

**ANNALS**  
OF THE  
**Propagation of the Faith.**  
COMPILED FOR THE  
**PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.**



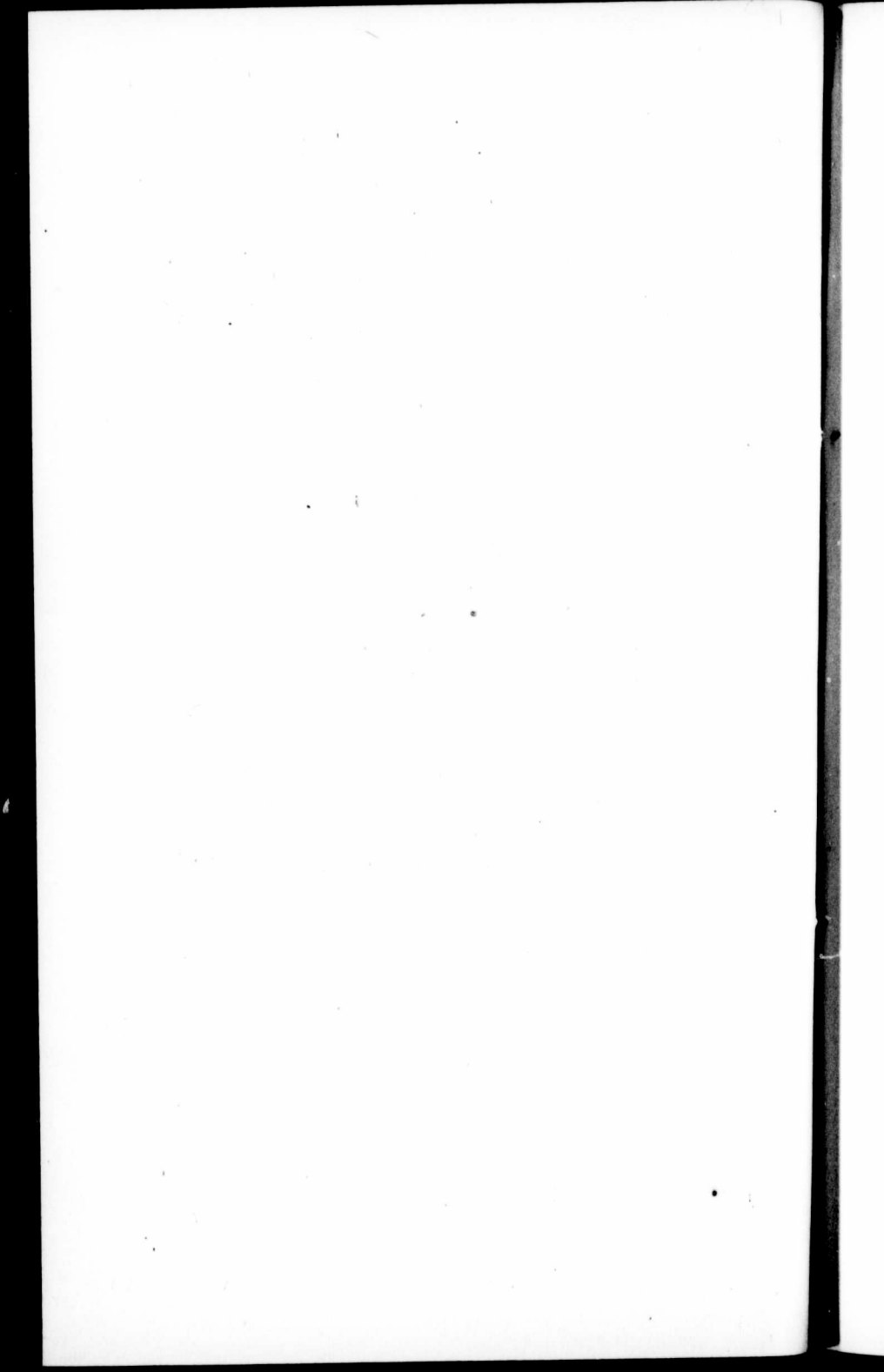
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**OCTOBER, 1879.**

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**THREE-RIVERS.**

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# THE CROSS IN THE NORTH !

## BISHOP SEGHERS' LETTERS.

### FOURTH LETTER.

*The Indians of Alaska.—Traveling on the Youcon.—Dress of the Missionary.—Narrow Escape from Drowning.*

St. Michael's Redoubt, Alaska Territory, July 3rd., 1878. }

REVEREND AND DEAR FATHER JONCKAU.

Three days of patient expectation have elapsed and no letters as yet. My last hope was that they might be in a box, among the steamer's freight ; but I am disappointed. Accept now a brief sketch of my mission among the Kyoukouk Indians. Having bid farewell to Father Mandart, to whose care I left the Nulato Indians, I started on the 30th. of October, 1877, with a Russian and Canadian trader to visit the country drained by the Kyoukouk River. The farthest point we reached North-east of Nulato, was about twenty-five miles this side of the Arctic Circle, beyond which the sun does not rise in the winter, and does not set in the summer.

#### THE FIRST WHITE MAN

that had ever visited the dwellings of the Kyoukouks, in 1876, ran great risk of falling a victim to their vindictiveness. It appears that a chief, with whom he had been traveling, fell suddenly dead. His men, imagining that their chief had been killed by the American trader, and instigated by their *shamon*, followed the trader in close

pursuit ; but fortunately they were not able to shed human blood. In the Summer of 1851 a sadder tragedy was enacted by the same Indians : a British Lieutenant Barnard arrived at Nulato, in search of Sir John Franklin ; just at the time that the Kyoukouks were plotting the killing of the Nulato Indians, and the plundering of the fort. A general slaughter took place, the unfortunate Lieutenant was mortally wounded by arrows, and died a few hours after in excruciating torments. His mortal remains repose behind the fort, where a few melancholy-looking crosses record his fatal end and that of the other victims of Indian cruelty. The British Government has so far done nothing to reward the devotedness of that brave soldier ; it does not look honorable, does it ? The Kyoukouk Indians spared the lives of a few women and children, so that the Tikaitski tribe is not extinct and is again on the increase. Dall, in his book on Alaska, has a few romantic particulars which his prolific imagination produced in addition to the facts ; these facts are still living in the minds of all those that dwell around Nulato. He also appears to lay the blame on Lieutenant Barnard, as if the latter had been the cause of the massacre. The cause of such a strange and false accusation cannot be explained except by some anti-British feeling lurking in the corner of his heart ; there is no telling through what labyrinths of nonsense people will wander, when patriotism takes the lead. I might adduce some ridiculous assertions of his, against the Hudson Bay Company, but such matters are too remote from my subject, and I return to my mission on the Kyoukouk River.

