

**Life, Letters and Travels of
Father De Smet among the
North American Indians.**



REV. PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET S. J.

LIFE, LETTERS AND TRAVELS
OF
FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET, S. J.
1801-1873

Missionary Labors and Adventures among the Wild Tribes of the
North American Indians, Embracing Minute Description of Their
Manners, Customs, Games, Modes of Warfare and Torture,
Legends, Tradition, etc., All from Personal Observations
Made during Many Thousand Miles of Travel,
with Sketches of the Country from St. Louis
to Puget Sound and the Altrabasca

*Edited from the original unpublished manuscript Journals
and Letter Books and from his Printed Works with
Historical, Geographical, Ethnological and other Notes;
Also a Life of Father De Smet*

MAP AND ILLUSTRATIONS

BY
HIRAM MARTIN CHITTENDEN
Major, Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.
AND
ALFRED TALBOT RICHARDSON

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CHAPTER XIV.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS RELATING TO THE INDIANS.

Difficulties in the way of missionary work — Deaths of baptized children — Polygamy and drink — Thanks an informant — The Grattan Massacre — Indians must be industrious and rely on Providence — Testimonials to the mountain tribes.

I SEE more plainly every day that a good store of virtue is required, and the assistance of many prayers, to overcome the difficulties and obstacles which seem to multiply with our efforts to advance the greater glory of God. The demon does not sleep, and seeing that some portion of his prey is escaping him, "*tanquam leo rugiens circuit, quærens quem devoret.*" He employs all his snares and ruses to attach his devotees to their infamous debauches, and to the grossest superstitions. If a baptized child dies, the medicine men, true ministers of Satan, put the whole village in uproar to make us the cause of its death. "It is the medicine (the water of baptism) that they poured on his forehead; it is the medal or cross that they have hung around his neck, and nothing else, that have caused his death." By such speeches they increase the fears of these poor people.

Marriage also, which hampers them, and the prevalent practice of polygamy, form powerful obstacles to their conversion. The Indian is naturally light and inconstant; consequently to attach himself for life to a woman, and have but the one, seems to him impossible and insupportable. I should explain further that marriage is a species of speculation with them; a father who has several daughters is rich among the Indians, for he can sell them for one, two

¹ Extract from a letter (in French) to the Father-General (in 1839?).

or three horses each. Frequently, after they have followed and relished our instructions for a long time, as soon as we touch upon this article they go away, like the disciples of the Lord, saying, "*Durus est hic sermo, et quis potest eum audire?*" and we have the grief of seeing persons escape us, who, in all other respects, were giving us great hopes.

A still greater obstacle, and one which will, I fear, end in the total ruin of the nation, is drink; which brings in its train war, famine and pestilence, all together. The country is overrun by vagabond Americans; and the Government, which alone could put a stop to this abominable traffic, in spite of the severity of its laws, pays no attention to the matter. The Potawatomes, by their treaty with the Government, receive \$50,000 per annum; this payment having been omitted last year, they received double in 1839. Such a sum, well placed, would procure for the savages victuals and goods in abundance, and would render them happy in regard to temporal things. But alas! all this money goes for liquor. As long as it lasts they neither work nor hunt; and they now have enough to keep them going from New Year's day to the end of December. They quarrel and fight from morning to night; their bodies become veritable furnaces, full of foul humors, which cause them all sorts of maladies. Their love for liquor is really inconceivable; one must see it to be able to form any idea of the thing. It is a regular tarantula to them; as soon as they are bitten by it, all their blood flames in their veins, and they are crazy for more. If they get it, "More, more!" is their war-cry, until, as the flame consumes them, they fall over, drunk, like animals. And when the fumes of drink evaporate from their brains, their first and only cry is "Whisky! whisky! whisky!" as if it was a matter of life and death.

While they are drunk, their passions control them absolutely. At first they are moved to joyous songs, but these are soon succeeded by yells and roars. Disputes and quarrels follow, and then the knives, lances and tomahawks come out, and murders finally crown their abominable or-

gies. A great many are dead already, and others are horribly mutilated. The other day I counted nine bitten-off noses in a single group of Indians. In their rage, this little member is the principal object of their attack; and a drunken Indian who deprives a comrade of his nose, boasts of it as much as a brave soldier of having carried off a flag from the enemy. When they are sober, no one would recognize them; they are mild, civil, quiet and attentive; but there is no safety in the presence of a drunken savage. Several times already our lives have been in the greatest danger; but fortunately by gentle and moderate words we have managed to appease the rage of these barbarous drunkards, who were breathing only blood.

Sept. 30, 1852.

MR. DENIG, *Fort Union*:

My Dear Friend.—At my return home this evening, I found a card in the parlor with the well-known name of our good friend Mr. Culbertson, and understood at the same time that he is to leave on to-morrow for the Upper Missouri. I cannot let him start without charging him with a few lines for you. I do not know how to express my gratitude for your very interesting series of narratives concerning the aborigines of the Far West. A thousand thanks are due to your precious and valuable labor and are hereby given, though language fails to express the feeling which a treasure like your pages has awakened within my breast. Nothing could be more gratifying to me than the beautiful and graphic details which you have given me of the religion, manners, customs and transactions of an unfortunate race of human beings, toward the amelioration of whose sad condition I have in some measure contributed *and am still anxious to contribute whatever I possibly can*. Please read these sublined words to the Crazy Bear, whose speech has wonderfully pleased me and whose petition, were it to de-

pend on me, I would most assuredly grant. Explain this well to him. By the next steamer he shall hear from me, and I shall send him the words of the big Black-robe (the Bishop), for I have forwarded a copy of his speech to him.

The lot of the Indian; his severance from the hallowed influences of Christian civilization; his profound ignorance, only exceeded by his grosser superstitions; the deep and often unmerited contempt, into which prejudice has thrown him; all call upon the humane and philanthropic to do for him what ordinary charity requires of man.

In telling his tale in unvarnished colors to the unknowing world by delineating his character and by painting the scenes with which he is habitually surrounded, you, dear friend, will soften into sympathy the public heart and stimulate it to active exertion for bettering his future situation; and you will further awaken an interest in the circumstances and events which surround the posts, plains and wigwams of the Indians.

Think that your researches can be spent most profitably to the Indian and most agreeably to me. Show me this acknowledgment, for your beautiful manuscript tells me that I may claim a large share in your friendship and remembrance, and for which I feel truly grateful to you. You are filling up the broken, but important, history of a race of men whose career, I deem, is well nigh run on this continent, but whose character, deeds and fate will increase in interest as generations descend the stream of time. We shall soon look in vain for the survivors of a once fierce and dreaded people, but shall find them again on the historic page which you and others shall have helped to swell with faithful accounts of their savage life, rude customs and untutored manners. I have read the present series with absorbing attention and growing interest. My imagination has often carried me back to scenes long familiar to my experience and to others of a general and kindred nature which your pen has so well portrayed, in your valuable descriptions of their religious opinions, of their great

buffalo hunt, their war expeditions, and in the histories of old Gauché and of the family of Gros François.

* * * * *

Mr. Culbertson will bring you all the news of the civilized world and a little remembrance from me, consisting of a couple of good razors and penknife.

Believe me to be, etc.

The Grattan Massacre.

Bardstown, Ky., April 17, 1855.

MY VERY DEAR GUSTAVE AND MARIE:

I have received your good letter of the 4th of October last in response to mine of September 12th. Thank you for it most sincerely. I cannot express to you how much good your letters, going into such details and so full of family news, do me. I shall keep them most carefully; I find only one fault with them — their dates are rather too far apart; let them be closer together, and I promise you, dear friends, to make it up to you. I rejoiced at the announcement of the birth of your first-born and I implore the Lord daily to keep him for you, for your mutual happiness and the consolation of your dear parents on both sides.

I told you in my last letter that I proposed to return to the desert in the course of this spring. That was sincerely my desire and I regret that serious difficulties have come up which compel me to put off my visits to the savages to more favorable times and circumstances. For you must know, that the grand and glorious Republic is going to appear on the stage of the great Indian desert to give a representation of the lovely fable of La Fontaine (always old and always new) of the Wolf and the Lamb. The moral is, "The wicked and the strong always find plenty of pretexts to oppress the innocent and the weak; and when they lack

good reasons they have recourse to lies and calumnies." An unpardonable offense, it appears, has been committed in the eyes of our civilized people by the Indians. They had repaired, to the number of 2,000, to the appointed spot at the time fixed by the Government agent to receive their annuities and presents. They waited several days for the commissioner to arrive and in the meantime they ran out of provisions. Then a Mormon wagon-train, on its way to the Territory of Utah, came peaceably by the Indian camp. One of the party was dragging after him a lame cow hardly able to walk. A famished savage, out of pity for his wife and children, and perhaps, also, from compassion for the suffering animal, killed the cow and offered the Mormon double value for it in a horse or a mule.

Such an act with such an offer under such circumstances passes for very honest, very fair and very polite, in a wild country. Still the Mormon refused the proffered exchange and went and filed a complaint with the commandant of Fort Laramie, which is in the neighborhood. Like the wolf who leaped upon the lamb to devour it, crying: "I know very well that you all hate me, and *you* shall pay for the rest," the illustrious commandant straightway sent out a young officer with twenty soldiers armed to the teeth and with a cannon loaded with grapeshot. He was absolutely determined to capture the so-called robber and make an example of him. The savages were astonished at the menacing turn that the affair of the cow, so frivolously begun, had taken; they begged the officer to take one, two, three horses in exchange, a hundred times the value of the cow, if necessary. They wished at any price to "bury" the affair, as they express it; that is to arrange it peaceably and quietly, but without giving up to him their brother, innocent according to their code. The officer was inflexible, refused all offers; he must absolutely have his prisoner; and when the latter did not appear, he fired his cannon into the midst of the savages. The head chief, whom I knew well, the noblest heart of his nation, fell mortally wounded and a

number of his braves beside him. At this unexpected massacre the Indians sprang to arms; and letting fly hundreds of arrows from all sides they instantly annihilated the aggressors and provocators. Will you in Europe believe this tale of a cow? And yet such is the origin of a fresh war of extermination upon the Indians which is to be carried out in the course of the present year. An army of 3,000 to 4,000 men is being got ready in Missouri at this moment to penetrate into the desert. A very large number of whites will lose their lives without a doubt, but in the end the savages will have to yield, for they are without fire-arms, without powder and lead and without provisions.²

Since the discovery of America a system of extermination, of moving the Indians, thrusting them farther back, has been pursued and practiced by the whites, little by little, at first — more and more as the European settlers multiplied and gained strength. At this day this same policy is marching with giant strides; the drama of spoliation has reached its last act, both east and west of the Rocky Mountains. The curtain will soon fall upon the poor and unhappy remnants of the Indian tribes, and they will henceforth exist only in history. The whites are spreading like torrents over

² This is what is known as the Grattan Massacre, from the name of the officer in charge of the detachment sent after the thief. There is no doubt that the Indians were already in bad temper over their general situation before this incident occurred, and that it required but little provocation to make trouble. But the unfortunate affair could probably have been prevented if the commanding officer at Fort Laramie had understood the gravity of his action and had sent an officer of sound judgment and experience. The conduct of Lieutenant Grattan showed him to be lacking in both these qualities. The massacre took place August 19, 1854.

A little over a year later, September 3, 1855, General Harney, who had been sent out with a military force to punish these Indians, met them in battle on the north shore of the north fork of the Platte opposite the place known on the Oregon Trail as Ash Hollow. The Indians were completely defeated. General Harney then went overland to Fort Pierre where he succeeded in bringing about a general pacification of the tribes.

all California and the Territories of Washington, Utah and Oregon; over the States of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Texas, and New Mexico, and latterly over Kansas and Nebraska, which have just been incorporated into the great American confederation. At a very recent epoch, within my own knowledge, all these first-named States and Territories were occupied by Indian nations, and just as fast as the whites settle and multiply there the natives disappear and seem to fade away. To-day the very names are hardly known of hundreds of tribes that have entirely disappeared. The immense regions that I have just named contain several million square miles of land. The Territories of Kansas and Nebraska alone are forty times as large as all Belgium.

When I began this letter I had no idea of saying so much about the savages, which can be of very little interest to you. I speak, no doubt, from the abundance of my heart — it is my favorite subject — and most willingly would I consecrate the remnant of my days to their spiritual and temporal happiness. I recommend them most urgently to your good prayers.

* * * * * * * *

St. Louis University, September 7, 1868.

Dear Colonel:

Your kind and most welcome favor of the 8th ultimo was received yesterday and has afforded me a great deal of pleasure and consolation to be remembered by you. Major Galpin called thrice on me during his stay in St. Louis. He kept very busy all the time. I occasionally visited his wife and children at the hotel. They enjoyed good health but seemed to prefer Fort Rice. The major gave me all the news from Fort Rice and mentioned you often. I introduced him to General Sherman with whom he had long conversations. He met General Harney at the Southern Hotel. I did not see the major before his departure from

St. Louis, and was informed by Captain Haney that he was hurried off to Sioux City, by a telegram from Harney. I recommended the major in strong terms to both generals. I hope he has found some honorable employment and in accordance with his wishes. His long experience among the Indians might make him a very efficient man, and with the co-operation of his good wife, he might render great service to the Indians, particularly the hostiles, under the existing circumstances. It is my candid opinion that he may be very favorably employed and to very good purpose, by the commissioners and the commanding officers at the various upper posts on the Missouri.

The news you give me from my adopted brother Two Bears, truly affects me and I am sorry to hear of the distress and sufferings of his people. The advice you have given him is the only true one. His actual trials should not make him despond and omit his prayers. He should rather redouble in fervor and pray oftener, doing all the good he can among his own people, to keep them in the straight path. Trials received with patience and resignation will render us more pleasing in the sight of the Great Spirit and more worthy of receiving his favors and assistance, whereas murmurs make things often worse than before. As you so well advised him, he should continue to pray, be industrious in hunting, fishing and digging roots. He must, meanwhile, rely on the kind providence of the Lord, on whom our dependence must rest altogether. I join him daily in my poor supplications to God.

What I have foreseen for several years past is now approaching. The buffalo are fast disappearing from the country and their time is well-nigh spent. Their want is already severely felt. Under these trying circumstances, the Great Spirit has moved the heart of their Great Father, the President, to lend his red children a fatherly hand in their actual sufferings. They must avail themselves earnestly of the opportunity he offers and follow the advice given them by the commissioners. They must set to work

in due season in the cultivation of the soil and the raising of domestic cattle and animals. Under the providence of God, it is to be hoped that their labors will prove successful in time, and before long their children may live in comparative abundance, by the labor of their own hands. Our great maxim in all things must be: "To do what we can, to ask God's blessing in what we cannot, and if we are deserving, the Lord will help us in our need." He commands us to "ask" and promises "we shall receive." All this, of course, is intended for my friend Two Bears. I hope Frank will make him understand it well. He may add that the actual want the Lord permits may be a warning to his red children to make strong exertions and efforts to succeed in the new life they are about entering. I place great confidence in my brother and friend Two Bears. He will tell his people, particularly the chiefs and orators, not to despond, to have courage and hope in the future. Industry and perseverance must crown their efforts. I remain truly attached to my red children of the upper country. The summer has been very severe and long. I have suffered much, and though it is much cooler at present, I still continue to feel the effects of the previous heat. Should my health permit, I intend to return to the upper country in the course of next spring. I have received some encouragement for the erection of a mission among the Sioux and I sincerely hope that it may be realized.

From the news I read yesterday, in the *Missouri Republic*, the Sioux on the waters of the Platte and its tributaries have refused to join the Cheyennes and Arapahos in the new depredations and murders. I have been assured, on good authority, that reckless endeavors are made in the new western settlements to continue the war with the Indians. "It brings them money in abundance, and they are determined to have it!"

A letter from you, dear Colonel, will be always most welcome. Please present my best respects to the officers of Fort Rice.

St. Louis University, May, 1870.

*Honorable Sir.*³

I received your favor of the 27th ultimo. Permit me to express to you my sincere thanks for the kind sentiments you entertain in my regard and which I shall ever gratefully remember. You reiterate to me the invitation, in the name of the "Honorable Committee of the United States Indian Commission" to assist at your meetings in New York on the 18th instant. Even apart from the great honor you are pleased to confer on me, nothing could be more pleasing to my personal feelings than to be admitted in the presence and at the deliberations of the most highly esteemed gentlemen of the country to whom the administration has confided in its wisdom the important Indian question as to the future welfare of the remaining Indian tribes. I stated in my previous letter that my health is rather declining, and must add that my hearing, particularly, is failing fast and makes my presence in meetings rather unpleasant. Besides, the invitations I have received from the Upper Sioux Indians and the promises I have made to them, if in my power to comply with their requests, make me humbly decline your very kind and honorable invitation, for which please receive again my sincere and heartfelt thanks.

You do me the honor to ask me some account as to my personal experience among the Indians and my conviction as to their capacity for civilization and receiving religious instruction, etc. Though pressed for time, I take great pleasure in reviewing some of my early experience among the Indian tribes, accompanied with a few simple illustrative occurrences, showing the Indian character in its primitive nature where it had remained uncontaminated by the contact of vicious whites.

You allude in your letter to the anecdote I related to the honorable commissioners at Fort Leavenworth (1868) to

³ Letter to Hon. S. F. Tappan.

wit: to the chapel trunk I had left among the Rocky Mountain tribes at my departure from them, as an assurance of my promise to return to the mountains. For nearly a year they had carried it with the greatest care in all their expeditions and returned it to me intact and in the best state of preservation. I may here add a short statement of what occasioned my visit to these Indians. The Rocky Mountain tribes, Flatheads, Kalispels, Cœur d'Alènes, Kootenais and others had heard of the Savior and of his holy laws to mankind, by means of a few Christian Iroquois from Canada who had come to the mountains as engagés of the Hudson Bay Company, and who had finally settled among the above tribes. They had aroused the minds of the mountain Indians with a religious feeling to which they had been hitherto strangers, and in a council they resolved to send a deputation to St. Louis of some of their wisest men, to obtain Black-robles (priests) from the Bishop. I always looked upon it as a particular favor to have been appointed to accompany this deputation and with pleasure I can bear witness, that during the long and tedious traveling at that time (1840) their conduct toward me was one continued act of kindness and of attention.

After some two or three months' travel to the appointed rendezvous in the plains of the Green river, we met great numbers of the above-mentioned tribes who had come hundreds of miles from their habitual hunting grounds to meet us and welcome us to their country. Their kindness, attention and zeal exceeded my expectations. From the very start of my missionary operations they listened with the utmost anxiety and earnestness to the holy word of God and put in practice immediately what they were made to understand. In this first visit I remained with the Indians about three months. They daily attended at the morning and evening prayers and instructions, which holy practice, as I learn, has never been discontinued among them. They keep the Lord's day in the highest veneration. As soon as it became practicable they abandoned polygamy and with-

out the least ill will or trouble. I always remarked great love and attachment of the parents toward their children, great regard for each other, for quarrels were of the rarest occurrence and no stranger could come amongst them without meeting with a kind reception and finding hospitality. They were strictly honest toward one another and likewise toward strangers. Even any object found was carefully remitted to the chief, who proclaimed it aloud at the camping place to return it to the owner. My mission-house was of necessity often left alone, but nothing was ever missed. My friends, the Kootenais, had a trading post on their lands provided with goods for their use. The trader (Mr. Berton) was sometimes absent for weeks or months. The Indians went in and served themselves according to their wants; replaced in furs and skins for the goods taken out; and upon the testimony of the trader (I use his words), "his confidence in their honesty was never abused." Their moral conduct was admirable and commendable. Every attempt at seduction, either by young men or by adults, was punished with a severe flogging. During my several years' intercourse and experience with these mountain Indians, I never heard of an adulterer.

I had an adopted Indian brother, named Moses, surnamed The Brave of the Braves. His exemplary conduct took pace with his renowned bravery and he was generally looked up to and esteemed. I was with him when he called upon the chief who had just performed his duty after his morning prayer and as justice of peace in flogging a guilty young Nez Percé, who had recently arrived amongst them and was ignorant of their laws and customs. Moses took off his buffalo robe, exposed his bare back, shook hands with the judge, and stipulated, himself, to receive twenty-five well-laid-down lashes. I here interposed and inquired into the motive and cause of his action. He answered me with a smile, equally admirable for his simplicity and sincerity: "Father, the Nez Percé here present was whipped because he talked foolishly to a girl. My thoughts are sometimes

bewildering and vexing and I have prayed to drive them from my mind and heart." I consoled him with a few words of advice and encouraged him to persevere manfully in the service of the Great Spirit, who would have pity on him and help him in his tribulations, and he was not flogged.

As to agriculture and other manual-labor work, it was easily introduced amongst them and they set joyfully to work as far as the few plows and other instruments we had would allow them. Each family had its field of weed [wheat?] and its garden of vegetables. Each mission was provided with a mill and carpenter and blacksmith shops.

I might here adduce many more characteristic traits of the mountain Indians. I shall rejoice if I have not exceeded the limit of my letter and if, in any way, I have come up to your intention and expectation in these somewhat hurriedly written pages. Please accept my good will in what I have the honor to address to you, with my best wishes and prayers in the deliberations you are about to assume for the welfare of the Indian tribes.

Permit me to add the following testimonies, confirming what I have said of the religious dispositions of the mountain Indians. In the Explorations and Surveys (of Governor Stevens) for a Railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean, Vol. 1, page 308, Captain John Mullan, of said expedition, writes, September 14, 1853: "When the guide and myself had reached their camp (Flathead) three or four men met us at the entrance and invited us to enter the lodge of their chief. They very kindly took care of our horses, unsaddling and watering them. As soon as the camp had heard of the arrival of a white man among them, the principal men of the tribe congregated in the lodge of the chief. When they had all assembled, by a signal from their chief they offered up a prayer. This astonished me, it was something for which I had not been prepared. Every one was upon his knees, and in the most solemn and reverential manner offered up a prayer to God. For a

moment I asked myself, was I among Indians? Was I among those termed by every one savages? I could scarcely realize it. To think that these men should be thus imbued, and so deeply too, with the principles of religion, was to me overwhelming."

From the late (1869) Report of the Commissioners of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior I take an extract from McConley's letter, U. S. Indian Agent, page 254, speaking of the Flatheads and Pend d'Oreilles, says: "These people possess strong religious feelings as the well-filled and commodious church of the Reverend Fathers of St. Ignatius' Mission on every Sabbath testifies. The missionary labors of the Reverend Fathers have not been in vain, for many of them are exemplary Christians. I may here remark that the labors of the Reverend Fathers have been very arduous and difficult. Poor and unaided, they have established their mission, built their church and school, and maintained themselves solely by their own exertion. Not only this, but they have been, at the same time, priest, physician and benefactor to these tribes. * * * Still more, in conjunction with the noble Sisters of Charity they educate, clothe and feed the orphans of these tribes without fee or reward. * * * Without their aid and influence, the wrongs inflicted upon these people would long since have driven them to war."

I give the above extract of McConley to draw your attention to these missions and take the liberty of recommending them to you, should the opportunity present itself.

I have visited and traveled among most of the Indian tribes of the upper Missouri river and its tributaries and plains, during the space of about thirty years. I am happy to be able to bear testimony that I have been on all occasions kindly received and entertained by them and have ever found them attentive to religious instruction. It is my candid opinion that much good might have been, and can still be, effected among the Indians, if they are properly and justly dealt with by the whites.

PART VIII.

MISSIONARY WORK AMONG THE INDIANS.

(When not otherwise noted, the letters in this part are here published for the first time.)

CHAPTER I.

THE FLATHEAD AND OTHER MISSIONS.¹

The Kalispel church — Virtues of Standing Grizzly — Victor and Insula — Beginning of present St. Ignatius Mission — American and European savages — Indian uprising feared — Object to parting with their lands — The little news of a remote mission.

To the Editor of the Précis Historiques, Brussels:

University of St. Louis, April, 1856.

Reverend and Dear Father:

¶ INCLOSE you a letter of Reverend Adrian Hoeken, brother of Christian, whose death you announced in your volume of 1853, page 394.

Father Adrian Hoeken was one of my earliest traveling companions in the missionary journeys to the Flatheads. He has ever labored, and still continues to labor here, with the greatest zeal and the most plentiful results.

I have this month dispatched a perfect cargo to him, by a steamer which was about to ascend the Missouri. It consisted of tools, clothes and provisions of all kinds. The boat will go 2,200 miles; then the goods will be transported by a barge, which will have to stem the rapid current about 600 miles; there will then remain 300 miles by land with wagons, through mountain defiles; so that the objects shipped in April can arrive among the Flatheads only in the month of October.

¹ From *Western Missions and Missionaries*, p. 295.

We hope that other evangelical laborers will soon go to assist Father Hoeken. The savages request missionaries. We shall perceive that this mission and that of the Pend d'Oreilles continue to flourish.

“Flathead Camp in the Blackfeet Country, Oct. 18,
1855.

Reverend and Dear Father:

“You will thank God with me for the consoling increase he has given, through the intercession of Mary, to the missions which you began in those remote parts. During the many years that I have passed among the Kalispels, though my labors have not been light and my trials have been numerous enough, God has given me in abundance the consolations of the missionary, in the lively faith and sincere piety of our neophytes. We have found means to build a beautiful church, which has excited the admiration of even Lieutenant Mullan, of the United States army. This church is sufficiently large to contain the whole tribe, and on Sundays and festival days, when our Indians have adorned it with what ornaments of green boughs and wild flowers the woods and prairies supply; when they sing in it their devout hymns with fervor during the holy sacrifice, it might serve as a subject of edification and an example to quicken the zeal of many an old Christian congregation. There is among our converts a universal and very tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin, a most evident mark that the faith has taken deep root in their souls. Every day, morning and evening, the families assemble in their lodges to recite the rosary in common, and daily they beg of Mary to thank God for them for having called them from the wild life of the forest, spent as it is in ignorance, rapine and bloodshed, to the blessings of the true religion and its immortal hopes.

“The Kalispels have sustained a great loss in the death of their pious chief, Loyola, with whose euphonious Indian name, *Etsowish-simmègee-itshin*, “Standing Grizzly,” you

are familiar. Ever since you baptized this excellent Indian chieftain, he was always steadfast in the faith. He daily made progress in virtue and became more fervent in the practices of our holy religion. He was a father to his people, firm in repressing their disorders and zealous in exhorting them to be faithful to the lessons of the missionaries. In the severe trials to which divine Providence subjected his virtue in his latter years, when within a short space of time he lost his wife and three of his children, he bore the heavy stroke with the edifying resignation of a Christian. During his last illness, of several weeks' duration, he seemed more anxious to do something still for the promotion of piety among his people, than to have his own great sufferings alleviated. His death, which occurred on the 6th of April, 1854, was lamented by the Indians with such tokens of sincere grief as I have never before witnessed. There was not that false wailing over his tomb which Indian usage is said to prescribe for a departed chieftain; they wept over him with heartfelt and heartrending grief, as if each one had lost the best of fathers, and their grief for the good Loyola has not died away even at this day. Never had I thought our Indians capable of so much affection.

“As Loyola, contrary to Indian customs, had not designated his successor, a new chief was to be chosen after his death. The election, to which all had prepared themselves by prayer, to lead them to a proper choice, ended in an almost unanimous voice for Victor, a brave hunter, whom you as yet must remember as a man remarkable for the generosity of his disposition. His inauguration took place amid great rejoicing. All the warriors, in their finest costumes, marched to his wigwam, and ranging themselves around it, discharged their muskets, after which each one went up to him to pledge his allegiance and testify his affection by a hearty shaking of hands. During the whole day, numerous parties came to the mission-house to tell the Fathers how much satisfaction they felt at having a chief whose goodness had long since won the hearts of all. Victor alone

seemed sad. He dreaded the responsibility of the chieftainship, and thought he should be unable to maintain the good effected in the tribe by the excellent chief Loyola.

“In the following winter, when there was a great scarcity, and almost a famine among the Kalispels, Victor gave an affecting proof of his generous self-denying charity. He distributed his own provisions through the camp, hardly reserving for himself enough to sustain life, so that on his return from the annual chase, when yet at a considerable distance from the village, he fell exhausted on the ground, and had to be carried by his companions, to whom on that very day he had given all the food that had been sent up to him for his own use.

“The Indian is often described as a being devoid of kind feelings, incapable of gratitude, and breathing only savage hatred and murderous revenge; but in reality he has, in his untamed, uncultured nature, as many generous impulses as the man of any other race, and he only needs the softening influence of our holy religion to bring it out in its most touching forms. We need no other proof of it than the grateful remembrance of all the Indians of their late chief Loyola, the generous character of Victor, and the affectionate feelings of all our converted tribes for their missionaries, and especially for you, to whom they look up as to their great benefactor, because you were the first to bring them the good tidings of salvation.

“Among our dear Flatheads, Michael Insula, or Red Feather, or as he is commonly called on account of his small stature, ‘The Little Chief,’ is a remarkable instance of the power which the Church has of developing the most amiable virtues in the fierce Indian. He unites in his person the greatest bravery with the tenderest piety and gentlest manners. Known amid his warriors by the red feather which he wears, his approach is enough to put to flight the prowling bands of Crows and Blackfeet, that have frequently infested the Flathead territory. He is well known and much beloved by the whites, who have had occasion to

deal with him, as a man of sound judgment, strict integrity, and one on whose fidelity they can implicitly rely. A keen discerner of the characters of men, he loves to speak especially of those whites, distinguished for their fine qualities, that have visited him, and often mentions with pleasure the sojourn among them of Colonel Robert Campbell, of St. Louis, and of Major Fitzpatrick, whom he adopted, in accordance with Indian ideas of courtesy, as his brothers. He has preserved all his first fervor of devotion, and now, as when you knew him, one can hardly ever enter his wigwam in the morning or evening without finding him with his rosary in his hands, absorbed in prayer. He cherishes a most affectionate remembrance of you and of the day he was baptized; he longs ardently to see you once more before his death, and but yesterday he asked me, when and by what road you would return. In speaking thus he expressed the desire of all our Indians, who all equally regret your long absence.

“It was proposed, during the summer of 1854, to begin a new mission² about 190 miles northeast of the Kalispels, not far from the Flathead lake, about fifty miles from the old mission of St. Mary's, among the Flatheads, where a convenient site had been pointed out to us by the Kalispel chief, Alexander, your old friend, who often accompanied you in your travels in the Rocky Mountains. Having set out from the Kalispel Mission on the 28th of August, 1854, I arrived at the place designated on the 24th of September, and found it such as it had been represented — a beautiful region, evidently fertile, uniting a useful as well as pleasing variety of woodland and prairie, lake and river — the whole crowned in the distance by the white summit of the mountains, and sufficiently rich withal in fish and game. I shall never forget the emotions of hope and fear that filled my heart, when for the first time I celebrated mass in this lonely spot, in the open air, in the presence of a numerous band of Kalispels, who looked up to me, under God,

² The present St. Ignatius, Montana.

for their temporal and spiritual welfare in this new home. The place was utterly uninhabited — several bands of Indians live within a few days' travel, whom you formerly visited, and where you baptized many, while others still remain pagan. I was in hope of gathering these around me, and God has been pleased to bless an undertaking begun for his glory, even beyond my expectation. In a few weeks we had erected several frame buildings, a chapel, two houses, carpenter's and blacksmith's shops; wigwams had sprung up at the same time all around in considerable numbers, and morning and evening you might still have heard the sound of the axe and the hammer, and have seen newcomers rudely putting together lodges.

"About Easter of this year, over 1,000 Indians of different tribes, from the Upper Kootenais and Flat-Bow Indians, Pend d'Oreilles, Flatheads, and Mountain Kalispels, who had arrived in succession during the winter, when they heard of the arrival of the long-desired Black-gown, made this place their permanent residence. All these Indians have manifested the best dispositions. Besides a large number of children baptized in the course of the year, I have had the happiness to baptize, before Christmas and Easter, upwards of 150 adults of the Kootenai tribe, men of great docility and artlessness of character, who told me that ever since you had been among them, some years ago, they had abandoned the practice of gambling and other vices, and cherished the hope of being instructed one day in the religion of the Great Spirit.

