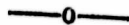


ANNALS
OF THE
Propagation of the Faith

COMPILED FOR THE
PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.



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THE MISSIONER OF THE CROSS, AND THE MISSIONER OF THE SWORD.

To impart to the ignorant and benighted *Savages* of the western world the light of christianity and the benefits of civilization, is recognized by all as the mission allotted by God to the white man, when first he led his daring ships safely across the wide Atlantic to the unknown shores of America. To have faithfully labored in the accomplishment of this noble mission is the white man's boast. But, however constant may have been his aim and his efforts, the means employed, and the result obtained, are somewhat different. The Church, sending forth her missionaries to accomplish the noble work, gives them the instructions of her divine Founder : *Take nothing for your journey, neither staff, nor scrip, nor bread, nor money.*

The Government of the United States, sending likewise to the poor Indians its messenger of civilization, setting aside the humble missioner of the *cross*, selects the man of the *sword*.

In illustration of the result obtained, we give below a few extracts from the labors and achievements of the two sorts of missioners to the Indians of the West during the last year or two.

MISSIONARY LIFE IN THE NORTH-WEST.

The extract published below is derived from a Protestant source, and while passing impartially upon the beneficent influences of the Oblate Fathers, in their endeavors to civilize and christianize the Indians under their charge, it points out in graphic language the many

hardships these missionaries have to encounter, and the trials and difficulties surrounding their efforts at evangelization :

The Indians in this scattered district are « the wildest red men in this Province, » but they are friendly to the whites, thanks to the Mission Fathers, who are indefatigable toilers in the vineyard of the Lord. What these men suffer and endure for the sake of the savage is almost incredible. Attending sick calls in a parish the size of Ireland is no child's play. When one of the fathers in the month of April or May attends a call by the Columbia lakes, or in some place more remote, he carries with him a few pounds of potatoes, and plants three or four in each place where he may hope to find a dinner in harvest when he returns on the path of duty. Fish-hooks and lines are very useful to these men ; they are often compelled to fish for a dinner, and find it or fast. When they return to the Mission it is not to rest, but to work, picking potatoes, cooking, ploughing. They are the only men I ever saw who could enjoy the pleasure produced by working eighteen hours a day. Their influence over the Indian tribes is not at all surprising. I attended mass on the 2d of November, All Soul's day. In the centre of the chapel there was an empty coffin covered with black cloth and decorated with a white cross ; twenty candles were lighted and placed round the coffin, and outside this circle the Indians on their knees prayed with the priest for the souls of the dead. Mass over, the whole tribes, male and female, followed the priest to the grave-yard. He was preceded by the chief bearing a crucifix, and two Indian boys bearing lighted candles. They marched all round the graves singing the litanies. I did not understand a word of their language, but it electrified me. I followed the procession to see the sport and to laugh at the performance ; but when I saw that crowd of savage men halt before the cross in the wilderness and kneel to pray, I took off my hat and knelt down with them and prayed in earnest ; and I can tell you that praying in earnest was something new to me and beautiful. It was a solemn scene. They returned in silence to the village, the chief leading and followed by the priest and the procession. At night the

Indian village was a picture of domestic peace—no whiskey, no noise, no rudeness. There was good humor, smiling on their faces, and there was the laugh that was musical, because it was the echo of mirth. Who are the savages ! ourselves or the Indians ?

LETTER FROM MGR CLUT, COADJUTOR TO THE VICAR APOSTOLIC
OF M^CKENZIE RIVER.

Providence Bishopric, May 22nd 1877.

REVEREND MOTHER,

Your excellent letter of Nov. 11th. arrived here on the 16th. of march last, and afforded me extreme pleasure. I regret very much, Rev. Mother, that the bad state of your health has deprived your daughters of the McKenzie of the happiness of seeing you. It is true, one must be strong and robust to execute a like voyage, and it could not be done hurriedly. A general Superioress could not easily exile herself during more than a year in a desert country, where it would be so difficult for her to correspond with her numerous daughters. This reason, together with the bad state of your health, has deprived us of the visit we so much desired. On the 3rd of May we solemnly celebrated the patronal feast of your congregation. I said mass for all your numerous family. I did not fail to have a special memento for you, Rev. Mother, asking health and all the other graces of which you are in need, to fulfil worthily your important charge.

You congratulate me, Rev. Mother, on my good health ; and happy am I to tell you that it improves daily. The most laborious work and journeys, which lasted almost all the winter, far from having altered my health, fortified it more and more. In the beginning of the winter I had made a lumber yard eight or ten miles from here :

during a month and a half I made two journeys to it every day with my four steeds. It is true that in going I made them draw me, but in returning I was obliged to walk all the way, the sledge being loaded with heavy blocks. During the latter part of the winter I made six visits to the Indian Camps, and each of these journeys took five or seven days' hard walk. Apart from the principal design of visiting the Indians to baptize and instruct them, my second plan was to procure a little meat and grease for our two establishments, the bishopric and the convent. This winter, I alone, by means of my four dogs, brought here over 2,000 lbs. of meat. In one journey I brought 554 lbs ; you can see by that, that my steeds were strong. But their conductor had to be strong also, to raise up the load which so often overturned in the bad roads. On one day I walked seventeen and a half hours, and on another twenty hours and forty minutes, forcing myself enormously to govern and direct my steeds. A great thaw which suddenly set in was another cause of making me hurry.

