient custom in the Church. The Catholic is aware that on Palm Sunday the Church celebrates the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem, some days prior to His passion. He came riding upon an ass, and was met, surrounded and followed by a vast concourse of people, some of whom strewed their garments upon the road, but the majority of whom waved palm branches in the air, and formed a carpet of them under foot for the Saviour to pass over. While the regular palm branch—that is to say, a branch of the oriental palm tree—is what is to be used on that occasion, still, on account of the impossibility, in certain parts of Christendom, and above all, in Western and Northern countries, to procure real palm branches, it is permissible to substitute the leaves, or twigs, or branches of other trees—especially evergreens. Thus in Canada we use the fir-tree, or balsam, as we call it. This is an evergreen, and very plentiful with us. We also use the spruce, and even the pine; but the balsam is the generally accepted substitute for the palm. We have also a pretty fair imitation of the real palm branches, in certain long grasses that are to be found in our swamp lands, where the beaver-hay grows, and which when dry preserve their green and yellowish tinges almost as long as they last. These, also are being used to a great extent. But, in Italy, where the palm and the olive grow abundantly there is little difficulty in securing the real object.

At the Vatican the various dignitaries carry palms that correspond with their respective ranks; hence it is that the Pope is always the bearer of a particular kind of branch, that differs in hue, in form, and in bulk from all others. And these palms are supplied to the Vicar of Christ by a family of the little seacoast town of San Remo. It is the story of how this family—descended of Guillaume Bresca—came to enjoy this special privilege that the writer, whose article is before me, that I wish to reproduce. The tale goes back to the days Pope Sixtus V., and it explains, as well the origin of the queer Italian axiom, "Acqua alle funi"—or "water the ropes." I will translate the account verbatim.

"WET THE ROPES."—"The great obelisk, in pyramid form, that was brought from Egypt, and which formerly ornamented the Circus of Caligula and of Nero, on the Vatican hill, had been buried for hundreds of years, under the debris, that has raised the soil of Rome to level much above the majority of her ancient edifices. Although devoid of hieroglyphics, it was known that this pyramid was a model of form and texture. It was, and still is, the most beautiful and best preserved of all similar shafts. Pope Sixtus V. resolved to rescue from oblivion that monument, around whose base had been committed all the atrocities of the Roman Circus, and to set it up for the contemplation of that civilization for which it had been created.

But the work was not without its difficulties and its dangers. The block weighed tens of thousands of tons, and it had to be set upon its base. Fontana, the architect who had once had so much to do with the construction of St. Peter's, was given charge of the work, and so rapidly did he push it to completion, that he was finally able to name the pyramid—the 10th September, 1586. The utmost tranquility was necessary on the part of the assistants, and a perfect silence that would not interrupt, nor prevent all orders being heard. The Pope issued an order to the effect that if any person, by voice or otherwise, broke

the silence of the occasion, he would at once be arrested, handed to the executioner, and there and then put to death. To enforce his order, and to terrify the people into silence, the Pope caused a scaffold to be erected on the square, now in front of St. Peter's—(of course, all these orders and precautions were merely intended as an experiment to secure the desired silence). Hence amidst the profoundest stillness, a vast multitude stood around, as the great pulleys were set in motion, and the straining and cracking of the cordage began. Soon the immense mass of stone was suspended in space; and the pyramid had described the half of its arc of ascension, when the machinery stopped, and the cords began to loosen. Becoming dry, from their extreme tension, the ropes were noticed to be giving out, and threatened to snap. Thousands were under the pyramid at that moment—and the silence was not only intense, but terrific—for no one dared to move. In the midst of this fearful scene a voice startled every one, with the cry "Acqua alle funi!"—"water the ropes." A man rushed across the square with two buckets of water; the ropes were dampened; they at once contracted; the pulleys turned; the machinery began to function; and the pyramid ascended slowly, until it reached the desired height, and then settled upon its base—where it has ever since remained standing. The man who had broken the silence, and saved the lives of thousands, was presented to the Pope, who blessed him and thanked him for his "timely disobedience." He was a ship captain, named Bresca, from the little fishing port of San Remo. As a reward the Pope conferred on him, and on his descendants, for all time, the sole right to supply the palms for the Vicar of Christ, and for the Pontifical Chapel on Palm Sunday of each year." And, to this day, the Bresca family has resided at San Remo, and has carried yearly the palms to the Vatican. They cultivate the palm tree, and use every device known to horticulture and to agriculture to improve the class of trees on their tiny estate—for they look upon this as a mission as well as a function or privilege.