"By the beginning of spring, our good Brother McGean had cut some 18,000 rails; and placed under cultivation a large field, which promises to yield a very plentiful harvest. Lieutenant Mullan, who spent the winter among the Flatheads of St. Mary's, has procured me much valuable aid in founding this mission, and has all along taken a lively interest in its prosperity. I know not how to acquit the debt of gratitude I owe this most excellent officer, and I can only pray, poor missionary as I am, that the Lord

may repay his generosity and kindness a hundredfold in blessings of time and eternity. We are still in want of a great many useful and important articles — indeed, of an absolute necessity in the establishing of this new mission. I am confident, many friends of the poor Indians may be found in the United States, who will most willingly contribute their mite in such a charitable undertaking — we will be most grateful to them, and our good neophytes, in whose behalf I make the appeal, will not cease to pray for their kind benefactors.

“Please make arrangements with the American Fur Company to have goods brought up by the Missouri river to Fort Benton, whence I could get them conveyed in wagons across the mountains to the missionary station.

“The Right Reverend Magloire Blanchet, Bishop of Nisqually, who in his first visit to the Mission of St. Ignatius near Lake De Boey, confirmed over 600 Indians, although he arrived unexpectedly, when a great many families had gone to their hunting grounds, among the Kalispels and our neighboring missions, intended to give confirmation here this summer. I was very desirous of the arrival of this pious prelate, who has done so much good, by his fervent exhortations, to strengthen our neophytes in the faith. It had already been agreed upon that a party of Indians should go to meet him as far as the village of the Sacred Heart, among the Cœur d’Alènes, about 200 miles from St. Ignatius’ Mission, when our plans were broken up by a message from Governor Stevens, summoning all our Indians to a council to be held some thirty miles off, in St. Mary’s or Bitter Root valley, at a place called Hellgate, whence a number of chiefs and warriors were to accompany him to a Grand Council of Peace among the Blackfeet. I was absent on a visit to our brethren among the Cœur d’Alènes, the Skoyelpis, and other tribes, when I received an invitation from the Governor to be present at the councils. I had found, in my visit, all our missions rich in good works and conversions, though very poor in the goods of

this world — all the Fathers and Brothers were in the enjoyment of excellent health. Father Joset, among the Skoyelpis, at the Kettle Falls of the Columbia, had baptized a large number of adults and children. During the late prevalence of the smallpox, there were hardly any deaths from it among the neophytes, as most of them had been previously vaccinated by us, while the Spokans and other unconverted Indians, who said the ‘medicine (vaccine) of the Fathers was a poison, used only to kill them,’ were swept away by hundreds. This contrast, of course, had the effect of increasing the influence of the missionaries.

“With mingled feelings of joy at all the good effected, and of sorrow at the miserable death of so many of God’s creatures — thankful to God for all his blessings, and submissive to the mysterious judgments of his Providence, I set out, accompanied by my neophytes, for the Blackfeet territory. The grand council took place in the vicinity of Fort Benton. Our Indians, who were in great expectation of seeing you with Majors Cummings and Culbertson, were indeed much disappointed at not finding you. The Blackfeet, although they are still much given to thieving and have committed more depredations than ever, during the last spring, are very anxious to see you again, and to have missionaries among them. Governor Stevens, who has always shown himself a real father and well affected toward our Indians, has expressed a determination to do all in his power to forward the success of the missions. The establishment of a mission among the Blackfeet would be the best, and indeed the only means to make them observe the treaty of peace which has just been concluded. Until missionaries are sent, I intend, from time to time, to visit the Blackfeet, so as to do for them what good I may, and prepare the way for the conversion of the whole tribe. I hope a new mission may soon be realized, for it is absolutely necessary, both for their own sake and for the peace of our converted Indians on the western side of the Rocky Mountains.

“From all I have seen, and from all I have learned during this last trip, I may say that the Crows and all the tribes on the upper waters of the Missouri, as well as the various bands of Blackfeet, where so many children have already been regenerated in the holy waters of baptism, by you and by Father Point, are anxious to have the Black-robles permanently among them, and to learn ‘the prayer of the Great Spirit.’ The field seems ripe for the harvest. Let us pray that God may soon send zealous laborers to this far-distant and abandoned region.

“The Kalispel chief Alexander, Michael Insula and the other Flathead chieftains, the leaders of the Kootenai and Flat-Bow bands, and all our neophytes, beg to be remembered in your good prayers — they, on their part, never forget to pray for you. Please remember me.

“Your devoted brother in Christ,

“ADRIAN HOEKEN, S. J.”

The following extract from a letter of Reverend T. Congiato, superior of the Missions of the Society of Jesus in California and Oregon, written since the commencement of Indian hostilities, and dated Santa Clara, 29th of last November, will perhaps prove not uninteresting to those who take an interest in the success of our Catholic mission. Reverend T. Congiato writes:

“On my return from our missions among the Rocky Mountains, which it took me three months to visit, I found here a letter of yours full of edifying news, for which I am very thankful. Our college here is progressing. The number of members of our Society is on the increase, and reaches nearly forty. All over California, our holy religion is making great progress, and priests and churches are multiplying. In the Oregon missions our Fathers are doing much good. At the mountains Father Adrian Hoeken, a worthy brother of Father Christian Hoeken, the apostle

and zealous missionary among the Potawatomies, who died in 1851, while on his way to the Upper Missouri tribes, has succeeded in bringing three nations and a part of the Flat-heads to live under his spiritual guidance. Everything seemed to be going on well when I left Oregon, but now the country appears on fire. All the Indians living on the banks of the Columbia, from Walla Walla down to the Dalles Mountains, together with the Indians of North California, are in arms against the whites, and commit great depredations. One of the Father Oblates, Father Pandory, has been killed. Please pray, and make others pray for our brethren in Oregon. The last accounts I received from St. Paul's Mission, at Colville, stated that our Indians disapproved highly of the depredations committed by the other Indians, and showed no disposition whatever to join them."

It may, indeed, be confidently anticipated that the Indians of the Catholic missions of the mountains, who have always shown great kindness to the whites, and have always lived in peace with them, will continue to listen to the good counsel and advice of the missionaries, and will abstain from any act of hostility. Moreover, they are removed from the seat of war, and have seldom had any intercourse with the hostile tribes.

Most Respectfully, etc.

University of St. Louis, August 4, 1857.³

Reverend and Dear Father:

You will find inclosed in this letter a recent letter from Reverend Adrian Hoeken, S. J. I hope that it will merit a place in your *Précis Historiques*. In Holland I am sure it will afford pleasure.

* * * * *

³ To the editor of the *Précis Historiques*, Brussels. From *Western Missions and Missionaries*, p. 306.

The expression of the sentiments of the poor Indians in my regard fill me with confusion, and I would not have sent the letter entire, but that you insisted on my sending each piece entire. For the rest, we must never forget that these wretched Indians, deprived of everything, and neglected by other men, experience an excessive joy for the least benefit, and feel grateful to any one who treats them with a little attention. A great lesson for our fellow countrymen. Among those whom infidel and revolutionary writers in Belgium style *savages* and *barbarians*, you could not find one enough so to figure in the bands of Jemappes, or even in the rioters of Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent and Mons. Here the Black-gown is respected, loved. The Indians perceive in him the emblem of the happiness that the missionary brings him in presenting him the torch of faith.

Letter of Reverend Father Adrian Hoeken.

Mission of the Flatheads, April 15, 1857.

Reverend and Beloved Father:

Before entering into a few details, I beg you to excuse the want of order in this letter. Much time has elapsed since I had the pleasure of receiving news from you, who have so many titles to my love and gratitude, and whose name is frequently on the lips, and always in the hearts, of each of the inhabitants of this remote region. Your letter of the 27th and 28th of March reached us toward the end of August; it was read, or rather devoured, with avidity, so dear was it to our hearts. It was remitted to us by our chief, Alexander, who accompanied Mr. R. H. Lansdale to the Cœur d'Alènes. Scarcely had we cast a glance at the address and recognized your handwriting, than, not being able to contain our joy, all with one consent cried out: "Father De Smet! Father De Smet!" You cannot imagine the

delight your letters afford us and our dear Indians. God be praised! Your name will be ever held in benediction among these poor children of the Rocky Mountains. Ah! how often they ask me these questions: "When, oh when! will Father De Smet come to us? Will he ever again ascend the Missouri? Is it true that he will not come to Fort Benton this fall?" These, and many other similar questions, show how dear to them is the remembrance of their father in Christ; of him who first broke to them the bread of eternal life, and showed them the true way to happiness on earth and bliss hereafter. It is not strange, then, that your letters should have been read several times, and that every time they gave us new pleasure and excited new interest.

I can never cease admiring Divine Providence, which presides over all, and which in particular takes care of our beloved missions. Among the unnumbered proofs of its continual protection, your assistance in our late distress, and the liberality of our benefactors, are not less remarkable nor less worthy of our gratitude. Our storehouses were empty, and the war between the Indians nearest the seaboard took away all hope of procuring other resources. Never, never was charity more appropriate nor received with greater joy. May heaven prolong your days and those of our benefactors! May you continue to foster the same interest toward us that, until the present moment, you have never ceased to testify! Yes, beloved father, let the recollection of our missions be ever equally dear to you. They are the fruit of your own heroic zeal, fatigues and labors. Ah! never forget our dear Indians; they are *your* children in Christ, the offspring of *your* boundless charity and your unwearied zeal!

During the months of June, July and August, disease raged cruelly in our camp, as well as in that of the Flatheads. However, there were few victims of its terrible attacks.

Father Ménétrey, my colaborer, visited the Flatheads, where he had been asked for by the chief, Fidelis Teltella (*Thunder*), whose son was dangerously ill. Later, I visited

them myself in their camas prairies. A second time, in the opening of the month of June, I remained some days with them, at Hellgate, and I distributed medicines to all those who had been seized with the epidemic, and a little wheat flour to each family. Victor, the great chief, Ambrose, Moses, Fidelis, Adolphus, and several others, came here of their own accord, to fulfill their religious duties. Since last spring there has been a notable amelioration in the whole nation. Ambrose has effected the most good. He had convened several assemblies, in order to arrange and pay off old debts, to repair wrongs, etc. The Indians appear, however, very reluctant to part with their lands; they will scarcely hear of the dispositions to be taken.

Father Ravalli labored as much as he could to pacify the tribes which reside toward the west, namely: the Cayuses, the Yakimas, the Palooses, etc. As our neophytes hitherto have taken no part in the war, the country is as safe for us as ever. We can go freely wheresoever we desire. No one is ignorant that the Black-gowns are not enemies; those, at least, who are among the Indians. Almost all the Cœur d'Alènes, in order to shield themselves from the hostilities of the Indians, and to avoid all relations with them, are gone bison hunting. A few days since, Father Joset wrote me that Father Ravalli had already written to him several weeks before: "I fear a general rising among the Indians, toward the commencement of spring. Let us pray, and let us engage others to pray with us, in order to avert this calamity. I think that it would be well to add to the ordinary prayers of the mass, the collect for peace."

If the less well-intentioned Indians from the lower lands would keep within their own territory, and if the whites, the number of whom is daily augmenting in St. Mary's valley, could act with moderation, and conduct themselves prudently, I am convinced that soon the whole country would be at peace, and that not a single Indian would henceforward imbrue his hands in the blood of a white stranger. Were I authorized to suggest a plan, I would propose to

have all the upper lands evacuated by the whites, and form of it a territory exclusively of Indians; afterward I would lead there all the Indians of the inferior portion, such as the Nez Percés, the Cayuses, the Yakimas, the Cœur d'Alènes and the Spokans. Well-known facts lead me to believe that this plan, with such superior advantages, might be effected, by means of missions, in the space of two or three years.

Our Indians here are doing well. Last spring we sowed about fifty bushels of wheat, and planted a quantity of potatoes, cabbages and turnips. God has graciously blessed our labors and our fields. Here all generally like agriculture. We give the seeds *gratis* to everybody. Our plows and our tools are also free to be used by them. We even lend our horses and oxen to the poorest among the Indians, and we grind all their grain gratuitously. But our mill, which goes by horse-power, is very small, and we are not able to build another.

Mr. R. H. Lansdale, agent of the Government, a very just and upright man, has assumed his functions at the Plum-trees, a place situated quite near the place where we cross the river, a few miles from this. We gave him all the assistance of which we were capable. I had indulged the hope that the Government would come to our aid, at least for the building of a small church; but so far my expectations have been frustrated. Alas! are we never to cease deploring the loss of our little church among the Kalispels? Several of these latter named, and among others, Victor, on seeing the chapel, formerly so dear to them, but now forsaken and neglected, shed tears of regret.

When, oh when! shall the oppressed Indian find a poor corner of earth on which he may lead a peaceful life, serving and loving his God in tranquillity, and preserving the ashes of his ancestors without fear of beholding them profaned and trampled beneath the feet of an unjust usurper?

Several among the Kalispels, Victor and others, already have possessions here. However, they have not yet renounced those which they own in the country lower down.

Twelve very poor habitations are the beginning of our town called St. Ignatius. Our little abode, although very modest, is sufficiently comfortable. To any other than you, this word *comfortable* might sound singular; but you, Reverend Father, who understand perfectly what it means when applied to a poor missionary, will comprehend the relative application of the word. Our community numbers six members. Father Joseph Ménétre, who is missionary, prefect of our chapel, and inspector in chief of our fields, etc.; Brother McGean, farmer; Brother Vincent Magri, dispenser, carpenter and miller; Brother Joseph Specht, blacksmith, baker and gardener; Brother Francis Huybrechts, carpenter and sacristan.

I intend going to Colville after the harvest and during the absence of the Indians.

Father Ménétre, of his own free will, went to Fort Benton with a pair of horses. The distance by the great road is 294 miles. He took horses because we could with difficulty spare our oxen, and also because, according to information received from Mr. Lansdale, the road is impassable to oxen which have not, like horses, iron shoes. Father Ménétre arrived at the fort on the 17th of September, and was very favorably received by the occupants; but he was obliged to wait some time for the boats. He speaks with high eulogiums of the Blackfeet, and regrets that he has not jurisdiction in that part of the mountains. He returned on the 12th of November.

How express to you, Reverend Father, the joy that filled our hearts, when we opened your letters and the different cases which you had the charity to send us? We each and all wept with grateful joy! In vain, the night following, I strove to calm the emotions that these missives, as well as the liberality of our benefactors, had produced in my heart; I could not close my eyes. All the community, yes, the whole camp, participated in my delight. In unison we rendered thanks to Divine Providence, and that day was a perfect holiday. The next day, having a little recovered from

my excitement, I was ashamed of my weakness. You who know what it is to be a missionary; you who know so well his privations, his trials, his pangs, you will easily forgive my excessive sensibility.

I had agreed with Father Congiato that he would send your Reverence my lists, as well as the money that he might allow me. I was bolder in soliciting your charity and your benevolence in our favor, because I knew the love and interest that you bear to our missions; and that, on the other hand, I only executed a plan that yourself had conceived and suggested, when, in consideration of the circumstances, it would have appeared to every one else illusory and incapable of execution.

Scarcely had Father Ménétrez gone than I received a letter from Father Congiato, in which he said to me: "If you think that your supplies can be furnished at a more reasonable price from Missouri, order them thence, I will pay the cost. Write on this subject to Reverend Father De Smet." Had I received this letter somewhat later, I scarcely know what would have been my decision; for it is very doubtful that we should have been able to find any one who would return to Fort Benton. I entreat you, be so good as to excuse the trouble that we give you; our extraordinary situation is the sole excuse that I can offer in favor of our importunity. A thousand thanks to you, and to all our benefactors who concurred so generously in the support of our missions. I also thank our kind brethren in St. Louis, for the very interesting letters that they had the kindness to write me. Receive, too, our grateful sentiments, Reverend Father, for the catalogues of the different provinces, the classical books, Shea's Catholic Missions, the works of controversy, etc., etc. I should never conclude did I attempt to enumerate all your gifts, which we were so overjoyed to receive. Brother Joseph was beside himself with gladness when his eyes fell on the little packages of seeds, the files, scissors and other similar objects. Accept, in fine, our thanks for the piece of broadcloth you sent us; by this favor

we continue to be *Black-robos*. Ah! with my whole heart I wish that you could have seen us as we were opening the boxes. Each object excited new cries of joy and augmented our grateful love for the donors. All arrived in good order. The snuff had got a little mixed with the clover seed, but no matter; my nose is not very delicate. It is the first donation sent into these mountains, at least since I have been here. We bless God, who watches over all of his children with so much care and liberality, even over those who appear to be the most forsaken.

On the following day I sent Father Joset his letters. I found an opportunity that very day.

It would have been very agreeable to me to receive a copy of all your letters published since 1836. The portraits were very dear to me. I could not recognize Father Verdin's, but Brother Joseph knew it at the first glance. Yours was also recognized at once by a great number of the Indians, and on seeing it they shouted "Pikek an!"⁴ It made the tour of the village, and yesterday again, an inhabitant of Kootenai came to me with the sole intention of "paying a visit to Father De Smet." This did them an immense good, only seeing the portrait of him who was the first to bear them the light of faith in these regions, still overshadowed with the darkness of moral death; and who first dissipated the mists in which they and their progenitors during untold ages had been enveloped. Believe me, Reverend Father, not a day passes, without their prayers ascending to heaven for you.

In what manner can we testify our gratitude in regard to the two benefactors who so generously charged themselves with the care of transporting and delivering to us our cases without consenting to accept the slightest recompense? Undoubtedly they will reap a large share in the sacrifices and

⁴ The venerable Father J. D'Aste, of St. Ignatius' Mission, thus explains this expression: "'Pikokan' means White Head, being composed of the word *ipik* (white) and the final *kan*, which in composition stands for 'head.' But there must be a mistake here, because when Father De Smet left the mountains forever, he had not yet white hair."

prayers that daily rise to heaven for all our benefactors, and which are with a grateful heart and the remembrance of their beneficence toward us, the only tokens of our thankfulness that we can offer them. How noble the sentiment which prompted them gratuitously to burden themselves and their boats with the charitable gifts, destined by the faithful to the destitute missionaries of the Indians! Heaven, who knows our poverty, will reward them with better gifts than we could have imagined suitable to their liberality.

The package destined for Michael Insula, the "*Little Chief*," lies here for the present. He has not yet opened it. The good man is abroad on a hunting excursion; but we expect him back in a few days. I doubt not that he will be very sensible to these marks of friendship, or, as he usually expresses it, "these marks of fraternity." He set out from here, when he had harvested the grain he had sowed. Always equally good, equally happy, a fervent Christian, he is daily advancing in virtue and in perfection. He has a young son, Louis Michael, whom he teaches to call me *papa*. It is a real pleasure to him to be able to speak of your Reverence and of his two adopted brothers, Messrs. Campbell and Fitzpatrick. I will give him the packet directly after his return, and will inform you of the sentiments with which he will have received it, as well as his reply.

Here in our missions, we already observe all the conditions stipulated in the treaty concluded last year by Governor Stevens, at Hellgate. Our brothers assist the Indians, and teach them how to cultivate the ground. They distribute the fields and the seeds for sowing and planting, as well as the plows and other agricultural instruments. Our blacksmith works for them: he repairs their guns, their axes, their knives; the carpenter renders them great assistance in constructing their houses, by making the doors and windows; in fine, our little mill is daily in use for grinding their grain, *gratis*; we distribute some medicines to the sick;— in a word, all we have and all we are is sacrificed to the welfare of the

Indian. The savings that our religious economy enables us to make, we retain solely to relieve their miseries. Whatever we gain by manual labor and by the sweat of the brow, is theirs! Through love of Jesus Christ, we are ready to sacrifice all, even life itself. Last year we opened our school; but circumstances forced us to close it. Next spring we shall have a brother capable of teaching, and we intend opening it a second time; but in the interval we shall not earn a cent. During last October, the snow forced Fathers Joset and Ravalli and Brother Saveo to return to the Cœur d'Alènes.

We have done, and shall continue to do, all that lies in our power for the Government officers. Still our poor mission has never received a farthing from the Government. Do not think, Reverend Father, that I complain — oh no! you are too well assured no earthly good could ever induce us to work and suffer as we do here. As wealth itself could never recompense our toils, so privations are incapable of leading us to renounce our noble enterprise. Heaven, heaven alone is our aim; and that reward will far exceed our deserts. On the other hand, we are consoled by the reflection that he who provides for the birds of the air will never abandon his tenderly loved children. Yet it is not less true, that, if we had resources (humanly speaking), our missions would be more flourishing; and that many things that we now accomplish only with great patience and sore privations, and which again frequently depend upon contingencies, could be effected more rapidly and with less uncertainty of success.

In our mission there are persons of such a variety of nations, that we form, so to speak, a heaven in miniature. First, our community is composed of six members, all of whom are natives of different lands. Then we have creoles; Genetzi, whose wife is Susanna, daughter of the old Ignatius Chaves; Abraham and Peter Tinsley, sons of old Jacques Boiteux; Alexander Thibault, a Canadian, and Derpens. There are some Iroquois: old Ignatius is settled here, as well

as the family of Iroquois Peter. The death of this venerable old man is a great loss to the mission. Then we have creoles from the Creek nation; Pierrish, and Anson, with his brothers; then some Flatheads; Kalispels; two camps of Pend d'Oreilles; then several Spokans; some Nez Précés, Kootenais, Cœur d'Alènes, and Kettle-Falls Indians; a few Americans, settled a few miles from here; and some Blackfeet. All, though of different nations, live together like brethren and in perfect harmony. They have, like the primitive Christians, but one heart and one mind.

Last spring, and during the summer following, we had several Blackfeet here. They behaved extremely well. Among others, the Little Dog, chief of the Piegans, with some members of his family. They entered our camp with the American flag unfurled, and marching to the tones of martial music and an innumerable quantity of little bells. The very horses pranced in accordance with the measure, and assumed a stately deportment at the harmony of the national hymn.

We held several conferences with the chief concerning religion. He complained that the whites, who had been in communication with them, had never treated this so important affair. So far the best understanding reigns between us, and it would appear that all the old difficulties are forgotten. May heaven keep them in these favorable dispositions. Last summer the Crows stole about twenty horses from our nation. A few days after, others visited our camp. The remembrance of this theft so excited the people that, forgetting the law of nations, which secures protection to even the greatest enemy as soon as he puts his foot within the camp, they fell upon the poor guests, and killed two of them ere they had time to escape.

May God bless the Government for establishing peace among the Blackfeet! However, as hitherto the means have not proved very efficacious, I fear that the quiet will not be of very long duration. I trust that our Society will one day effect a more enduring peace. A mission among them

would, I am persuaded, produce this blessed result. And if to bedew this hitherto ungrateful soil requires the blood of some happy missionary, it would bring forth a hundred-fold, and the Blackfeet would respect our holy religion.

I am much distressed at learning that an epidemic disease is making terrible ravages among the Blackfeet. According to the last news, about 150 Indians had perished in one camp alone, near Fort Benton. When the malady had ceased scourging men, it fell upon their horses. Many are dead already, and many are dying. We have lost five. Our hunters are forced to go to the chase on foot; for, according to their account, all the horses are sick. If the Nez Percés lose their horses in the war with Government, horses will be very dear here.

Michael, the Little Chief, has arrived. I presented him the gracious gift of Colonel Campbell. He was astonished that the colonel should think of him, and was much moved at this mark of attachment. Then he cited a long list of kindred, dead since his last interview with Colonel Campbell, and entertained me at length with the great number of Americans that he had seen annually passing Fort Hall. He told me with what solicitude and anxiety he sought his friend among those successive multitudes, and when at length he could not discover him, he believed that he was dead.

Our Indians are bison hunting, and quite successful. Five Spokans have been killed by the Bannocks, and six of these last killed by the Spokans and Cœur d'Alènes. The Flat-heads have had a man killed by the same Bannocks. Louis, Ambrose's son, was killed last fall by the Grosventres. All last winter a good understanding prevailed among the Blackfeet. Many of them will come, I think, and reside with us.

The Nez Percés and the Spokans endeavor to spread a bad spirit among the Indians who reside in the country below. They endeavor to communicate their hatred of the Americans; but our chiefs are firm, and will in no wise

acquiesce in the desire of their enemies. Victor, the great chief, and Ambrose, are here again, in order to accomplish their spiritual duties. Unfortunately a great antipathy prevails among these tribes.

Mr. McArthur, formerly agent of the Hudson Bay Company, has now settled at Hellgate.

To conclude, Reverend Father, I entreat you to believe that, notwithstanding your reiterated exhortations to assure me, it is not without a feeling of restraint that I inclose you anew the list of things we need this year. I am aware that you are weighed down with business; but who, as well as yourself, can know and understand our position?

I entreat you to present my respects to all my kind friends who are at the university, at St. Charles, and elsewhere.

Your reverence's most respectful servant,

A. HOEKEN, S. J.

CHAPTER II.

LETTERS FROM THE RESIDENT MISSIONARIES.¹

Adventures of a missionary — Sufferings and danger — A Dakota blizzard — Charles Larpenteur — Needs of the Sioux — Iowa in 1851 — Dangers of delay.

The Sioux.

*To the Editor of the Précis Historiques, Brussels:*¹

Paris, November 17, 1856.

Reverend and Dear Father:

¶ I FIND with pleasure in your number of the 15th inst., the interesting letter of Father Adrian Hoeken, written to me from the Flathead camp, which I sent you from St. Louis before I started for Belgium.

Herewith are four letters of his brother, Father Christian Hoeken, which will, I think, be found as interesting as Father Adrian's. In a few days I shall see you at Brussels.

First Letter of Father Christian Hoeken to Father De Smet.

Sioux Country, Fort Vermilion, Dec. 11, 1850.

Reverend and Dear Father:

You have doubtless learned by Father Duerinck's letters that I set out last June for the Sioux country. The season was quite favorable when I left Kansas, but I had a pretty cold time as I crossed Missouri, Iowa and Minnesota till I got to the post of the American Fur Com-

¹ From *Western Missions and Missionaries*, p. 263.

pany, called Fort Vermilion. My inability to find a good guide to lead me to Fort Pierre, the great post of the Missouri, made me lose five days of excellent weather.

At last I succeeded in finding a companion who had crossed backward and forward, for the last thirty-three years, every plain, mountain, forest and prairie of the West. I set out the day before the weather changed. On the third day the snow overtook us. On reaching James river we found it impassable; the water was too high and too cold for our horses to swim it. We had to ascend it to find a ford. We traveled eight or nine days without finding any place or means to cross. A violent north wind set in, so that we were nearly frozen to death. We accordingly began to descend the valley of the river, but had not made over five or six miles when night surprised us, and we had to encamp in a spot which offered scarce wood enough for one night. We had hardly encamped when the north wind began to blow with horrible violence; the snow fell so thick and fast, that you would have said the clouds had burst. You may imagine our position, and how much we pitied each other. Sleep was out of the question. The next morning we struck our camp. The snow and wind raged with unabated fury for two days and two nights. In some spots there were six, fifteen, and even twenty feet of snow. Conceive our position if you can, as we made our way along the valley of James river, which runs between two chains of mountains, with deep ravines near each other.

We were almost out of provisions, entirely alone, in a sad desert, where we could see nothing but snow; we had no one to encourage us, except the spirit of divine charity, at whose voice I had undertaken this painful journey. The snow grew high around us, our horses would not proceed. The gloomy thought that we could never cross the river crushed out all courage; but I was consoled when I remembered the words of divine wisdom: "It is good for you to suffer temptation." To fill up our misery, rheumatism seized both my knees, so that I could not set one foot before

another. One of our horses fell lame and was no better than myself. Moreover, the keen norther froze my ears, nose and feet, and my companion's feet. The poor man complained of violent pains in the bowels, caused doubtless by fatigue and hunger. The elements seemed to conspire against us; and it is only by a special assistance of heaven that we did not perish in this strait. "I never saw anything like it. I have lived, wandered, traveled, for thirty-five years all over the upper Missouri, but never, never was I in such a scrape as this." Such were the frequent exclamations of my guide. For my part, I was forced by a dire necessity to march against my inclination, or rather to drag myself along as best I could. I gathered up what little courage I had left. I walked on in the snow from morning to night, praying and weeping in turns, making vows and resolutions. The aspirations of the prophets and apostles were the subject of my communications with heaven. "Confirm me, O Lord, in this hour. Rebuke me not in thy fury, and chastise me not in thy wrath." This I repeated at almost every instant. When I sank to my waist in snow, I cried: "Have mercy, Lord, have mercy on us. For thee and for thine have we come unto this hour. Stretch out thy arm to lead us. Lord, we perish."

Meanwhile, we advanced painfully over the mountains of snow, till night summoned us to plant our tent, which consisted, be it said here, of a square piece of a skin tent-cover. We set to work with courage, clearing away the snow, getting down a framework and wood enough for our fires at night. The fire is kindled; we have finished our night prayers; we have only a morsel to eat. Now, then, repose for a few hours. Impossible. Sleep has fled our eyelids; the smoke blinds and stifles us, at almost every instant we had to cough; my companion said that it was impossible to distinguish one object from another, the smoke had so blinded him. How sleep, with the wolves howling and prowling around us! The snow and sometimes rain and hail fell on us all night long. Often, while listening for

any noise, the prayer, "From all danger, rain and hail, deliver us, O Lord!" escaped my trembling lips involuntarily. Thank heaven, the Almighty heard our humble supplication; every day he gave us fine weather, though bitter cold. My greatest fear every morning was that my companion would bring word that our horses were dead of cold or hunger in those bleak and sterile tracts. Had this loss befallen us, our misfortune would have been complete. I put myself and all belonging to me under the special protection of our good and amiable patroness, the Blessed Virgin Immaculate, and I often reminded her, with filial confidence, that we had been committed to her care at the foot of the cross.

From day to day, my guide was the more urgent that we should abandon the lame horse so as not to be frozen for him. We had to lose a good part of the day in unloading and reloading him, because he fell at almost every step on the slippery snow; yet by care, pain, fatigue and patience, we arrived with our two horses at Fort Vermilion. Famished and almost dying as we were (having had nothing to eat for ten days, but a little bread and a prairie-hen that my companion killed by chance), sleepless and wearied to death, we reached Vermilion on the 8th of December, the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. To express the joy that overflowed my soul on that happy day I would need write in tears, not in ink, and you could trace my feelings better than if delineated with a pen. I was at the end of hunger, cold, snow, rain, hail, tramping, and blasphemy that filled me with horror every time my companion vented his wrath on the horse or the evils we experienced. I rebuked him frequently and begged him to refrain, but in vain; the poor man had always the same excuse: "It was a second nature with him, and he meant no harm." Wretched excuse! I suffered more from his troubles and murmurs than from all the other miseries put together. To my prayers of blended hope, and fear, and anguish, succeeded now hymns of gratitude and joy. In-

stead of my ordinary aspirations: "Enough, Lord, it is enough. Command the winds and there shall be a great calm. Lord, thou hast said: Ask and you shall receive. Give us this day our daily bread," and so on, I now exclaim: "We praise thee, O Lord! great is thy power, Lord God of hosts."

Mr. Charles Larpenteur, whose hospitality you have often enjoyed when traveling in the desert to visit the Indian tribes, is now in charge of the post, and he received us with all the goodness of a father. He procured us all that he could. May the Lord bless him, for he deserves it. "The Samaritan in the Gospel," said he, "took care of an unfortunate man, and poured oil and wine into his wounds. Sir," he added, "you are welcome. I offer you all I have; I wish to treat you as well as is in my power." The dignity and worth of charity are never better felt than on similar occasions, and by beggars like us.

I shall spend some days instructing and baptizing a score of people who live around here. I shall endeavor to recover from my unusual hardships before I start. In the meanwhile the snow will melt, the roads become better, and I will resume my journey.