I would not wish, Rev. Mother, to make of myself a meat-carrier, nor undertake such laborious journeys which correspond so little with the dignity of a Bishop ; but in going to visit the camps, I profited of my strength to bring meat to your dear daughters, to my brethen, and to our dear orphans. We have actually twenty-nine children, twenty-seven of which I must feed ; and as we cannot here go to the butchery or buy anything out of the shops, one must know how to prepare provisions in advance. With pain must I state that each day it becomes more difficult to procure meat, and during the two winters that I have just passed at Providence, had I not been so strong and expert, we could never have kept so many orphans. These dear children afford us great consolation ; we have a great deal to do to bring

them up, to feed and clothe them ; but when I consider how well raised they are by your devoted daughters, who work so zealously for the salvation of their souls, as also for the salvation of others to whom these children will afterwards give such a good exemple, I am encouraged to make these voluntary sacrifices. Ah ! what a difference there is between the children who pass under the beneficent hands of your daughters and those who live in the woods and forests. I am happy to announce to you, good Mother, that thanks to the skill of our excellent Canadian workman and to Brother Boissain, we have here a machine for shelling barley, which makes very fine barley flour, thus enabling your daughters of the McKenzie to eat barley cakes a little oftener ; and in order to render the treat more frequent, I have had a greater quantity of barley sown this year than any of the preceding years. To enlarge our fields, already vast enough, R. F. Ledousal novice, and Brother Lecomte, with myself have employed all our fore-noons, during the past month, in cutting down the trees. I must inform you that I propose going up to Athabaska this summer. I shall then see the little company of the Holy Angels. I hope the good they have done will make me rejoice at having there planted a few of your generous daughters. I will make but a short visit, being obliged to return in haste to Providence in order to ordain Brother Lecomte, who is yet only tonsured, although it is a long time since he completed his theology. If R. F. Grouard comes to us this summer, he will again take charge of the important direction of this mission, and then I can resume my apostolic course in a more extensive Vicarage. Continue, Rev. Mother, to pray, and have all your daughters pray for me and our dear savages. And on my part I shall never forget you and your numerous community. Often, during

the memento of the Mass, you are present to my mind, and I beg of God to bless you and bestow on you the most precious graces your heart desires. You wish, Rev. Mother, to see me again. I am still a simple officer of the Great Centurion, and I must await the command : *go there, or come here* etc. I can say with all sincerity, that whenever I have the pleasure of again seeing Canada, willingly indeed shall I go to see you, and that more than once. Whilst waiting for that happy time, let us be always united in our Lord and his Immaculate Mother. With all my heart I bless you, your daughters, your orphans, your poor, your benefactors, your relations and your friends.

I am, Rev. Mother, with respectful affection,
Your all devoted in our Lord

† ISIDORE, *Bishop of Aryndel.*

CORPUS CHRISTI IN COLVILLE.

It is truly touching to see our glorious old Faith triumphing even in the wild western forests of the New World, amongst the poor, ignorant Red Men. Almighty God rejoices in the simple, heartfelt demonstrations which these poor Indians manifest, and we Catholics have reason to rejoice also; everywhere we turn, we see and feel the effect of the words which our Divine Lord addressed to his Apostles more than eighteen hundred years ago, from the highest nobleman down to the poorest and lowest of mankind; but when one sees how these degraded people are ennobled, as it were, by the teachings of our Holy Mother the Church, one's eyes are fairly dazzled and cannot fail to comprehend how this same Church is One Holy Catholic and Apostolic.

The present Holy-day was the occasion of drawing together a vast concourse of Indians from far and near, some coming from a distance of three or four hundred miles ; for two weeks before the feast, caravans of one hundred, two hundred, and even three hundred arrived at a time and pitched their tents around the church ; the young and strong, the old and infirm, the blind and lame,—in fact, all exerted themselves to the utmost so as to be in season for the great “ Flower-Day,” as they call it in their language. A most friendly feeling existed among the different tribes ; on the arrival of each new tribe, the Colville Indians would assemble at the church door in double file with the Flag of Truce, and a discharge of firearms, to welcome their brothers in Christ, and after the hearty shaking of hands all round, conduct the new-comers to the camping ground. After this they began in earnest the chief business—that of the soul—the missionaries, who were two in number, and to whom all the honor and success of this mission is to be attributed, were in the Confessional from the first break of day until midnight, leaving, as may be seen, but two short hours for Nature ; sometimes even that short respite was begrudged them as they were often called for by the sick. For eight days before, this was the course of things for them, and great was the harvest they reaped. On the morning of the feast over seven hundred Indians received Holy Communion. It was really edifying to see how fervent these poor creatures were ; many, many melted to tears at the approach of the Divine Guest, and after having tasted the sweets of heavenly consolation they went their way to wait for High Mass, which began at eleven o'clock.

The greater part of the people of this valley came also to adore their Lord, thus testifying that the Faith was still alive among them.