The mercury on the day we left Nulato marked 10° (22° freezing). It was cold. The ice of the Youcon was solid, and a foot of snow covered the whole country, as



far as the eye could reach. There was talking, shouting, howling of dogs, and a tremendous confusion until, upon the signal given, the dogs started, dragging the sleds and making it awfully difficult to us to follow them. I shall, I hope, be able to explain to you verbally, what an arduous task it is to run, out of breath, through the snow, and to keep pace with sleighs drawn by dogs in the excitement of a first start. Let then the North wind blow and howl, let the snow fall and the frost crystallize the Youcon to a solid mass of ice ; in spite of all this the *running* missionary is soon in a hot perspiration and necessitated to throw off his *parka*. His *parka* ? A few words are needed to describe our dress : A pair of boots made by Indians out of deer skin, and well stuffed with hay or straw, a pair of trowsers of moose skin, with the lower end tucked in the boots ; a *parka* or outer coat of deer skin, with no other opening than one at the top, to let the head pass, and which *parka* is provided with a hood, as a protection for the head, and finally a fur cap with ear-laps so arranged that they protect the neck. Such was the picturesque dress under which no one would have recognized the Bishop of Vancouver Island. The first day we made about 30 miles in 5 hours and 45 minutes. Before reaching *Bolshoi Gore* (by mountain) where we slept, we passed a dangerous place, between the bank and the water of the river, the current of which had prevented its freezing over : the crust of ice over which we cautiously traveled for a pretty good distance was hardly 25 feet between a steep bank to the left and the foaming, roaring current to the right. But, thanks be to God, I escaped safe and unhurt that danger and a great many more which I encountered in this country. The following day we reached the mouth of the Kyoukouk river

which empties into the Youcon. There we saw huge blocks of ice standing up one against the other, or piled upon one another's top and opposing to us a barrier difficult to cross ; but we had to get through, and after an hour's delay, caused by the falling and breaking of one of our four sleighs, we succeeded in passing that importune obstruction. To account for this curious phenomenon you must know that the ice does not close up the Youcon like a lake which quietly and placidly allows its surface to crystallize : The noble river does not brook that attempt against its liberty, and the impetuosity of its current bids defiance to the shackles which the North wind prepares for it. It is along the banks of the Youcon, where the current is slack, and on its tributaries that the first ice is formed and carried down by the current to the sea. Wherever there is a short bend, or a sand-bank, or the mouth of a tributary, ice-cakes meet each other and come clashing into collision, then the water rises, overflows its banks, roots up shrubs and trees, and not seldom cuts a new channel, through which it may flow with more liberty.

But sometimes the barrier of ice has to yield, and the victorious current sweeps it down, boiling and foaming, until another obstacle stops it, and then a scene of wild confusion takes place, ice cakes are heaped upon ice cakes, solid towers 30 feet high, are built in a few hours, the frost solders them altogether into one solid crust, the snow fills up the deepest cavities, and the Youcon is imprisoned for 6 or 7 months.

I visited about a dozen *Barrabarras* and instructed the occupants of each, except the *shamon* who, with his three wives, gave me a very poor reception. I am inclined to think that my visit and my instructions made, with God's grace, a good impression upon the savage

minds of those benighted Indians. In one *Barrabarra* a man bent down by the weight of years addressed me as follows, making a marked impression of surprise on the traders whom I accompanied : « You have spoken well » said he with all the appearance of sincere conviction « all you have told us is true, we all believe it. My heart has thought on all this a long time ; I have even endeavored to do what you teach us to do, but there is one thing which, I confess, I have never done : I have never prayed to God. »

The Kyoukoug country is almost an unbroken succession of lakes and rives. On one of the latter the crust of ice was not solid enough to carry our sleighs and we took a cold water bath. At another place we glided down the bank of the Kyoukoug river with a velocity hardly inferior to that of railroad cars. Our sleigh was upset and broken, I was flung into the air and fell on a soft bed of snow, and my Russian companions came down the bank in a recumbent position. Nobody was hurt.

But one narrowest escape was at the farthest point we reached on the Kyoukoug river : there I was quickly advancing with the first sleigh of our Canadian trader when we heard loud shouts behind us : « *Skora ! skora ! uprod !* » (Hurry up ! Go ahead !) looking back we saw the Russian in the greatest excitement, making sign for us to advance : he had seen the crust of ice slowly bending under the weight of our sleigh. Then there was a cracking of the ice ; the sleigh that followed ours was pushed to the right, and we beheld the crust over which we had just passed disappear in four pieces off the current of the river, which at that place must be more than 30 feet deep. But, thanks to the prayers so

numerously and fervently offered up for my preservation, I escaped unhurt.

I conclude this brief sketch, hoping to give you a fuller and better description.

Very sincerely yours in J. C.,

∴ CHARLES J. SEGHERS,

Bishop of Vancouver Island.

FIFTH LETTER.

*Instructing the Indians.—The murderer's Remorse.—Camping in the Snow.—The Animals of Alaska.*

St. Michael's Redoubt, Alaska Territory, July 3rd., 1878. }

REVEREND AND DEAR MOTHER JONCKAU.

Accept a few lines concerning a trip I made on the ice and snow from Nulato to Ulukuk, a distance of about 140 miles. Having secured two sleighs and 10 dogs, and having entrusted to F. Mandart the care of the Nulato Indians, in order to convey to Nulato the provisions which the summer before we had taken up in a boat from St. Michael's to Ulukuk and also to instruct the Indians I would meet during my trip.