Receive the assurance of my respect. Present my respects to the Fathers and Brothers, and believe me,

Reverend and Dear Father,

Your devoted servant and brother in Christ,

CHRISTIAN HOEKEN, S. J.

You see, Reverend Father, by this letter of Father Hoecken, that the consolations of heaven are constantly tempered by the desolations of earth. This is the support of the laborers in the vineyard of the Lord.

I have come to Europe for missionaries. Belgium has already furnished many. St. Francis Xavier asked for Belgians. Shall I succeed in getting some? Cannot I count on my own land as much as on Holland, France, or Italy?

Second Letter of Father Christian Hoeken.—To Father Elet.

Territory of the Platte, Dec. 28, 1850.

Reverend and Dear Father Provincial:

According to my express promise in my letters, I write to tell you where I have been, and what I have done since I left the Kansas, till my return from the Upper Missouri.

I traveled by the way of Weston, without a cent in my pocket. I had to trust entirely to Providence. A draft of ten dollars on Father De Smet enabled me to get the actual necessities for my journey. I should have drawn more, but it was all they could let me have.

On the way I met several old friends, whose liberality did not improve my poverty. I reached St. Joseph at the foot of the Black-snake Hills. My horse could not stand the hard travel. Others were of my opinion, among them was Mr. Scanlan, who offered me an Indian horse to go as far as Bellevue, and also to take charge of mine. I accepted his kind offer. In two days I was quite disappointed. The horse was very lazy, and weak in the bargain. I changed him at the Great Pacoa [Platte?Tarkio?] river for a good horse, whose exterior promised better in the long journey before me. I gave the man a draft on Mr. P. A. Sarpy to pay the difference.

On reaching Bellevue, I learned from Mr. Sarpy that Messrs. Bruyère and Argot had started the day before, and that I could easily overtake them; that there was no guide for me, and they knew none about there. I bought the necessary utensils, a little pot, tin-pans, provisions, etc., and started in pursuit of the gentlemen, who live about thirty miles below Fort Vermillion at the mouth of the Great Sioux. I overtook them next day at Boyer River. I traveled in their company seven days, when we reached the Great Sioux.

I spent three days there instructing the people, and baptized fourteen persons. They treated me with great kindness, and expressed their extreme delight at the prospect of the establishment of a Sioux mission. They promised to pay for their children's board. They are not only full of good will, but capable of acting.

As for the mixed race of the Santees (a Sioux tribe), they receive from Government about \$1,000 a head, according to the treaty made last year at St. Peter's River in the Upper Missouri. You see, then, Reverend Father, that if we defer founding a mission among them, they will send their children elsewhere. Do not imagine that the number of these poor children, all baptized by Father De Smet and others, is insignificant. The half-breeds exist in great numbers everywhere, with thousands of Indians. Must all these children, of whom several thousand have already received holy baptism, perish for want of instruction? Are they doomed to remain sitting in the shadow of death? May I not announce to them all, the precious tidings of vocation to grace? I trust, in God's mercy, the day of their deliverance is at hand; that they will soon perceive the aid of the Saviour and Redeemer. My daily prayer is (above all at the holy altar) that their expectations and frequent appeals may at length find a term.

I forgot to say, that on arriving at Linden, a village situated eight miles below the river Nishnabotna, I found Major Matlock very dangerously ill with dysentery. He recognized me at once, and cried out: "Father Hoeken, I am extremely glad to see you. I wished to see you much a long time; but I am so indisposed at this moment that I cannot converse with you. Could you not come a little later?" "Most willingly," I replied; "I will see you by and by." An hour after I returned to his room in the hotel; I found him half asleep. He heard my voice, and after having dismissed those who were with him, he spoke to me of his religious convictions. He informed me that he had been brought up in the Methodist sect, but that he

did not believe in their views, and that his most ardent desire was to become a Catholic. He then made his confession to me; after which, I baptized him conditionally. He appeared to me to be perfectly contented and resigned to die. I have since learned that he did not long survive his baptism. May he rest in peace.

I commend myself to your prayers and sacrifices, Reverend Father Provincial,

Your most humble servant,

CHRISTIAN HOEKEN, S. J.

Third Letter of Father Christian Hoeken.—To Father Elet.

St. Joseph's, Jan. 3, 1851.

Reverend and Very Dear Father Provincial:

I was obliged to wait in order to regulate my account with Mr. P. A. Sarpy, who was absent when I arrived at Council Bluffs. That time was not lost. I had the happiness of baptizing a great number of children of the Omaha tribe, and I met the young chief, Logan Fontenelle. He is a spiritual child of Father De Smet. He is very worthy of the post he fills in his tribe, and will do all in his power to convert his people and bring them to the true faith.²

I quitted Council Bluffs on the 27th of December. I arrived on the river Nishnabotna at a place called French Village. It is occupied almost exclusively by Canadians, by half-breeds, and a mixture of Indians united among themselves. I was received with much kindness, and employed Saturday and Sunday in confirming and strengthening them in the faith.

² He fell, in 1855, in a combat against a great war-party of the Sioux.
—(Note by Father De Smet.)

As soon as my arrival was known, the people collected on all sides, in order to secure to their children the grace of baptism. You can easily imagine what a consolation it was to me after the fatigues of the late journey. On examining the state of things, I found that those people needed instruction in regard to the sacrament of marriage. They listened to me with profound attention, and followed my advice on this point. I baptized sixteen persons, among whom was one converted from Mormonism and one Sioux squaw. I gave the nuptial benediction to three couples. In the midst of a meeting held in a private house, the conversation fell on the construction of a village church; each one offered his services, and promised to approach the sacraments. How great and plentiful is the harvest, but alas, how few are the reapers! We must, in truth, but in sadness, repeat with the prophet Jeremiah: "The children ask bread and there is no one to break it to them." What a vast field for them of whom the scripture says: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the footsteps of those who proclaim the glad tidings of peace and salvation."

A month's traveling in the desert through which these people are wandering deprived of instruction, would bestow on our missionaries greater experience of the evils of ignorance and of superstition, than many years passed in studying them in books and writings, and one hour of conversation would inspire Christian hearts with sentiments of more real compassion, than all the discourses of rhetoric and all the artifices of eloquence could ever produce. If the Catholics of civilized countries, and provided with all the advantages that civilization offers for the soul and for the body, could, during one single week, experience what is endured in the midst of the ravages and violence of this poor Indian country, their hearts would open to the sentiments of a truly active compassion, and they would extend a charitable hand to relieve the misery and mitigate the bitterness of their wretched and afflicting condition.

There are in human life certain marks of degradation which, at first sight, awaken the tender sentiments of a Christian heart; there are interior trials and sorrows which need to be related to excite charity toward those who suffer them. Such are, my dear Father, the troubles and sufferings of the Indians. Deprived of civilized society, destitute of all the advantages of social life, ignorant of the very elements of individual duty, they are a prey to exterior deceptions, to interior illusions, and their days are counted by overwhelming evils and misfortunes as numerous as the hours which mark their duration. But when it pleases a wise Providence to permit that they be visited by other and extraordinary trials, as it happened to the Potawatomies, who lost their harvest, their ills are increased a hundred-fold, and nothing but the consolations of the gospel are capable of ameliorating the hard lot of barbarism and the anguish of ignorance. May heaven deign to inspire a large number of worthy ministers of the Church with a zeal in conformity with the will of God, and inspire also a great number of Christians with that charity which covers a multitude of sins, in order that they may come to their aid amid the painful sufferings which they are at this moment undergoing.

My respects to all,

Reverend Father Provincial,

Your most humble servant,

CHRISTIAN HOEKEN, S. J.

Fourth Letter.—To Reverend Father Elet.

Bellevue, December 23, 1850.

Reverend and Very Dear Father Provincial:

I left Fort Vermilion on the third Sunday of Advent; I descended the Great Sioux as far as its confluence. There

I met with Major Halton, who is agent for the Upper Missouri.

He employed all his eloquence to persuade me to accompany him as far as Fort Pierre, which is the post of the Little Missouri. He will probably stop there, at about the middle of January. God alone knows what the weather will prove at that time. He presented us a beautiful buffalo-robe, and told me, that if we would establish a mission in these sections, he would contribute annually \$100. Another gentleman added, I have three children to educate; I will furnish \$300 per year, and be assured, continued he, that every white man residing in this locality that has a family of mixed race (and there are a great number of them), will assist you to the best of their ability — one in one manner and another in another, according to their means. The Brûlés, and Yanktons, and the other Sioux tribes assembled in council said: “The missionaries shall not perish with hunger among us; we will bring them an abundance of buffalo-robes and buffalo-meat, so that they can purchase clothes for the children who will be confided to them.”

For the love of God and of souls, I conjure you, Reverend Father, not to defer any longer. All the good that Father De Smet and others have produced by their labors and visits will be lost and forgotten, if these Indians are disappointed in their expectations. They weigh men's characters in the balance of honesty; in their eyes whosoever does not fulfill his promises is culpable; they do not regard or consider whether it be done for good reasons, or that there is an impossibility in the execution. Some of them have sent their children to Protestant schools, and they will continue to do so as long as we form no establishments among them.

From all this you may easily conclude that there is apostasy and all its attendant evils. Immortal souls are precious in the sight of God. You are acquainted with my dispositions — arrange everything according to your own

good will and pleasure. My sole desire is to endure fatigue and suffering, as much as I can with God's assisting grace, and as long as I shall live. I have deposited my hopes in the bosom of my God; I expect my recompense from his goodness, not in this life, but in the next.

Yours, etc.,

CHRISTIAN HOEKEN, S. J.

These four letters of Reverend Father Hoeken show sufficiently, my dear and reverend Father, the spiritual wants of these nations and their desire of being assisted. Apostasy is more frequent than is generally believed in Europe. Oh! if the zealous priests of the Continent knew what we know, had they seen what we have witnessed, their generous hearts would transport them beyond the seas, and they would hasten to consecrate their lives to a ministry fruitful in salutary results. Time passes; already the sectaries of various shades are preparing to penetrate more deeply into the desert, and will wrest from those degraded and unhappy tribes their last hope — that of knowing and practicing the sole and true faith. Shall they, in fine, obtain the Black-robles, whom they have expected and called for during so many years?

Accept, Reverend Father, the assurance of my sincere friendship.

P. J. DE SMET.

CHAPTER III.

TRIBUTES TO THE FLATHEADS AND OTHER TRIBES.¹

Testimony of Lieutenant Mullan and Governor Stevens — Progress in agriculture and useful arts — Pious devotions — Stolen horses returned — Advancement of the Cœur d'Alènes — The Indian outbreak.

Brussels, Feast of St. Xavier, December 3, 1856.

Reverend Mother:

THE festival of to-day renews in my mind the recollection of the pleasant time I spent at Erps, last Monday.

I must again thank you for the kind reception I received at your convent and academy.

The repeated invitations you have extended to me, since my return to Belgium, through Father Terwecoren, who took me there, made it a duty on my part to go. I owed you this visit also personally, Reverend Mother, on account of the ties which always have existed, and still exist, between your family and mine. This recommendation was made to me at Termonde. It was, indeed, pleasant for me to meet you, after thirty-five years' absence, and especially to find you consecrated to God by the vows of religion. During my long travels over the world, I have always found in religious communities the greatest amount of happiness to which man can aspire here below.

But independent of this personal motive, the Academy of the Servants of Mary would leave, in my mind, a most pleasing recollection. I shall never forget this little family festival, the charitable and pious words addressed to me by one of your scholars, in the name of her companions; the

¹ To the Mother Superior of the Convent and Academy of Erps-Querbs, between Brussels and Louvain. From *Western Missions and Missionaries*, p. 275.

earnest attention paid by them to my accounts, and the prayers they promised me for my poor Indians; that beautiful hymn in honor of St. Francis Xavier, the patron of missionaries; the happiness of the little village children, gathered in the day-school, where their hearts learn to love God and serve him by labor; the respectful deference of all the sisters, and of your worthy director.

I thank you, then, Reverend Mother, for this welcome; and, in the name of the Indians, I thank you especially for the alms which the convent has confided to me for them, and the vestments which you prepare. The Indians pray for their benefactors; they will pray especially for the Servants of Mary, and for their young pupils, as soon as I tell them all.

As an anticipated testimony of their gratitude, and that the remembrance of this day may abide, your community ever prosper more and more, your young ladies, when they come forth from that house of the Lord, preserve precious the inappreciable gift of piety and the pure lustre of all virtue, I propose to give to the first little Indian girls that I baptize after my return, the Christian names of the religious and pupils whom I saw assembled, that they may pray for their benefactresses. Please to prepare a list, and send it to Father Terwecoren, who is collecting all that is offered for the mission.

I add to this letter a copy of the tributes of admiration paid to the Flatheads, as well as the Pater and Ave in Osage. It is a little souvenir for the Academy of Erps-Querbs.

I. *Tribute of admiration rendered to the Flatheads, by an officer of the United States army, sent with Governor Stevens to explore St. Mary's valley.* These lines are drawn from a report recently issued by order of Government. *Explorations, etc., from the Mississippi to the Pacific ocean*, p. 308. Lieutenant Mullan says:

"When I arrived at the camp with my guide, three or four men came out to meet us, and we were invited to enter

the lodge of the great chief. With much eagerness they took care of our horses, unsaddled them, and led them to drink. As soon as the camp had been informed of the arrival of a white man among them, all the principal men of the tribe collected at the lodge of the chief.

"All being assembled, at a signal given by the chief, they prayed aloud. I was struck with astonishment, for I had not the least expectation of such conduct on their part. The whole assembly knelt. In the most solemn manner, and with the greatest reverence, they adored the Lord. I asked myself: Am I among Indians? Am I among people whom all the world call savages? I could scarcely believe my eyes. The thought that these men were penetrated with religious sentiments, so profound and beautiful, overwhelmed me with amazement.

"I could never say enough of those noble and generous hearts among whom I found myself. They were pious and firm, men of confidence, full of probity, and penetrated at the same time with a lively and religious faith, to which they remain constant. They never partake of a repast without imploring the blessing of heaven. In the morning, when rising, and at night, when retiring, they offer their prayers to Almighty God. The tribe of the Flatheads among the Indians is the subject of their highest esteem; and all that I witnessed myself justifies this advantageous opinion."

Here is another testimony from the Hon. Isaac I. Stevens, Governor of Washington Territory. Giving orders to Lieutenant Mullan, he says:

"Tell those good Flatheads that the words of Father De Smet in their behalf have been received by their Great Father, the President of the United States, and that all good people are devoted to them. I would like to rebuild St. Mary's. Let them know that I am attached to them, and ready to aid their old benefactors in their well-being. This would be most pleasing to me."

He wrote to the Indian agent :

"You are already aware of the character of the Flatheads. They are the best Indians of the mountains and the plains — honest, brave, and docile, they only need encouragement to become good citizens — they are Christians, and we are assured that they live up to the Christian code."

This passage is from the message to the President in 1854. You see, Reverend Mother, that my eulogium at Erps-Querbs, on the Flatheads, is also in the mouths of the Americans. It is the same with the other Indians. The sisters of the pupils may then rely on the prayers and gratitude of the little girls who bear their names. May these children of the desert have the same means of salvation as the children of Belgium.

Accept, Reverend Mother, this trifling homage of my gratitude, and express the same sentiments to your worthy Director, community, and pupils.

Your servant in Christ, etc.

To the Editor of the Précis Historiques, Brussels.²

Oregon Missions.

University of St. Louis, July 16, 1857.

Reverend Father:

Since my return to St. Louis I have been very busy, and not very well, in consequence of the sudden transition from a cold climate to one where the thermometer stands at 90° Fahrenheit. I have not been able, thus far, to send you any interesting article. I have lately received a long and beautiful letter from Father A. Hoeken, in the Rocky Mountains. It appeared, on the 11th instant, in the *Freeman's Journal*, which you receive regularly. I shall try and send you a translation.

² From *Western Missions and Missionaries*, p. 280.

I inclose to-day a short notice of Father Eysvogels. If you give it a place in your *Précis*, it will give pleasure to the friends and acquaintances of that good Father in North Brabant.

As you propose terminating a volume of my letters, you would do well, perhaps, to add, if there is time, a letter to the *St. Louis Leader*, dated June 19, 1855, which you can have translated.

St. Louis, June 19, 1855.

Mr. Editor:

From a letter received from the Rocky Mountains about two months ago, I learn that the Indians, in our different missions in Oregon, continue to give great satisfaction to their missionaries, by their zeal and fervor in the holy practices of religion. "I hope," writes Father Joset, "that the holy sacrament of confirmation, which many have lately received, will add still more stability to their good resolutions. The arrival of Monseigneur Blanchet, of Nisqually, had been announced only a few hours before, yet, notwithstanding that one-half of the neophytes were absent on their hunting grounds, the zealous prelate gave confirmation to over 600 persons. He expressed the greatest satisfaction at the flourishing condition of the missions, and the exemplary and Christian conduct of the Indian faithful."

The conversions to our holy faith, if you consider the small number of our missionaries, are very consoling and encouraging. Father Joset says, that in the Mission of St. Paul's alone, among the Skoyelpis or Kettle Falls Indians, he had 163 converts in the course of the year. He further states in his letter, that Lieutenant Mullan, of the United States army, visited the Flatheads, and several others of our missions, by order of Governor Stevens, of the new Territory of Washington, and that the distinguished officer had expressed great delight at all he saw among the Indians, promising withal to favor them and to speak well of them in his report. Governor Stevens him-

self, in his report to the President of the United States, commends them highly, and calls upon the Government for aid and assistance. "They are," says he, speaking of the Flatheads, "the best Indians of the mountains and the plains — honest, brave and docile — they only need encouragement to become good citizens; they are Christians, and we are assured that they live up to the Christian code," etc.

Most respectfully, Dear Sir,

Your humble and obedient servant,

P. J. DE SMET, S. J.

You see, Reverend Father, that I have cited the testimony of Governor Stevens, as to our Indian missions. The details which I shall give you in this letter emanate from the same source, as honorable as it is truthful. They form part of an official report on the State of Oregon, sent by that magistrate to the President of the United States, in 1855, and published by order of Government.

Speaking of the tribe of Pend d'Oreilles, the Governor says:

"I am indebted to Doctor Suckley for many interesting facts in relation to the mission of St. Ignatius, established among the lower Pend d'Oreilles; it would be difficult to find a more beautiful example of successful missionary labors. The mission was established nine years ago, by Reverend P. J. De Smet, the whole country at that time being a vast wilderness.

"For the first two years the missionaries lived in skin lodges, accompanying the natives on their periodical hunts and visits to their fishing grounds.

"During this time they found it very hard to live. Their food consisted principally of camas-roots and dried berries, which at best contain very little nourishment. They raised some wheat, which they boiled in the beard, for fear of waste; parching some of the grains to make a substitute for

coffee. After this, they slowly but steadily increased in welfare. Each year added a small piece to their tillable ground. They then obtained pigs, poultry, cattle, horses, agricultural implements, and tools. Their supplies of tools, seeds, groceries, clothing, etc., are shipped direct from Europe to the Columbia river. There are two lay brethren attached to the mission. One of them, Brother Francis, is a perfect jack-of-all-trades. He is by turns a carpenter, blacksmith, gunsmith and tinman; in each handicraft he is a good workman. The other, Brother McGean, superintends the farming operations. They both worked hard in bringing the mission to its present state of perfection, building successively a windmill, blacksmith's and carpenter's shops, barns, cowsheds, etc., besides an excellent chapel, in addition to a large dwelling-house, of hewn timber, for the missionaries.

"The church is quite large, and is tastefully and even beautifully decorated. I was shown the handsomely carved and gilded altar, the statue of our 'Mother,' brazen crosses, and rich bronzed fonts — work which at sight appears so well executed as to lead one to suppose that they must all have been imported.

"Works of ornament are not their only deeds. A grindstone, hewn out of the native rock, and modeled by the same hand which made the chisel which wrought it, tinware, a blacksmith's bellows, plow-shares, bricks for their chimneys, their own tobacco-pipes, turned with the lathe out of wood, and lined with tin, all have been made by their industry. In household economy they are not excelled. They make their own soap, candles, vinegar, etc., and it is interesting and amusing to listen to the account of their plans, shifts and turns, in overcoming obstacles at their first attempts, their repeated failures and their final triumphs. The present condition of the mission is as follows:

"The buildings are: The house, a good, substantial, comfortable edifice; the chapel, a building sufficiently large

to accommodate the whole Kalispel nation. A small building is attached to the dwelling-house; it contains a couple of sleeping-rooms, and a workshop, a blacksmith's shop, and a storeroom for the natives. These are all built of square or hewn timber. Besides these there are a number of smaller outbuildings, built of logs, for the accommodation of their horses and cattle during the winter, and an excellent roothouse.

"The mission farm consists of about 160 acres of cleared land: wheat (spring), barley, onions, cabbages, parsnips, peas, beets, potatoes and carrots. Father Hoeken says, that if the children see carrots growing, they must eat some. Says he, 'I must shut my eyes to the theft, because they *cannot* resist the temptation. Anything else than carrots, the little creatures respect.'

"The Indians are very fond of peas and cabbages, but beets, and particularly onions, they dislike. The other productions of the farm are cattle, hogs, poultry, butter and cheese. Around the mission buildings are the houses of the natives. These are built of logs and hewn timber, and are sixteen in number. There are also quite a number of mat and skin lodges. Although the tribe is emphatically a wandering tribe, yet the mission and its vicinity are looked upon as headquarters.

"When the missionaries came among the Indians, they found them to be a poor, miserable, half-starved race, with an insufficiency of food, and nearly naked; living upon fish, camas and other roots, and, as the last extremity, upon the pine-tree moss. They were in utter misery and want. The whole time was occupied in providing for their bellies, which were rarely full. They were of a peaceable disposition, brave, good-tempered and willing to work.

"Of spiritual things they were utterly ignorant. Unlike the Indians east of the mountains, they had no idea of a future state or of a Great Spirit, neither had they any idea of a soul; in fact, they had not words in their language to express such ideas. They considered themselves to be ani-

mals, nearly allied to the beaver, but greater than the beaver, 'because,' they said, 'the beaver builds houses like us, and he is very cunning; true, but we can catch the beaver, and he cannot catch us, therefore we are greater than he.'

"They thought that when they died, that was the last of them. While thus ignorant, it was nothing uncommon for them to bury the very old and the very young alive, because, they said, 'these cannot take care of themselves, and we cannot take care of them, and they had better die.'

"The missionaries had an arduous labor before them. They commenced by gaining the good will of the inhabitants, by means of small presents, and by manifesting great interest in their welfare, in attendance upon the sick, and by giving the poor creatures food, seeds and instruction as to farming.

"The Indians could not help seeing that no hopes of temporal or personal benefit induced the missionaries thus to labor among them.

"The missionaries told them that they had a Creator, and that he was good. They told them of their Savior, and of the manner of addressing him by prayer. To this they listened, and believed.

"The people look up to the Father, and love him. They say that if the Father should go away, they would die.

"Before the advent of the missionaries, the inhabitants, though totally destitute of religious ideas, still believed that evil and bad luck emanated from a fabulous old woman or sorceress. They were great believers in charms or medicine. Every man had his particular medicine or charm, and from it they expected either good or ill. With some it would be the mouse, with others the deer, buffalo, elk, salmon, bear, etc.; and whichever it was, the savage would carry a portion of it constantly with him. The tail of a mouse, or the fur, hoof, claw, feather, fin, or scale, of whatever it might be, became the amulet. When a young man grew up, he was not yet considered a man until he had discovered his medicine. His father would send him to the

top of a high mountain in the neighborhood of the present mission; here he was obliged to remain without food until he had dreamed of an animal; the first one so dreamed about becoming his medicine for life. Of course, anxiety, fatigue, cold and fasting would render his sleep troubled, and replete with dreams. In a short time he would have dreamed of what he wanted, and return to his home a man.

“The missionaries say that these Indians are industrious, and not lazy, as compared to other Indians; that they are willing to work; but the land is so poor, and so little of it is susceptible of cultivation, that they cannot farm enough.

“The mission farm, as already stated, contains about 160 acres. This is kept up for the natives, as but a few acres would be amply sufficient for the missionaries. Each Indian who wishes it, is allowed a certain amount of land to cultivate for his own use, and is provided with tools and seeds.

“Before reaching the Mission of St. Ignatius, Doctor Suckley found four lodges of the Pend d'Oreilles about half a mile above the outlet of Lake De Boey. These lodges were all built after the fashion of the Sioux lodge, with the single difference that they were covered with mats of reeds, instead of skins. These mats are made of rushes laid parallel, and fastened together at their ends. For convenience in traveling, the mats are rolled into cylindrical bundles, and are thus easily carried in canoes. Doctor Suckley's provisions being out, he concluded to lodge all night with All-ol-stargh, the head of the encampment. The other lodges were principally occupied by his children and grandchildren. ‘Shortly after our entrance,’ says Doctor Suckley, ‘All-ol-stargh rung a little bell; directly the lodge was filled with the inhabitants of the camp, men, women and children, who immediately got on their knees, and repeated, or rather chanted, a long prayer, in their own language. The repetition of a few pious sentences, an invocation, and a hymn, closed the exercises. In these the squaws took as active a part as the men. The promptness, fervency and earnestness, all showed, was pleasing to contemplate. The partici-

pation of the squaws in the exercises, and the apparent footing of equality between them and the men, so much unlike their condition in other savage tribes, appear remarkable.' ”

The following trait, mentioned by Mr. Doty in his report, attests their good faith and decision of character :

“ On the 1st of November, six Pend d'Oreille Indians came to this post, and delivered up all the horses that were stolen. It appears that they were taken by two young Pend d'Oreilles, and run to the Pend d'Oreille camp, then hunting beyond the Muscleshell, under the command of a chief of that nation, Alexander. The horses were recognized, by the stamps, as belonging to the whites, and the young men confessed having stolen them at this post. A council was held, and it was determined that it was a great sin to steal horses from the white men who were friendly to them; that the wishes of the 'Great Soldier Chief,' who had been at St. Mary's, were known to them, and they had promised compliance with them; that stealing these horses would give the Pend d'Oreilles the name of liars and triflers; that they had always borne a good name, and were ashamed to have mean things said of them now; therefore the horses must be taken back by the great chief and five principal men of the tribe. Accordingly, they came boldly to the fort and delivered up the horses, without asking any reward, but, on the contrary, expressing much sorrow and shame that they had been taken.

“ Thus the six Indians proved themselves not only honest, but brave in the highest degree, coming, as they did, five days and nights into an enemy's country, simply to do an act of justice to strangers. They remained here two days, and on departing were accompanied by Mr. Clark and myself fifteen or twenty miles on their journey.”

In regard to the Flatheads, the Governor says :

“ Lieutenant Mullan, in his journal of September 20th, relates the following incident, illustrative of their noble character: 'We had to-night a great luxury, in a string of

mountain trout, brought into camp by one of our Flathead friends. Our Indians displayed, on this occasion, a trait worthy of notice. They were without meat or anything to eat. We were without meat, but had a little flour left from our small stock of provisions. These being the first fish caught by any of the party, they insisted on our taking them. This we refused, but they insisted, until we were compelled to accept them.' He continues: 'I cannot say too much of the three noble men who were with us. They were firm, upright, reliable men, and, in addition thereto, entertained a religious belief, which they never violated. They did not partake of a meal without asking the blessing of God; they never rose in the morning or retired at night without offering a prayer. They all knew the country well, and were excellent guides and hunters. When they could not find fresh meat, they accepted the remnants from our scanty table with the greatest contentedness.'

"The Flatheads recognize Victor as their chief, an Indian of the same name being the chief of the lower Pend d'Oreilles. These two tribes usually accompany each other in their great hunting expeditions east of the Rocky Mountains. The heroism of the Flatheads in battle, and their good faith toward others, have been the theme of praise, both from priest and layman."

Speaking of the Cœur d'Alènes, the Governor says:

"The Cœur d'Alène Indians are under-estimated by all the authorities. They have some seventy lodges, and number about 500 inhabitants. They are much indebted to the good Fathers for making considerable progress in agriculture. They have abandoned polygamy, have been taught the rudiments of Christianity, and are greatly improved in morals and in the comforts of life. It is indeed extraordinary what the Fathers have done at the Cœur d'Alène mission. It is on the Cœur d'Alène river, about thirty miles from the base of the mountains, and some ten miles above the Cœur d'Alène lake.

“ They have a splendid church, nearly finished by the labors of the Fathers, brothers and Indians; a large barn; a horse-mill for flour; a small range of buildings for the accommodation of the priests and brothers; a storeroom; a milk or dairy-room; a cookroom, and good arrangements for their pigs and cattle. They are putting up a new range of quarters, and the Indians have some twelve comfortable log cabins. The church was designed by the superior skill of the mission, Father Ravalli, a man of skill as an architect, and undoubtedly, judging from his well-thumbed books, of various accomplishments. Father Gazzoli showed me his several designs for the altar, all of them characterized by good taste and harmony of proportion. The church, as a specimen of architecture, would do credit to any one, and has been faithfully sketched by our artist, Mr. Stanley. The massive timbers supporting the altar were from larch trees five feet in diameter, and were raised to their place by the Indians, with the aid simply of a pulley and a rope.

“ They have a large, cultivated field, of some 200 acres, and a prairie of from 2,000 to 3,000 acres. They own 100 pigs, eight yokes of oxen, twenty cows, and a liberal proportion of horses, mules and young animals.

“ The Indians have learned to plow, sow, till the soil generally, milk cows (with both hands), and do all the duties incident to a farm. They are, some of them, expert woodcutters; and I saw at work, getting in the harvest, some thirty or forty Indians. They are thinking of cutting out a good trail to St. Mary's valley, over the Cœur d'Alène Mountains (on the route passed over by me). They need agricultural implements and seeds.

“ The country generally, on both sides of the Cœur d'Alène river and lake, is rolling and beautiful. It is interspersed with many small prairies, all affording excellent grazing, and most of them adapted to crops. The rolling country could be easily cleared, and would yield excellent wheat and vegetables. I have no question that all the coun-

try, from the falls of the Cœur d'Alène to some distance above the mission, and thence to near Clark's Fork, a region of 3,000 or 4,000 square miles, is adapted to grazing and culture. A small portion will be overflowed by the melting of the mountain snows, and another portion will be occupied by the mountain spurs or isolated peaks, capable simply of furnishing timber and fuel.

"The Fathers state that a better site for the mission is furnished by a river flowing from the southeast into the western end of the Cœur d'Alène lake, and called by them St. Joseph's river. It is said to be larger than the Cœur d'Alène river, to have many prairies along its banks, and the country generally to abound in wood, grass and water.

"On the return of the Indians from the field above spoken of, I talked to them in these words:

" 'I am glad to see you, and to find that you are under such good direction. I have come four times as far as you go to hunt the buffalo, and have come with directions from the Great Father to see you, to talk with you, and to do all I can for your welfare. I see cultivated fields, a church, houses, cattle and the fruits of the soil — the works of your own hands. The Great Father will be delighted to hear this, and will certainly assist you. Go on; and every family will have a house and a patch of ground, and every one will be well clothed. I have talked with the Blackfeet, who promise to make peace with all the Indian tribes. Listen to the Good Father and to the good brothers who labor for your good.' "

These details are drawn from the Message of the President of the United States to Congress, 1854-5, p. 416.

Accept, dear Father, my respectful homage, and believe me,

Your devoted servant and brother in Christ,

P. J. DE SMET, S. J.

*Indians of the Rocky Mountains.**To Editor of the Précis Historiques, Brussels.*³

St. Francis Xavier, Feb. 4, 1856.

Reverend Father:

I have just received a letter from Father Adrian Hoeken, dated October 18th, at the united camp of the Flatheads and Pend d'Oreilles, in the region of the great plains, east of the Rocky Mountains. The Indians had gone there to attend a peace council, held by order of the United States Government. Father Hoeken attended, at the express request of Governor Stevens of Washington Territory, who shows every regard to the Fathers, and whose reports to the President evince the lively interest which he feels in the improvement of the material condition of the Indians under our care.