The military, too, although the greater number were non-Catholics, obtained permission to attend, and all the citizens came to take part in the festivities of the day. The church was crowded ; all the women inside and the greater number of men out-doors. A Guard of Honor, consisting of twenty of the best Indians, dressed in a tasty uniform of white albs and red capes, knelt two by two in the aisle. Before the service commenced, the old chief addressed a few words to the white people, begging them to behave themselves properly so as not to scandalize the Indians. "What we are about to do," said he, "we do for the honor of God, and we will not be kept back by any human respect ; therefore, if you whites wish to laugh or mock at us you will miss your mark, and the best thing for you to do is to conform yourselves to our rules, or else go home." Solemn High Mass began ; the Indians sang the beautiful Gregorian Angels' Mass with a very fine effect. At the consecration, a discharge of guns announced the coming of our Lord amongst his people, and at the *Domine, non sum dignus*, another salute was fired to show their thankfulness to the Heavenly Visitor. During the silent parts of the Mass appropriate hymns were sung by the Sisters' children.

At the *Ite missa est*, the procession took up its line of march, the women leading with a beautiful banner of Our Lady, and the men likewise with the ensigns of Holy Mary flying in the air. Then came the Guard of Honor with lighted candles, the incensebearers, and then the canopy came in sight, under which was the Rev. Father, bearing carefully our Lord Jesus Christ, who thus deigned to smile benignantly on His dusky, simple-hearted children of the forest. After the Blessed Sacrament came the Sisters and their children, followed by the ladies of the valley ; afterwards the Indian chil-

dren, in the rear of whom were several Protestant Indians. The procession wound round the foot of the hill, and was over a half mile in length. Regarded from the summit on which the church is built, it presented a spectacle fit for angels to look at—to see the profound recollection and devotion of over 2300 people, walking two by two about three feet apart from each other, singing hymns, reciting the beads, &c., is a sight never to be forgotten. There were two repositories beautifully decorated, at each of which the benediction was given to the devout multitude. Arrived at the second repository the women passed on in the same order to the church, while the ranks of men formed a wide passage, extending from the church door to the foot of the hill, through which the Blessed Sacrament was triumphantly borne, accompanied by a cavalcade of fifty and a number of boys scattering wild flowers before and around. In this manner the Divine Guest was carried to the home which His love made for Himself amongst the children of men; and from the hearts of these loving people may He never be driven by any of the wolves in sheep's clothing, as He has already been in different places!

At three o'clock the crowd dispersed, much pleased with the whole affair, and one may truly say that such a procession might grace even the streets of the Eternal City; nothing better could be wished for, such order and such recollection can seldom be found among civilized people.

A LOVER OF THE FAITH.

THE MISSIONER OF THE SWORD.

LAST SUMMER'S EXPEDITION AGAINST THE SIOUX—BY GENERAL
JOHN GIBBON, U. S. A.

The Great Missouri River, heading in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, receives on its southeastwardly course towards the Mississippi the waters of several tributaries, one of which, the Yellowstone, flowing from the north-west, empties into the Missouri at Old Fort Union. The Yellowstone itself receives numerous streams, the largest of which, the Big Horn, receives, about forty miles from its mouth, the waters of another stream, the Little Big Horn, around whose name mournful memories will linger for many years to come.

For several years the Sioux Indians had been committing depredations on the white settlements of Montana, carrying consternation wherever they went. Cattle were slaughtered, horses stolen, and men killed in the settlements east of Fort Ellis, in the summer of 1875, and during August of that year several soldiers, whilst hunting and fishing in the vicinity of Camp Lewis, a post established for the protection of a mail and freighting route from Helena to Carroll, on the Missouri River, were killed. These depredations were all supposed to be committed by men belonging to a tribe presided over by a chief called Sitting Bull, a rather notorious Sioux who prided himself greatly upon standing aloof from the whites, never going to an agency, and never trading with one personally, although he was not averse to trading with the agency through others. These war parties from his camp, operating during the summer season, would pass over vast distances on their fleet little ponies, commit their depredations, and be off hundreds

of miles away before anybody but the poor victims would know anything about it.

But Montana was not the only region which suffered from these depredations. Similar transactions were taking place to the southward, along the northern borders of Wyoming and Nebraska; and in the Black Hills (a region guaranteed by solemn treaty to the Indians), the « irrepressible conflict » between barbarism and the invading gold-seekers was carried on, and, as may be imagined, did not tend to bring about peaceful relations between the government and the Sioux. At length the government, having through its agents *starved* many of the Indians into leaving the agencies in order to get food, ordered them all back there in the depth of winter at the penalty of being proceeded against by the military, and early in March the troops took the field from the south, struck Crazy Horse's camp on Powder River, and returned.

The military was started out to punish and bring to subjection the hostile bands which were defying the government. These were known to be not numerous, and they were, during the summer months, in the habit of roaming at will over the vast uninhabited region in the great bend of the Missouri River, hunting the buffalo, laying up their supplies of skins and meat for the winter, and varying their operations by sending out small war parties to raid upon the white settlements, or fighting the Crows, against whom they were at deadly enmity.

After several months of hard marching through snow and mud, with but little advantage against the ever invisible enemy, our whole command was finally reunited on the 14th of June, (1876) at the mouth of the river Rosebud, where we waited for the arrival of

General Terry, keeping in the meantime the country well scouted up and down the river. General Terry was understood to be at the mouth of the Tongue River, and the next morning Colonel Reno started with his command to join him. Our scouts reported seeing large fires in the direction of the Little Horn, and now every one was anxious for the arrival of General Terry, for our last chance for striking the Indians appeared to be in the direction indicated.