LITTLE THINGS THAT COUNT.

How often in our busy life
We speak a bitter word;
We care not who the listeners are,
We care not where 'tis heard,
We do not know within our heart
To what it may amount,
And truly, it is only one
Of the Little Things That Count.

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We often wound the trusting heart
By being insincere,
We do not think that which we do
May cause a lonely tear,
We give it but a passing thought,
And bother not about
The Little Things that rise and
cause
The trusting heart to doubt.

We often wrong within ourself
The ones who love us true,
Because they tell us of a fault;
We're all impatient, too,
And do not down the angry words
That to our lips may mount,
But watch and wait; 'tis only one
Of the Little Things That Count.

How often from our very heart
We let our anger rise,
And never mind the pleading looks
That come from soulful eyes;
We crush, we bruise, in passion's
hour,

And scorn the falling tear;
Little Things, oh, Little Things,
What sorrow wrought you here!

You count, oh yes, you Little
Things,
You count, but not for gain;
You count to sadden trusting
hearts,

You count for naught but pain,
You count as clouds in some one's
sky,

You darken some one's day;
O cruel little deeds and words
We can't undo, unsay!

Then ever speak the kindly word
Instead of one of pride;
'Twill banish sorrow from a soul,
And anger turn aside,
The loving word and deed and
glance,

Is borne on angel wings,
And angel voices echo true;
Be kind in Little Things!
Kathryn O. Murray, in Hartford
Daily Courant.

BOUNDARIES OF PARISHES

Patrick's parish extends
from Grant street
to Mountain and McCord
streets. Above Sherbrooke
it runs from Amherst street
west beyond the corner of
Seminary; on the south
from the corner of McCord
street to McGill, Gill to river and along
east as far as Grant; the
limit is the old city bou-
levard dividing line between
the dividing line between
and St. John the Baptist
and running from the cor-
ner of Sherbrooke and
Duluth Avenue
line about midway between
and Napoleon streets. Al-
ward lies in St. Patrick's

WHO ARE PARISHES

All Catholics residing in
tory, and whose language
ish, belong to St. Pat-
of all other languages be-
or other of the French in
ther Notre Dame, St. Ja-
Louis, according to loc-
families where French are
are equally spoken, the
of the head of the family
what parish the family be-
when the mother tongue
of the family is French
family belongs to the Fr-
and to St. Patrick's wh-
ther tongue of the head
ily is English. In cases
especially on occasion of
parties should consult c-
of the pastors of the te-
which they live.

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St. Ann's Parish

THE ABBOT OF DUN

Through an inadvertence
deeply regret, our rep-
Ann's Young Men's e-
St. Patrick's night co-
mention of the two pri-
acters in the cast, viz:
of Dungarvon" and "Co-
mersleigh." The latter
by Mr. W. E. Finn. The
difficult one, and would
the ability of many wel-
fessionals, yet Mr. Finn
part to perfection,
"Ruined Abbey" scene,
wounded and delirious
the unstinted applause
mense audience.
Mr. T. F. Sullivan, f-
bert Hammersleigh," a
the "Abbott of Dungar-
new "prestige" to his
reputation. As "Gilber-
one's" brother, he at-
tends attention which b-
end of the prologue; b-
the "Abbott" that his
was shown. The char-
that requires a large m-
tronic ability, and in a
mediocre actor would
noticed, but Mr. Sulli-
out the capabilities of
to fully realize the au-
tion, and the long-suff-
ble "Abbott" was a fa-
vorites. The actor's
completely lost in t-
monk; his appearance
and in his denunciat-
Hammersleigh" his ric-
ful voice penetrated in-
and corner of the green
Apart from his work
bot," Mr. Sullivan
shoulders the added re-
stage management. Th-
the two denotes plus
prise; that he succeed-
shows eminent ability
nial T. F. possesses a
pity that they are b-
front only once a year

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