The Blackfeet, Crows, Flatheads, Pend d'Oreilles, Kootenais, and a great number of chiefs of other tribes attended the council. It is to be hoped that the stipulations of the new treaty will be ratified by Government. On the one hand, the Indians promise to remain at peace with each other; on the other, the whites and the Government to aid them by subsidies in educating their children, and by farming implements to encourage them to leave their nomad life and settle in a convenient spot on their own lands. It is to be hoped that the council will succeed in realizing this laudable plan.

Father Hoeken tells me that the Indians of our missions west of the Rocky Mountains (the Flatheads, Pend d'Oreilles, Cœur d'Alènes, Kootenais, Kettle Falls Indians), continue, by their regular and religious conduct, to give the missionaries great consolation. He speaks also of the good dispositions of the Crows, Blackfeet and others east of the mountains. These Indians earnestly solicit missionaries. Colonel Cummings, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, who

³ From *Western Missions and Missionaries*, p. 292.

presided at the great Indian council, assured me, on his recent return to St. Louis, that all the tribes of the upper Missouri are devoted to us. He would gladly use his influence with Government for the success of our missions among them. Before setting out for the council, he expressed the wish that I should accompany him to the great Indian assembly.

In a letter from Father Congiato, dated at Santa Clara, November 29th, that superior of the missions of California and Oregon, speaks of his visit to the missions in the mountains. It lasted three months. The following is an extract:

“The Fathers do much good in that remote region. Like his venerable brother, who died on the Missouri in 1851, Father Hoeken does the work of several men. He has succeeded in uniting three nations and a part of the Flatheads to live together under his spiritual direction.

“All was going on wonderfully well when I was in Oregon; now all is on fire. The Indians who live on the banks of the Columbia, from Walla Walla to the Dalles, have joined the Indians of northern California to make war on the Americans or whites, and commit great depredations. One of the Oblates (Father Pandory) has been massacred.⁴ The last tidings which I received from the Mission of St. Paul at Colville, inform me that your Indians express their horror for the excesses committed by the Indians, and show no disposition to join them in the war. Pray for your fellow missionaries in Oregon.”

Several papers in this country ascribe the origin of this war to the cruelties perpetrated by some whites on a peaceful and tranquil band of Indians. I do not think that our Indians will take the least part in the difficulties which have arisen between the Americans and the Indians of the Columbia. They will doubtless follow the advice of their missionaries, who will divert them from such a great danger and so sad a misfortune. Moreover, they are at some distance from

⁴ This was a false report.—Editor, *Western Missions and Missionaries*.

the actual seat of war, and have had but trifling intercourse, if any, with the hostile tribes.

Do not forget me in your prayers, and obtain prayers for the wretched. I have just received a second letter from Father Hoeken from the Flathead village of St. Ignatius. He has several nations there. The conversions among the Indians have been very consoling and numerous in the course of last year.

In the name of all the Indians east and west of the mountains, he implores me to revisit them. The Blackfeet, Crows, Assiniboins, Sioux and others incessantly implore our aid. These nations are still very numerous. They number over 70,000 souls. Religious should, before all else, be children of obedience. It is the affair of our superiors. We shall never cease to aid them by our prayers, and commend them in a special manner to the remembrance of the pious.

CHAPTER IV.

PLANS FOR A SIOUX MISSION.

An excursion among the Yanktons — Quarters assigned — Talks all day and wrestles with the enemy all night — Baptism of head chief — His experience with a miraculous medal — A good Indian — Repulses sectarians — Letter from chiefs — The Indian Bureau consulted in regard to formation of a mission — Letters to public men — Nomination of Indian agents — Statistics of mountain tribes.

St. Louis University, March 22, 1866.

Major-General SULLY,

Headquarters District Upper Missouri, Clinton, Iowa:

Dear General.— I received your kind favor of the 28th ultimo. You will excuse me for not answering it sooner. I had to postpone it till the arrival of the Superior of the Board of the University, who has been on a long absence. He has now just returned and your propositions, concerning Indian missions, have been taken up for consideration.

Allow me to return my sincere thanks for the kind and favorable feelings you express in your letter toward the Catholic missions in general. Your suggestion of establishing a mission at Fort Berthold among the three united bands of Mandans, Aricaras and Grosventres, and among the Sioux near Fort Randall, was highly approved and will be looked to. Owing to our numerous establishments and the great want of personal means, the design could not immediately be acted upon. It will, I hope, be done before long and as soon as practicable and when the proper persons can be prepared for carrying out the views proposed and with the permission of the proper civil and military authorities.

I intend leaving St. Louis on the 7th of April, on the *Fannie Ogden*. I hope I shall have the honor of meeting you on my way up the river. Should I meet the head men of the Santee tribe and the chiefs at Fort Berthold I shall do my best to encourage them.

With sentiments of the highest consideration of respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, dear General, etc.

Tribe of the Yanktons, in the vicinity of
Fort Randall, July, 1866.¹

Very Reverend Father Provincial:

In this letter I shall give you a faithful statement of my mission among the Yanktons. I do not doubt in the least that your Reverence and the consulting Fathers will take under consideration the position of these good savages and their admirable disposition toward the faith. Permit me to go into minute details concerning all my relations with them. If the consolations are sometimes great in the holy ministry among the savages, I have also, at the station from which I write, shared in a good portion of human misery. The more fruitful were the days, the more miserable and exhausting have the nights been. The following recital will give you a faithful account of it.

Upon my arrival among the Yanktons, Indians and half-breeds welcomed me among them with the utmost good will. Every one expressed in particular his desire that I should come and share his lodge or cabin, as the case might be. As the families are usually quite numerous and their quarters rather cramped, and in order that I might have more free use of my time among them, I expressed my intention of occupying some little private abode, in whatsoever condition, where I might discharge in quiet my spiritual

¹ From the French of the Linton Album, p. 94.

duties; say my early morning mass and recite my breviary. They had the very thing for me — a poor cellar (fifteen feet square) built of hewn timbers and covered with earth and long abandoned. It was serving as a junk shed for all the community and was full of rags, pieces of rusted iron, chips, planks, etc. This was all cleared away and the place swept out. My little effects were quickly transported thither, and in less than an hour I took possession, without the least doubt that I would spend several agreeable days there in the instruction of the Indians, and several tranquil nights in reposing after the fatigues and the great heats of the day. I had a long conference with the chiefs and their subjects concerning the motives of my visit; I answered all their questions, and it was prolonged well into the night. At last I said prayer with my new community, we smoked one last calumet together, and then every one, thanking me joyfully for my presence, withdrew to give himself up to repose under his own roof.

Worn out by the heat of the day and the fatigues of the journey, I expected to enjoy a good sleep. I had reckoned without my hosts. I had been perhaps ten minutes in bed and was almost asleep, when I was awakened with a start. The dugout was swarming with famished rats; they came and laughed in my very face. Night is their particular domain and they make the best use they can of it in their own behalf. They carried on at a shocking rate. They were rummaging all my bags of provisions, and were about to begin in earnest the transportation of such of their contents as suited their purposes into their caves, when I stopped them short. To prevent the depredations of the rats, I hung my sacks to the posts of my mansard out of reach of any attempts on the part of these highwaymen. During this labor I felt myself assailed by another enemy, the flea. If he is not so formidable as the rat, he is more importunate and he attaches himself to his prey in a most tenacious manner. Often one is deceived into the consoling belief that he has put his finger upon him, but — “he is not there.” To

be brief, I was awake and up all night, making play with my hands, fingers and nails to defend myself against the fleas and their comrades in evil-doing, the mosquitos, the bed-bugs, the ants, the spiders, *et omne genus muscarum*. As you will perceive, dear Father, all is not gold that glitters. The more beautiful and consoling had been the day, among those good Indians, who lent such earnest attention to my words, the more sorry and troubled was the night. Take what precautions I would for the night, during my fortnight among the Yanktons, and with all my fruitful and consoling relations with them on each day — I spent all my hours instructing them and baptizing their little ones and those about to die — still each night I must go on the war-path afresh against the common enemy, the veritable scourge of this region. But of course, putting miseries and consolations in the balance, the latter outweigh as much as light surpasses darkness.

The results of my mission among the Yanktons have been very happy. I have baptized all the little children that were in the camp, about 100 in number, together with some fifteen adults, among whom I count the head chief of the tribe with his spouse. I think a little notice of the life and character of this head chief may please you. I will transcribe it from the notes in my journal.

On the 6th of this month (July) I baptized solemnly the head chief of the Yankton tribe, named Pananniapapi, or Man that Strikes the Ree. His tribe numbers in the neighborhood of 450 lodges, say 3,000 souls. He is a remarkable man, the descendant of a long line of chiefs recognized for their bravery in war against their enemies, but still more for their wisdom in the councils of the Dakota nation, which numbers 35,000 to 40,000 souls. I met Pananniapapi first in 1844. He recalled all the circumstances to me. I had at that time, he says, long talks with him regarding our holy religion. I exhorted him to pray the Master of Life to make him worthy to enter some day into the bosom of Jesus Christ, and become a worthy child of his Church. He

has remained faithful ever since to the words I spoke to him upon religion, and has kept them carefully in his mind and heart. He has preserved with care and respect the large miraculous medal and has always worn it, full of confidence in the protection of the Mother of God, and he and all his tribe have participated in her mighty favors.

He recounted to me with primitive simplicity the benefits obtained from heaven by the intercession of Mary. Once, in 1853, he and all his camp were buffalo hunting in the vast plains of the West. It was the cholera year, and the frightful scourge of God broke out among the Indians, where its ravages were terrible. Thousands of them fell victims to it. Pananniapapi's camp was attacked in its turn and in one day thirty died. There was universal mourning and nothing but groans and weeping was to be heard anywhere. In the consternation of the moment, the head chief exhorted his people to have trust in God and apply to Mary. He placed the miraculous medal upon a new white parfleche, neatly painted. Surrounded by his people, he implored the succor of the Holy Virgin, the good Mother of the children of God. Pananniapapi embraced the wonder-working medal devoutly, and amid their pious invocations to Mary, which penetrated heaven, all the Yanktons, 3,000 in number, full of trust, kissed the medal after the example of their head chief. At the same instant every symptom of the malady disappeared and the cholera left them.

It gives me pleasure to add to this little tale the universal testimony which I have received to the character of the great and good chief Pananniapapi. He leads an exemplary life among his people. His charity is boundless. His position as chief brings him certain remunerative favors from the Government which would put his family in easy circumstances. He accepts them, and makes use of them solely to relieve the distress of the poor members of his tribe. He shares with resignation, nay, I may say with joy, the general needs. He wears no mark of distinction.

He has adopted the costume of the whites; his garments are humble, but clean. His bearing is at once modest and imposing. In his speech he is grave and imposing, and he is quick to take a point. His example is a model and lesson to all. Although sixty-five years of age and almost blind, he is always the first at work, whether in the field, the forest or the garden. The men, women and children of his tribe need no other encouragement. With axe, pick and shovel on their shoulders, they follow him everywhere eagerly, either to the forest or to the field. Such an example is rare, especially in a head chief among the Indians, so little accustomed to labor. They have over 800 acres under cultivation. The vast field was admirably tended, and promised a good ample crop.

The longer I stayed among the Yanktons, the more I was struck with the manners and bearing of Pananniapapi. His modest exterior, his words full of wisdom and prudence, brought to my mind an ancient Patriarch or Nestor of the wilderness. During his younger years, he distinguished himself in war by deeds of valor. He bears the honorable marks upon him, but without ostentation. A three-inch arrowhead remained in the small of his back for sixteen years. But he has distinguished himself still more by his wise and moderate counsels upon the most important affairs of his nation. At the death of him who was head chief before him, he was chosen unanimously to fill his place, and he has ever discharged the duties of it with honor and for the best interests of his people.

My arrival in the thirty-mile square Yankton reservation was a real day of rejoicing for Pananniapapi. He received me with all demonstrations of the sincerest joy, and eagerly renewed his invitation of twenty-two years before, that we should come and establish ourselves on his land and open a mission there for the instruction of children and of the members of his tribe. He has often had to resist the artifices of Government agents and employees, who have

sought, unasked, to impose missionaries of their own particular sect upon his tribe, by force and against his remonstrances. Pananniapapi has always resisted all their attempts. When they asked him his reason for refusing his consent to their benevolent and charitable intentions toward his tribe, he replied modestly, "I am thankful for the occasion you give me to tell you all my thought with reference to this important matter. My opposition to your plans is a sincere and conscientious duty to the Great Spirit, which I desire to discharge. I made up my mind on this subject twenty-two years ago. I wish to put the instruction of the youth of my tribe into the hands of the Black-robcs; I consider them alone the depositaries of the ancient and true faith of Jesus Christ, and we are free to hear and follow them." The ministers answered him: "The religion of the Black-robcs may be good, but ours is the best; why not rather accept ours?" The chief replied, "I have told you that my resolution goes back a great many years. In the old Church the Mother of Jesus Christ is honored. When the cholera attacked us in the desert, all my camp was put under the protection of Mary. She deigned to come to our rescue; I always wear her medal." And he told them the story of the miraculous occurrence in the plain. He continued: "Besides, like ourselves you have your wives and children; they possess your hearts and are your principal preoccupation. You wish to come and settle among us. That is to gather wealth and enrich your wives and children at our expense. The Black-robe has neither wife nor children. His heart is undivided. All his care is for God and the happiness of the people that surround his cabin and the house of prayer. Since my first talk with the Black-robe I have had no other thought but to embrace the ancient religion of Jesus Christ, if I can make myself worthy. My mind is made up." His answer has always been the same to all renewals of the question. Pananniapapi has remained imperturbable as to his choice of a religion for twenty-two years. To-day he enjoys the distinguished

happiness of having been regenerated in the holy waters of baptism with his wife Mazaitzashanawé under the patronage of St. Peter and St. Anne.

As soon as I came he renewed his petition with ardor, to obtain a Catholic mission among the Yanktons. In my long experience with Indians, I have never seen so durable and admirable a persistency. He spent all the time he could spare with me. We had long talks together upon religion, and he was most attentive.

May all the tribe of the Yanktons, after the example of their great chief, become worthy to enter hereafter into the sweet fold of the Divine Shepherd! May the long-desired Catholic mission be established among these children of the desert, under the illustrious patronage of the Holy Virgin, to be led to the knowledge of the word of her Divine Son, the only door of salvation!

Come, Reverend Father, to the aid of the Indians by your holy sacrifices and prayers, for the fulfillment of their desire — a mission among them. The land which the Yanktons occupy is the doorway to the vast territories of the Dakotas or Sioux, who are 35,000 to 40,000 in number. In my various meetings with the Sioux tribes, they have always treated me with much respect and kindness and given close attention to my words.

I have the honor to be, with the deepest respect and the most sincere esteem

Very Reverend Father Provincial, Revæ Vae Servus in Christo,

Copy of Letter of Yankton Chiefs.

Greenwood, D. T., July 26, 1866.

Reverend Dear Father De Smet:

I send you a few lines from the chiefs of the Yanktons. They say when they were at Washington their Great

Father promised them a school and teachers, and now it is seven years and they have seen nothing as yet. Doctor Burleigh had a school for his children. There is another religious [teacher] that wants to come and remain with us. He wants to teach us the Santee language, but we do not want them. We want no other but you and your religion. The other wants to learn us how to read and sing in the Indian language and which we all know how to do in our own way. What we want is to learn the American language and their ways. We know enough of the Indian ways. I am now very old and before I die I want to see a school and the children learn how to read and write in the American language, and if you will try and get with us, I will be very happy. Our agent has not arrived as yet, but when he comes I will have a long talk with him and will send you an answer to what he says.

I will say not much until the agent arrives and then I will tell him what I have to say and what I want and then I will send you a few lines. After you had gone, all my Indians have had plenty of buffalo. We have made a surround from this place. I think the Great Spirit will take pity on us and grant all our requests. Hoping that we may hear and see you soon, we remain, ever yours.

THE MAN THAT STRIKES THE REE. X
LITTLE SWAN. X
FEATHER IN THE EAR. X
MEDICINE COW. X
JUMPING THUNDER. X

²(I write this for the Chiefs, who have requested me so to do.)

J. B. CHARDON, for Indians.

² Note in parenthesis by Chardon.

St. Louis University, Nov. 24, 1866.

Honorable Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the "Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the year 1865," which you had the great kindness to forward to me, and for which I return you my most sincere thanks.

I avail myself of the present occasion to lay respectfully before you a little incident of my late missionary visit among the Indian tribes of the upper Missouri. At the special request of Pananniapapi, or "The Man who Strikes the Ree," the head chief of the Yankton tribe and several of his braves who reside at the Yankton Agency below Fort Randall, I remained some time amongst them. During my whole stay, I found them all very attentive and respectful. Since my first interview with Pananniapapi, in 1843, he had nourished a longing desire, as he expressed it, "to see the old Black-robos (the priests) reside among his people, to instruct the Indian youth and to teach them the saving truths of Christianity." On my recent visit last summer he manifested anew this his old desire with an urgent request to come and locate on the land reserved for his tribe. The chiefs, having made up their minds, in regard to the religious profession of the teachers of their children, had been opposed hitherto to the establishing of schools by teachers of other denominations contrary to their own choice.

I could not give at that time a positive promise to Pananniapapi, the affair having first to be proposed to our own Board of Missions in St. Louis, and the practicability of its execution having first to be discussed. The Yankton Indians are under treaty with the Government, and a school fund, if I have been well informed, has been established in favor of their tribe consisting, I am told, of about 450 lodges, or 2,500 souls.

I would feel grateful for information on the following points: First. Should our Board of Missions agree to grant a Catholic missionary establishment, as expressly de-

sired by the chiefs of the Yankton tribe, will it meet with the approbation of the Indian Bureau in Washington?

Second. In case it meets with the consent of the proper authorities, I would beg to be informed as to the conditions and stipulations of the Yankton Treaty in regard to the formation and allowances for aforesaid schools.

With sentiments of the highest consideration of respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, etc.

Honorable L. V. BOGY,
Com'r of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D. C.

St. Louis University, July 30, 1868.

Dear General:

According to promise you have a right to a letter from me. I shall ever remember your extraordinary kindness to me whilst in the upper country. Since I left Fort Sully I suffered greatly from the unprecedented atmospheric heat. I had made up my mind, after my arduous trip to the hostile bands on the Yellowstone river, to take a few days' rest at St. Mary's Mission, among the Potawatomies, in Kansas. The thermometer at that place and in the shade, ranged from 104 to 109°. Of course, I availed myself of the coolness after the first good shower, to proceed hastily to St. Louis, which I reached a few days ago. I find the heat here more moderate, still it continues to be excessive and I am under great sufferings and in real danger. Deaths from the heat are very common and are of daily occurrence.

At Omaha I had the pleasure of entertaining the Right Reverend Bishop O'Gorman last mission in the upper Missouri, principally among the various Indian tribes. I have exposed to him the great need and want of a Catholic chaplain to visit the various military forts along the river and attend to the spiritual welfare of the numerous Catholic

soldiers they contain. He felt moved at the representation made, but owing to the great scarcity of priests in his immense district, I doubt much whether he will be able to grant any assistance in this respect. At this moment the Archbishop is absent from St. Louis. At his return I shall expose the case to him in earnest terms and at your particular request. With some certainty, or at the least, good hope, I can announce to you that a mission of our Society will be established on the new contemplated Indian reservations, in all probability among the Yanktonnais (the Two Bears band) who number over 700 lodges. From this establishment, in case of no regular chaplain being appointed, a Father will be able to visit yearly all the military posts on the Missouri. Should any suggestion occur to your mind on this subject, please inform me. I shall do my best and take great pleasure to bring it about. When last at Fort Sully, I informed you of my intended trip to Europe. Under urgent circumstances two Fathers have left a month ago to perform the duties intended for me. Should you have any commands or orders for the Old World, I shall with pleasure communicate them to my friends, who will promptly and readily fulfill the requests. Any other commands from here in books, etc., I shall, with pleasure, attend to.

I intend shortly to write to good Captain Duffy and family. I procured two little libraries of very interesting books for his dear young children and shall send them by the safest and best occasion. I have carefully kept the address of his son, Master James, and shall soon write to him. A beautiful prayer-book and other books are bundled up and ready to be forwarded to Rhode Island.

Please present my best respects to Mrs. Stanley and remember me to your dear little daughters.

Most respectfully, etc.,

General D. S. STANLEY,

Fort Sully, D. T.

St. Louis University, Sept. 9, 1868.

Dear General:

I heard to-day of the arrival of General Sherman and paid him a visit at his office. I represented to him the case of removing the Upper Missouri tribes in the vicinity of Forts Sully and Rice, to the neighborhood of Fort Randall, adding its objections and difficulties. The general showed me the map intended for the Indian reservation. It is about as large as the whole State of Missouri and extends from Fort Randall, above Fort Sully. The upper Indians, he added, "may select any spot, even opposite Fort Sully, if they choose." I learned that General Harney has the entire control of the reservation and that \$200,000 have been placed at his disposal, to help the Indians through the coming winter. Of course, you will see General Harney. Your great experience, advice and direction will be of great service to him and result in the welfare and happiness of the Indians.

Try your best to induce my brother, Two Bears, to make a good selection, not far away from Sully. Should a Catholic mission be established, and I have good hopes it shall, I would like it to be in his neighborhood, according to the promise I made him. From a letter I received lately from Colonel Otis Two Bears appears to me in great distress, as few animals are found in the prairies. Should you see him, try to console him. In my answer to the colonel I inserted a long paragraph to him.

Present my best respects to Mrs. Stanley, to Captain Duffy and family. I received a very fine letter of his son, James, from Rhode Island.

Should you find out a good locality for a mission, confer on the subject with General Harney and give me information and advice in due time. I hope we shall not meet with any opposition in Washington, if the sentiments of the Indians are well known and duly represented by yourself and Harney. On the subject of missions, as far as my ex-

perience goes, the Indians have always pronounced in favor of the Black-gowns, or Catholic missions. I truly hope and pray that their expectations may be soon realized and that the light of faith may redound upon them.

Most respectfully, etc.,

D. S. STANLEY, *Brevet Major-General*,
Fort Sully, D. T.

P. S.—I hope my letter of the 4th instant has reached you.

St. Louis University, July 16, 1869.

Honorable Sir:

In writing the other day to Mr. John B. Motley, solicitor of patents, etc., I requested him in case of meeting you to present you my kindest respects and regards and my most sincere congratulations for the high and important office to which our worthy President has called you. I entertain the fullest convictions that the appointment will redound to the general welfare of our red brethren throughout the Union, and particularly among the numerous tribes of the Far West. I shall always remember with true satisfaction and pleasure the honor I have had of visiting the Sioux tribes in your company and that of General Sully, in the summer of 1867. Accept my sincere thanks for the many favors and great kindness you bestowed on me on that occasion.

The answer I received from my friend Motley, in regard to his kind compliance with my request, encourages me to address this letter to you to let you know my future intentions in regard to a visit to the Sioux tribes in the Upper Missouri country. In my visits last year among the friendly and among the hostile bands on the Yellowstone river I was everywhere received with marked tokens of kindness, respect and confidence. Two Bears and other principal

chieftains in their speeches at the council at Fort Rice, expressed the desire of my forming a missionary station in their midst. In particular they entreated me to that effect. I made no formal promise to them and have answered simply, "that I would do my best to bring it about." I learn from various sources that Two Bears, chief of the Yanktonnais, and several others have been anxiously expecting me. I arrived in St. Louis on the 7th ult., leaving the cool climate of Belgium and stepping so suddenly into the fullest heat of our Missouri summer, that I have been rather suffering ever since. However, I have not abandoned the intention of visiting the Sioux tribes in the neighborhood of Forts Sully and Rice as soon as I shall be able and feel strong enough for the trip.

The situation of affairs in the upper country having somewhat changed in regard to missionary establishments, permit me to lay before you my plan, if admissible. Your views on the subject will be gratefully received. My visit to the upper country would be to select a place where a missionary station may be commenced early next spring and where manual-labor schools may in time be erected. In my visits last year I found all the half-breeds, who are mostly Catholics, very sanguine on the subject and several of the most prominent chiefs in the council at Fort Rice made the same request to the commissioners.

Honorable Sir, I have another important matter to lay before your consideration — a letter from the Reverend Father Dielo, which I just received from St. Mary's Mission, Kansas. I feel particular interest in said mission because it was the Potowatomies, now of St. Mary's, among whom I first commenced my missionary career. This mission has been in a flourishing condition for about thirty years. At various times the establishment has been visited by most distinguished and eminent men of the United States. Senators Doolittle, Foster and Ross, General Ewing and a host of others, have at various times honored it with their presence and pronounced the establishment "A

model mission " and the schools " a perfect success." The Friends or Quakers now threaten to replace Doctor Palmer, for many years the efficient and qualified agent of the Potawatomies, who has given satisfaction to the greatest number of Indians in his agency. The schools of the mission continue (The rest of the letter not copied in Press Book.)

St. Louis University, Jan. 6, 1870.

Honorable R. CAMPBELL, *St. Louis, Mo.*:

Honorable Sir.—Having the honor of your acquaintance for these several years past in my capacity of missionary among the Indian tribes; knowing the deep interest you take in the welfare of the Indians, and in your present capacity as member of the Board of Commissioners instituted by the Government for the interest and civilization of the Indians, allow me the liberty of laying before you my intention of establishing a mission among the upper Sioux tribes, should it meet with the approbation of the Board of Commissioners.

A few words of explanation may be here necessary. I visited various bands of Sioux in the summer of 1868. Several considerable portions of Indian tribes about Fort Sully and Fort Rice were friendly and entertained peaceable dispositions toward the Government and the whites. The presence of the hostile Sioux bands being highly desirable and necessary, to meet the commissioners at Fort Rice, in order that a treaty of peace might be concluded, I offered my services which were accepted. Accompanied by Mr. C. E. Galpin, in the capacity of interpreter and a band of friendly Indians as scouts, we proceeded across the plains in a western direction. After about fifteen days' travel we found the hostile bands to the number of several thousand, encamped on the banks of the Yellowstone river ten miles above the mouth of Powder river. They had

been apprised of my approach by some of the scouts and I was met by hundreds of warriors clad in their finest apparel and war ornaments. They welcomed me into their country and amidst the greatest rejoicings conducted me to their common camp, consisting of about 1,000 lodges and composed of Ogallalas, Brûlés, Blackfeet-Sioux, etc. The day after my arrival I held a council with the Indians, attended by thousands — a space of over an acre was surrounded by Indian lodges and served as the council hall which was filled to its utmost. I made known to them the benign intentions of the Government, in their regard. I was listened to with apparent great attention and received the answers from the various orators appointed for the occasion. On my return to Fort Rice I was accompanied by a number of deputies from the hostile bands. They attended the great council of the Government commissioners and signed the treaty of peace.

Several of the chiefs present at the council, in their speeches to the commissioners expressed a desire to be attended by *Black-robés* or Catholic priests for their instruction and that of their children. For years past, during my missionary visits to them, and more particularly in the summer of 1868 at Fort Rice, have I been earnestly requested by the chiefs to make a missionary establishment in their midst — I made them a formal promise to that effect, if in my power, to interest myself in their behalf. I entertained the hope of seeing them the following summer in 1869, but being called to Europe on business and on account of subsequent sickness on my return to the United States, I have been compelled to postpone my visit until next spring.

In conformity with the wishes of numerous Indians and half-breed families, I feel desirous to establish a mission for their welfare in some well-suited locality. I must here humbly observe that our means for such an undertaking are very limited and inadequate. Should we be able to bring the design about and should our services be ac-

ceptable, my principal object in addressing you, Honorable Sir, is to humbly beg you to present our case to the honorable board of commissioners of which you are a distinguished member. Should means be accorded for the undertaking of our contemplated mission, it shall be gratefully received and conscientiously applied in accordance with the views of the Government and in favor of the Indians.

Allow me to make the observation, that our Catholic missions among the Potawatomies and Osages, during their whole existence for over twenty years, have always been in a flourishing condition and have merited the approbation and praise of the various superintendents and agents of the Government. The usefulness and good done by our missions in the Rocky Mountains (Montana and Idaho) are highly spoken of in late letters I received from General Sully.

Should reference be necessary, allow me to name General Sherman, Commissioner Parker, Generals Stanley, Harney, Terry and Sully.

With sentiments of profound respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, Honorable Sir, etc.

St. Louis University, Sept. 15, 1870.

Honorable Sir:

I received your very kind favor of the 9th instant. Please accept my most sincere gratitude. Your letter has been for two days on my table, but [has been delayed] owing to bodily indisposition and very urgent matters to attend to, and hoping the return of my Superior to confer with him on the subject in question. He is still absent, but I can no longer defer my answer.

A simple statement of our intention to erect a mission among the Upper Missouri Sioux tribes early next spring may here be necessary. I passed the months of June and July in visiting the various military posts and Indian reser-

vations from below Fort Thompson to Grand river. I was kindly and well received by the various Sioux tribes and bands. I had to listen to their usual little complaints and apprehensions, but upon the whole they appeared to me pretty well pleased and peaceable. Generally they seemed anxious to have me establish missions among them. On the occasion, I answered all their queries and gave them the best advice in my power with the promise of doing what I could to return soon among them to establish a mission for their welfare and the education of their children.

At my return to St. Louis, in the beginning of last month I gave an exposé, to my Superior and his consultors of my visit and mission among the various Sioux tribes. They readily approved and resolved on the establishment of a mission among the aforesaid tribes, without deciding about the locality. During the consultation a letter was read from General Stanley, in which he advised, stating his motives, establishing the mission in Peoria Bottom, where General Harney raised buildings fifteen miles below Fort Sully and where the little band of Yellow Hawk habitually resides. (North side of the Missouri river.)

I will here state that, personally, I am in favor of establishing the mission on the Grand River reservation, from the fact that it will bring the missionaries in closer contact with a greater number of Indians and give them more facility to visit the hitherto hostile bands in the interior. I was assured while at Grand River that the bottom lands four miles above and six miles below the agency are susceptible of cultivation, with plenty of timber and good grazing around. My proposition will, no doubt, meet with the approbation of the Superior and his board of whom I am a member.

My health has been rather feeble for some time past, owing to the excessive summer heat in the upper country. I trust the coming cool weather will again brace me up and prepare me for the new Sioux mission which for years has been dear to my heart.

I feel truly grateful, and find no words to express my gratitude and heartfelt thanks for your extraordinary kindness and confidence in allowing me to propose "some suitable person, who will be acceptable to myself and the Society I belong to, for appointment by the President as United States agent at Grand River." The motive you express is highly appreciable, paternal and just. Certainly a good understanding between the agent and the missionary will always produce the happiest results among the people for whose welfare they devote themselves.

* * * * *

With sentiments of the highest consideration, etc.

Honorable E. S. PARKER, *Commissioner of Indian Affairs,*
Washington, D. C.

St. Louis University, Sept. 27, 1870.

Honorable Sir:

On the 12th instant I received a very kind letter from the Honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs, in which he desired me, "to name some suitable person, who will be acceptable (to myself and to the Society I am a member of) for appointment by the President as United States Indian Agent at Grand River, on the Missouri;" stating as a reason and motive: "it seeming very desirable that any agent sent by the Government to the care of those Indians should be in full harmony and sympathy with the local missionary or teacher."

Previously to the reception of the Commissioner's letter, it was decided upon by the Board of Fathers regulating the affairs of the missions of the Society, to establish a mission among the upper Sioux tribes in Dakota, early next spring. The reservation at Grand River, containing the greatest number of Sioux bands, it is likely this point will be selected for our future establishment.

I felt highly honored and most grateful for the confidence and kindness expressed in the honorable Commissioner's letter, to wit: in allowing me to make the proposal of the agent of Grand River reservation. On the most estimable and highly-prized authority and recommendation I proposed to the honorable Commissioner, as agent for Grand river, Doctor Wm. F. Cody. His profession, his talents, qualifications and services, no doubt entitle him highly to the position and I hope he may be willing to accept.