Anticipating a move up the river, I ordered, on the 21st. three companies of infantry to proceed up the road to replace the bridges, and repair the crossings over the various streams destroyed by the recent rains. During the morning General Terry reached our camp on the « Far West. » As soon as we were tied up to the bank, he came aboard, and seated in the cabin with a map before us, we discussed the proposed operations. The large trail found by Colonel Reno leading up the Rosebud, and the fires seen in that direction by my scouts led to the belief that the Indians, if overtaken at all, would be found somewhere on the Little Big Horn, a favorite resort, where the grazing was good and game close by. It was therefore arranged that General Custer should start the next day with the whole of his regiment, take up the trail on the Rosebud, and follow it ; that my command should march to the mouth of the Big Horn, something over sixty miles distant, be there ferried across the Yellowstone, and march from there to the valley of the Little Big Horn, and up that stream to co-operate with Custer's command.

At noon the next day, General Terry, accompanied by myself and General Brisbin, rode to the upper end of the camp to witness the departure of Custer and his fine regiment. The bugles sounded the « boots and saddles, »

and Custer, after starting the advance, rode up and joined us. Together we sat on our horses and witnessed the approach of the command as it threaded its way through the rank sage brush which covered the valley. First came a band of buglers sounding a march, and as they came opposite to General Terry they wheeled out of the column as at review, continuing to play as the command passed along. The regiment presented a fine appearance, and as the various companies passed us we had a good opportunity to note the number of fine horses in the ranks, many of them being part-blooded horses from Kentucky, and I was told there was not a single sore-backed horse amongst them. General Custer appeared to be in good spirits, chatted freely with us, and was evidently proud of the appearance of his command. The packmules, in a compact body, followed the regiment, and behind them came a rear guard, and as that approached Custer shook hands with us and bade us good bye. As he turned to leave us I made some pleasant remark, warning him against being greedy, and with a gay wave of his hand he called back, « No, I will not, » and rode off after his command. Little did we think we had seen him for the last time, or imagine under what circumstances we should next see that command, now mounting the bluffs in the distance with its little guidons gayly fluttering in the breeze.

A very heavy cold wind was blowing from the north, and our steamer did not start until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. We ran on till near dusk, when we tied up for the night and took in wood. The next day (23d) we ran steadily all day, and just before night we tied up, the captain stating that he was unable to reach Fort Pease before dark. We arrived there, however, early the next morning, and my command being in position was at once ferried across the river, and at 5 o'clock

started on its march up the Big Horn. I had been attacked with very severe illness the night before, had remained in bed all day and was unable to move. General Terry accompanied the command in person, leaving me on board to meet the column at the mouth of the Little Big Horn. The next day at noon (25th) we entered the mouth of that stream, the « Far West » being the first steamer that ever ploughed its waters, and running till dark tied up for the night, little dreaming what a disastrous day had closed over the gallant Custer and his command. The next morning we were early under way again. The river, which was very full, began to be intersected with numerous islands, and the boat experienced some difficulty in finding a navigable channel. We had just finished pulling over a bar, and were approaching a difficult rapid, when two horsemen were seen on the bluffs coming towards us. They were soon made out to be one of my staff officers and an orderly. He came aboard and informed me that the infantry part of the command was only a few miles up the river ; that they had had a terrible march the day before over the rough mountainous region lying between the Big Horn and Tullock's Fork, during which the men suffered very much from exhaustion and the want of water, and that General Terry, with the cavalry and Gatling guns, had started ahead for a night's march the evening before. This looked as if he anticipated meeting with Indians, and as I now began to be impatient lest the boat would be unable to reach the mouth of the Little Big Horn that day, I determined to mount my horse and overtake the command at once. It was lucky I did so, for the command was not again in communication with the boat until four days afterwards. After a brisk ride of four or five miles I overtook the infantry marching over a plateau not particularly rough, but

intersected by numerous deep ravines, which must have rendered the march of the cavalry the night before very tedious and slow, as the night was dark and rainy. Later in the day we overtook the cavalry as it was leaving the place where it had bivouacked at midnight, and on reaching the head of the column and receiving the command from General Terry, I was informed that our scouts reported Indians in front in the direction of the Little Big Horn. Soon after, the officer in charge of the scouts reported that several Indians had been seen to whom the Crows gave chase, and that they had fled across the Big Horn. In their flight they had dropped articles which showed them to be Crows and not Sioux, and our scouts declared them to be some of the Crows which I had lent General Custer at the mouth of the Rosebud for scouting purposes. They were directed to communicate with their friends across the Big Horn, bring them back, and ascertain what news they brought from Custer. For, of course, the inference was at once drawn that these Crows had been sent out by Custer to communicate with our column. We were utterly unprepared for the startling report which our Crows brought back after calling across to their friends on the opposite bank of the Big Horn. Our best interpreter had been left sick at the mouth of the river, and from what we could make out by the indifferent one with us, who appeared very much excited and demoralized by the news, Custer's command had been entirely cut to pieces by the Sioux, who, so said the interpreter, "were chasing our soldiers all over the hills and killing them like buffalo."