I experienced much trouble in employing the services of Indians, not one volunteering to expose his life by adventuring too near to the Mahlemuts. The reason of this I now proceed to explain. Last Summer (1877) a Mahlemut was seen hunting on the mountains between the Behring Sea and Kyoukouk river by two Kyoukouk Indians, whilst he did not notice that he was watched. One of the Kyoukouks, prompted by traditional hostility

between his tribe and the Mahlemuts, proposed to his companion to murder their enemy ; the latter would not consent and tried, but in vain, to dissuade the evil-minded Indian from committing the vile deed. Deaf to his companion's entreaties, the Kyoukouk approached his enemy and shot him through the heart. Then the murderer fled to his barrabarra, fortified it, begged all his friends to protect him, and from that time shows himself in public with an air of assurance which is impudent in the extreme. His bravery is only apparent, however. He came during the winter to Nulato ; there I saw him, and had him questioned, and learned from his own mouth that he has no rest either at night or in the day, that he never parts with his gun, and that he would give anything if he could make out that he had not committed his crime. A strong proof of the impossibility of stifling the voice of conscience. Of course some people will find in this a severe punishment and maintain that every criminal is to himself his own punishment. But you must acknowledge that such a punishment is rather lenient, and that it would be more than strange, if the law were to say : murderers, thieves and burglars, you shall receive no punishment except the one you will inflict on yourselves. As for the culprit, his doom is sealed and the Mahlemuts are determined to have his blood. Surely, it is time that the Church interferes and brings to these savages the olive branch of peace. The Mahlemuts, not seeing their chief come home, went in search of him, preceded by his dog who led them straight to the corpse of his master, and, from that time, occasional threats have been carried from the sea to the Youcon, spreading fear and terror.

However, the persuasive eloquence of the Russian trader at Nulato having overcome all the repugnance

of 3 Indians, I started on the 20th of November, the thermometer marking 0 (32° below freezing) I visited and instructed in the holy religion of Jesus-Christ the occupants of three barrabarras I found on the river : two at Kaltay and one little more than half way between Nulato and this place. At Kaltay I had to travel the Youcon and make a portage of about 80 miles. It was on the 22nd. of November; I put on my huge snow shoes and toiled through 3 feet of snow whilst, at Nulato, the mercury stood at 21° (53° degrees below freezing) that night we camped and slept on the snow. A camp is soon ready; one cuts down small trees, another brings dry wood, a third one puts off his snow shoes, sinks through the snow and then, using one of his snow shoes as a shovel, lays the ground bare. Then the latter is covered with pine branches, and when everything is ready, a high barricade being built on the side from where the wind blows, usually the North side, then, I say, a fire is kindled, supper is cooked, and no sooner are our prayers finished than we roll ourselves in our blankets and fall asleep, overcome by fatigue and exertion. The frost of 21° below zero was rather too much to allow us a long sleep. My Indians woke up before 3 A. M., and I heard them chat together. Finally one proposed to rise and to proceed on our way, as the moon was giving now sufficient light to know in what direction to travel. We rise, cook our breakfast, and after a frugal meal, are again pushing ahead, 4 hours before sunrise. The task of taking the lead and beating the track for dogs and sleighs devolved on me, and I cannot describe the fatigue I felt in the evening after a forced march, on snow shoes, from 5 A. M., to 6 P. M. Fortunately at that hour, we reached a barrabarra now abandoned, where we made ourselves thoroughly com

fortable and enjoyed a sound, invigorating sleep. My attention has been already attracted by numerous tracks left by a variety of animals on the snow and which, betraying their haunts, enable hunters to kill them and despoil them of their fur. The principal quadrupeds of this country are moose, elk and reindeer. A book of a certain Dr. Hartwig confounds moose and elk, making them of one family ; be not surprised if some future Dr. or Professor confounds the sun with the moon. The reindeer is not tame here like in Siberia and is the same animal as the cariboo ; the principal feature which distinguishes it from other families of the species « Cervus » is that the females have antlers, smaller ones, as well as the males. As to the moose, it attains a large size, and is, in its greatest development, larger than a very large horse. There are 3 kinds of foxes : the red-fox, arctic fox and the silver fox, the latter's fur being valued at \$25.00. Besides the wolf, and the black and the brown bears, there is a variety of the weazel family, ermins, sable, minx, pine-marten, stone-marten and polecat. It is the fur of the sable which on the Youcon is the standard fur and is the unit in trade transactions like the dollar is with us. To pay an Indian five skins is to give him five times the value of a sable-skin. Across the mountains the English use the beaver-skin as such. The glutton or Wolverine, and the beaver or castor, the mask-rat and the squirrel, close the list of the fur-bearing animals ; there is here neither snake nor panther. You could hardly believe how numerous the tracks of all those quadrupeds were between Kaltay and Ulukuk. Having left our barrabarra next morning at 8 A. M., we traveled till 10 P. M., when we reached Ulukuk the mercury at Nulato being at 26° (58° below freezing.) The following day I instructed the occupants of two

barrabarras, about 30 persons in all, but not without having to silence a *Shamon*. When entering a barrabarra, I was not a little surprised to find a long thin Mahlemut stretched on the ground, and doctoring with wild and horrible ejaculations a young boy of 4 years who seemed to enjoy exceedingly the funny spectacle. Having patiently waited a few minutes, I enquired how long that display of charlatanism would last, and was told that it might last all night, and then I walked up to the shamon and ordered him to stop and sit down. He looked up at me discountenanced and hesitating. As he did not soon enough comply with my request, I seized his drum and flung it away, his drum-stick went in the same direction, and I made him sit down by himself, whilst all the other Indians flocked around the *Catholic Ladder*, which I explained to their wrapt attention. The shamon in the meantime dressed himself and took a seat among my hearers, but finding the doctrine of Christ too severe for evil doers, he went off to a corner of the barrabarra and smoked his pipe.

Having promised the Russian trader at Nulato, to return to him his sleighs and dogs as soon as possible, I left Ulukuk with a heavy freight, struggled during 5 days with a piercing North wind, the mercury remaining constatly 20° below 0, fell twice through ice into the water, experienced enormous difficulty and trouble to find the track which the North wind had covered with snow, and found to my great sadness that the fish which one of my Indians had stowed away in the snow to feed our dogs on our return, had been found and devoured by foxes, so that our poor dogs were 48 hours without having a morsel to eat. Finally on the 1st of December I arrived at Kaltay, where the Indians welcomed me and gave me a really triumphant reception.



I reached Nulato on the following day, happy to find F. Mandart in good health, and to be able to celebrate the next day the Holy Sacrifice of Mass in honor of St. Francis Xavier, patron of Missionaries.