In the absence of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, permit me to renew my first application and request and to place the matter directly under your consideration, with the hope that it may prove acceptable.

With sentiments of the highest consideration, etc.

Honorable SECRETARY COX,
Washington, D. C.

St. Louis University, March 27, 1871.

Honorable E. S. PARKER, *Commissioner Indian Affairs,*
Washington, D. C.:

Honorable Sir.—This letter I intend both as personal and official. Ever since we traveled in company in 1867, to promote the welfare of the Indians, you have inspired me with the highest regard and respect.

I need advice and direction as to the course and endeavors in starting our future mission on Grand River agency. From reports I have received, I understand that the locality may be changed. The land at Grand river is rather poor for farming purposes, with hardly any timber around. I have little means at my disposal. What assistance may be expected from the Government? or how may it be obtained? We have nothing else in view than to promote the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Indians.

My health, for some time past, has been rather on the decline. I hope, however, I shall be able to undertake the trip, toward the 10th or 12th of next month, and introduce two reverend companions among the various bands at Grand River.

When I was in Washington, January last, I was not sufficiently posted as to the actual situation or statistics, of some of the Catholic missions in Idaho, Montana and Washington Territories. I then promised to forward to you, what information I should be able to obtain. The Superior of Indian Missions, the Reverend Joseph Giorda, Society of Jesus, has sent me a sketch, with some remarks, as to the number of converts among the various tribes, under his charge, which I consider as implicitly reliable and beg to be allowed to present it to your kind attention and consideration. I hope, that as soon as practicable, the benevolent intention of the President will be established in favor of these missions, to wit: "That the agent and the missionary or teacher, may work in unison, for the welfare of the people under their charge and care."

In Montana Territory, I commenced the missionary work thirty years ago. All the missions and missionary visits to the various tribes of that extensive territory, have been attended exclusively by Catholic clergymen.

In the Flathead agency, we have two regular mission establishments. One of these is among the Flatheads, in Bitter Root Valley. The total number of these Indians is about 450 — all Catholics. The agent, Mr. Jones, is well liked, and merits the confidence, both of the Indians and missionaries. The Indians possess some very good farms and are fencing in considerably. It is hoped the treaties between Governor Stevens and the Flatheads in 1855, and in 1869 with General Sully, may be strictly carried out. Hitherto, these treaties have been rather disregarded, or have remained unfulfilled. Father D'Aste, one of the missionaries, writes to me: "As to the removal of the Flatheads from Bitter Root valley, I think it may be obtained without

great difficulty, by granting the Indians an immediate compensation. They have been often disappointed, and place no reliance whatever on promises of agents. Their removal to Jocko reservation, among the Upper Pend d'Oreilles or Kalispels, would best suit the Flatheads, having a common language, but precautions should be taken to prevent the whites from settling on the reservation."

The second mission of the Flathead agency is on the Jocko reservation (Montana Territory), for the Upper Pend d'Oreilles and numbers about 1,500 Indians, all Catholics, including some Kootenai Indians.

The Sisters of Charity have opened a manual-labor school for girls, on the reservation. The average number of teachers is twenty. The Government used to pay \$1,200 a year for the maintenance of the teachers and their pupils — for several years past this allowance has been withdrawn by previous agents.

In the Blackfoot agency (Montana Territory), the Catholic missionaries are the only ones who have paid missionary visits to the Indians. I commenced the work thirty-two years ago, which has been continued ever since. Over 2,000 Catholics are scattered among the various Blackfoot tribes. The Catholic agent, McCulloch, was removed when about commencing a school and church. He was succeeded in the agency by Jesse Armitage, strongly opposed to the Catholic religion, who preached to the Indians. As I learn from good authority his repute in Montana has been far from enviable.

In Idaho, I commenced the Cœur d'Alène mission over thirty years ago; it numbers over 400 Catholics and all are very exemplary. They are industrious and cultivate the soil, but lack instruments of agriculture. If the missionaries had the means at their disposal they would soon have flourishing schools, for the Indians express a great desire to have their children educated. Seltis, their chief, wrote an interesting letter on the subject a few months ago to the Sisters of Providence in Walla Walla.

The Nez Percés number a good many Catholics, but on account of the fact that the mission was first commenced by missionaries of the Presbyterian denomination, the agency was assigned to them.

At Colville the Kettle Falls Indians number 606 Catholics. The missionaries of said section attend the Spokane Indians, who number over 300 Catholics. The former agent at Colville, Mr. Harvey, though not a Catholic, aided the missionaries in their efforts to promote the welfare of the Indians and was highly popular and beloved by them. They beg that he may be reappointed. His successor among the Spokans gives no satisfaction, neither to the missionaries nor to the Indians. The chief, in his effort to prevent the spread of licentiousness among his people, was threatened with jail.

The Lower Kalispels number 403 Catholics; the Okinagans number 107 Catholics; the Snaiclist [?] number 229. The above are principally attended from Colville Mission. The Kootenais and some of their allied tribes, along the northwestern line of the British dominions are visited by Catholic missionaries and number several hundred converts. They are generally very tractable people and are very attentive to religious instruction.

In the Yakima reservation (Washington Territory) we have another mission attended by over 500 converts. Some fourteen small tribes are visited from that mission and come generally under the appellation of Yakimas among the whites: They are: the *Tyapenish*, *Wishgam*, *Stockamzin*, *Klikitash* (*Goilgoilpam*), *Uniapam*, *Uinnachapam*, *Sipam*, *Chamnapam*, *Nagchespam*, *Silapam*, *Winash*, *Pshuanapam*, *Kookchentla* and *Enteaktla*. They are about 4,000 in number.

In connection with the Yakima mission Father Giorda writes to me: "It is truly painful to state, that the present agent, Reverend Mr. Wilbur, will not allow the Catholic missionary to stay with his flock on the reservation. In consequence the priest is located outside the reservation,

and even Wilbur, though unsuccessfully, tried to order him from the place." The missionary, Father Caruana, is personally known to me and is highly estimable for zeal and talent in the noble cause to which he has devoted himself for years past.

It must be here noted that about twenty-nine years ago the Yakima mission was first undertaken by Catholic missionaries and remained under their control until the Indian war broke out in Oregon, during which the mission was burned by the militia, an act highly disapproved by the public at that time. Is not this a parallel case with the Nez Percé mission, which was restored to the Presbyterian missionaries because it was first commenced under their direction? Might not the same favor be asked from the Government in regard to the Yakima Catholic mission? The number of Catholic converts among the Yakimas exceeds by far those of Wilbur.

Though Dakota Territory, along the Missouri river, has been divided into several sections or agencies, bestowed on the Episcopalian missionaries, this, I suppose, will not prevent me or my companions from visiting my Catholic Indian brethren and friends to give them the consolation of their religion. Among the Yanktons many are Catholics, including their principal chief Pananniapapi. At Wetstone, Cheyenne and all the stations along the river most of the half-breeds are Catholics and under instruction, and numbers of Indians of the Sioux bands along the Missouri, in my yearly visits to them, have always been very attentive to religious instruction and have often asked for Catholic teachers.³

The Aricaras, Mandans and Grosventres have recently made application to be attended by us. From my acquaintance with them for many years past I feel inclined to attend to their request as soon as I shall be able, and in the hope it may meet with your approbation.

³ I have baptized several thousand of their children.—*Author's Note.*

Pardon me, Honorable Sir, in addressing this long letter to you for your kind attention, consideration and advice. For these thirty years past we have labored among the benighted tribes of the Far West with the only view of promoting the knowledge of God amongst them and to add to their temporal welfare. We have divided with them the little means placed at our disposal, and often have we joyfully shared their poverty and privations.

We hope and trust that, in accordance with the benevolent views and intentions of our worthy President, in the above-mentioned missions of Montana, Idaho and Washington Territories, "Agents and teachers might work in unison, in promoting to the best of their power, the welfare and happiness of the peoples confided to their care."

With sentiments of profound respect and esteem, I have the honor to be

Note by Father De Smet on letter-press copy.—I have given a copy of this letter to the commissioners of the Indian tribes. It has received no response from them nor from the Indian authorities in Washington.

CHAPTER V.

MISCELLANEOUS MISSIONARY NOTES.

Some remarks on Protestant apostles — A plea to the Council of Bishops — Promises made to the Indians — Appeals from the tribes — The soliciting of alms — Transportation of mission supplies — Black-feet repel a Presbyterian — Colonel Vaughan on Catholic missionaries — One Jesuit mission secured — Protestant tricks — The Potawatomies in Kansas — Routes to the mountains — A report to the Commissicner of Indian Affairs — Agents and missionaries — Victor, the Flathead chief — His invitation to the Pope — Failing health and remembrance of early days and old friends.

YOUR Paternity will observe that the Indian Territory, compared with others, is well filled with this sort of apostles; the reason is very simple.¹ These nations having exchanged their lands with the United States and the Government has made treaties with them containing stipulations providing for the education of their children. It is to enjoy the favors of these treaties, which give \$500 to \$600 per year to each minister, that such great crowds of these people are hastening thither. They have other great temporal advantages besides, for the Protestant propaganda of New York, Boston, etc., furnish them means to erect houses, schools and everything necessary. These gentlemen keep school for a small number of children, and speak now and then of the gospel to those who may sometimes come, from curiosity or by chance, to listen to them. Aside from this, they work hard — but for what? To fill their coffers and storehouses. They raise cattle in large numbers, get a fine crop and sell their produce at a high price. After spending

¹ From letter of 1839 to the Father-General, referring to a table from the American Almanac of 1838, showing seventy-four Protestant ministers among reservation tribes, and none among the others.

a few years in such a way as to amass a good competency, these gentlemen retire, disgusted apparently with their lack of success in the conversion of the Indians, and go elsewhere for the rest of their days to repose in peace and abundance.

Most Reverend Archbishop.²

As the Right Reverend Prelates of the United States are about to assemble in the first National Council in Baltimore, it appears to me a fitting occasion to address to your Grace a few lines on a subject which, in my humble opinion, is of the highest importance, since on it depends the salvation of thousands of our poor, bereft and benighted brethren of the wilderness. The spiritual destitution of these poor children of nature attracted the attention of the Right Reverend Bishops in one of the early councils; and their paternal solicitude thought fit to place several of the Indian missions under our care. To carry out an undertaking so highly recommended, the Fathers, at four different periods, made collections in several dioceses. These means, together with the yearly allowance made by the Association for the Propagation of the Faith at Lyons (continued up to last year but now suspended), as well as what we derived from our own private funds in Europe, enabled us to establish the following missions: First, amongst the Flatheads and Mountain Indians are two Fathers and four Brothers engaged; second, among the Pointed Hearts or Cœur d'Alènes are two Fathers and two Brothers; third, among the Kalispels or Ear-rings [Pend d'Oreilles] and Kettle Falls Indians on the Columbia are two Fathers and two Brothers; fourth, among the Carriers, Okinagans and Sioushwaps in New Caledonia are two Fathers and one Brother; fifth, in the Willamette valley at St. Francis Xavier's mission-house

² Addressed to Archbishop Eccleston of Baltimore. Dated St. Louis, April 26, 1849.

and other stations two Fathers and three Brothers. Besides the missions of the Far West three missions are in operation in the Indian Territory east of the Rocky Mountains, to wit: Among the Osages, the Potawatomies and the Miamis — the two first have each an academy directed by nuns, Ladies of the Sacred Heart and Sisters of Loretto, seven Fathers and six Brothers are engaged in these three establishments. These three establishments receive moneys from the education fund for the Indians — \$50 for every child (clothing and boarding included) being granted by Government to these various schools. The Government pays likewise for the erection of schools to a certain amount. If these Fathers had more means at their disposal they might increase their operations among the Indians to a greater advantage. A Father left St. Louis eight days ago to establish a mission among the Winnebagoes in the diocese of Monseigneur Loras — another Father and two Brothers are shortly to follow him. This mission will likewise draw from the education fund.

In addition to these already established missionaries will leave next May for the numerous tribes of the Upper Missouri. Here, as in Oregon, the missionaries must be left to their own private and scanty resources — the Sioux, the Poncas, the Mandans, the Aricaras, the Assiniboin, the Crows, the Blackfeet, the Snake Indians, etc., have asked repeatedly for Black-gowns. I have resided about ten years among the Indians. I have visited the tribes I here mention. I deem it a duty incumbent upon me to state, that I have the full conviction that our holy religion would be readily embraced by thousands of these, our benighted brethren, if timely assistance in missionaries and in temporal means were afforded them. Europe in its actual condition cannot help the missions, or at most very slightly. The holy work having been thus prosperously advanced hitherto and the demand for missionaries yet so frequently made by these poor Indians, I have taken the boldness, Most Reverend Archbishop, to address these few lines on this

important subject to your Grace, particularly at this favorable moment, when the spiritual fathers of the Church of the United States are about to assemble for the well-being of their spiritual children, spread far and wide over the land. The Indians at all times have been dear to their paternal hearts. Permit me, Most Reverend Archbishop, to observe, that in order to maintain the actual number of missionaries and missions and to establish new ones, wherever they may be most needed, it would be advisable to devise some plan of obtaining the necessary funds, either by establishing an association for the propagation of the faith among the Indians, or such, should it be thought expedient, as the wisdom of the Right Reverend Bishops may think most proper to adopt.

I am with profound respect and esteem, etc.

St. Louis, April 26, 1849.

St. Louis University, Feb. 2, 1850.

Very Reverend Father-General:

The approach of the months of April and May always reminds me of the promises that I have made to the Blackfeet and Crows, and some two years ago, as well, to the Poncas and the numerous tribes of the Sioux. This year again (1849) at various times, these poor unhappy tribes have gotten word to me of the pain they feel at having their hopes frustrated and their ardent desire of at least an early accomplishment. On the other hand, your Paternity is but too well aware how poor in subjects is the vice-province of Missouri, and how impossible it is for it to furnish the missions, when it has barely sufficient for itself. It is therefore men that we need. You know better than I, Very Reverend Father, what their qualities should be; but as I

am somewhat acquainted with the ground, I will take the liberty of pointing out a few. A fair judgment and a firm will to suffer much, though without gaining much ground, since, in the new lands which it is proposed to evangelize, the obstacles are greater and more numerous than among the nations on the west of the Rocky Mountains. It is not a conquest but a painful labor — many sufferings, few consolations. If you had at your disposal any subjects whom such a prospect might terrify, we might still keep them for our colleges and send out some of our men who are able to endure such fatigues.

Your Paternity, in writing me on the 29th of August last, had the kindness to inquire regarding the state of my health. I am well, thanks be to God. I suffer but little from my rheumatism of late, and I feel fit to undertake and endure afresh all the privations connected with such expeditions. A sign from your Paternity will make me take incontinent the road to the plains of the West, where so many thousands of souls are groaning under the empire of Satan. The hope of baptizing so many thousands of poor little children, and of preparing for death so many poor old people, whose dispositions are generally admirable, inspire me with the necessary courage to return to a post which I have always regretted.

The establishment of missions seems so much the more urgent to-day, when the Mormons (a sect of fanatics) and the French socialists under the lead of Cabet are proposing to go and form new States in the midst of the great desert. The Mormons are there already, 50,000 to 60,000 in number. Cabet is negotiating at this moment to go and occupy a large territory east of the Rocky Mountains. The poor simple savages will be their dupes, unless we forestall them and implant as much as possible the truths of our holy religion in their hearts.

St. Louis University, Sept. 19, 1852.

Right Reverend Doctor MIÈGE, S. J., *St. Mary's Potawatomi Mission*:

Right Reverend and Dear Father.—I hope you will have received my letter of the 17th ultimo, and we are expecting your answer, on which depends the sending of good Father Van Hulst. He is detained in St. Joseph's College, where he is to give a retreat to the clergy of Kentucky. It has been promised to give another to the seminarians in Carondelet, Mo., so that he might be ready to leave here toward the end of October, together with a good brother. Let us know your wish in due time. Your long-lost trunk, as you may have been told already, has been recovered. It was received a few days ago in St. Louis and placed in charge of Mr. Duncan MacDorvell of Weston, who will forward it to St. Mary's in one of his wagons. The cape you borrowed at St. Xavier's College, Cincinnati, has been returned; they missed it greatly. You will find in the trunk an instrument for Brother De Vriend, a gift from Cincinnati; some papers belonging to Father Duerinck; several late numbers of the *Civiltà Cattolica*, and Dr. Bragg's mus-tang liniment with the prescriptions, said to be very good and commendable.

As the Father of the Indian tribes west of the Rocky Mountains, I must acquaint you with the letters I have received from the upper country, all speaking most favorably of the dispositions of your far-distant children and of their anxiety to be instructed. Mr. Meldrum, the Crow interpreter, and considered as a chief in the nation, having resided over thirty years in their midst and having become fully identified with them, writes as follows: "The Crows speak of you frequently and are anxious to be baptized and to become Christians. I consider them candid and we frequently converse on the subject."

Zephyr [Rencontre], the great Sioux interpreter, in the name of the different bands of Sioux Indians, numbering

thousands, begs most earnestly, and urges the arrival of missionaries among that powerful nation: "Remember," says he, "the holy waters of baptism have flowed on the foreheads of hundreds of our children." Several other letters from the gentlemen of the American Fur Company speak to the same effect and in equally strong terms in favor of missions among the Sioux.

The great chief of the Assiniboin nation sent me a lengthy and beautiful speech, in which he chiefly aims to urge our arrival amongst them, promising withal, "that should means be wanting, if he has it in his power, a portion of the annuities due the Assiniboins shall be set apart for that purpose." "I am convinced," he adds, "that buffalo are getting scarcer, and if my people do not learn something and get the knowledge of the word of the Great Spirit, they will vanish with their game and disappear from the face of the earth. I am getting old, and would like to see your good works commence before I die. I shall then die contented. My people wish you to come and invite you with all speed. I know you wish the ignorant Indian well, and hope you will act up to our expectations, and think about us and how we are situated."

Right Reverend and Dear Father in Christ, in giving you these extracts, I am performing a duty. I have endeavored by word of mouth to explain to you the forlorn and unhappy situation of these poor people and how ardently thousands among them are desirous to receive instruction. You know my own personal feelings on the subject; "*non recuso laborem*," if, perchance, I am not judged unfit to labor in so holy an undertaking. I believe ample means could be obtained. The Association of Lyons would, no doubt, yearly contribute toward it. The Government, as General Mitchell assured me, would make a grant out of the yearly annuities, and the American Fur Company and all the whites in the Indian country can and are willing to contribute. It is indeed high time to think seriously about this affair, for ere long Protestants will take it in hand and crush the good

dispositions of the Indians and trample under their foot the scattered seeds sown in that benighted region.

We are all well, I recommend myself, etc.

Dear Sir.³—After many journeys in the deserts of North America I am at last in my native land, happy to be able to express to the benefactors of the poor Indian all the gratitude of the missionaries.

Since my last departure from Belgium I have traveled prairies where no mission had ever been established — indeed, where no European probably had ever been.

We ascended the Missouri for about 730 leagues, and crossed a plateau of over 100 on the upland that separates the waters of the Yellowstone from those of the Missouri. From the Yellowstone we proceeded southwest marching about 300 leagues to the Black Hills and Wolf Mountains, spurs of the Rocky Mountains. We left these hills at the great road leading from the Rocky Mountains to California.

On the 2d of September, 1851, we were on this highway trodden by the whites hastening these latter years to the gold mines. The road is fine, broad, and perhaps the longest in the world. On the track of the emigrant caravans you can travel easily from the frontier settlements to the Pacific. This immense avenue is like a barn-floor swept by the winds. No blade of grass springs up, so unceasingly is it trodden by the feet of thousands of Americans and Europeans hastening to California. Our Indians, who had seen only pathless wastes, crossed at most by a hunter's trail, thought, on beholding it, that the whole nation of the whites had passed over it, and that the land of the sunrise must be depopulated. They could hardly believe me when I told

³ Letter I, Second Series, *Western Missions and Missionaries*. To the Chevalier DIEUDONNÉ STAS, *Editor of the Journal de Bruxelles*, Brussels, June 30, 1853.

them that the multitudes who had gone were scarcely missed.

Providence has supported my feeble courage, guided my steps, fructified the seed of the gospel in lands which had not yet received them. After traveling many hundred leagues I saw what good could be done among these wandering tribes, always at war, without consolation in misery, because they scarcely know of the hopes of eternity. With the grace of God I hope to return next spring with Bishop Miège, the vicar-apostolic. We will be able to found missions for those nomad tribes on a soil fertile enough to support them, and thus removing occasion of war, let civilization, with the light of the faith, dawn on these wastes.

The limits of a journal do not permit me to enter into details on this expedition to the Great Desert, on which I have yet published but one letter; but I intend to publish more in the *Précis Historiques*, published by Reverend E. Terwecoren, at the College of the Society of Jesus, Brussels. Besides a notice on the Mormons, a new sect, dating from 1826, but threatening to play in America the part of the Moslem in Asia, I am preparing notes to develop to Europeans the almost unknown state of religion in that vast portion of the world, and to leave authentic documents on the rising church of the wilderness. I will vary these historical details with notes, written in the desert, on geology, zoology, botany, the manners, religion, and language of the Indians.

This will show what civilized Europeans are too apt to forget, that Catholicity, by the very force of her missions, contributes to the civilization of nations and the development of science. The Government of the United States knows it and encourages our labors. The good to be accomplished is in every respect immense. The Catholics and recent converts need priests to preserve the faith, the pagans to learn the good tidings of the gospel. The small number of ministers of the Lord there does not suffice for the 4,000,000 Catholics, and for all the Indians who desire

ardently the visit of a Black-robe, to instruct and baptize them. I have come to Europe to appeal to generous hearts.

I will express one more desire, and express it frankly. I come, too, to solicit alms. I am not unaware that Belgium is constantly visited by missionaries from America, the Indies, and the East. I am conscious that the benevolent can scarcely satisfy these repeated solicitations. But Europeans cannot conceive the immense want of succors experienced in these countries, to prevent defections, convert the heathen, form missionaries, establish schools, build churches, etc.

Consent, Sir, to contribute by your estimable paper, which has elicited so many generous works, to make known this two-fold object of my coming to Europe, where I shall probably remain till the close of September.

Your obedient servant, etc.

St. Louis University, Jan. 12, 1855.

W. A. SMETS, Esq., *Utica, N. Y.*:

Dear Friend.— * * * *

I have been, thank God, in the enjoyment of good health ever since I had the pleasure of seeing you in New York. My heart, I must acknowledge, remains still with the Indians. I frequently receive moving messages from them in which they urge my return. I am happy that even here I can be of some service to them, at least temporally, by providing our missionaries with all the necessary articles they may stand in need of to carry on the good work among the various tribes they are evangelizing. Our number being proportionably small in St. Louis I have not been able hitherto to be replaced in the station I now hold. However, like the commodore of old, "I do not give up the ship," and I fervently pray, if it be God's will, to be allowed to pass the remainder of my days in the Far West, with the poor, abandoned and much-abused children of nature. Thousands

still roam over the plains and in their native forests without expectations for the future and without spiritual consolation and comfort.

Please present my best respects to all, etc.

St. Louis University, April 9, 1856.

Colonel ALFRED CUMMINGS, *Superintendent of Indian Affairs, St. Louis, Mo.:*

Honorable Sir.— I have taken the liberty of addressing to you, as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in St. Louis, a few lines regarding the Indians, in whose welfare I have seen you invariably manifest so much devotedness and fatherly care. Indeed, I feel the more assured in taking this liberty from having experienced on several occasions the kind assistance which you have always shown yourself ready to give to our missionaries, who labor in the midst of this poor benighted people in order to promote their happiness.

The missions in the Rocky Mountains need no word of praise at my hands. The Honorable Governor Stevens and the gentlemen of his party, in their report to the Government, speak of these missions in the most flattering terms. They say that these tribes are by far the best and most peaceable Indians of the great desert; and in their reports promise to promote the interests of these tribes with their Great Father in Washington. You have yourself, no doubt, witnessed the happy influence which our missionaries exercise over the minds of these rude, uncivilized Indians. For years they have shown a great predilection in our favor and have constantly expressed a wish and desire to see us in their midst. Major Culbertson knows well their feelings in this regard. In the course of the year I feel confident we may be enabled to gratify [them] in a matter so dear to their hearts.

Some time ago I received a catalogue of goods ordered by the Reverend Adrien Hoeken, one of the missionaries who attend to the united bands of the Flatheads, Kalispels, Flatbows and Kootenais, settled at present in the vicinity of the great Flathead lake. The settlement is not far distant from Fort Benton and there is a good wagon road to it. The goods ordered will probably cost about \$1,000. Of this amount, however, I regret that it is not in my power to furnish more than \$300. For want of means, therefore, I find myself necessitated to select only those articles which are most needed for the mission. I would feel very grateful indeed should you secure the permission of sending these goods to Fort Benton along with those designed to be sent by the Government to the upper Indian tribes. Had the idea occurred to me, while in Washington City, I would have applied for this permission to the Honorable Mr. McClelland, Secretary of the Interior, and to the Honorable Mr. Manypenny, Commissioner of Indian Affairs. We are under the greatest obligations to these gentlemen for their constant attention and kindness in whatever regards the missions under our care.

With the greatest respect and esteem, I remain, etc.

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⁴In February of last year the Government made us very advantageous offers for the erection of one or several establishments among the Blackfeet or other tribes. Not receiving any positive response from the superiors, some Calvinists or Presbyterians later accepted the Government's proposition, and a minister, attracted by the money, even started off for the distant mission with his wife and children. These last were the proof for the Indians that the minister did not belong to the genuine Black-robbs, and so they would

⁴ Extract from letter in French to Father-General, June, 1857.

not receive him nor have anything to do with him, and that gentleman and his suite lost no time in getting back to the States.

Below is the translation [into French] of the letter written me lately by Colonel Vaughan, the Government agent. It is dated May 20th. The colonel is a Protestant.

“Reverend and Dear Sir.—Before my departure for the Blackfoot territory, where I have been appointed agent by the Government, I take the liberty of writing you upon a subject of vital importance to the welfare of the Indians intrusted to me, and to the progress of civilization. You are aware that I have filled the office of agent of the United States Government among the Indians for fifteen years. During all this time I have noticed with the greatest interest that the efforts made by good Christians to establish missions and schools, to instruct the Indians in spiritual and temporal matters, have contributed the most to civilizing and pacifying them. Furthermore, I take pleasure in testifying that the Catholic Church, to which you belong, has everywhere obtained the most pre-eminent success. The Catholic missionaries have always succeeded in gaining the Indians’ hearts, in controlling their brutal outbreaks and ameliorating their condition in every respect.

“Being fully convinced of this, the object of this letter is to obtain your intercession with your superiors for the formation of a mission among the Blackfeet. Such a mission I am sure would advance the interests of the Government and those of the Indians at the same time.

“You know also that the Government’s treaty with these Indians on Judith river in the Blackfoot territory makes ample provision for the support of the establishment by yearly money payments. Hoping that my request may be successful, I have the honor to be, etc.,

“ALFRED VAUGHAN.”

St. Louis University, April 1, 1858.

Reverend F. CONGIATO, S. J.

P. C.:

Reverend Dear Father.— I received your kind letter with the inclosed of Father Ménétrey — I sincerely thank your Reverence for all the kindness you express in it. I have only a few minutes to write you and on a subject highly important to the Rocky Mountain missions. I just received a letter from Lieutenant Mullan, a Catholic and very much in favor of our Indian missions. He tells me “I have seen the chairman of the Indian Committee and he says that all the Indian treaties made by Governor Stevens are to be confirmed, and that in these treaties the most ample provision has been made for schools, farms, utensils, etc. All of which, in the mountains, will be under the eye of the Jesuits. They are going to establish a farm and manual-labor school on Sun River, for which there will be near \$45,000, and from all appearances Father Hoeken will have all to do with it, if he will avail himself of it!” I begged the lieutenant to call on Father Accolti in San Francisco and to let you know immediately of the whole of this affair. Father Hoeken should be authorized to accept; the Blackfeet and Crow Indians would be thus secured to the Catholic cause. He has all jurisdiction from Bishop Miège on this side of the mountains. I hope my letter on this subject will have reached him long ago.

Should this affair be neglected, Protestants will try immediately to obtain all the advantages which the Government now offers so abundantly for the progressing of those poor missions. Orders came to St. Louis last evening from Washington to send up by the first boats to the Blackfoot country oxen, cows, plows and other farming utensils, all to be placed in the hands of the Fathers, should the thing be accepted. All the agents in that region are also in our favor. Some three months ago I wrote to his Paternity in favor of the new missions east of the Rocky Mountains. I hope to obtain a favorable answer. I will

try all [I can] that one or two Fathers and a few Brothers might be sent on that expedition. It will at once secure the Indians on the western side. Father Hoeken being on the ground and in the neighborhood of the Blackfeet should be allowed at once to proceed in this glorious undertaking. Lieutenant John Mullan can tell you more about it. Please see him and confer with him on the subject; or should you be unable, Reverend Father Paresce will take, no doubt, all the interest in this great offer from Government, and which will make the missions on both sides altogether independent in a temporal view.

I am trying my best at present to obtain some little things in St. Louis for the missions in the mountains, which I will forward by the first boats in the course of the present month. I will probably accompany one of the boats and pay a visit to the Indian tribes of the Plains. Several of the officers of the army have asked me to accompany the expedition to Utah. Should the application come from headquarters, I will accept. The Provincial, who is now absent, has already granted permission.

Remember me to all the Fathers in California and pray for me, etc.

P. S.—Excuse the great hurry in which this has been written. I should have added the following, from the letter of Lieutenant Mullan: “Suffice it for me to say that the day is nigh at hand when we shall be enabled to see carried out our most sanguine wishes and hopes regarding these many little bands of Indians in the mountains,” etc.

St. Louis University, Feb. 24, 1862.

Bishop TIMON:

Right Reverend Bishop.—I returned to St. Louis on the 22d instant. Your kind favor of the 12th was handed me and agreeably to your request I answer it. The number of

Catholic Indians in Kansas among the Osages and Potawatomies, etc., is approximately, I should think, not far below 4,000. I have written to the Superior of the missions to be correctly informed on the subject and shall forward his answer to your Lordship when received. The *Catholic Magazine*, Baltimore, of 1849-50, edited by the Very Reverend C. White, D. D., published a number of letters of Reverend Fathers Bax and Gailland, missionaries among the Osage and Potawotami Indians, giving detailed accounts of their labors and of their success. Since about fifteen years, the agents of the Government in their yearly published accounts, though Protestants, have always reported most favorably and commendably of the Catholic missions in Kansas. The piety, fidelity and zeal in the St. Mary's Potawatomi mission have always been conspicuous among a great number of the Christian Indians. Since Kansas has become a State and since civilization has crept in and with it vice and drunkenness and all mischief, there is great danger for the existence and continuation of those missions; and "the Protestant trick of damning by faint praise," as your Lordship says, may be again renewed on this occasion. "It is easy to show that Protestant unscrupulous cunning worked whatever failure there was." As far as my own experience has gone in regard to Protestant missions, east and west of the Rocky Mountains, they have proved a complete failure. Nothing remains of their missions in Oregon and Washington Territory but rich and extensive tracts of lands, enriching the *ci-devant* missionaries, their better halves and their little ones. 0 is their number of converts, and mighty little do they care.

I must make a rough guess at the number of Christian Indians west of the Rocky Mountains. Including all that has been done under the Right Reverend Bishops and by the secular clergy, by the Oblate Fathers and by the Jesuits, over 6,000 must have been regenerated in the holy waters of baptism. The Cœur d'Alène mission numbers between 600 and 700 souls. The Pend d'Oreille and Kalispel mis-

sion numbers from 1,200 to 1,500. The Flathead tribe contains about 600; the Kootenai tribe number about 1,000, nearly all baptized, and though for sixteen years since their baptism without a resident missionary, the zeal and fervor of the Kootenai Indians as true Christians has never abated. Their Christian simplicity, their sincere piety, their charity and their love of justice, are admired by all who frequent the mountains.