This startling piece of news was received with incredulity by every one, and the absconding Crows were again sent for, to come back, that we might question them, and try to ascertain something near the facts

Whilst the head of the column was halting for the infantry to close up, General Terry and myself walked over to the edge of the bluff overlooking the valley of the Big Horn to await the return of the scouts, and ascertain from them such news as we could. The broad river intersected by numerous wooded islands was spread out at our feet, and from the edge of a piece of timber nearest us our scouts were soon seen emerging, and approaching a buffalo trail which led up the bluffs to the spot where we were standing. As they came nearer we detected signs of grief ; and as old « Show-his-face » (the senator) mounted the steep slope on his pony, he was seen to be crying as if his heart was broken, with great tears streaming down his old weatherbeaten face, and uttering every now and then the most doleful exclamations. We had become used to this after seeing them cry at the loss of their horses, and therefore did not attach much importance to it ; but when the others arrived and confirmed the previous report, with the information that their friends declared their horses and themselves were too exhausted to cross the river again, and positively refused to come back, it became evident that the Indians themselves believed in the truth of the report as they heard it.

Of course there was but one thing for us to do, which was to push forward as rapidly as possible and try and clear up for ourselves the terrible uncertainty ; for, at all events, the fact seemed undoubted that Custer had come in contact with the Indians, and the sooner we could reach him the better. The march was at once resumed, and we shortly reached the bluffs overlooking the valley of the Little Big Horn, some distance up which huge columns of smoke could now be plainly seen. As we wound along over the rough broken hills seeking for a place to get down into the valley, I observed that

all our Crows, instead of travelling well to the front, as was their custom, stuck close to the column. I ordered the interpreter to take them to the front and report for duty with the advanced guard ; but he declared his inability to get them to go, and was evidently himself so badly scared that he produced a bad effect upon the Indians. Finding I could not get them to the front I angrily ordered them to the rear of the column, an order which they obeyed with so much alacrity under the lead of the white interpreter, that we saw them no more ; and they never stopped till they reached their agency, a hundred miles away. This, of course, we ascertained afterwards. They were evidently very badly stampeded, but I attributed this more to the demoralized condition of the white interpreter than to any want of courage on their part ; and they afterwards assured me, when they rejoined us at the mouth of the Big Horn, that the interpreter had told them that I said I did not want them any longer.

We had to remain for some time on the high bluffs overlooking the valley of the Little Big Horn, up which the smoke of the fires continued constantly to increase in volume, which gave rise to the hope that, as our guides expressed it, Custer had « got away » with the camp and was destroying it. Such a hope was in consonance with our ideas, for I do not suppose there was a man in the column who entertained for a moment the idea that there were Indians enough in the country to defeat, much less annihilate, the fine regiment of cavalry which Custer had under his command. Distances in this clear, rarefied atmosphere are very deceptive, and, as we moved on, the distance to the smoke which at first appeared to be only a few miles seemed to lengthen out and grow greater under the weary feet of our men, and when we did finally make our way down into

the valley and cross the stream at a deep ford we were still some twelve or fifteen miles from the nearest smoke. To afford rest and food to both men and animals the command was halted here ; the animals permitted to graze for an hour and a half and the men to make coffee. In the meantime efforts were made to communicate by courier with General Custer, General Terry offering a large reward to any one who would carry through a dispatch. Two of our guides, Bostwick and Taylor, although unacquainted with the country, volunteered for the service, and, shortly after they left, the column resumed its march up the broad open valley. After we had proceeded several miles some stray ponies were picked up by the advance guard, which were evidently estrays from an Indian camp. On our left ran the stream bordered with timber and brushwood, and some distance on our right the valley was bounded by low rolling hills. In our front the stream after cutting into the bluffs crossed the valley from right to left, the timber shutting out all view beyond, save above its top appeared a sharp mountain peak, on the edges of which could now and then be indistinctly made out a few moving figures, and just beyond this peak the smoke appeared to have its origin. Up to this time no Indians had been seen, but shortly after one of our couriers came riding in from the front, and reported that in attempting to reach Custer's command he had run into a number of Indians in the hills, and was unable to proceed farther. A company of cavalry was now thrown out to the hills on our right, and the column pushed forward as rapidly as the men could march, the infantry responding with alacrity and almost keeping up in pace with the horses. Small scattered bands now began to make their appearance on the tops of the distant hills up the river where the latter began to deflect its course

to the northward, and as it grew dark more of them could be seen in the distance.

The condition of affairs regarding Custer's command was now more involved in doubt than ever. If he had defeated the Indians and destroyed their camp, as the fires seemed to indicate, it was difficult to account for the presence of these Indians in our front, who were evidently watching us ; whereas, if the report of the Crows was correct, and the Indians had defeated Custer, their bearing was equally inexplicable. This state of doubt was only increased when our other courier came in and reported the result of his attempts to get through to Custer. He had struck into the hills to the southward, and had encountered Indians, who appeared to be friendly, and responded to the signals he made them. He approached some of them on foot, and leading his horse, when one of them he said treacherously fired a shot at him, and he fiercely declared he had recognized him as one of Custer's Ree scouts, and that he would kill him when he met him for firing at him. As night closed around us the command was halted and bivouacted in the open prairie ; the scouting parties were called in, who reported seeing quite a large number of Indians on the distant hills, but in the gathering darkness nothing could be plainly made out. After watering and grazing the animals they were all carefully picketed inside the command formed in a square, guards established just outside, and the tired men sank to rest eight miles from the brave little band of fellow-soldiers which, unknown to us, was watching and waiting on those bleak bluffs of the river above.