Very sincerely yours in J. C.

‡ CHARLES J. SEGHERS,  
Bishop of Vancouver Island.

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SIXTH LETTER.

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*An ice trip of 350 miles.—Intense Cold resulting in a frozen face.—The different dialects of the Indians.—A fierce tornado on the Youcon, etc.*

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St. Michael's Redoubt, Alaska Ter- }  
ritory, July 4th., 1878. }

REVEREND AND DEAR FATHER JONCKAU.

This is the anniversary of American Independence. Everyone is busy preparing all that will make this day a day of great rejoicing. In the meanwhile, I will devote to you a few moments by describing my mission down the Youcon river. Knowing that I would have no time to visit the tribes of the lower Youcon, after the breaking up of the ice, and learning that the Russian trader of Nulato had prepared himself for a trip to the Russian mission, a distance of nearly 350 miles, I asked him if I would be allowed to go along and be permitted time enough to instruct the Indians on our way; and with his consent, I bade farewell to Father Mandart for a month, and left Nulato on the 25th of January of this year. The Mercury stood 5° (37° below freezing), and the intensity of the cold increased gradually. until, on the 31st of January, the mercury was

frozen at 39°, at Nulato, whilst the alcohol thermometer at St. Michael's marked 53°; from which we may infer that, at Nulato, the latter would have marked at least 60° (or 93° below freezing). The first five days of that mission we found water on the ice, under the snow, and as we had no snow-shoes, our feet were soaked and then, in a few minutes, entirely covered with ice both inside and out our deer-skin boots. Be not surprised at hearing of water on the ice during such a tremendous cold: the water of the river becomes gradually lower, and the crust of ice remains suspended, (there being a vacuum between it and the river's surface;) then, naturally the ice bends and cracks, water issues through the opening, and the two or three feet of snow that covers the ice prevent the water from being frozen for a long time. I mentioned the 31st a while ago. It was then that I had my ears, cheeks, nose and chin considerably frost-bitten; so much so that on my return to Nulato, Father Mandart hardly knew me. During that mission I instructed the Indians at « Alexi Barrabarra, » at « Nohoitliltota » « Anwik » « Banio, » « Kojirofski, » « Poimut, » « Gargarishapka, » and in a few barrabarras where I found isolated families.

At Poimut, I could no more use my interpreter, as it is quite a different language which is spoken there; but I was fortunate enough to find everywhere either one or more Indians that understood and spoke the Russian. The language of the Poimut Indians extends over the main land in a southern direction, that is, over the Kuuskokwin and Koodiac Island, the inhabitants of which speak the same language substantially as the Poimuts. East of Poimut, one language is spoken, with a few differences of dialects, on the Youcon River as far as the Rocky Mountains, and on the Lenana as far as

Copper River. But the dialects at both extremities are so different that the Indians, living widely apart from one another, require the interpretation of intermediate tribes to understand each other ; it was however originally and is substantially the same language. West and North of Poinut, the Mahlemut, Esquimaux, Innuits, or Orarians, as they are variously called, speak another language, but how it is divided I cannot say, as I have not found, to my great dismay, the means to visit them. I do not wish to enter into the question whether all these Indians are of the same race, or of different races, whether they are all of the Carribean race or some of the Mongolian, and others of the Carribean, whether the coast Indians come from Asia, say, from Japan and Kamschatka ; or are, as well as those of the interior, aborigenes of America. Of course, the identity of language reveals the same original descent ; but difference of language is not sufficient proof to establish a difference of race ; there are, certainly, Mongolian features among the coast Indians, but you find the same in the interior. Religious practices and superstitions tend to show identity of original descent ; the coast Indian, given to fishing and feeding chiefly on oily substances, is short and fat ; the Indian of the interior, intured to the fatigue of hunting on the mountains, and feeding chiefly on meat, is tall and thin ; this, of course, is only the rule, admitting of numerous exceptions. But, enough about this question ; I believe it is quite possible that the coast Indians are of the Mongolian race, also the Indians of the interior of the Carribean, but I have met no proof, not even an argument worthy of the name, which is able to substantiate that difference of race. A linguistic test, perhaps, applied according to Muller's Science of Languages, will solve this problem ; so far, it is certainly not solved.

During that Mission, I am happy to say, I slept every night, two nights excepted, in a warm, comfortable barrabarra, and at Lofka where, last year, we struck the Youcon, the first time after our portage across the mountains, I found yet hanging the feathers of the hawks which had then served for our supper. I shall never forget our trip from Poimut to Gargarishapka. The river there flows at the foot of rather high mountains, alongside of which there seems to be a constant wind blowing from the North during the winter; but such a wind I had never experienced during all my traveling on sea. The force of the wind actually upset our sleigh, drove us off to the other side of the Youcon and threw each of us down on the ice. I need not tell you there was not a particle of snow visible in that locality; ice, clear ice, from 6 to 8 feet in thickness; I cannot describe all the pranks played by Boreas, and the numerous somersaults we executed quite involuntarily. My breviary was lost there and carried off to parts unknown; and we though ourselves quite fortunate when, after two hours exertions, we made, in two hours the last two of the 30 miles we traveled on that rough day. Indians tell us, that years ago, when deer was very numerous in this country, some of those animals, venturing too near the North side of those mountains, would be hurled by the wind and fall lifeless on the ice. On our return the wind was more moderate; had it then been as strong as the first time, it would undoubtedly have prevented us from passing as it was then blowing against us.

At the Russian mission, the Youcon narrows down to about one mile, but the water reaches the incredible depth of 210 feet; it was the Russian Lieutenant Zagwoskin who measured it during the winter, so that in

the spring some 30 feet ought to be added to that figure. I was cordially received by the Russian pope. He receives \$1,800 a year from the Russian Government ; he is a native of the Aleutian Islands, a full blood Aleut and he has received some education in San Francisco.

I often mention the word « barrabarra. » It is the name of the dwelling of Indians. The Indians build their houses of logs, covered with a thick layer of clay ; those houses are from 3 to 6 feet below the level of the ground, so that the roof does not exceed the surface of the ground more than 6 or 7 feet. One opening, in the top, admits air and light, and gives passage to smoke. The entrance is a tunnel some 10 or 15 feet long, and just large enough to allow dogs to pass comfortably ; but what trouble we had to crawl through those pitch-dark tunnels is not easily described. In the interior of the barrabarra, one feels comfortable, and perfectly protected against the cold and frost ; but the amount of smoke is often hardly tolerable. At the Mission I did not instruct the Indians, they were dancing, having a regular *Igronshka* with some superstitious dances without masks, which I suppose the Russian pope would stop if he could. He continues, however, to baptize all those Indians, and the Emperor of all the Russias piously believes that they are all Christians.