This day, I take the liberty to forward to your Lordship *Les Missions de l'Orégon*. Letters Nos. III, XVII, XX, XXII, XXXII and others may contain some edifying points. Governor Stevens of Oregon, in his report to the Government, published in 1854-55, upon his explorations and surveys for a railroad route to the Pacific ocean, speaks most highly and favorably of our Rocky Mountain missions, of the Flatheads, Kalispels, Pend d'Oreilles, Cœur d'Alènes and Kootenais.

These missions are all in great danger. The rich mines are now greatly attracting attention and thousands of whites will soon be on the move to take possession of them. In my *Oregon Missions*, published in 1847, page 125, I said: "Poor, unfortunate Indians! They trample on treasures unconscious of their wealth. They would tremble, indeed, could they learn the history of those numerous and ill-fated tribes (in South America, etc.) that have been swept from their land to make place for Christians who have made the poor Indians the victims of their rapacity." Unhappy times, I am afraid, may befall the Indians of the mountains before long. Two years ago, whilst I was with the army in Oregon, the transportation of liquor toward the newly-discovered mines of Colville on the Columbia was immense and the baneful effects on the poor, simple savage were soon felt.

The reports which I receive now and then from our Fathers east and west of the mountains are satisfactory and consoling. The improvements which they make at their respective stations are slow, but yet they have been unin-

interrupted. The missionaries are at present more comfortably lodged than they were formerly; their arduous labors, however, allow them but little time to enjoy the sweets of a convenient dwelling. The churches too are now more commodious and more substantially built, so that the severity of winter is less dreaded. Their fare is not always of the most delicate kind, but it is nourishing, abundant and wholesome. The Indians are in general good and tractable and after baptism often zealous and fervent; yet their early habits and their roving disposition make it difficult, if not impossible, to accustom them to the manners of a more civilized life. Their nature should, perhaps, be less blamed for this than the circumstances of their location.

The Indian, like every other being, stands in need of food to support life and of raiment to protect him against the inclemency of the weather. If these accessories cannot be found in the neighborhood, he is obliged to go in search of them elsewhere; and until by some means or other this obstacle is removed, the same difficulties will continue to exist and produce the same baneful results; for it can easily be imagined that it is impossible for the missionaries to maintain at their own expense whole tribes of Indians. Consequently they must see their flocks scattered and exposed to the ravenousness of the wolves without enjoying the benefit of that spiritual aid so necessary to a Christian's life.

Our endeavors, however, have certainly not been fruitless. The great number of souls that are every year cleansed in the regenerating waters of baptism; the sick who are attended in their dying hour and strengthened with the holy sacraments for their journey to the other life, and finally the hardships and destitution of the missionaries endured for the love of him who laid down his life for his brethren: all this, I say, is fruit enough (whatever Protestants may say of the "no permanent result of Catholic missions") and prepares the missionaries, if not for a reward in this life, for imperishable laurels in the next world.

Mr. John G. Shea of New York intends to publish shortly a little biography of the life and death of a holy Cœur d'Alène woman, with several edifying letters on the mission Indians of the Rocky Mountains. If applied to by your Lordship, he might give a great deal of information such as you may require.

With sentiments of profound respect and esteem, I have the honor to remain, etc.

St. Mary's Mission, August 30, 1866.⁵

Reverend Father:

On my return from my mission among the Indians of the plains, upon the upper Missouri, or in the new Territories of Nebraska and Montana, I have visited the Mission of St. Mary among the Potawatomes. I have found my dear brothers in Jesus Christ in good health. There are four Fathers and ten Brothers of them. The mission stretches several hundred miles westward, and they water this vast vineyard of the Lord with their sweat, and cultivate it with the greatest zeal and with much success. Every year thousands of emigrants are coming and settling in this fertile and beautiful region. In the last four years, Reverend Father Dumortier has established twenty-four stations among them, and built four stone churches. He makes regular visits over a distance of 150 miles every six weeks. The flourishing condition in which I have found the two Indian schools has filled me with consolation and joy. That for boys is under the care of the Brothers and contains 150 boarders, that for girls is under the maternal care of the respectable Ladies of the Sacred Heart and contains over 100 boarders. They are considered the two model schools of the State of Kansas. I propose to give you here an idea of the present position of St. Mary's and

⁵ From the French of the Linton Album, p. 99.

of the salutary influence which it continues to exert in the land under the new *régime* which governs it.

St. Mary's does not offer any very great news items. It continues its little march, without making much noise; tranquil amid the rapid changes at work, both within itself and among the surrounding population. The Potawatomies, who profess Christianity, are faithful to their religious duties — their assiduity at the divine office is the admiration of all who know them. They take particular pains with the instruction of youth; the two schools are accordingly very flourishing. Last year, the Vice-President of the United States, Mr. Foster, and Senator Doolittle, honored them with their presence; examined diligently the greater part of the pupils, and sent to Washington a testimonial which is no less the faithful expression of an upright and magnanimous heart, than it is glorious for the Catholics. The Americans are so well aware of the value of the religious education that we give young people, that they constantly importune the directors of the schools for the admission of their children. All the places are taken, and if the houses were doubled they would be filled at once.

The use of liquor, which is generally the curse of the Indian tribes, seems to moderate in proportion to the ease with which it can be obtained. In the last three or four years no noteworthy crimes have been committed among them. A good number of families are living in easy circumstances — their farms and dwellings may be compared with those of the Americans around them. The railroad which is in a few years to unite the States of the Orient to those of the Occident, crosses the Potawatomie territory. It brings them several great advantages; it raises the price of land, facilitates the exchange of products and furnishes openings for remunerative work to the industrious young men. Many American and European colonists are settling among the mission Indians. Some marry their daughters, some buy their surplus lands. Some have built close to the mission, attracted principally by the vicinity of the church

and schools. St. Mary's, as I have already observed, is the centre of a vast field of missionary operations; their apostolic labors, among the Catholics, Indian and white, extend upward of 150 miles from the residence.

Divine Providence seems to have shown itself always favorable to the Mission of St. Mary, especially amid the tempests which have seemed to threaten its existence. Lately, at the most critical moment perhaps in the nation's history, it has given the establishment, in the person of their excellent agent, Mr. Palmer, not only a sincere friend but also a wise and devoted protector. By means of his care, the nation has just concluded a treaty with the Government which seems to confirm the residence of the Potawatomies in this country. By the provisions of this treaty, each Indian has received his portion of land. Those who wish to become citizens and are found worthy by a commission established for the purpose, may do so immediately—minors are obliged to wait until they are twenty-one—meanwhile they are prohibited from selling their lands, and have a right to the school privileges. Those who are of age, but who, either from misbehavior or from lack of industry, are deemed unworthy to be citizens, are obliged to wait some time and to deserve this honor by industrious life and irreproachable conduct. May the Immaculate Virgin, whom the Potawatomies have chosen for patroness, continue her puissant aid to them, amid the difficulties and dangers to which they are constantly exposed on the part of their enemies.

Accept my most humble respects and believe me in union of your holy sacrifices and prayers,

University of St. Louis, Nov. 11, 1866.

My Reverend and Dear Father:

I received yesterday your kind letter of the 4th of this month. I think the holy providence of the Lord, who sent

three more missionaries to this immense portion of his vineyard, where the needs are indeed great and where you will be received with open arms by our dear brothers in Christ.

You ask me for information upon the continuation of my voyage to the Rocky Mountains. I will give you here briefly the details of my last two long voyages to those remote missions :

In 1863 I tried to return to Benton by steamer with a large cargo for the missions in the mountains, at the special desire of our dear missionaries in these places. The water in the upper part of the Missouri was low this year and the steamer was obliged to discharge all her cargo and put the passengers off in a forest about 300 miles from Benton. An express was sent to Benton and I wrote to the Reverend Fathers Giorda and Imoda, then in the mission of St. Peter among the Blackfeet, to come and take care of the cargo and the charge of two Italian Brothers. We waited about three weeks for a response amidst the greatest dangers from savage bands, enemies of the whites. Every day we were on the alert and in an attack from a large number of Sioux, two of our men were severely injured.

I finally received a response from our reverend and dear Fathers, who announced to me that it was an impossibility to send me help. I was obliged then to do my best to get the effects to them and to accompany the two good Brothers to the mission of St. Peter.

The season advancing, and not wishing to return by way of the Missouri because of the great dangers from the Indians, I was obliged to take the sea voyage of the Pacific, pass the Isthmus of Panama and return by way of New York to St. Louis.

My journey this year, as far as the stage of water is concerned, was more favorable. We reached Benton where I hoped to find Father Giorda or some one of the Fathers to take care of a precious cargo that I had made great ef-

forts to procure for them. A new war of the Blackfeet against the whites had compelled the missionaries of St. Peter to abandon that mission and repair to the mission of St. Ignatius, on the west slope of the Rocky Mountains 200 miles distant. They told me the circumstances and the condition of the country in which they were and stated that it was impossible for them to take possession of the effects and begged me to dispose of the cargo at the house of some inhabitant of Benton. The cargo contained objects precious to the churches and were for the use of the Indian missions. Altogether their value amounted to a large sum of money. I have never yet received the least news whether these objects have reached their destination.

I enter into these details to give you the uncertainties of the route of the Missouri for reaching Benton and the missions in the mountains.

I shall not return to Benton next spring. If the good Lord will grant me health, and with the permission of my superiors, I will make a visit among the Yanktons, a tribe of 3,000 Indians, belonging to the Sioux nation, which is very numerous. They are on this side of the mountains about 1,800 miles from Benton.

As to the price of passage upon the steamers from St. Louis to Benton, it amounts to \$300 for each passenger; and for all that he brings beyond fifty pounds he pays from fifteen to twenty cents per pound.

Until this year I have always had my passage with my effects *gratis* upon the steamers of the Fur Company of St. Louis. This company is to-day dissolved and it is, consequently, very doubtful if I shall meet again with such a favor inasmuch as the companies are constituted principally of Protestants. I cannot, at this time, give you the least assurance that there will be a diminution in the price, nor do I yet know the names of the steamers that propose to risk the voyage to Benton the coming spring (1867).

The voyage from New York to Idaho and Montana, by way of Panama, San Francisco and by the Columbia river,

is long, but it is easier and more sure and is made in less time than by the Missouri river. The voyage by way of the Missouri, if made favorably and without the least obstacle, takes ordinarily three months. By way of the Pacific it takes from New York to Panama ordinarily nine days; from there to San Francisco, twelve days; from San Francisco to Vancouver, on the Columbia river, four days; from Vancouver to Walla Walla, three to four days; from Walla Walla to the Mission of the Sacred Heart among the Cœur d'Alènes, six days. If I have been well informed on the subject of this journey, they grant a diminution in price upon the steamer from San Francisco to Walla Walla. The Reverend Fathers Accolti or Congiato will be able to give you information upon this point.

* * * * *

I recommend to your holy sacrifices and prayers the new mission which I hope to be able to establish next spring immediately after the opening of navigation of the Missouri. My mission among these Indian tribes last summer has been for me a source of consolation. I visited principally the Yanktons, belonging to the Sioux nation, the Minnetarees, the Aricaras, the Mandans and the Assiniboins. I had the happiness to regenerate in the holy waters of baptism over 500 little children and a good number of adults, among the latter Pananniapapi, head chief of the tribe of the Yanktons, composed of 450 lodges or nearly 3,000 souls. He asked urgently that a mission be permanently established among them. Pray the Lord to grant a good personnel and the necessary funds for this new enterprise.

The country of the Yanktons is the key to the entrance of the numerous Sioux nations which number from 35,000 to 40,000 souls.

In union with our holy sacrifices and prayers, I have the honor to be, etc.

St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo., September, 1867.

Honorable Sir:

I hope my second letter from Sioux City in July last has been received. I arrived in St. Louis on the 13th ultimo, after an absence of four months. At Leavenworth (12th ultimo) I had the honor to meet the Peace Commissioners and hold a conference with them, and was kindly requested by all the honorable members to accompany the expedition. Sickness has prevented me of accomplishing the request and fulfilling my promise.

At my return to health, I avail myself of the first opportunity to write to you and to render my account of expenses and outlays of my visit among the Indian tribes of the Missouri, as recommended in the commission I received from the Department of the Interior on the 2d of March of the present year.

When in Washington last February I received from the department the sum of \$2,500 to defray my necessary expenses and outlays for the men who accompanied me on the expedition. I herewith account for the money I have expended on my trip, to the best of my knowledge and recollection; the sum amounts to \$1,576.70. This balance in favor of the Department of the Interior I am ready to refund upon the presentation of the order I shall receive.

All the recommendations I received, in my commission from the Honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs, I have tried to carry out faithfully and to the best of my power and I trust may prove available to the Indian tribes I have visited.

Allow me to add a few lines on my late expedition among the Indians of the Upper Missouri, at Yankton agency and its vicinity. I met most of the Indians of the Yankton tribe, numbering about 2,500. They are all true friends of the whites. They are in a prosperous condition with regard to agriculture. The chiefs begged me to establish schools amongst them, for which a proper yearly outlay

will have to be established before it can be undertaken. At Fort Thompson I found over 100 lodges encamped, composed of Brûlés, Yanktonnais and Two Kettles. At old Fort Sully, over 200 lodges were encamped, composed principally of Blackfeet-Sioux, Two Kettles, Brûlés, Yanktonnais, Yanktons, Sans-arcs, Minniconjous and Ogallalas. At Fort Rice over 500 lodges awaited the arrival of Generals Sully and Parker and myself. The remainder of the tribe of Yanktonnais were here assembled, together with bands of Têtes-coupées, Hunkpapas and Blackfeet-Sioux. At Berthold we met the three united and friendly bands of Aricaras, Grosventres [of the Missouri] and Mandans, who have always remained faithful and have strictly adhered to the Laramie Treaty, held in 1851. At Buford we met a good number of chiefs and braves, belonging to various bands of Assiniboins.

General Sully did me the favor to communicate to me his reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs before he forwarded them and I concur in every statement he has made concerning our intercourse with the various tribes of Indians. The Indians in all their speeches and in the private conversations I held with the chiefs who frequently visited me possessed friendly dispositions toward the whites and a strong determination to keep aloof from the war bands. Their complaints have been faithfully noted down for transmission to the Department of the Interior. It is my candid opinion, should due regard be paid to the just complaints of the Indians, should their annuities be delivered in due and proper time, and implements of agriculture be supplied to them and should they be dealt with honestly and kindly by agents and other persons in the employ of the Government, the bands above mentioned will be kept friendly to the whites, and the warrior bands in the Upper Missouri plains will gradually and soon join the peaceable tribes.

As to placing them on one or two great reservations, patience, on the part of the Government will be necessary.

It must be the work of time, or at least of a few years. The Indians we met were disposed, together with their agents, to select suitable reserves for farming on their own ground or country they claim. A good number of families among each band showed favorable dispositions to go to work at once. Should their efforts prove successful, in the first, second and third years, the example of the working class will then be followed by the greatest number or the entire tribe, and once understanding the great advantages of agriculture and the raising of stock and subsisting and tasting of the fruits of their labor, they might later be more easily induced to go on one or two great reservations, in imitation of the Choctaws, Cherokees, etc.

From old Fort Sully I sent out several Indian expresses to the hostile bands to come and see me. Over 100 warriors of the Hunkpapas (a great war band) came to Fort Rice and awaited the arrival of Generals Sully and Parker and myself during ten days. Their families being in want of provisions, they returned to the plains for their buffalo hunt. They left word for me, in particular, with Messrs. Galpin and La Framboise (interpreters) that they were very anxious to confer with me, and showed, as reported by the two gentlemen, strong dispositions toward peace.

Should my health permit it is my intention and desire to return to the Upper Missouri country early next spring and to visit principally the war-parties. I shall do my best to carry out the views of the Government in regard to the Indian tribes and to dispose these deluded and unhappy people to measures of peace with the whites. To promote my purpose and intention, a simple permit, on the part of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, would be very acceptable to me.

With sentiments of the highest consideration of respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, etc.

*To the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D. C.*

St. Louis University, Sept. 4, 1868.

Dear General:

I received your very interesting letter of the 14th ultimo and return you my sincere thanks for your kind remembrance of me. I am happy to learn that your dear family are in the enjoyment of excellent health. If your dear little daughters were to visit St. Louis they would be noticed with admiration, and all the mammas would wish for their children a climate like that of Fort Sully and its neighborhood.

A word on the "Cannon Ball" you launched from your headquarters. It has been rolling and rolling all over the country and was noticed in all the Catholic papers, both American and German. As I learn, the ball is now rollicking among my acquaintances in Belgium and Holland and by this time must have reached Rome. I must make you accountable and be grateful at the same time. The great praise you gave me was truly little merited on my part. The article has been extensively read and has been well received by all parties. No doubt it will do much good to the Catholic missions.

I dread the consequences of the new outbreak along the Platte and its tributaries and fear it may extend anew among the upper tribes of the Missouri and Yellowstone plains. I place, however, great reliance on the numerous friendly bands of Indians in the vicinity of Forts Sully and Rice. They have been always so well cared for and so well advised by their respective and fatherly commanders, I hope their example will be imitated and followed by their wilder brethren of the plains.

I read to-day in the *Missouri Republican*, that the Sioux in the upper Platte country have refused to join the Cheyennes and Arapahos in their actual depredations and murders against the whites.

General Sherman is still absent from St. Louis. At his return I shall lay all your reasons before him, regarding the

Indians in your district and around Fort Rice. Their going to Fort Randall cannot reasonably be expected. I think General Harney does understand this affair fully well and I hope will attend to it, if in his power. He had left St. Louis before I received your letter.

I hope, General, you will keep your promise of honoring me now and then with a letter. Your letters will be always most welcome. I shall continue to remember you in the holy sacrifice of the altar and all that is dear to you and daily offer up to the Lord your good desires and resolutions. Renew them often and always with a full confidence and reliance on the goodness, mercy and grace of our Lord and the powerful protection and assistance of the ever blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary, the refuge of all who invoke her in their need.

The same day your letter arrived I received one from our worthy friend, Captain Duffy. I was happy to learn that his lady and children are well. I intend, shortly, to write to him. I trust the package of books forwarded by Mr. Fox has reached him by this time. Two of the books I have inscribed to you.

Please present my best respects to Mrs. Stanley and to Captain Duffy and family.

Most respectfully, dear General, your humble and obedient servant,

Major-General D. S. STANLEY,
Fort Sully, Dakota.

St. Louis University, Nov. 18, 1870.

Hon. E. S. PARKER, *Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.:*

Honorable Sir.—I have been closely and intimately connected with the Potawatomi Mission in Kansas ever since

its existence, and was one of the founders of said mission, always taking the deepest interest in its success. I see from a recent paper that "but twelve or fifteen agents remain to be selected, and these will be named as soon as the various religious bodies consulted have presented their choice." Under the above consideration and under the newly-adopted method of the President of the United States in regard to the Indian agencies, to wit: "That there should be a good understanding between the acting agent and the missionary or teacher for the welfare of the Indians under their control," etc., I have been very particularly requested by the missionaries who superintend St. Mary's Mission among the Potawatomies in Kansas to propose to your kind consideration the nomination of Doctor Palmer for that station. Doctor Palmer, as agent, has always been very efficient and acceptable to the great majority of the Potawatomies and their missionaries. I doubt not his reappointment to the agency would be a source of great joy to them and accepted as a great favor.

With sentiments of profound respect and esteem, etc.

St. Louis University, Dec. 6, 1870.

Honorable E. S. PARKER, *Commissioner of Indian Affairs,*
Washington, D. C.:

Honorable Sir.—Pardon me the liberty I take in sending you some communications I have just received from my brethren in the Catholic missions west of the Rocky Mountains. Having been the founder of several of these missions, over thirty years ago, I take deep interest in their welfare.

In regard to the Pend d'Oreille and Flathead agency, the missionaries desire me to inform you that they are well pleased with the appointment of the actual agent, Mr. T. C. Jones, and express great hope that he may be continued in

his office for which he has all the requisite qualities, and in a religious view he exercises great influence on the minds of the Indians.

The Yakima Indians in Washington Territory have had an established Catholic mission for a number of years, and many of the Indians are members of the Church and desire the re-establishment of their old mission, and to receive the consolation of their religion and the instructions of the former teachers, the priests. I am informed that the actual agent, Wilbur, forbids the Catholic missionary "to set his foot on the Yakima reservation."

The Spokane Indians have been visited by our missionaries for a great number of years and are nearly all practical members of religion. It is most desirable for the welfare of these Indians that an agent in full harmony and sympathy with their missionaries might be appointed.

With sentiments of the highest esteem and respect, etc.

St. Louis University, Feb. 11, 1871.

Reverend Dear Father D'Aste:

I received your kind favor of the 20th ultimo. I remember the circumstances you allude to in your letter, "of making a show in an Indian dress in one of my visits to Paris" — a providential mark, as you express it, "of your future destiny; the evangelizing the poor Indians." I am much obliged to your Reverence for the news you give me concerning the Flatheads and the good and dear Fathers at the mission. I am very sensible to the kind remembrance you sent me in their name and daily pray that the Lord may prosper your holy undertaking for the welfare of the Indians. Please remember me to all and beg their prayers in my favor.

I have been called to Washington by the Secretary of the Interior where a great council has been held on Indian af-

fairs in general. I then learned that forty-three Indian stations were to be divided among different denominations in the various sections of the country inhabited by the Indians, of which only four are assigned to the Catholics, viz.: one in Dakota (the mission we intend to establish in the spring among the Sioux), one in New Mexico, another in Montana (Flathead) and a fourth in Idaho. *In the whole of this affair the Indians have not been consulted as to the religion they desired to belong to.* I have given all the information I could give concerning our missions in Montana and Idaho; but I had no statistics to present from any of the Fathers as to the number of Indians converted, the schools and the various Indian tribes visited and attended by our Fathers. I have frequently called for such accounts and I stand much in need of them to render myself useful to the missions. I hope the Fathers will forward them at their earliest opportunity. They ought to be written as presentable to the Government. Please inform Reverend Father Giorda on this important subject, that he may inform the Fathers at St. Mary's, at St. Ignatius, at the Sacred Heart at Colville, etc., naming all the tribes converted or under instruction and the localities they inhabit. Upon the information given the Government may and will modify its plan of christianizing and civilizing the Indians.

I am instructed to make the same request of the very Reverend Mr. Brouillet, Vicar-General at Walla Walla, and of the Archbishop and Bishop Blanchet in favor of their Indian missions, if they have any.

From what I understand in Washington, "it is the intention of Government to remove the Flathead Indians from the Bitter Root valley — *volens vel nolens.*" If *volens*, it would be a happy thing. I dare give no advice on the subject. Reverend Father Giorda must know what is best under existing circumstances. I think the Government is resolved. I have done what I could to obtain the approval of the name of Agent Jones by the Senators. McConley as agent of the Blackfeet did not pass the Senate. My en-

deavors to the contrary had no success, as we have no resident mission among the Blackfeet. The same in regard to the Crow Indians.

My health is not good. I thank your Reverence for your kind invitation to pay a visit to the Rocky Mountain missions. I would gladly perform the trip, if in my power to do it. I may be directed by my superiors to accompany the Fathers and to commence the new mission at Grand River among the Sioux. However, I do not give up the hope of seeing the Rocky Mountain missions once more. I feel a great interest in doing what I can for their continuance.

* * * * *

Please give my best respects to Father Giorda and the whole community at St. Mary's Mission, Bitter Root valley. I have the honor to be, etc.

St. Louis University, March, 1871.

Colonel S. F. TAPPAN, 436 *K Street*, *Washington, D. C.*:

Dear Sir.—I received your kind favor of the 17th ultimo. Bodily indisposition has retarded my answer. You mention in your letter McKenney's history of the Indian tribes of America, published in splendid style by the firm of Messrs. Rice & Butler, who call on you for additional portraits and among these, you express a desire to add the portrait of Victor, chief of the Flatheads, whom you style "a truly representative man, a representative of the religious element." During his long career as the leader of his tribe, he gained the good will, the confidence of all, even the admiration of his enemies by the suavity and dignified simplicity of his manners and his bravery and courage when called into action. I shall ever remember with the deepest sentiments of consolation the day on which Victor received baptism, the joy and happiness he expressed when together with a great number of other adults of his

tribe he was admitted into the "Fold of the Lord," of which he has ever been a bright example.

An extract from the "Explorations and Surveys," etc. (of Governor Stevens), from the Mississippi river to the Pacific ocean (vol. 1, p. 308) calls to mind the "religious element" of Victor and of his people. Captain Mullan says: "When the guide and myself had reached the Flathead camp, three or four men met us at the entrance, and invited us to enter the lodge of the chief, Victor. They very kindly took care of our horses, unsaddling and watering them. As soon as the camp had heard of the arrival of a white man among them, the principal men of the tribe congregated in the lodge of the chief. When they had all assembled by a signal from their chief they offered up a prayer. This astonished me; it was something for which I had not been prepared. Every one was upon his knees and in the most solemn and reverential manner offered up a prayer to God. For a moment I asked myself, was I among Indians? Was I among those termed by every one savages? I could scarcely realize it. To think that these men should be thus imbued and so deeply too with the principles of religion, was to me overwhelming."

(Page 311, Mullan continues) "I cannot say too much in favor of these noble men; they were pious, firm, upright and reliable men; in addition thereto they entertained a religious belief which they never violated. They partook not of a meal without asking a blessing of God; they never rose in the morning or retired at night without offering a prayer to God. These Flatheads have always been held in the highest estimation and this I can fully confirm from actual observation."

In the summer of last year (1870) the Montana newspapers announced as a public calamity the death of Victor, the Nestor of the Rocky Mountains, great chief of the Flatheads. The above quoted captain, on learning the death of his old friend, addressed to all the Flatheads the following tribute in commemoration of their illustrious and old

chieftain. From Mullan's following tribute and the above quotations an appropriate little sketch may be compiled to accompany Victor's portrait.

"To the Indians of the Flathead Nation in Montana Territory:

"Your friend, Captain Mullan, has learned with great sadness and regret the loss you have sustained in the death of your great and good chief, Victor.

"As the long and oft-tried friend of the white men, Victor had no superior among the red men of America. Mild and gentle as a woman and innocent of wrongs as a child, he commanded his people for near a half century.

"Your friend, while residing among your people, knew Victor well. He has eaten and slept and smoked at his camp fires, traveled with him to the hunt; has seen him help the widow and orphan of his tribe, and go in person on missions of peace to the Blackfeet, to the Crows, to the Sioux and to the Bannocks, endeavoring to maintain with them friendly relations. Brave in battle and generous in peace, he has set an example worthy of imitation to all Indian tribes. To his many and constant acts of kindness do I chiefly attribute the fact, that while I resided in your mountains I never had any of mine injured or any of my horses stolen.

"Victor's record as your chief is on file in the archives of the Government at Washington, and I shall use my best endeavors to have the Indian Department erect a monument to his memory, to commemorate his worth and his acts, and at the same time to teach all Indians that their good deeds shall never die.

"In reading the death of Victor I feel that the white man has lost a friend and I could not do less than say as much to your people.

"In the selection of Victor's successor, may you choose a chief that possesses, if possible, all his virtues, and may the mantle of his widespread greatness fall on his shoulders.

“Victor to-day is resting from his labors in the home which the Great Spirit has prepared in eternity for all his children who do right. May it be our good fortune to meet him again among the happy spirits of the celestial abode.

“Father De Smet, Mullan and all your friends among the whites have many reasons for feeling exceedingly sad to hear of the death of the great and good chief, Victor.”

This tribute to the memory of Victor, given by Captain Mullan, is highly deserving of the chief of the Flatheads, and I am happy to be able to subscribe to it fully and bear him testimony. I have been intimately acquainted with Victor for years during my missionary residence and visits to the Rocky Mountain missions. In their hunting expeditions I used to pass the beautiful summer and autumnal evenings seated on the grass and flowery meadows of their lovely mountain valley, surrounded by my dear neophytes. They took the liveliest interest in my narratives of holy writ — on the creation, on the deluge, the ark of Noah, the Maccabees, Samson, Joseph and his brethren, etc. I occasionally entertained them on American and European events and wars, on Washington and his great country, on the battles of Napoleon I, his struggles and his final overthrow at Waterloo; on the long list of sovereign pontiffs, successors of St. Peter, to whom Christ has promised “that the gates of hell shall never prevail against his Church,” adding that the attempts to overthrow the Church and its supreme pastors had lasted for over 1,800 years and the Church had gloriously survived all her enemies. At this Victor hastily rose, full of animation, and said: “Should our Great Father, the Great chief of the Black-robcs, be in danger,— you speak on paper (or write); send him a message in our name, and invite him to our mountains. We will raise his lodge in our midst; we will hunt for him and keep his lodge provided, and will guard him against the approach of his enemies.” As this last trait belongs to Victor, I have taken the liberty of adding it to the little biography of our great Rocky Mountain chieftain. It is a

proof of his filial and religious affection and the generosity of his heart.

In 1843 I found myself for the first time at Rome, and the very Reverend Father-General Roothaan had the kindness to present me to Gregory XVI. The Pope lent a paternal attention to my little narrative of the missions and my account of the good dispositions of the Indians of the Rocky Mountains. He smiled at Victor's proposition and invitation; but then he said, with a seriousness of tone which has always lingered in my mind, "Truly, the time is at hand when we shall be forced to quit Rome. Whither shall we go? — God alone knows — Give those good savages my apostolic benediction."

Please present my best respects to Mrs. Tappan. I shall anxiously expect a copy of her valuable poem and wish for it a far-spread and great success.

I have the honor to be, etc.

St. Louis University, October 25, 1872.

(HICKEY.)

Dear Sir.—I take great interest and pleasure in sending you some extracts of letters from Reverend Father Giorda, S. J., Superior of the missions in the Territories of Montana and Idaho, known by the name of the Rocky Mountain [missions]. These letters were written in Italian in the years 1863, 1864, 1865 and were never published on this side of the Atlantic.

I consider amongst the happiest days of my life when in 1840 I was sent out by my superiors on a visit to the Rocky Mountain Indians to sound their dispositions and, if found favorable, to establish missions among them. They exceeded all my expectations and in the course of a few years the following missions and missionary stations were erected:

1st. St. Mary's Mission among the Flatheads in the Bitter Root valley.

2d. Sacred Heart Mission in the Cœur d'Alène country.

3d. Mission of St. Paul near Colville on the upper Columbia.

4th. St. Ignatius Mission among the Kalispels, or Pend d'Oreilles, near Flathead lake.

5th. St. Peter's Mission for the Blackfeet near the Missouri Falls.

6th. The Mission of St. Joseph among the Yakimas in Oregon Territory.

7th. The Mission of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary at Helena City.

Besides, the Spokans, the Kootenais and a great number of other tribes have each their stations where they are regularly visited by the Fathers of the various missionary establishments. The missionaries are thirty-three in number, of whom sixteen are priests and seventeen are lay brothers, mostly of the Society of Jesus from Turin (Italy), to whom the missions of the Rocky Mountains were transferred and where they have continued their apostolic labors with great fervor and zeal until this day.

The extracts I now send you will go to show some of the hardships the missionaries encounter in their visits and excursions among the Indians; but at the same time the spiritual consolations and fruits they reap repay them a hundredfold. It is truly an encouraging scene to behold the happy and good dispositions of the Indians and the zeal and fervor they manifest on hearing the holy word of God and the consoling truths of salvation; which, with the grace of God, they edifyingly embrace, when understood.

With regard to the Indians in general allow me to add a few words from my own experience. The farther I find them from any intercourse with the whites, the better were they disposed to listen to the word of God. As the Indians approach the frontiers of our so-called civilization and meet with the first intruders on their land, they soon become contaminated and fall victims to all its vices and sins. The

use of liquor is the first step and it is poured into them until their nature is changed and altogether brutalized. They sin, but they are more sinned against. "This practice of the destruction of a people of whom Providence has given us the guardianship, originating in such cases, is unworthy of the civilization of the age in which we live, and revolting to every sentiment of humanity." (McClelland, Secretary of the Interior.)