Every one was astir at the first appearance of day, and after a hurried breakfast of hardtack, bacon, and coffee, the march was resumed up the valley. The trail, forced into the hills on the right by the encroachment

of the river, led through rough ground around a bend in the stream, and as the view opened into the valley beyond, we caught sight, through the scattered timber, of a couple of Indian teepies standing in the open valley. The advance guard with flankers out on the hills to the right now moved rapidly to the front, whilst a party of mounted infantry, which had crossed the river, scouted the hills on that side. As soon as the Gatling guns were passed over the rough portion of the trail, the whole command, well closed up, moved in compact order up through the open valley beyond, every one eagerly pressing forward and anxious to solve the dread doubt which seemed to hang over the fate of our comrades. Silence reigned around us, only a few distant horsemen had been seen, and, but for the presence of a few scattering Indian ponies, the valley seemed to be entirely deserted. The company of cavalry in the advance was seen to push more rapidly to the front, past the Indian teepies, which showed no life, and on beyond at a gallop, whilst our more slowly moving column seemed merely to crawl along. At length we reached the teepies, found them occupied by dead Indians laid out in state, and surrounded in every direction with the remnants and various obbs and ends of a hastily abandoned camp. Teepie poles, skins, robes, pots, kettles, and pans lay scattered about in every direction. But we had little time or inclination to comment on these sights, for every thought was now bent upon the possible fate of our fellow soldiers, and the desire was intense to solve as soon as possible the dread doubt which now began to fill all minds. For, in searching about amongst the rubbish, some one had picked up a pair of bloody drawers, upon which were plainly written the words, "Sturgis's 7th. Cavalry," whilst a buckskin shirt, recognized

as belonging to Lieutenant Porter, was discovered with a bullet-hole passing through it.

It was plainly to be seen now that a conflict had indeed taken place, but of its extent or results we were still in as much doubt as ever, when a report came to me from the scouting party in the hills to our left that several dead horses had been discovered in a ravine in that direction. Every eye was now strained to the utmost in search of information, and whilst looking up the valley I caught sight of something on the top of a hill far beyond the sharp peak before referred to, which at once attracted my attention and a closer scrutiny. I sprang from my horse, and with a field glass looked long any anxiously at a number of dark objects which might be either animals or stubby cedar trees. The closest scrutiny failed to detect any movement amongst them, and yet I could not divest my mind of the idea that they were horses, and called upon a pair of younger eyes to try the glass. One of General Terry's staff officers took the glass and seating himself on the ground peered long and anxiously at the spots, but finally said "they are not animals." But scarcely had the words escaped him, when we both noticed a very apparent increase in the number of objects on the highest point of the hill, and now one doubt was solved only to give rise to another. Were the objects seen friends or foes? Had we come in time to save some of our friends, or were the objects on the hill simply a party of Indians watching our approach after having, as the Crows said, destroyed them all? The feeling of anxiety was overwhelming, and the column seemed to crawl along more slowly than ever. The advance was moving ahead fast enough now, and I dispatched a staff officer in haste to ascertain and bring back any information it might have picked up; for I had observed on the peak before

spoken of, and opposite which the advanced guard had now arrived, three horsemen evidently observing our movements and watching us closely. They could scarcely, I thought, be white men, for our troops were marching up the valley in two columns, in plain sight of where they sat on their horses, and if friendly they surely would have come down and communicated with us. They did finally come slowly down to a lower hill standing nearer to the river, but there they halted again and seemed to question us with their eyes.

Whilst watching these lookouts and wondering at their strange movements, the officer in charge of the mounted infantry party, in the hills to the north of us, rode up to where General Terry and I sat upon our horses, and his voice trembled as he said, « I have a very sad report to make. I have counted one hundred and ninety-seven dead bodies lying in the hills ! » « White men ? » was the first question asked. « Yes, white men. » A look of horror was upon every face, and for a moment no one spoke. There could be no question now. The Crows were right, and Custer had met with a disaster, but the extent of it was still a matter of doubt ; and as we turned our eyes towards the lookouts on the hill above us, as though to question them, we saw them moving, still slowly, however, down closer to the river. Then as they reached a gentle slope they rode on a little faster, and were seen to approach the advance guard, and some one in our anxious group exclaimed, « They are white men ! » From out of the timber near the point, a horseman at full speed was now seen coming toward us. It was my staff officer coming with news, and as he approached us on the full run he called out, « I have seen scouts from Colonel Reno, who report their regiment cut to pieces, and Colonel Reno fortified in the bluffs with the remnant. » We were still some

distance, probably a mile and a half from the objects we had been observing on the hill, and now pushed forward more eagerly than ever, the advance guard being already opposite their position. After we had gone about a mile a party of horsemen was seen approaching, and as we rode forward to meet them we recognized two young officers of the Seventh Cavalry, followed by several orderlies. Hands were grasped almost in silence, but we questioned eagerly with our eyes, and one of the first things they uttered was, "Is General Custer with you?" On being told that we had not seen him, they gave us hurriedly an account of the operations of the past two days, and the facts began to dawn upon us. No one of the party which accompanied General Custer when the command was devided, about noon on the 25th, had been seen by the survivors, and our inference was, that they were all, or nearly all, lying up in the hills where our scouting party had found the dead bodies.