Not wishing to be too prolix, I pass several incidents of my return to Nulato and conclude by stating that I was glad to find a few days of rest in our barrabarra, at Nulato, where Father Mandart and I lived as comfortably as circumstances would allow.

Very sincerely yours in J. C.,

† CHARLES J. SEGHERS,

Bishop of Vancouver Island.

ZULU LAND.

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WHAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS DOING FOR CIVILIZATION IN  
THE LAND OF CETEWAYO.

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The civilization which civilizes is that of the Catholic Church. Another kind of civilization is that of fire water and fire arms. In South Africa, just at present, the British are wiping out the poor Zulus in their efforts to preach the second of these gospels. What the Church has done in the same region is told in the following report from Bishop Jolivet to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Contrast it with, the reports by cable, of the doings at Ulundi and the sickening details of burned kraals and slaughtered savages whose crime was protecting their homes against a most cruel and unjust war :

« Three years have not yet passed by since the Sovereign Pontiff gave in charge to me the Vicariate of Natal, and, in that short space of time, we have been able, thanks to the alms of the Propagation of the Faith, to establish many institutions destined to spread abroad the knowledge and the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of His holy Church. It is a happy thing for me, and at the same time my duty, to give an account of them, and thus testify to the Associates of the Propagation my gratitude for all the good they have done in these far-removed regions. Yes, those works are your works, pious associates ; it is your prayers and your alms that have made success possible ; and if you happen to see these lines, rejoice that the Lord has deigned to select you to carry His name to the extrimities of the earth, and to make you participators, at so little cost, in the glory and merits of His apostles. Our Christians are not as yet numerous here, and our wants are immense ; however, this year shall not pass without my having taken measures to establish the society in my vicariate. A day will come when we shall be numerous. These vast regions are being opened up to agriculture and industry ; easy communication will be

established from one ocean to the other ; villages and towns are about rising on all sides. Then we can do without the alms of our brethren in Europe ; but that day will not see any break in the chain of charity which unites the vicariate to your splendid society. No, then the society will be found flourishing amongst us, happy in being able in our turn to contribute to the extension of the Kingdom of Jesus-Christ in less favored countries. I ask you to take a tour with me

THROUGH THIS IMMENSE VICARIATE.

We have doubled the Cape of Good Hope and for some days we sail along magnificent coasts, which have the effect of an English park, with its green sward interrupted by groves and groups of trees. We land at Port Natal, about two miles from the town of Urban, to which it is united by a railway. Urban is the commercial town of the Natal colony ; it has about 10,000 inhabitants, of all races and of every color. Here, as everywhere else, the Christian education of youth is our first care. The building of the church can wait ; but youth cannot wait, it grows ; in a few years it will form a new Christian, an impious, or indifferent society, according to the way in which it will be developed. We therefore began by building at Urban fine schools, entrusted to the Sisters of the Holy Family. An infant school, a primary school, a superior school for young girls, are all provided there. We also required a school for the boys. We were too poor to be able to build one, but we were allowed to convert our poor little church into a school during the week. An Oblate Father, assisted by a lay brother, has charge of it. Oh ! that we had the means to build a suitable church here ! Perhaps St. Joseph, patron of this parish, will inspire some Christian soul with the idea of assisting us to realize this desire ! Let us leave Urban, its port, its noble cliffs, and its almost tropical vegetation, and go on to

PIETERMARITZBURG, THE CAPITAL OF THE COLONY.

I do not ask to go by rail ; they are working at a railway, but it will take two years to finish it. Let us get



into the diligence : we have fifty miles to travel. We start at eight o'clock in the morning, and at five o'clock in the evening we are in the city. It has not the commercial look nor the stir which the seaport gives to Urban ; but, in compensation, it has the advantage of being the seat of the Government. The Governor and his suite, the various functionaries of the State, a regiment of English soldiers, a fine military band, all contribute to give importance and brilliancy to this little aristocratic city, as the inhabitants of Urban, somewhat jealous of the privileges of the capital, style it. An elevation of more than 2,000 feet procures for it a moderate temperature. The winter nights are cold. But here, as all through the country, the sun of Africa makes its rays be felt during the daytime, even in winter, when we never see a cloud. In summer, on the contrary, frequent rains fall to temper the fierceness of his rays. We have established at Pietermaritzburg a convent, with a boarding and day school, and a primary school and an infant school, and we have just added an orphanage, where already fourteen little girls have found a refuge, and the motherly care of the Sisters of the Holy Family. We have built a residence there for the Bishop and his clergy, and we have consecrated the principal wing of the building to the education of the young men of the town. Besides English, we teach Latin, French, and accomplishments. The college of the Oblate Fathers is in existence but a few months, and is already the most flourishing in the city ; it has more pupils than the two other colleges together. So that lately the Rev. M. Newnham, member of the legislative Council, acknowledged, in a speech in the Chamber, that the Catholics had surpassed, as far as education was concerned, all that the Government and the Protestant sects could do. At least the two thirds of the children who frequent the schools are not Catholics, and, for prudential motives, we avoid disturbing their religious ideas, but educated as they are in a healthy atmosphere, they escape equally the deleterious miasmata of indifference and the violent poison of anti-Catholic fanaticism.