Very respectfully, etc.

St. Louis University, Oct. 27, 1872.

Reverend P. P. GIORDA and GUIDI:

Reverend Dear Fathers.— I was truly happy in receiving your letter and am very thankful for all the news it contains. I am particularly grateful for your kind invitation and would gladly make the journey if my health permitted. I may decide this question early next spring. However, I must add that the doctor who attends me gives me but very little hope and calls me a bird for the cat. It has afforded me a great deal of consolation to have been able to assist good Father Guidi and his two companions, who are now preparing to enter the great vineyard of the Lord in Montana and Idaho. I wish them every success in the great work before them.

* * * * *

Many thanks for the pious remembrances of the good Indians. I sympathize with the Flatheads in their sorrows and the injustices done them. Their separation from the whites and their baneful influence may, I hope, be in time a service to them. I trust the Fathers will not abandon these good people whom General Stevens considered the model tribe among all the American Indians. Remember me to them. I daily offer up my prayers to God for their perse-

verance in the faith, their happiness and welfare, as likewise of the Pend d'Oreilles, the Cœur d'Alènes, Kootenais, etc. I have seen all the calumnies against the Flatheads in the newspapers and I knew them to be a pack of lies. It is the rule the whites follow when their interests are at stake. The Indians are everywhere their victims. I have full confidence that their good Fathers will not abandon them.

PART IX.

MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS.

(Descriptive, Personal, etc.)

(Unless otherwise noted, the letters in this part have not before been published.)

CHAPTER I.

NOTES ON THE WESTERN COUNTRY.¹

The Rocky Mountains and the Prairie Ocean — Scarcity of timber — A deposit of alabaster — Independence Rock — Chimney Rock — The Platte and some other rivers — A tornado on the plains — An ode.

Sweetwater River, July 14, 1841.

Very Reverend and Dear Father Provincial:

ALREADY two long months have elapsed since we began our journey; but we are at length in sight of those dear mountains that have so long been the object of our desires. They are called Rocky, because they are almost entirely formed of granite and silex, or flint stone. The length, position and elevation of this truly wonderful chain of mountains have induced geographers to give to it the appellation of “the back-bone of the western hemisphere.” Traversing almost the whole of North America, from north to south, containing the sources of some of the largest streams of the world, this chain has for its branches, toward the west the spur of the Cordilleras, which divide the Empire of Mexico, and toward the east the less known but not less wonderful mountains of the Wind river, where are

¹ From Father De Smet’s narrative of his journey in 1841. *Letters and Sketches*, p. 76.

found the sources of the large streams that empty themselves into the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. The Black Hills and the table lands, called Prairie Hills, which separate the sources of the upper Missouri from those of the Mississippi, the Ozark and the Masserne ridges may all be considered as so many collateral chains of the Rocky Mountains.

According to trigonometrical calculations and observations made by means of the barometer, Mr. Bonneville, in his memoirs, asserts that the summits of some of these mountains are 25,000 feet high.² This height would appear much exaggerated if we consulted only the testimony of the eyes, but it is well known that the mountains which are found in immense plains are not unlike ships seen on the ocean; they appear much less elevated than they are in reality. Whatever may be the height of these colossal mountains, it was at their base that we hoped to meet our dear neophytes. But a messenger we had sent to acquaint them with our arrival has just returned and informed us that the Indians who lay encamped there about a fortnight ago went in a southerly direction to hunt the buffalo. We know not whether those Indians were Flatheads or belong to another nation, and it is to obtain information on this subject that we are going to dispatch a second messenger. In the meantime I shall continue my journal. The numerous notes which, on account of our slow progress, we have been enabled to take on the spot will warrant that exactness of description which is the more desirable, as it is a quality frequently wanting in the accounts given of these distant regions. Not to exceed the bounds of a lengthy letter, I shall say but little concerning perspectives, flowers, birds, animals, Indians and adventures.

With the exception of the ridges which run parallel to

² Bonneville's "calculations" and "observations" were all practically worthless from a scientific point of view.

As elsewhere stated the highest of the northern mountains is less than 14,000 feet high.

each other on both sides of the Platte river, and which, after passing under the Black Hills, disappear at the base of the Rocky Mountains, the whole plain which we traversed for 1,500 miles after we had left Westport might be called the Prairie Ocean. In fact, nearly the whole of this territory is of an undulating form and the undulations resemble the billows of the sea when agitated by the storm. On the tops of some of these elevations we have seen shells and petrifications, such as are found on several mountains in Europe. No doubt some impartial geologists may discover here, as they have done elsewhere, incontestible proofs of the deluge. A petrified fragment which I have in my possession, seems to contain a number of these shells.

In proportion as one removes from the banks of the Missouri or penetrates into the western regions, the forests lose much in height, density and depth, in consequence of the scarcity of water. Soon after only the rivers are lined with narrow skirts of wood, in which are seldom seen any lofty trees. In the neighborhood of creeks and rivulets we generally find willow bushes, and where there is no water it would be vain to look for anything but grass, and even this grass is only found in the fertile plains that lie between Westport and the Platte River.

This intimate connection between rivers and forests is so striking to the eye that our beasts of burden had not journeyed more than eight days through this desert when we saw them in some manner exult and quicken their pace at the sight of trees that appeared at a distance. This was chiefly observable when the day's journey had been rather long. This scarcity of wood in the western regions, so much at variance with what is seen in other parts of North America, proceeds from two principal causes: In the plains on this side [south of] the Platte River, from the custom which the Indians who live here have adopted, of firing their prairies toward the end of autumn, in order to have better pasture at the return of spring; but in the Far West, where the Indians do not follow this practice (because they fear to

drive away the animals that are necessary for their subsistence, or to expose themselves to be discovered by the strolling parties of their enemies), it proceeds from the nature of the soil, which, being a mixture of sand and light earth, is everywhere so very barren that with the exception of the absinth that covers the plains, and the gloomy verdure that shades the mountains, vegetation is confined to the vicinity of rivers,—a circumstance which renders a journey through the Far West extremely long and tedious.

Over considerable areas, chiefly between the Kansas and Platte rivers, are found blocks of granite of different sizes and colors. The reddish or porphyry is the most common. In some of the stony parts of the Black Hills are also seen numberless quantities of small pebbles of all shades. I have seen some that were united into solid masses. If these were well polished they would present the appearance of fine mosaics. The columns of the House of Representatives in Washington, which are deemed very handsome, are made of similar concretions.

On June 29th, the feast of St. Peter, a remarkable occurrence took place. We discovered a curious quarry which, at first, we took for white marble, but we soon found it something more valuable. Astonished at the facility with which we could fashion this kind of stone into any shape, most of the travelers made calumets of it. I had several made myself with the intention of offering them as presents to the Indians, so that for the space of forty-eight hours our camp was filled with lapidaries. But the greater number of these calumets could not withstand the action of the fire and broke. It was alabaster.

The first rock which we saw, and which truly deserves the name, was the famous Independence Rock. It is of the same nature as the Rocky Mountains. At first I was led to believe that it had received this pompous name from its isolated situation and the solidity of its base; but I was afterward told that it was called so because the first travelers who thought of giving it a name arrived at it on the

very day when the people of the United States celebrate the anniversary of their emancipation from Great Britain. We reached this spot on the day that immediately succeeds this celebration. We had in our company a young Englishman, [Romaine] as jealous of the honor of his nation as the Americans; hence we had a double reason not to cry "Hurrah for Independence." Still, on the following day, lest it might be said that we passed this lofty monument of the desert with indifference, we cut our names on the south side of the rock under initials (I. H. S.) which we would wish to see engraved everywhere, and along with a great number of others, some of which perhaps ought not to be found anywhere. On account of all these names, and of the dates that accompany them, as well as of the hieroglyphics of Indian warriors, I called this rock on my first journey "the Great Record of the Desert."

I shall add a few remarks about the buttes that are seen in the vicinity of the Platte River. The most remarkable of all, at least that which is best known to the generality of travelers, is the one to which they have given the name of "Chimney." It is called so on account of its extraordinary form; but instead of applying to it an appellation which is rather unworthy this wonder of nature, just because it bears some resemblance to the object after which it is named, it would have been more proper to call it "the inverted funnel," as there is no object which it resembles more. Its whole height, including the base, body and column, is scarce less than 400 or 500 feet; the column or chimney is only about 130 feet high, so that there is nothing striking in the loftiness of its dimensions. But what excites our astonishment is the manner in which this remnant of a mountain composed of sand and clay has been so shaped, and how it has for such a length of time preserved this form in spite of the winds that are so violent in these parts. It is true

ing of a vein of petrified clay. If from these two facts it would be inferred that at a certain height the substance of which the horizontal and perpendicular strata are formed is susceptible of being hardened so as to approach the nature of stone, then we might perhaps account in some manner for the wonderful formation of this curious ornament. Yet the main difficulty would still remain, and we would at last be compelled to have recourse to the system of occult qualities. The existence of the chimney is therefore a problem, and if any scientific person should wish to solve it, I would advise him to repair to this monument without delay, as a cleft which is seen at the top, and which in all probability will soon extend to the base, threatens to leave nothing of it but the remembrance of its existence.

The Chimney is not the only remarkable mound to be met with in this vast solitude. There are many others of various forms. One is called "the [Court] House," another "the Castle," a third "the Fort," etc. And, in fact, if a traveler were not convinced that he is journeying through a desert where no other dwellings exist but the tents put up at night and removed in the morning, he would be induced to believe them so many ancient fortresses or Gothic castles, and with a little imagination, based upon some historical knowledge, he might think himself transported amid the ancient mansions of knight errantry. On one side are seen large ditches and high walls; on the other, avenues, gardens and orchards; farther on, parks, ponds and lofty trees. Sometimes the fancy presents a castle of the middle ages and even conjures up the lord of the manor; but instead of all these magnificent remains of antiquity we find only barren mounds on all sides, filled with cliffs formed by the falling of the waters and serving as dens to an infinite number of rattlesnakes and other venomous reptiles.

After the Missouri, which in the Far West is what the Mississippi is in the North, the finest rivers are the Kansas, the Platte, the Yellowstone and the Sweetwater. The

first of these falls into the Missouri and receives the waters of a great number of tributary streams. Of these tributaries we counted as many as eighteen before we reached the Platte. Hence we may infer that the country abounds in springs, and that the soil is compact and covered with verdure. The reverse may be said of the neighborhood of the Platte, where springs and verdure are seldom seen. Even on the bluffs that run parallel to its banks the waters that fall from the clouds upon a sandy and porous soil run down into the valleys. But the prairies that receive the overflowing waters of the river are extremely fertile and appear beautiful in spring, being enameled with a great variety of flowers.

Here I cannot but speak again of the Platte, although I have described it in the account of my first journey. The sight of the river itself is still more pleasing; though in spite of all its beauties, it has, like the most remarkable of its bluffs, received a vulgar name. This proceeds from the custom which some travelers have of applying to objects the names of things with which they are well acquainted. They have called it *Platte* or Flat river, on account of its width and shallowness; the former often extending 6,000 feet, whilst its depth is but from three to five feet, and sometimes less. This want of proportion destroys its utility. Canoes cannot be used to ascend it, and if barges sometimes come down from Fort Laramie to the mouth, it is because they are so constructed that they may be converted into sledges and pushed on by the hands of men. The author of *Astoria* has properly defined it "the most magnificent and most useless of rivers." Putting its defects aside, nothing can be more pleasing than the perspective which it presents to the eye; though besides the prairie flowers and the ranunculus, its banks bear only the eglantine and the wild vine; for on account of the fires made in the autumn the lofty vegetation is entirely confined to the islands that stud its surface. These islands are so numerous that they have the appearance of a labyrinth of groves floating on the waters.

Their extraordinary position gives an air of youth and beauty to the whole scene. If to this be added the undulations of the river, the waving of the verdure, the alternations of light and shade, the succession of these islands varying in form and beauty, and the purity of the atmosphere, some idea may be formed of the pleasing sensations which the traveler experiences on beholding a scene that seems to have started into existence fresh from the hands of the Creator.

Fine weather is common in this temperate climate. However, it happens sometimes, though but seldom, that the clouds floating with great rapidity open currents of air so violent as suddenly to chill the atmosphere and produce the most destructive hail storms. I have seen some hailstones of the size of a turkey's egg.³ It is dangerous to be abroad during these storms. A Cheyenne Indian was lately struck by a hailstone and remained senseless for an hour. Once as the storm was raging near us, we witnessed a sublime sight. A spiral abyss seemed to be suddenly formed in the air. The clouds followed each other into it with such velocity that they attracted all objects around them, whilst such clouds as were too large and too far distant to feel its influence turned in an opposite direction. The noise we heard in the air was like that of a tempest. On beholding the conflict we fancied that all the winds had been let loose from the four points of the compass. It is very probable that if it had approached much nearer, the whole caravan would have made an ascension into the clouds; but the Power that confines the sea to its boundaries and has said: "Hitherto shalt thou come," etc., watched over our preservation. The spiral column moved majestically toward the North, and alighted on the surface of the Platte. Then another scene was exhibited to our view. The waters, agitated by its powerful action, began to spin round with a

³ This is one of the first and best descriptions of the cyclonic summer storms which have become so dreaded in the central prairies since that country has become filled with population.

frightful noise, all the river boiled, and, more quickly than a rainstorm falls from the clouds, it rose toward the whirl in the form of an immense cornucopia whose undulous movements were like the action of a serpent endeavoring to raise itself to the sky. The column appeared to measure a mile in height; and such was the violence of the winds which came down in a perpendicular direction that in the twinkling of an eye the trees were torn and uprooted and their boughs scattered in every direction. But what is violent does not last. After a few minutes the frightful visitation ceased. The column, not being able to sustain the weight at its base, was dissolved almost as quickly as it had been formed. Soon after the sun reappeared; all was calm and we pursued our journey.

In proportion as we proceeded toward the sources of this wonderful river, the shades of vegetation became more gloomy and the brows of the mountains more cragged. Everything seemed to wear the aspect, not of decay, but of age, or rather of venerable antiquity. Our joy was ecstatic as we sung the following ode composed for the occasion:

Non, ce n'est plus une ombre vaine,
 Mes yeux ont vu, j'en suis certain,
 Dans l'azur d'un brillant lointain,
 Des Monts Rocheux la haute chaîne, &c.

Oh no! — It is no shadow vain,
 That greets my sight — yon lofty chain
 That pierces the ethereal blue;
 The Rocky Mounts appear in view.

I've seen the spotless, virgin snow,
 Glist'ning like gems upon their brow —
 And o'er yon giant peak now streams
 The golden light of day's first beams.

How from their ice-clad summits, steep,
 The living waters joyous leap!
 And gently on thro' vallies gay,
 Sweeter than honey wend their way.

It is because on yon proud height,
The standard floats of life and light:
It is, that there th' Omnipotent
Hath pitched his everlasting tent —
The God whose love no tongue can tell,
Among his children deigns to dwell.

All hail! majestic Rock — the home
Where many a wand'rer yet shall come;
Where God himself, from his own heart,
Shall health and peace and joy impart.

Sorrow adieu — farewell to fear,—
The sweet-voiced hymn of peace I hear;
Its tone hath touched the red-man's soul:
Lo! o'er his dark breast tear-drops roll.

O! soon the silent wilderness
Shall echo with his song of praise;
And infant lips, from morn till ev'n,
Shall chant thy love — great King of Heav'n.

Father and God! how far above
All human thought thy wondrous love!
How strange the path by which thy hand
Would lead the tribes of this bleak land,
From darkness, crime and misery,
To live and reign in bliss with thee!

CHAPTER II.

THE MISSOURI RIVER.¹

The Three Forks — The cataracts — Tributary streams — Gate of the Mountains — Resources of the valley — Scenery — Purity of the air — Bad Lands — Fate of the Elkhorn Steeple — Headquarters of the wolves — Some beaver stories — Lake Eustis and the wonders of the Yellowstone — Geological curiosities — A disastrous gorge — Vanity — Some tribal traditions — Prairie fires.

AS I have been speaking of rivers I shall give you a short geographical description of the Missouri, which I am inclined to call *my* river, as I have so often ascended and descended it during the last four years, traveled along its banks and crossed almost all its tributaries from the mouth of the Yellowstone to the place where the mighty river mingles its turbid stream with that of the peaceful Mississippi. I have drunk the limpid waters of its sources and the muddy waters at its mouth, distant more than 3,000 miles from each other. The prodigious length of its course, the wildness and impetuosity of its current, have induced the Sioux to call it "the Furious." Whenever I crossed this magnificent river the sensations which I experienced bordered on the sublime, and my imagination transported me through the world of prairies which it fertilizes to the colossal mountains whence it issues.

It is in the heart of the Rocky Mountains that the Missouri takes its rise, together with many other magnificent streams; such as the Father of Waters, into whose bosom it flows after having fertilized its own borders to a vast extent; the Arkansas and the Red river, both, like itself, majestic tributaries; the Columbia, which becomes the reservoir of all the waters of the Oregon territory, and the Rio

¹ Part of Letter IV, *Letters and Sketches*, p. 85.

Colorado which, after winding its course through a gloomy and rocky desert, invigorates the most beautiful part of California.

The Missouri, properly so called, is formed by three considerable forks that unite their waters at the entrance of one of the passes of the Rocky Mountains. The north [west] fork is called the Jefferson, the south [east], the Gallatin, and the one between them the Madison. Each one of these is subdivided into several small arms that flow from the mountains and almost mingle their sources with those of the upper forks of the Columbia on the western side. I have drunk of both, distant only about fifty yards from each other; for the same field of snow supplies both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

After the junction of the forks, the Missouri for a considerable distance becomes an impetuous and foaming torrent. Below this its bed is more spacious and its course more tranquil. Steep rocks of a black hue jut and rise above its current to a height of nearly 1,000 feet. The mountains along whose base it runs are shaded by pines, cedars, fir and turpentine trees. Some of these mountains present a solitary aspect and wear a look of unspeakable grandeur. The river, for the space of seventeen miles, is seen raging and foaming, rolling from cataract to cataract with a roaring noise that is repeated by echoes from all the neighboring cliffs. The first of these cataracts measures ninety-eight feet in height; the second, nineteen; the third, forty-seven, and the fourth, twenty-six.² Below the falls,

² The series of cataracts and rapids here referred to commence at the city of Great Falls and continue about twenty miles; but the larger falls, of which there are four, Rainbow, Black Eagle, the Great Falls, and another, are included within a distance of ten miles. The total fall is upward of 500 feet. The lower, or Great Fall, is about eighty-four feet high, and may be properly called the Niagara of the West. The magnificent water power afforded by these cataracts is being extensively used for industrial purposes.

the beautiful river of Marias,³ flowing from the north [west] adds its peaceful waters to those of the rapid and impetuous stream. Still lower, but on the opposite side, the Dearborn⁴ and the Fancy disembogue themselves through mouths respectively 150 yards in width.

After many other rivers of considerable width and extent, we come to the Yellowstone,⁵ the largest but one of all the tributaries of the Missouri, resembling the latter in many respects. This river too has its source in the Rocky Mountains and is 850 yards wide at its mouth. Its bed is spacious and its current rapid; its length is about 1,600 [750] miles, and at its confluence with the Missouri it appears to be the larger of the two. For a considerable distance above the mouth its banks are well wooded and its bottom lands are extensive and very fertile. The grey and

³ Maria's river (Lewis and Clark), named for a lady acquaintance of one of these officers. Modern usage drops the apostrophe and makes it simply Marias. The stream is a large one, and drains an extensive tract of country. Lewis and Clark were in doubt, when they came to it, whether it was not the main stream.

⁴ Error. The Dearborn river joins the Missouri from the west above the Great Falls.

⁵ The Yellowstone river is one of the most noted rivers on the continent. It is not only a great river, in itself worthy of high comparison, but it comes from a region which in recent times has acquired celebrity throughout the world as that singular place where nature seems to be still engaged in finishing the work of manufacturing a planet. The river comes mainly in its upper course from the Yellowstone National Park. It flows through the beautiful Yellowstone lake, over the Great Falls, and through the Grand cañon, and exhibits within a distance of fifty miles a combination of grandeur and beauty unparalleled upon any other river in the world.

From its source it flows north 150 miles to the great bend of the Yellowstone, where it turns abruptly to the east. It then flows nearly due east for about 100 miles, when it turns gradually to the north and finally flows northeast to its junction with the Missouri. It receives no tributaries worthy of mention from the north, but many important ones from the other side. Of these the principal one is the Big Horn river, which, in its upper course, bears the name of Wind river.

black bear, the bighorn, the antelope, the buffalo, the stag and the common deer frequent these regions, whilst coal and iron mines are in such abundance that for fifty years they might supply fuel and materials to a countless number of steam engines.

After the Missouri has received the Yellowstone river, its bottom lands become more extensive; yet as little or no wood is found on them, it may be long before attempts will be made to cultivate them. The White Earth river coming from the north, and the Goose river from the south, are not very considerable. The width of each at the mouth is 300 yards. The Little Missouri, though shallow, has a rapid current, and has its sources in the south, as also the following streams: Cane [Knife] river, near the village of the Mandans; Cannon Ball river; Winnipenhu [Grand], Searzena [Moreau] and Cheyenne river, which is navigable for 400 miles, a rapid and muddy stream, 400 yards wide at the mouth; Teton river and White river (so called on account of the color of its waters) which are unwholesome. The latter is navigable for 300 miles, has a rapid current, and measures about 300 yards at its mouth.⁶ The lands which it waters in the upper country are barren, and abound in animal and vegetable petrifications, whilst its banks have everywhere a fantastic appearance.

Next and on the same side we meet the Ponca and Running Water [Niobrara] river, the latter of which has a fine current. Medicine [Creek] and Jacques rivers [James river] enter the Missouri from the opposite side; the latter is also a rendezvous of the beaver hunters and runs nearly parallel with the Missouri. After the White Stone [?] and the Vermillion, we find the Big Sioux river, on which is found the fine red stone quarry explored by the Indians to make their calumets. The Floyd and the Rodger [Boyer], the Maringoin, the Nishnabotna and the Nadowa fall into the Missouri on the northern side.

⁶ All of these distances are vastly overstated. Navigation refers only to canoes and bullboats.

Its chief tributary, the Platte, rises like itself in the Rocky Mountains and extends its course nearly 2,000 [1,000] miles. Though it is a mile wide at the mouth yet it is shallow, as its name indicates, and is not navigable.⁷ The two Nemahas flow from the south and the Little Platte from the north. The Kansas, on the south side, is about 1,000 miles long and is navigable to a great distance. Grand river from the north is a wide, deep and navigable stream. The two Charitons are found on the same side, while the Osage and Gasconade rivers enter from the south. The former is an important stream, navigable for 600 [300] miles, and has its sources near the waters of the Arkansas; whilst the latter, though navigable only for sixty-six miles, is equally important, on account of the fine large pine forests that supply St. Louis and the adjacent country with lumber.

I shall say nothing of the many other less remarkable tributaries of the Missouri, such as the Blue, the Mine, the Bonne Femme, the Manitou, the Muddy, the Loutre, the Cedar, the Buffalo, the St. Johns, the Wood river, the Charette, Bonhomme, Femme Osage, etc. The length of the Missouri, from its sources to the Yellowstone, is 880 [1,100 miles from Three Forks] miles, from the Yellowstone to its junction with the Mississippi, is about 2,200 [1,760]. I subjoin a list of the forks of its great tributaries which I have seen and crossed.⁸

* * * * *

⁷ It was navigated in canoes and bullboats, like the Cheyenne, White, and other streams which Father De Smet classes as navigable.

⁸ Father De Smet's list of rivers is omitted here and the subjoined list given instead.

Following is a table of the more important streams of the great Missouri Basin, so often referred to by Father De Smet:

Mississippi-Missouri river, length, 4,221 miles.

Missouri proper, length from Red Rock lake, source of the Jefferson, 2,945 miles; from the Three Forks, 2,547 miles.

I left off my narrative on Sugar river, [the Sweetwater] otherwise called Eau Sucrée; I must interrupt it to listen to the good tidings that are brought from the mountains.

I remain, Rev. and Dear Father,
Your Dutiful Son in Christ,

TRIBUTARIES.

(Distances are above mouth of Missouri.)

Gasconade river, enters Missouri from south (right bank), 110 miles.

Osage river, a large and important stream, enters from the south (right), 142 miles.

Grand river (Missouri), from the north (left bank), 261 miles.

Kansas river is a large stream entering from the west (right) at the site of Kansas City, where the Missouri makes its great bend to the east, 390 miles. Formed by the junction of the Smoky Hill and Republican rivers. Has been navigated by steam to this point. Largest tributary, the Big Blue, from the north.

Little Platte, from the east (left), 411 miles.

Nadowa river, from the east (left), 499 miles.

Big Nemah, from the west (right), 529 miles.

Nishnabotna river, from the east (left), 588 miles.

Platte river, largest tributary of the Missouri, except the Yellowstone, enters from west (right), 635 miles. Formed by junction of North and South Forks in western Nebraska. Principal tributaries of North Fork are Laramie river from south (right) and Sweetwater from the north (left) bank. The principal tributaries of the Platte below the junction of the North and South Forks are the Loup Fork and the Elkhorn rivers.

Big Sioux, from the east (left), 810 miles.

Vermillion, from the east (left), 854 miles.

James, from the east (left), 888 miles.

Niobrara, from the west (right), 941 miles.

White, from the west (right), 1,055 miles.

Bad river (formerly called Teton or Little Missouri), from the west (right), 1,172 miles.

Cheyenne, from the west (right), 1,222 miles. A large stream formed by two forks which completely encircle the Black Hills of Dakota.

Little Cheyenne, from the east (left), 1,268 miles.

Moreau, from the west (right), 1,293 miles.

Grand, from the west (right), 1,316 miles.

Cannon Ball, from the west (right), 1,399 miles.

Extract from a Letter dated St. Louis, January 1, 1847.

I shall close this letter by giving you a geographical description of the great river which I have just descended, accompanied by only two men, for about 2,500 miles.

Heart, from the west (right), 1,446 miles.

Big Knife, from the south (right), 1,514 miles.

Little Missouri, from the south (right), 1,582 miles. Rises in the northern foothills of the Black Hills.

White Earth, from the north (left), 1,646 miles.

Yellowstone, largest tributary of the Missouri, from the south (left), 1,760 miles. (See earlier note.) Principal tributaries, all from the south: Powder, Tongue, Rosebud, Big Horn, Pryor, Clark. Of these the Big Horn is the largest, and bears the name Wind river in the upper third of its course. Its principal tributaries are the Shoshone (old Stinkingwater) and Grey Bull, from the west or left bank.

Poplar, from the north (left), 1,858 miles.

Milk, from the north (left), 1,937 miles.

Muscleshell, from the south (right), 2,076 miles.

Judith, from the south (right), 2,196 miles.

Marias, from the west (left), 2,263 miles. See earlier note.

Sun, from the west (left), 2,334 miles.

Three forks of the Missouri, 2,547 miles. The Gallatin is the easternmost and the Jefferson the westernmost, the Madison lying between the two. The Jefferson is the largest, its two principal tributaries being the Big Hole and Beaverhead rivers.

The following table of distances is from one of Father De Smet's unpublished letters.

"Here are the supposed correct distances from St. Louis to the mouth of the Yellowstone river. I give the principal names known in that country, but hitherto unheard of outside." [The second column of distances is from the surveys of the Missouri River Commission.]

TABLE OF DISTANCES.

	Miles.	Miles.
From St. Louis to Bellevue, above the the mouth of		
Nebraska or Platte river.....	800	646
Hence to old Council Bluffs	85	36
Hence to Little Sioux river	75	40
Hence to Black Bird's Hill and tomb.....	45	31
Hence to Big Sioux river	56	59
Hence to Fort Vermillion	60	49
Hence to Jaques or James river	50	27

The Missouri rises in the Rocky Mountains between the forty-third and forty-ninth degrees of north latitude.⁹ The springs which give birth to several of its branches, are not a mile away from a large number of springs whose waters flow to the Columbia. I have stood upon snow banks that contribute innumerable torrents to both rivers. One runs west into the Pacific Ocean; and the other, which merits the title of the largest river of North America, by the abundance of its waters and the length of its course, but which was not explored until after the Mississippi and thence came to be considered its tributary, has its mouth twenty miles above St. Louis. The Missouri takes that name after the junction of three branches, the Jefferson, the Gallatin and the Madison. The place called the Gate of the Mountains is 441 [160] miles above the highest point of navigation on the Missouri and presents a magnificent and pic-

	Miles.	Miles.
Hence to Niobrara or L'Eau qui Court river.....	80	54
Hence to the Grand Tower	40
Hence to White river	100	113
Hence to Medicine river	80	71
Hence to Fort Pierre	65	48
From Fort Pierre to Cheyenne river.....	60	48
Hence to Moreau river	96	71
Hence to Cannonball river	130	106
Hence to Heart river	50	47
Hence to Fort Clark (among the Aricaras and Mandans)	65	60
Hence to Fort Berthold or Grosventres	65	52
Hence to White Earth river	90	89
Hence to the mouth of the Yellowstone river, three miles below Fort Union	150	114
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,322	1,760
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The number of bends of the Missouri river, from Bellevue to the mouth of the Yellowstone river, is 256. In the same distance the number of its islands is 42.

⁹ Red Rock lake, the ultimate source, is about in latitude 48° 30'. The junction of the Three Forks, where the name Missouri first applies, is about 46°.

turesque view. For a distance of six miles the rocks rise perpendicularly from the bed of the river to the height of 1,200 feet. Here and there in crevices are bunches of verdure, firs, cedars and lone pine trees, watered by an infinite number of springs, which channel the sides of the rock. Here the river is compressed within a bed 150 yards wide; and only one place, a few feet square, is visible where a man might stand between the cliff and the water. From the entry of the Rocky Mountains to the Great Falls is 110 miles; to the junction with the Mississippi it is 2,685 miles.

The Great Falls of the Missouri are not as sublime as those of the Niagara, but they may hold second place for grandeur among all the waterfalls of this vast continent. In a distance of sixteen and a half miles the river descends 357 feet by a succession of rapids and falls. The greatest fall has a perpendicular height of eighty-seven feet, the second is nineteen, the third forty-seven and the fourth twenty-six; a succession of rapids and cascades of from three to eighteen feet fill the distance from one to another. The upper course of the river to the mouth of the Yellowstone [Marias] lies toward the north.

The Yellowstone, which has a mouth 800 yards in width, and which at that point seems as large as the main river, is probably the greatest of the tributaries of the Missouri. It comes in from the southwest, 1,216 [about 750] miles from its source and 1,880 miles from its junction with the Mississippi. Steamboats come thus far up and could go higher in both branches.

The length of the Missouri river from its source to its mouth is therefore 3,096 miles; add 1,353 miles from its mouth to the Gulf of Mexico and you have a total of 4,449 miles. It is without doubt the longest river of the globe. From the gulf to the Great Falls there is no insurmountable obstacle to its navigation. Its principal tributaries are navigable for distances of 100 to 800 miles. The alluvial soil along this river and its tributaries is fertile, but narrow and subject to occasional overflows. Leaving these

bottom lands you enter the immense high plains covered with verdure and inclosed here and there with thickets and forests. The upper region traversed by the Missouri is sterile and arid. The current of the river is rapid and turbid in the greater part of its course. It is a half-mile wide at its mouth; at several other places it is much wider. Although all the waters of this immense region and of so many great tributaries unite in the Missouri, it is notwithstanding so low at certain seasons of the year that steamboats can scarcely find passage. This lack of water is attributed to the dry, open country traversed by the river and to its great evaporation.