Whilst General Terry accompanied the officers to Colonel Reno's position on the hill, I proceeded to select a camp for the command. Nearly the whole valley was black and smoking, and it was with some difficulty I could find grass sufficient for our animals, as it existed only in spots close to the stream where too green to burn. Except the fire, the ground presented but few evidences of the conflict which had taken place. Now and then a dead horse was seen; but as I approached a bend of the creek (for it is little more than a creek), just below the hill occupied by the troops, I came upon the body of a soldier lying on his face near a dead horse. He was stripped, his scalp gone, his head beaten in, and his body filled with bullet-holes and arrows. Close by was another body, also close to a dead horse, lying, like the other, on its face, but partially clothed, and this was

recognized by one of our officers as the body of Captain McIntosh. More bodies of both men and horses were found close by, and it was noted that the bodies of men and horses laid almost always *in pairs*, and as this was the ground over which Colonel Reno's command retired towards the hills after its charge down the valley, the inference was drawn, that in the run the horses must have been killed first, and the riders after they fell.

The command was placed in camp here, and details at once set to work to haul away the dead horses and bury the men, both of which were already becoming offensive. Then mounting my horse I proceeded to visit Colonel Reno's command. As I rode a few hundred yards up the river towards the ford, bodies of men and horses were seen scattered along at intervals, and in the river itself several dead horses were lying. The banks of the river at the ford were steep and some six or eight feet high, with here and there an old buffalo trail leading down to the water. The water itself was not over a horse's knee, and close to the bank, on the other side, a series of steep bluffs, intersected at short intervals by steep and narrow ravines, rose up for probably a hundred feet. Up the sides of these ravines, winding about to make the ascent more gradual, numerous paths led, now tramped hard and smooth by the many animals which had recently passed over them. My horse struggled up the steep path, wide enough only for a single animal, with difficulty, and on emerging from the ravine up which it led, I found myself on a sort of rough broken plateau, which sloped gradually up to the curved summit occupied by the troops. I soon came to a line of rifle-pits facing the space I was crossing, and running from the summit of the ridge down to the bluff overlooking the river, whilst behind this and facing the other way was another line, running in a similar way

along the summit of an almost paralld ridge. Between the two were standing and lying, almost motionless, the horses and pack-mules of the command. As I approached the summit of the main ridge which overlooked all the rest of the ground I have described, the evidences of the severe struggle which had taken place here began to manifest themselves. Dead horses and mules were lying about in every direction, and in one little depression on the other slope of the main divide I counted forty-eight animals. Here and there, these had evidently been made use of as breastworks, and along the top of the ridge holes and rifle-pits extended, connecting the two lines before referred to. On the far side of the ridge, the ground gradually fell away in lower ridges, behind which the Indians had sheltered themselves and their ponies during the fight.

Standing on top of the main ridge with my back to the river, I overlooked the whole of the ground to the front ; but on turning to my left, the ground was seen to rise higher and higher in successive ridges which ran nearly perpendicular to the stream, until they culminated in the sharp peak referred to in my description of the previous day upon which we had seen objects at a great distance down the valley. Several of these ridges commanded in reverse the position occupied by the troops, and we were told had been occupied by the Indians during the fight of the 26th, their long-range rifles covering all the space within the lines. Turning again to the left so as to face the river, the broad open flat where Colonel Reno had made his charge at the commencement of the battle on the 25th lay directly at our feet, whilst off towards the south the bluffs which bordered the valley rose up abruptly, and were succeeded by a gently sloping country intersected by several small valleys, with brushwood lining the now dry beds

of the streams at the bottoms, while in the far distance the rugged range of the Big Horn Mountains rose, their tops partially covered with snow. One of the little valleys referred to was pointed out to us as the place where at dusk, the evening before, the last of the Indians disappeared in the distance after passing over, in admirable order and in full view of the command, the rolling plateau which bordered the valley of the Little Big Horn to the southward. Looking down the river in the direction we had come was a point of timber jutting out into the plain, where for a portion of the time the cavalry had fought dismounted ; and beyond this, in plain sight from where I stood, was located the village where the fight began ; and opposite that, hidden from sight by the high peak so often referred to, was the scene of Custer's fight, where his body was found surrounded by those of his men and horses.

On the highest point of the ridge occupied by the troops, and along what had been the nothern line of defence, were pitched a number of shelter tents, and under and about these were lying some fifty wounded men, receiving the care of the surgeons and their attendants. The cheerfulness of these poor fellows under their sufferings, and their evident joy at their rescue was touching in the extreme, and we listened with full hearts to their recital in feeble tones of the long anxious hours of waiting and fighting, during which every eye was strained, looking for the coming succor, hoping for its arrival, yet fearing it would be too late. At one time, so strongly did the imagination effect the judgment, the whole command was convinced that columns of troops could be seen moving over the hills to their assistance, but in directly the *opposite* direction from which they actually came. So strong was this delusion that the buglers of the whole command were assembled and

ordered to sound their bugles to attract attention. When we finally made our appearance down the valley, the same thing was done, and it is supposed that it was the gathering together of the buglers of the highest point of the hill which finally decided in our minds that we were looking at men and horses, and not clumps of cedar trees. But we heard nothing of the bugles, for the wind was blowing from us.