IN THE LONG RUN, THE EFFECT MUST BE SALUTARY,  
and, at present, this state of things secures for our



schools the means of existence, and to our holy religion a prestige and an influence which it could not otherwise acquire in the midst of non Catholic populations. In addition to the schools, the Sisters have established a congregation of young girls at the convent, and the Fathers have founded an association of young men, for whom we are about to build a large hall for meeting in, with library, reading room, etc. Let us now transport ourselves into the Caffir missions of Basutoland. To get there we have to cross the formidable chain of the Drakensberg (Dragon Mountain) whose winding crests form the rampart between Natal and the surrounding regions. We can go there on horseback and spend the night in the open air ; but we prefer the ox carts (wagons), which offer facilities for carrying things to the Mission, and furnish a shelter at night. Eighteen oxen are harnessed to each wagon, for we have to cross rivers, ascend mountains, pass through multitudes of ravines, and if the rains have flooded the river, we have to wait patiently till the waters subside. We cannot be content with one wagon ; we must have at least two travelling together, so that one may help the other in case of necessity. We have been travelling for four weeks at a slow pace, and from choice by night. Here we are at Caladon. The river is fordable, and our oxen enter it without much difficulty. But the wagon is heavily loaded, and our eighteen beasts are powerless to drag it up the opposite bank. In a few minutes the eighteen oxen of the second wagon are harnessed with ours. The Caffirs whip, shout and dance about like mad men ; the thirty-six beasts drag with all their strength, the iron chain holds firm, and we ascend the opposite bank without accident. We are now in Basutoland, a fine country of mountains and verdant plains, formerly the kingdom of Moshesh. But the old Caffir king, hunted by the Dutch boërs, was compelled to place his country under English protection, and at present his sons are only petty chiefs submissive to the authority of English magistrates. Before establishing themselves here, our missioners had tried, but unsuccessfully,

TO LABOR FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE ZULUS,

a warlike and powerful Caffir tribe, but of a frivolous and fault-finding disposition, little apt to receive the teachings of the Gospel. Our Fathers came then to be stationed amongst the Basutos on the invitation of King Moshesh, who granted to them the valley in which our principal Caffir mission is at the present day, and who himself gave to the new establishment the name of *Watsi wa ma Jesu* (village of the Mother of Jesus.) My venerable predecessor, Mgr. Allard, established himself in the mission, and under his direction our missionary and the Sisters of the Holy Family have labored in it successfully for the conversion of the natives. We are four miles and a quarter from the mission. The arrival of the Bishop is not unforeseen, for here are the Fathers and the Brothers and a numerous escort of the Basutos, mounted on their best horses, who are coming to meet us. After some moments of sweet emotion, I get on horseback ; a discharge of musketry announces the departure of the cavalcade : some startled horses run away and upset their riders. This incident makes us all laugh. We gallop joyously to the little rustic arch of triumph where the Sisters with the children of the schools expect us. After a little complimentary speech in English, in French and in Sisoutou, we slowly proceed to the church, while the children sing with all their strength a Sisoutou hymn. Let us rest a while from the fatigues of our journey and take advantage of our leisure, to cast a glance on the things around us. Here, in the centre of the village, is the thatched church, whose humble walls contain within them the Holy Tabernacle, the sacred source from which the missionary derives his strength and his consolation. At some distance we find the convent, with its garden and its girls' school, the dormitory of which occupies the upper story. This story is looked on as a miracle in the country. The Caffirs, who have never seen anything like it, at first ascend to it with hesitation ; they seem to fear that the edifice will crumble under their feet, and never go up without feeling their way like an elephant crossing a river on a wooden bridge. Let us go down to the school where the pupils expect us. They are all neatly dressed,

their feet naked, and their foreheads bound round with a light rose-colored ribbon. They salute us singing in Sisoutou the welcome song : *Loumeta Morena* (Hail, Monsignor !). They have a good ear, are fond of singing. Their collection of songs includes almost all the popular airs of France. The most of them

KNOW HOW TO READ AND WRITE THEIR OWN TONGUE,

and even a little English, not to speak of French, which is taught chiefly to them by the native Sisters. For we have already six lay Sisters, well trained and instructed, who are of great use in the classes as well as in household affairs. Let us examine their needle-work ; they have a little exhibition of it which is interesting, and proves that the children have not lost their time at the school of the Sisters. We go to the neighboring hall ; there is a manufactory for the fabrication of woolen and linen stuffs with which our little Caffirs are clothed. It is probably the only manufactory of wearing apparel which exists in all South Africa. It has done great good, and has excited the astonishment, not only of the Caffir chiefs who have seen it at work, but also of English magistrâtes, who are anxious to see industry take root amongst the Caffirs. It is, however, an old and very imperfect machine, and we must replace it as soon as possible by something better, if we have the means. We have finished our first visit to the Sisters and to their pupils, who are forty in number. The boys are fewer in number. Here is their school, with walls white as snow, built on a small eminence above the church. Our young Caffirs, in their Sunday clothes and drawn up under the veranda, expect us, proud as can be. Their dress is irreproachable, they are clean and neat ; but at what cost has this been attained ? Ask that of the poor Sister who has charge of their wardrobe. They are almost all baptised, or at least prepared for baptism. They read and write their own language very well ; many of them gabble English prettily, with a slight Sisoutou accent. They are already well instructed in arithmetic, children of parents who do not know how to reckon a hundred. They are somewhat employed in agricultural labor. They will have to be

taught useful trades ; up to the present, this portion of their education has been necessarily neglected. To complete our staff we still want a tailor, a shoemaker, a carpenter, a wheel wright and a smith. The Fathers and the Brothers do their utmost to supply every necessity,

BUT THE TASK IS BEYOND THEIR STRENGTH.

We have a small printing press here which is only used for printing leaflets ; we are compelled to get our Sisoutou books, necessary for the Christians, printed at a great expense at Natal. Below there, on the river which forms the boundary of the mission, we have a mill which grinds the corn for all our numerous family. It was made by the good Brother Bernard, who has grown old in the labors of the mission, of which he has been the chief teacher, engineer and factotum. Sunday will be a great feast day for Motsi-wa-ma-Jesu. The Fathers desired that their Bishop should taste the sweetest joy that the heart of the missionary even can know. For a long time, foreseeing his visit, they have been instructing and preparing a large number of adults for baptism. The interior preparation has been a work of time and of holy solicitude ; at present they are preparing the exterior adornments. The rustic temple is ornamented with flowers, garlands, and many colored draperies ; on all sides they are making dresses for the catechumens. Those are not always the white garments of baptism ; but they are a symbolical clothing, which recalls to our neophytes the rules of Christian modesty. The small printing press of the mission has already struck off the invitations to the chiefs and the notabilities of the neighborhood to come to the celebration. For such is the march of civilization in our valley, that those sorts of invitations must be issued in this style, even when they are sent to a far off village where no one can read. Amongst the catechumens is the wife of a chief, a sensible man, kind to us, but kept in paganism by the strength of bad habits. The woman got some one to write to her husband, to tell him she was about to become a Christian, and that for the future he would have

to conduct himself in a way worthy of a chief who had a Christian wife. It is now Saturday ; the two shots you have heard have immolated two fat oxen, without speaking of sheep and goats, for to-morrow's feast to which all the Caffirs, Christian or pagan, are invited for many leagues around.

AT LENGTH THE GRAND DAY HAS COME.

From early morning the village of the mission is filled by the multitude who are to form the line, right and left, from the convent to the church, and to keep clear the passage for the procession formed of distinguished Christians, the school children and the clergy, in the middle of whom the Bishop walks, the mitre on his head and the crosier in his hand, to the great wonder of the pagans, who have never seen anything so fine. The Pontifical Mass is celebrated with all the solemnity possible ; but the baptism of the seventy-two adults is the chief attraction of the feast. There they are ranged in two lines, and accompanied by their godfathers and godmothers. The beautiful and long prayers, and the ceremonies of the Roman ritual for the baptism of adults are carried out to the letter. The most salient points are translated into Sisoutou and recited in a loud voice for the edification of the numerous assembly, who are witnessing with emotion the imposing religious ceremony. Some moments have been devoted to thanksgiving, and to the congratulating of the neophytes by their relatives and friends, and all are now ready to do honor to the banquet in the open air. The green-sward is used for seats as well as for a table. All group themselves around their respective chiefs in proper order. The smoking viands and the cans of *litine*, (a tartish and nourishing beer made from mabélé, a grain of the country), are brought in, and every one sets to work to enjoy the feast. The Caffirs have no need of bread or vegetables at their dinner ; but to-day they shall have at least a dessert. In the neighboring orchard there are hundreds of peach trees covered with ripe fruit. To shake the trees, to fill the baskets and bowls, and heap them up with succulent peaches in the midst of each group of guests, is the work of a moment. Towards evening

the crowd separates in peace ; the Christians blessed with twofold happiness which the soul, still imperfect, experiences when it finds supernatural gifts, and the innocent joys of life united in an attractive form ; and the pagans, grosser and more sensual in their ideas, attracted to a religion which, whilst raising the heart to the pure regions of thought, leaves notwithstanding, terrestrial though innocent pleasure to human weakness.

#### WE HAVE TWO BRANCH MISSIONS

attached to the principal one of Motsi-wa-ma-Jesu : the Mission of St. Joseph of Korokoro, at three-quarters of a mile from us, where we have a church and a school, and the Mission of St. Michael, four miles only from the mother mission. The conversions there were so numerous that we were compelled to build a larger and more suitable church, which is now in course of construction. The Christians meet every evening in their present small chapel to say public prayers. Whilst I am going to the sacred edifice I hear their sweet voices mounting to heaven. Men, women, and children all chant their prayers together in perfect harmony. The school is under the guidance of a French sister, assisted by a native sister. We here see the ceremony of numerous baptisms performed as at Motsi-wa-ma-Jesu. The Christians are fervent ; but the neighborhood of the *batolic* (literally deserter, the name the Caffirs give to the Protestants) necessitates continual vigilance on the part of the missionaries. To conclude our visit to the missions of Basutoland, let us go on fifty miles farther into the country where the chief Malapo governs, under the inspection of an English magistrate. It is a mission in its infancy. We are beginning to build a church under the invocation of St. Monica, which I dedicated at the commencement of the present year. This new mission is literally *in partibus infidelium*, since there is not as yet a single baptised Christian in it ; but the pagans come willingly enough on Sunday to hear the word of God, and to sing the hymns in the Sisoutou. Not a trace of the civilization introduced by the missionaries



in the old mission are here visible. Let us hope that with time and patience we may make Christians of them. Our first care will be to establish here also a convent of the Holy Family for the education of children.

SUCH IS WHAT WE HAVE DONE AND ARE DOING

for the conversion of the Caffirs. I say nothing of what could be done, if we had the means ; that would be a boundless subject. We now go to make a visit to Bloemfontein, the capital of the Free State of Orange. The Dutch boërs of the Cape and Natal, flying from English domination, founded this State, the independence of which England has recognized. Almost all the lands, divided into immense farms, are in the hands of the boërs, who do not cultivate them and are content with rearing cattle. But at Bloemfontein, and in almost all the little towns, the English element predominates ; and although the Dutch, or rather the dialect of the boërs, is the official language of the country, in the town the English is generally spoken. Bloemfontein is reputed to be the healthiest in the world. The Anglicans, from their numbers and their social position, have great influence in it. Their clergy affect to come as close as possible to the Catholic practices and doctrines. We see the ministers walking in soutanes through the streets of the town, and they display, in the exercise of their ministry, a zeal worthy of a better cause. They repudiate the name of Protestant ; they have founded a convent of Anglican nuns, who have charge of a boarding-school, and do their best to attract to it the rich young girls of the land. No one can see, without a pang, such exertions made in behalf of error : and we can hardly understand how educated men can remain in a schismatic and heretical church, without jurisdiction and valid ordination, repudiated equally by the East and the West, and whose sacerdotal pretensions are despised by the immense majority of its followers. When, two years ago, I came to Bloemfontein, I found a small group of the faithful, who met in a chapel to hear Mass, except when the priest was away on a journey, which often happened.

WE HAD NO SCHOOL ;

but we obtained from the government a large piece of ground, then of no value : at present admirably situated for the establishment of our institutions. On the hill which overlooks the town, a great edifice, recently built, rises up and it rivals the greatest buildings in the capital. This is the Convent of the Holy Trinity. Its chapel is used provisionally for the parish church ; and the boarding-school, which is only open some months, is already a flourishing establishment. May we soon be able to endow the handsome capital of Free State with a church and a college for our young Catholic people !— You have heard the Diamond Fields spoken of. The country was part of the Free State up to the time the precious stone was discovered in it ; then the English discovered also that the country ought to belong to them. Whatever might be the doubtful claims of England, the affair has been settled quietly between that power and the Free State by means of pecuniary compensation, and the Diamond Fields are now English territory. It is towards that marvellous land we now set forward. We take two days to travel from Bloemfontein to Kimberley, the capital of the Diamond fields. We shall confine ourselves to notice a remarkable particularity, namely, the mirage, the fairy effects of which amuse and enchant us all along the way. The hills, detached from the horizon, seem everywhere to be surrounded by placid and limpid lakes, the waters of which reflect, with an accuracy capable of deceiving the most attentive eye, the reversed image of the rocks and trees. Sometimes, at a little distance before you, you perceive a sheet of water ; you come up to it, and the illusion disappears as if by enchantment. We are now within five miles of Kimberley ; one hundred and fifty horsemen have come out to meet their Bishop, and are ready to escort him into the town. We make our triumphal entry into the city of tents and houses of galvanized iron. A large crowd, composed of women, children, and those who could not procure horses to form part of the cavalcade, await us at the gate of the church. After the usual compliments



and congratulations, we go into the church to thank God for having granted us a fortunate journey.