Standing on the scene of the conflict, we heard from officers and men the story of the struggle and their experience for the past forty-eight hours. The battle commenced some time about noon on the 25th by the charge of the three companies down towards the village. They reached the point of timber I have referred to as jutting out into the plain. Here they were dismounted for a time, and fought from the timber, and then when the Indians came swarming around them from the ravines in the bluffs, they mounted again, and then commenced the race for the bluffs bordering the river. It must, from their description, have been a race for life against death. Look up the stream, and you will see the ford where Reno's command crossed to enter the fight. The one it crossed to reach its present position lies directly at your feet. Turning now to the left again so as once more to place your back to the river, and looking up to your right and front, you can trace with the eye a little valley winding its way up into the broken ground to the northeast. It was down this valley that Custer's command approached the Little Big Horn, and near where it joins the valley of that stream in the ford where Reno crossed before the battle. Before reaching that point, Custer, it appears by his trail, turned to the right with his five companies, skirted along through these hills to our front, passed to the right of the sharp peak, and still on, beyond it and out

of sight of where we stand. His trail is all that is left to tell the story of his route, for no white man of all those who accompanied him has since been seen alive. To us who stand upon the ground, and make these observations, his fate is still a matter of doubt, and is now to be solved. One of Colonel Reno's companies is mounted and started for the scene of Custer's fight. It leaves our position, and winding along the rolling hills, ascends the high ground to the right of the high peak, and disappears beyond, just as Custer's command would have vanished probably from the sight of an observer standing where we are now.

Whilst this company is away we are busy preparing to remove the wounded down from the hot, dusty hill where they are lying to my camp, where they will be more comfortable and can be better cared for.

After being absent a couple of hours the detached company is seen winding its way back, and as it approaches we all collect round General Terry to hear the report of its gray haired captain, who won such praises by his indomitable bearing in the fight. He comes forward, dismounts, and in a low, very quiet voice, tells his story. He had followed Custer's trail to the battle opposite the main body of the Indian camp, and amid the rolling hills which borders the river-bank on the north. As he approached the ground scattered bodies of men and horses were found, growing more numerous as he advanced. In the midst of the field a long *backbone* ran out obliquely back from the river, rising very gradually until it terminated in a little knoll which commanded a view of all the surrounding ground, and of the Indian camp-ground beyond the river. On each side of this backbone, and sometimes on top of it, dead men and horses were scattered along. These became more numerous as the terminating knoll was reached ; and

on the southwestern slope of that lay the brave Custer surrounded by the bodies of several of his officers and forty or fifty of his men, whilst horses were scattered about in every direction. All were stripped, and most of the bodies were scalped and mutilated. And now commenced the duty of recognizing the dead. Of Custer there could be no doubt. He was lying in a perfectly natural position as many had seen him lying when asleep, and, we were told, was not at all mutilated, and that, only after a good deal of search the wounds of which he died could be found. The field was searched and one after another the officers were found and recognized, all except two. A count of the bodies disclosed the fact that some twenty-five or thirty were missing, and we could not, until some time afterwards, form even a surmise in regard to their fate.

The great mystery was now solved, at last, of the destruction of that part of Custer's command. It was possible that some few individuals might have escaped the general massacre ; but so far as we could judge all had fallen ; and the particulars of that sad and desperate conflict against overwhelming numbers of the savage hords which flocked about Custer and his devoted three hundred when Reno was beaten back, will probably never be known.

REFLEXION OF THE AMERICAN Q. C. REVIEW.

The defeat of Custer's command by the Sioux or Dakota Indians has taken the country by surprise. To not a few of us the news of the Little Big Horn disaster came like a clap of thunder from a cloudless sky. Nor has the press failed to comment on it in a variety of ways. The full significance of the fact, however, especially from a Catholic point of view, seems not quite generally understood, nor candidly acknowledged. The fall of a gallant officer, rendered more tragical by the simultaneous death of his

nearest of kin ; the slaughter of four or five companies of soldiers, and the tears and distress of so many bereft parents, widows, and orphans, call for our sincere sympathy. Nor should we forget to feel compassion for the mourners in the Indian camp.

Is there not something unmistakably providential in the circumstance, that in the very height of her centennial exultation our young and queenly nation has been compelled to endure a public humiliation, the like of which we can scarcely find in the earlier pages of her history ? It is a standing disgrace to us, that a nation of forty millions of civilized and, to a great extent, Christian people, is utterly unable to deal in any creditable manner with a few thousands of so-called savages within easy reach ? The present Dakota war and our recent defeat have placed this in a very strong light. What is our material progress ? What, for example, are the wonders of our Corliss engine and the display of mechanical skill that, at this moment, dazzle the eyes of our guests from every clime, if they see our civilization evidently lacking the power to assimilate by moral influence the last small remnant of barbarian life within the limits of the republic ? We boast of the spread of education all over the land. We Catholics glory especially in the number and grandeur of the edifices we erect for the worship of the Father of all men, whether white, black, or red ; but in the actual warfare against Paganism and its concomitant evils the *gun* and the *sabre* remain our most effective weapons and our last resort. What a few dozens of poor monks or religious achieved in the forests of our own barbarian ancestors, or at a more modern period in the wilds of Paraguay and in the Canadian woods, we, with all the resources of our advanced civilization, apparently are unable to accomplish !