THE MISSIONER HAD THEN NO DWELLING BUT HIS TRAVEL-  
LING WAGON ;

he had just built his iron church, and for a school had only a miserable hut. Since then they have built two fine halls for schools, and a suitable residence for the Missioner. The inhabitants of Kimberley are proud of their diamond mines, which are one of the wonders of the world. You have hardly arrived when they ask you :— “ What do you think of the “ Diamond Fields ? ” Have you ever seen anything like our diamond mine ? ” I must acknowledge, that although I had seen many mines in Europe, in America, and in Africa, I never saw anything like the mines of Kimberley. The town is built round a hill, which conceals the precious stone. The hill is divided into a great number of lots called *claims*, which the proprietors work by perpendicular excavations. Should any one deviate, by an inch, from the true perpendicular, it will be unfortunate for him ; the proprietors of the adjoining claim, on which he has trespassed, will be certain to take an action against him. The earth dug in the claim, is placed in a bucket, which is rapidly drawn up by a wire rope, to the orifice of the large basin, whence a cart brings it to the proprietor's enclosure. Here it is exposed to the sun and the air ; it is washed in running water, which takes off the lighter matters, leaving only the gravel behind, in which the precious stone is easily discerned. They have thus hollowed out the depths of the hill, which at present has the appearance of immense arenas, in comparison with which even the Coliseum would only be a common circus. If you stand on the orifice of this vast crater, and look down, you will see thousands of Caffirs at work, like black insects, in that human anthep. You see the buckets coming and going every where, suspended in the air as if by spiderthreads, and the powerful pump which draws off the invading waters. You hear people shouting in every tongue, and their voices rising above the dull sound of the pick axe and the spade. What a spectacle ! grand and mean at the

same time. Yes, mean ; for man is there bent to the earth, from which he seeks happiness. Oh ! if he only did as much in trying to find the precious pearl of the Gospel ! The diamond mines have their prosperous days ; which will never return. The working of mines becomes more costly every day, whilst the diamonds diminish in value.—I have, at the end,

A WORD TO SAY ABOUT THE TRANSVAAL,

where I am at present. This country, situated to the north of the Natal colony, is nearly as large as France. The climate is excellent, the soil fertile, its mineral riches incalculable. The boërs, who had seized on the country, constituted it into an independent republic. Ignorant and fanatical, they would never admit Catholics to participate in the prerogatives which their Protestant fellow citizens enjoyed. They wanted to make war on the Caffirs ; but would neither pay taxes nor strike a blow. Finally, the feeble government had to succumb, and the English have annexed this magnificent territory to their African possessions. We are in consequence, free in this fine territory ; but we have nothing in it, either church nor school, nor even a foot of land. The few Catholics are scattered about everywhere. Some have lost the faith. The greater number see their children grow up without being able to procure for them Christian education. But still we are free, and with the assistance of God, we intend to take advantage of our liberty to put an end to such a deplorable state of things. I have been able, already, to secure an excellent site for our Catholic establishments ; the rest will come by degrees. I said that we had nothing in the Transvaal ; I was mistaken : we have a Pilgrim's rest, a hut, where the priest can rest on his journey, and celebrate the holy mysteries. I have just travelled into the country to visit some Catholics who are obstinately bent on the pursuit of gold and often find nothing but misery. In almost all the Transvaal there is gold, but where can one find it in sufficient quantities to remunerate the laborers ? No one as yet knows. They are beginning to explore the country ; iron, copper, coal, cobalt, loadstone, are found here in

abundance ; but capital is wanting to work those rich mines, and the means of transport to utilize them. When I was coming back from Pilgrims rest, my horse got knocked up, and as I was alone I was compelled to sell him, and to get a vehicle. On the first night, our wretched equipage was overturned, and my luggage was dragged through the water and mud in the ravine. Thanks to my guardian angel, I escaped without a scratch. What a frightful night I passed on that cold, wet, and desolate mountain ! But the next morning, what a lovely day ! Before us, an immense plain extended, covered with thousands of antelopes. The animals stared at us, and took to flight when we came near. We had lost in the previous night's catastrophe our little store of provisions and were hungry. We stopped at a boër's residence and asked him to give us dinner. To my great astonishment, I saw the man take up a plane and plane down what I thought to be a bit of hard wood :— ' What are you doing there ? ' said I,— ' I am preparing your dinner ', he replied. He was planing down for me a piece of *bellong*, (dried meat) which he set on a piece of bread. It appeared to me to be a delicious dinner. Here we took a Bushman for a driver. The Bushmen do not belong to the Caffir race : they seem to be a tribe of the hottentot race, and from the west

THE CAFFIRS ARE A FINE RACE OF MEN,

much superior to the negroes. The Bushmen, on the contrary, are the most degraded race I know. They are, moreover, few in number in the vicariate, where they are strangers. The Bushman is dwarfish ; his parchment face is horribly ugly, his spread out fingers resemble big toes more than anything else. He is a drunkard, a robber, a liar, and has all imaginable faults. He has however, one good quality ; no one can drive a carriage or manage horses like a Bushman. Our Bushman had six mules to drive, and his whip could not reach the leaders. Accordingly he alighted, and supplied himself with pebbles ; and by means of those projectiles, he made the obstinate beasts move on. « At last I am back safe and sound in Pretoria, the capital

of the Transvaal. There is every prospect of our having here, in a short time, a flourishing Mission. Catholics are crowding in from all sides ; conversions are beginning to be announced ; a new era is opening for us in this country, which has been up to this time shut out from all Catholic influence. Pray that the Lord may bless the works of His humble laborers. ”