The resources which the Mississippi and Missouri may offer to commerce are incalculable and have not yet been sufficiently appreciated. For thousands of years these magnificent American rivers rolled their waters peacefully through the vast forests, fertile prairies and most picturesque mountains, reflecting the varied scenes of a capricious nature; they were then unknown save to the wandering savage of the West or to the animals that fed upon their banks. At last they drew the attention of civilized man and now they have begun to satisfy both their needs and their desires. All parts of this vast region, watered by the main stream and its tributaries, may be penetrated by steamboats, and but for a small district in the plains of the upper Missouri, there is not a single point more than 100 miles from a navigable branch. One boat may take its cargo at Lake Chautauqua in the State of New York, another in the interior of Virginia, a third can start from Rice lake, at the source of the Mississippi, and a fourth, laden with the furs of the Rocky Mountains, can descend the Missouri 2,800 miles, and all meet at the mouth of the Ohio, to go down together to the ocean.

Reader, you live in Europe, where the commerce of every seaport, where all interior branches of navigation have been carried to the last perfection; where superior intelligences consume themselves in vain for lack of a career in which

they can develop themselves. But here, on these vast ramifications of navigable streams, an endless, limitless field for commercial speculation is opened.

The first steamboat arrived at St. Louis in 1819.¹⁰ To-day the Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio and their tributaries are covered with steamboats and craft of all kinds, and populous cities have arisen on their banks. There are now in the centre of the American continent ports and commercial cities whereof each one by itself already does more business than many of the most celebrated ports of the Old World.

The valley of the Mississippi, one of the most astonishing marvels of nature, contains at least 1,300,000 square miles. It may some day possess a population almost as great as that of all Europe and supply all its needs abundantly. If its population becomes as dense as that of England, which already counts 207 souls to the square mile, the number of its inhabitants will amount to 179,400,000. But should it come to equal that of Belgium, as the fertility of the soil seems to warrant, its area will maintain a population of 200,000,000. What a subject for reflection to the philanthropist and the Christian!

I have the honor to be, etc.

Let us descend the Missouri together.¹¹ You shall admire with me the length of its course, its breadth, its marvels and its dangers. Upon that portion of its banks already occupied by civilization, some 2,653 miles, you shall admire the proud cities and flourishing villages, whose grandeur and importance grow day by day; the splendid

¹⁰ They have since ascended the Missouri to the foot of the Great Falls, and the Yellowstone to a point a little above the mouth of the Big Horn.

¹¹ From the French of the third Belgian edition, vol. V. Dated "On board the *Yellowstone*, June 4, 1864, in the Cheyenne river country, 1,515 miles from the mouth of the Missouri."

chateaus, the dark ancient forests, the smiling manors, the model farms, the prairies specked with flowers, supporting innumerable herds and scattering abundance and happiness as far as its entrance into the Gulf of Mexico.¹²

Often have I rested by banks of perpetual snow, or beside little lakes and marshes, a fall or noisy cascade or some fair and abundant fountain, whose tutelary spirit (to adopt an Indian idea) seems to invite the solitary passer to rest in the cool by its swift crystal flow. I have spread my bearskin and my buffalo robe, which formed my bed, and passed many nights in profound slumber, after the fatigues of a long day's travel, now at the sources of the Athabasca, Saskatchewan or Missouri, now at those of the Columbia, which in some cases are not more than a mile asunder, and then depart to opposite points of the compass, the one to the east and the other to the west, toward the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. In that elevated region, the atmosphere is of remarkable purity; by night, in the blue-black firmament, the moon and stars shine with wonderful brilliancy. Here, as everywhere, one cannot but repeat the beautiful words of Thomas à Kempis: "Lord, all that we have in the order of nature, it is thou that hast given it; and thy benefactions remind us without ceasing of thy goodness and tenderness, and the immense liberality thou usest toward us, thou from whom cometh every good. Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. Give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies."

Excepting possibly the great Amazon river in South America, the Missouri is considered the longest stream on the globe. Its sources are in the Rocky Mountains, at 45° north latitude and longitude 110° 30' west. Its three upper branches are the Jefferson, Madison and Gallatin. Thousands of miners are flocking thither at the present time,

¹² Father De Smet, like every other person who knows the Missouri river intimately, considered it a river of great natural beauty, and came to form an ardent attachment for it and for its unique character among the rivers of the globe.

drawn by the attraction of the gold hidden in the bosom of that remote land. There are three cities with names there already, namely, Bannock, Virginia and Gallatin. All that country, for an immense distance east of the mountains, has recently been admitted into the Union under the name of Montana Territory.

The sources of the Three Forks, as well as those of the Yellowstone, Dearborn and Sun rivers, are interlaced with the sources of several tributaries of the two great branches of the Columbia, Lewis' and Clark's Forks, known by their primitive names of Snake and Flathead rivers.

From the sources of the Three Forks to the Great Falls of the Missouri, about 500 miles, the waters incline northward; then, taking an east-north-east direction, they reach their northernmost extension at the mouth of White Earth river, at $48^{\circ} 20'$ north latitude. Thence the general course of the river is southeast, until its junction with the Mississippi, in latitude $38^{\circ} 50'$ north and longitude $90^{\circ} 10'$ west.

At about 411 miles from its first sources, the Missouri passes through the Gate of the Mountains, where it is compressed into a width of 150 yards. The floods rush tumultuously and swiftly along for a distance of six miles; the cliffs rise perpendicularly from the water's surface to a height of 1,200 feet, with a sort of jutting edge, where a man can hardly stand erect. This channel, scoured out by the impetuosity of the water, resembles the remarkable Dalles of the Columbia.

The Missouri proper commences at the confluence of the Three Forks, which come down from the mountains at almost equal distances and parallel with one another.

Between the Gate of the Mountains and the Great Falls (110 miles) the first tributaries of the Missouri are the Prickly Pear, Beaver, Camas, Dearborn and Sun rivers, with some other smaller streams or mountain torrents. The two last-named rivers are the most considerable.

The Great Falls of the Missouri are in the midst of a desolate and sterile region; they give it an aspect of gran-

deur, beauty and interest well worthy of remark. They commence nine miles below the mouth of Sun river, and reach for sixteen miles, in very rapid currents, falls and cascades, making a total descent of 380 feet. The last fall is the highest; the water drops a height of eighty-four feet. The river is 480 yards in width. One-half falls in a mass over a perpendicular rock, and the other half rolls its tumultuous water through a series of cataracts, falls and capricious cascades, into the basin at the foot. From an elevated point which commands the river from the north, there is a ravishing view. The water, the rocks slightly covered with a veil of foam, the lofty cliffs which frame it all, that succession of rapid currents, the deafening noise of the fall and the cataract, spreading into the distance, the column of vapor rising and presenting to the sun all the vivid colors of the rainbow, make a scene very beautiful and very wild at the same time. The Falls of the Missouri are among the most important in North America; they are 3,100 miles above its mouth.

Leaving the falls, we pass the Belt river and some minor water-courses, and arrive at Fort Benton, the highest post of the St. Louis Fur Company, 3,000 miles above the mouth of the river, a distance which has been reached by steamboats, under the conduct of the excellent and brave Captain Charles Chouteau. Thanks to the discovery of gold in the Territories of Idaho and Montana, Benton has become a great centre of commerce east of the Rocky Mountains.

Farther down, the Missouri receives the pretty Marias river, with its pure water, and the little rivers called Island Thirty-four, Sandy and Eagle. Here we are at the entrance of the "Bad Lands" of the Missouri, or rather let us say of its marvels.

At a distance of some fifty miles, we pass within sight of some scenes as fantastic as they are wonderful; nature seems to have produced them for her diversion, and to have exerted herself to vary them. There are evident indications that this passage through this sterile volcanic region has

been formed by the might of water. To give an accurate idea of it would require an able pen and a most active imagination. I will try, however, to express something of it. Like all the other travelers, I was in continual transports of wonder and astonishment, from one end to the other, under the influence of this varied succession of picturesque scenes and views, which are at the same time curious and sublime, with the beautiful and grand often mingling with the fantastic. They pass before us as if a magnificent panorama were presenting them successively and rapidly to our eyes.

The bust of Washington appears at a distance — a large number of the passengers observe it simultaneously and call out the name with one voice. There is no mistake about it; we watch and wonder. As the boat proceeds and changes position, this same bust presents a fine lady in crinoline and then a shapeless mass. The great man *par excellence* of the last century here finds himself joined, in one and the same block and on the same pedestal, with one of the queerest types of present fashion.

Once engaged in this astonishing passage, one cannot prevent his imagination from seeing a great many things in it. On both banks of the river you think you see ruined cities; especially remarkable is a succession of blackened walls, several hundred feet in height. It seems incredible that such regular workmanship should not be artificial productions; but at the same time one is compelled to admit that an architect capable of executing them would surely rank as a great genius in his profession. One of these remarkable walls, called the "Hole in the Wall," has a round opening representing an ancient cathedral window. In another place appears a *porte cochère*, wide, lofty and of regular shape, cut from the living rock; it is like the entrance to an immense monumental cemetery, with its statues, busts, obelisks, columns, vases and urns, tables, entablatures, mortuary frescoes and monuments of every sort, which, in their structure and arrangement, appear like the antique and venerable remains of the remotest ages. We pass by the

foot of the Citadel, an immense solitary rock. Another represents a steamboat. There follows a succession of ancient manors and convents, castles, cathedrals, bastions and forts, surmounted by towers and parapets and surrounded by sentinels motionless at their posts.

On either side cedars and pines, singly and in groups, spread their verdure and add to the beauty of the landscape. They clasp the rocks by the little crevices which afford them a few handfuls of earth and dust, and they crown the sides and tops of the hills. In the absence of any other wood, we are obliged to cut them down to feed the greedy furnaces of the boat; and soon the vandal axe will have destroyed one of the fairest ornaments of this marvel of the Missouri.

From time to time one is agreeably surprised to see, rising in the distance, the blue tips of the Little Rocky and Bear Paw Mountains; the latter are the higher. They are two isolated chains in the high plains of this region.

Lovers of the wonders of nature and those who travel with scientific objects in view will not neglect to come and visit a place so remarkable and which promises such rich discoveries from the point of view of geology. The Bad Lands of the Missouri will some day take their place among the great wonders of the American hemisphere.

In my various voyages, this remarkable spot has always charmed and interested me in the highest degree. One cannot view this succession of scenes without an ever-growing curiosity and pleasure always new. The hand of man has not touched as yet these astonishing works of nature; they are still intact, subject only to the atmospheric changes of this elevated region, under which, however, they doubtless change continually in aspect and in form.¹³

Passing out from the Bad Lands, the river Judith comes to pay its tribute to the Missouri. It is followed by three little nameless creeks, then by the two Calf rivers, Island

¹³ See footnote, p. 852.

Fifty-eight river, the Upper Rocky, the Cadotte, the Big Dry Fork, Milk river, the Porcupine, the Harvey, the Little Dry, the Wolf Point, the Poplar, the Elkhorn, the Upper Muddy, the Mackinaw and the Little Muddy. The principal ones are the Upper Muddy and Milk river.

The Judith is 2,768 and the Yellowstone 2,136 miles from the mouth of the Missouri. They are 632 miles apart. Singular formations of great isolated rocks are seen, on high hills, something in the style of those in the Bad Lands. The principal one is the monument of Napoleon the Great, called by this name, and no doubt saluted, by some *vieux grognard* of the *grande armée*, to recall to all travelers in this desert the memory of the *grand homme*.

The alluvial portions of the river present interesting views of another sort. They are a series of plains, stretching to the limit of vision, often interspersed with volcanic lands, producing nothing but cactus, Adam's needle (the proper name of which is *yucca*), with their pretty flowers, and sagebrush. Then it will be a series of pleasing prairies, which in spring are adorned with a rich carpet of verdure spangled with flowers. These plains and prairies are, for the most part, covered with forests of poplars, but these, greater or smaller, are lined, along the river, with vast willows. There is little or no underbrush in these forests, the trees stand at some distance from one another, and though irregular, seem as if planted by some ingenious forester. One notes especially wide and straight avenues, and smiling paths cutting them almost at right angles. Herds of buffalo, deer and antelope, and here and there sundry grizzly bears, the terror of the mountaineers, animate in their turn these silent forests. One would think himself in great parks and lovely parterres, such as one may see in the domain of some opulent European nobleman. Only the old donjon-keep seems lacking.

Seventeen miles below the Judith you come to what is called the Monumental Elkhorn Prairie. So far as I know, it is the only place in all this part of the country which has

possessed a true monument, erected by the hands of the Indians. A tower had been constructed here, composed exclusively of elks' antlers; it was of remarkable height. Its base formed a great square. After every campaign against the elk and deer, so abundant in this region, the Indians would come here to deposit religiously the trophies of their hunt, that is, the skulls of the animals surmounted by their antlers. The most ancient of the Assiniboins (it is on their land) could not give me any account, either of the epoch nor of the circumstances which gave rise to the erection of this unique monument. The cupidity of a modern vandal has caused the demolition of this strange savage structure, which had resisted all the tempests, wind-storms, stern winters and other vagaries of the atmosphere in this strange region. He took his capture to St. Louis and sold it, and there the antlers were transformed into handles for knives, forks and daggers. Wolf Point, thirty-one miles lower down, deserves a small notice. Here is the rendezvous *par excellence* of the wolves, those animals so cruel, but timid and cowardly at sight of man. They will attack together a calf or a cow, which they have managed to separate from the herd; they watch for buffalo to cross the river and try to climb steep and difficult places; the poor animals get mired in the mud, and often entire herds perish. The wolves throw themselves on them and devour them. On these occasions, these rivals of the jackals and hyenas express their joy in their own manner, in a kind of concert of terrifying howlings, as if a pandemonium had been convoked. I have several times found myself close to these carnivorous animals in cases of this kind. To prevent being kept awake all night, we had to fire a few shots from time to time, which reduced the frightened wolves to silence.

From the Yellowstone to Benton, there are rapid currents at intervals, of which there are ten that are difficult to ascend and very dangerous to go down. The whole power of the engines and all the strength of the capstan have to

be applied, and the entire crew are put on the tow-rope to overcome the current. If in descending a point of rock or a loose boulder be touched, the shock is generally fatal to the boat. The hull is crushed in, despite the strongest framing. These rapids generally bear the name of some individual or other who has lost his life there, or undergone shipwreck.

In all this stretch of 632 miles, and as far up as the sources of the Missouri, the whole length of the bank displays the ravages of numerous beavers. These industrious animals, of whom so many wonderful things are related, seem to be more plentiful there now than ever; for the number of hunters has fallen off with the decadence of beaver hats, which have given way before head-coverings of silk. The presence of beavers is detected by the destruction which they make in the forests and among the willows along the bank. It is surprising to see the number of trees, large and small, which they have cut down. With their teeth these skillful animals cut branches with tender bark into four-foot lengths; these furnish their favorite food, and they transport them into their lairs. On the Missouri, they dig holes in the cut or vertical banks of the river, making them large enough to lodge a number of them. The interior resembles a cave, and can contain a whole family, that is, the old beaver and his old companion, and usually four or five little ones. I have been assured that sometimes they contrive different apartments, larger or smaller. All the inside is lined with willow branches, picked clean and interwoven. The entrance to the cavity is obstructed carefully with a mass of twigs, mingled and heavily plastered with clay. They make a communication or passage-way which ends beneath the outer water, and also leave an opening overhead to admit air.

I have spoken of their ways and works in other letters. I will therefore not touch upon them here, but I should like to tell a story which I had from one of my traveling companions, a trustworthy man, an intrepid hunter, and who

saw these things himself. Happening one day to be above a beaver lodge, he heard the young ones crying, very much like the wailing of babies. The old beaver it appeared did not like so much noise, and to restore silence in his young family he took them one at a time and thrust them again and again under the water until they stopped. The observer was amazed.

Another time, a large beaver was caught in a trap. In such circumstances, they do not hesitate to bite off the foot that is caught, to release themselves. Wishing to be sure of his prey, our hunter had so arranged that the beaver could easily pull up the stake and drag off the trap together with its chain. The floating wood would serve as a buoy. He soon saw the beaver struggling near the bank; he pulled his prey out of the water and took up a club to knock the creature on the head. The poor animal instinctively put up his paw to protect his head, uttering lamentations and cries like a human being. The hunter made a motion several times as if to strike him; each time, the beaver put up his paw to save himself and repeated his complaints. The man told me that if he could have got the animal out of the trap, he would have let him go; but he dreaded, and with reason, the beast's terrible teeth, which cut like a carpenter's chisel.

Beaver are still found all along the river, even in places quite near the new settlements of the whites; but in the end they disappear from such places. The beaver's instinct makes him seek the most retired spots, and it is on the least frequented forks of the rivers that their lodges are found in the greatest numbers. There they are more regularly built than on the banks of the great river. The streams are dammed with strong and high dikes, which make fine ponds for the animals. Instinct moreover warns them of spring droughts and of scarcity of rain and snow in the mountains; then they redouble their activity and triple their dikes, to make sure of having a sufficient quantity of water for summer. This is, to the Indians and people acquainted

with the country, a certain sign that the river will be low in the season of high water, and they govern themselves accordingly.

To conclude, I must tell you that in spring, toward the period when the female is carrying her young, she takes sole possession of the lodge. The father, with his young progeny, amuses himself elsewhere and spends the pleasant season around the neighborhood; notwithstanding, he takes care to provide his companion with victuals in abundance. There is a belief commonly held among the hunters, that just as among men there exist indolent persons who arouse scorn rather than pity, so there are lazy individuals found among the beavers; they refuse to do any work, go and come, eat and live at the expense of the others; but when one of these loafers comes and tries to mingle with the rest, he is received with their teeth; his presence seems to inspire the others with horror, and he bears the marks of it in his slit ears and his long tail lacerated and torn by bites. Repulsed everywhere, miserable and wretched, he passes his sad days apart, in some heap of driftwood or abandoned lodge.

The Indians, as well as the hunters, regard the beaver as the animal who most nearly approaches man, as they say, "by his sense, his instinct, his manners and customs." The Absharokays or Crows treat them as brothers, because, as they claim, the beavers gave birth to their first father and mother.

The region of the upper Missouri as far as the Yellowstone, of which I have been telling you, contains more than one interesting reminder of another nature. It is the country ranged by the Assiniboins, the Crows, the Blackfeet, and at the present day by the Sioux, and whither the tribes from west of the mountains, the Flatheads, Pend d'Oreilles, Kootenais, Nez Percés, Bannocks and Snakes come down for the buffalo hunt; where all contend for the possession of those animals, and which has been the theatre of an infinity of battles, encounters and combats. It is the land to which

Tchatka was accustomed to lead his people, and whither so many other renowned chiefs have conducted their tribes, whether to war or to the chase. A multitude of tolerably high hills, and of plateaus and prairies bear the names of some brave or other who distinguished himself near them. It is here especially that the greatest and finest hunting, of buffalo, elk and deer, is found.

I have often taken part in these, either riding with them in the chase or simply as a peaceable onlooker. Sometimes, motionless at my post, seated on my horse or on the flowery sward of the plain or on some height, I would watch the vast and variegated scene and the admirable skill of the Indians. I would share in spirit in all their ardor and their movements, as if I had really been one of the actors. There is no more charming nor more interesting view. The desert, whose profound solitude is usually silent and monotonous, is now transformed into a vast arena, full of life and movement; the air resounds in all directions with the bellowings of the furious buffalo, flying with all their might to escape destruction. The ground trembles under the dull sound of their formidable footfalls. It is a chorus of cries of hunters animating their ardent coursers to attack the fat beast they have selected; it is sudden, confused and irregular gunshots; it is columns and clouds of dust raised by the buffalo and the horsemen. Taken as a whole, it is a spectacle of the highest interest to him who witnesses it, and it recurs afterward to the memory with always fresh pleasure.

I was once present at a great hunt in which upward of 600 buffalo were laid low by about 200 Flathead and Pend d'Oreille hunters. In the same spot I saw all the Indians in the camp prostrated in adoration, with eyes and hands raised toward heaven, offering their thanksgivings to the divine and paternal providence of the Lord, who had granted them, in his goodness, so abundant a chase.

In this kind of hunt, or carnage, the entire animal is used up, even to the bones; these are cracked and broken open for soup. The marrow of the bones is the finest part of

the whole animal and the most agreeable to the taste. The meat is cut into long strips and dried in the sun. When the chase is over, one horse easily carries the spoils of an entire buffalo. The savages break camp, and go away full of joy. They follow and practice literally the axiom, "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

But I am wandering too far away from my subject, it appears; let us return to the river and its tributaries. We had reached the mouth of the Yellowstone, the most important river of the Upper Missouri. It has a width of 800 yards at its entry. Among its numerous tributaries are the Big Horn and Tongue and Powder rivers. Its course is nearly parallel with that of the Missouri. It issues from Lake Eustis,¹⁴ and its principal sources are in the springs and snowbanks upon the icy summits of the Rocky Mountains and Black Hills, one of their numerous chains. I suppose the Yellowstone to be navigable for steamboats for about 1,000 miles above its mouth. Abundant gold mines have lately been discovered at its sources, and thousands of whites are flocking in to-day, who will have to measure their strength with that of the Crow and Snake Indians, hitherto peaceful possessors of those mountains.

The Yellowstone and its upper forks have also their wonders, or one might say their Bad Lands. A volcanic region is especially noteworthy, where underground noises are often to be heard at a great distance. Jets of steam, like the exhaust of steamboats, are seen issuing from the soil, and there are mounds and broken hills in the strangest of shapes, which appear to have been thrown up by volcanic forces. The Indians pass these places in profound silence and with superstitious dread. They regard them as "the abode of underground spirits, always at war with one another, and continually at the anvil forging their weapons." They

¹⁴ Yellowstone lake was long known by this name. It was given for William Eustis, secretary of war, after the existence of the lake was made known by John Colter.

never pass without leaving some offering on a conspicuous point of that mysterious region.

In the same section I have observed, in the side of a steep cliff, a wide and high opening, supposed to be very deep. The unfortunate savage points it out to you as "the place of coming-out and going-in of underground spirits," and to render them propitious, at each visit he throws in one or more arrows with his hand. Whoever hits the mark is sure of the success of the expedition, whereas he who misses the hole altogether will usually turn around and go home, abandoning for the time being the project that he had in view, whether it were of war or the chase. At the foot of the rock a heap of arrows or offerings that went wrong may be seen. No Indian, however much he might be in need of them, would dare to touch one of these objects, much less to take them away; they are sacred.

Between the Yellowstone (2,136 miles) and the Big Cheyenne, 1,515 miles from the mouth of the Missouri, there are eighteen creeks, which reach far into the interior on both sides, north and southwest. It is 400 yards wide at its mouth, comes from the Black Hills and traverses a rolling region of beautiful plains and prairies. The great ammonite that I sent to Father Catoir, professor at St. Ignatius Institute, came from this region. In this distance of 621 miles the principal rivers are the Big Muddy and White Earth, coming from the north; the Little Missouri, the Heart, the Cannonball, Upper Grand river and the stream called Moreau, coming from the south.

Upon Heart river, on one of its lofty hills, overlooking the whole region, there is a rather remarkable geological curiosity. At the top of the hill there is a large and wide stone, flat and level as a table, called Record Rock. It bears distinct imprints of feet of men and children, tracks of bears, bisons, elk, deer and antelope, all mingled in confusion. The tradition of the Aricaras, that is, the "primitive people," speaks of a deluge that covered all the country; and this rock is the place where men and animals, forget-

ting all animosity and fear, met in the face of the common danger; there it was that all found safety at the time of the flood, separating afterward, when the waters subsided, each going his way and resuming his former habits or work, to increase and multiply and replenish the desolate earth.

Cannonball river is interesting by reason of its numerous stone "balls," of all sizes, which gave it its name. These balls abound on the high rocky hills near and above the mouth of the river, for a distance of several miles. This is another curiosity for the geologist to explain. There are tiny balls as big as marbles, and others gradually larger until you come to masses weighing 200 pounds.

All along the river are a great number of eminences bearing names which recall Indian memories. Such is the Horsehead Butte.

A rise, both sudden and unexpected, in the Yellowstone and other rivers coming from the south, once lifted the ice in the Missouri and broke it up into large, strong and compact cakes. This rise took place on a dark night in the winter. These ice-blocks made a formidable dike in a bend of the river just below a large Indian camp. The dike built itself up on either bank as far as the bluffs which terminate the low alluvial bottoms. This vast gorge, swollen more and more by the ice and the immense increase of water, rose to a height of forty feet, until at last the formidable dam across the Missouri yielded to the pressure of the water, which rushed through impetuously and irresistibly. A large number of Indians perished in the flood, with all their horses and other property. The whole affair took only a few hours. The furious waters of the night had carried the ice out of sight, and before sunrise the river had resumed its ordinary even flow. The valley where this frightful and deplorable catastrophe took place resounded for a long time with the weeping of the poor unhappy savages who had escaped the wreck; and long afterward it bore the marks of their mourning.

Some buttes resemble in shape animals or birds, and bear their names; among others, Eagle's Head and Calf Buttes.

The Wanity Butte brings to mind that renowned chief, who was always fortunate in the chase and in war. He had raised a young crow, his pet, or "familiar tutelary spirit," according to the Indian calendar. The bird flew with the chief on all his expeditions, and to it Wanity attributed all his success and good fortune. The crow went and came according to the chief's pleasure, and was often absent a day or two at a time. When he came back his master watched him closely, and interpreted to his companions the cries and motions of his faithful little favorite. "The bird had discovered buffalo, or he had seen enemies." When they broke camp the crow took flight, and the band followed the direction which he indicated. Such fables are common among the savages, and they tell them as actual facts.

Opposite Old Fort Clark, on the Missouri, appears in the distance White Bear Butte. It bears the name of an Aricara chief, who was accustomed to go thither, to fast and torture himself. He went there every year, at certain periods, or before setting out on the warpath or the chase. He would spend whole days there without taking the slightest nourishment. He would cut off a joint of his fingers, or passing leather thongs through wide incisions cut to the quick under his shoulder-blades or in his breast, he would attach one or two buffalo heads and drag them a mile or so to the summit of the hill. On one of these occasions he was surprised and slain by the enemy.

An entire tribe will sometimes give itself up to the practice of the most austere macerations. There are few men advanced in age who have not made the sacrifice of several joints of their fingers and covered all the fleshy parts of their bodies with scars. The two fingers needful to draw the bow and fire the gun are always spared.

These poor wretches are still plunged in the maddest and most superstitious errors of paganism. Still, at every opportunity, they implore the aid of the Black-robe, to come

and instruct their children in the true way of salvation. I hope that this happiness will soon be granted them, and that they will become good children of God, worthy of the early days of Christianity. I shall be among them in a few days, and I propose to remain some time to attend to their instruction.

At 220 miles from the mouth of the Yellowstone, on a high hill near a large and beautiful plateau, are the three united tribes, the Aricaras of whom I have been telling you, the Grosventres or Hidatsa, "People of the Willows," and Mandans. There are about 3,000 of them, living all together in a single large permanent village. Their houses are covered with earth, and resemble mounds twenty-five to thirty feet in height. Light enters and smoke passes out through a round opening left in the top. Although these tribes speak different languages, and though each has its own lands, the common and continual danger from the formidable Sioux, who carry on a war of extermination against them, has compelled them to join their forces to assume the defensive and protect themselves mutually.

The tribe of the Grosventres and that of the Crows have the same origin. A trifle, a senseless dispute over the carcass of an old buffalo, separated the camp into two portions. The Crows won the land of the Yellowstone and the Black Hills.

The Mandans and Winnebagoes, to judge from the resemblance of their two languages, seem to come of the same stock. However, neither of them has any tradition on the subject.

The Aricaras and Pawnees speak the same dialect, and parted in consequence of a simple refusal by the chief of one of the tribes, insolently expressed to that of the other. The latter had asked for some laces to mend his shoes and clothing; upon receiving a refusal, he went away, and advanced with his people very far into the desert. The two branches of the nation have never met since.

The Assiniboin are direct descendants of the Sioux tribes. What separated them was this. The famous buffalo was in this case also the apple of discord. In a common chase, a great number of the animals were brought down. The old men, women and children were butchering them. Each family has its own mark and can recognize the arrows of its hunters. Two women, the wives of two chiefs, claimed the same animal and quarreled over the mark on the arrow, each one asserting that it was her husband's mark. As usual, from words they came to acts, and to hair, which they pulled out, and then to fists and teeth and woundings. One "fixed" the other in the most barbarous manner. In the meantime the two chiefs arrived together on the field of battle. At the sight of the disarranged and lacerated features of their dear spouses, each one took the side of his own. Here they too go, into the stupid quarrel. The conflict soon became general and wound up in a fight to the finish, which left dead and wounded. The Assiniboin band had the worst of it, and parted forever from the others. Since that day they never meet save as mortal enemies.

From Cheyenne river to Fort Randall, 320 miles, the physiognomy of the country, on both sides of the Missouri, is so monotonous as in the end to depress the observer and weary the sight. Wooded points are rare, and with the exception of some bottom lands, the land is generally dry and arid. Large herds of buffalo, antelope and deer are seen from time to time at a great distance, and seem then to animate the sad desert and lend it a fleeting interest. Take away the animals, and for days and weeks together there is nothing to be seen but an endless succession of plateaus, bluffs and hills, which all resemble one another and seem drawn up like a long file of brothers and sisters, representing the same types.

I have traversed these regions in all seasons of the year. I have seen the prairies in spring, covered with a rich and supple mantle of verdure, waving and bowing under every

breeze; they were enameled with flowers, as varied in form as in color. But at every bend or twist of the river, you see the same prairie, the same bluffs and the same hills, following the same type and in the same positions, and in spite of their uniformity, they are beautiful yet. I have admired them after the burning summer sun had transformed the vivacious green into a greyish yellow and the supple plant had become hard, dry and crisp, waiting only for the match of a careless hunter or a spark from the lightning to become the prey of flames. These aspects are disagreeable to the sight. I have seen this country on fire by day. The sun seemed to intensify the flame, and thick clouds of smoke rose above hills, uplands and bottoms, until the light of day was obscured. By night the spectacle is very different. The column of smoke becomes a column of fire; you see fire in all its forms. Here, it is solitary braisiers and snaky flames winding from branch to branch; there, it is a moving wall, a long train of fire, which lengthens, advances and devours everything upon its line of passage. I have passed these places again after the fire had devastated them, leaving not the slightest trace of verdure. These plateaus, these prairies, these bluffs and hills then offered the image of a land of desolation, which it makes one sick to look at. Finally the snows of winter come and cover with a mournful shroud all this strange nature. This is its last and gloomiest transformation; it gives us an idea of the instability of all worldly things.

From the Cheyenne to the mouth of the Platte it is 800 miles, in which distance there are twenty-three tributaries. The principal ones are—White river on the south, 300 yards wide at its mouth; the Niobrara (*L'Eau qui Court*) on the south; James river (*Rivière à Jacques*) on the north, and the Big Sioux on the north, 110 yards wide at the mouth.

The Platte, on the south, is 600 yards wide at its mouth and enters the Missouri 716 (635) miles above the mouth of the latter stream. Its bed is composed of moving sand

which extends far above the junction of the two forks. Its channel is wide but very shallow. It waters an immense region and serves as its sewer.¹⁵

The Platte has its several sources in the Black Hills, the Wind River Mountains and other ranges north and south. It flows through a great valley whose tributaries connect with those leading into Colorado, the valley of Great Salt Lake and to the Rocky Mountains. From its valley one may pass by connecting routes to Utah, Nevada, California, Oregon and the Territories of Washington, Idaho and Montana. The valley of the Platte has become the Golden Gate, or the great highway which leads to the gold mines of those several countries.

The White river flows out of the Black Hills and drains the Bad Lands of Dakota of which I have given a description in a former letter.

L'Eau qui Court, or the Niobrara, owes its name to its rapid current. It also rises in the Black Hills and finds its ultimate source in an elevated peak called Rawhide Butte, toward the plains of Fort Laramie. It flows through a sterile, sandy region called the Sand Hills.

James river, Dakota, and the Big Sioux rise in groups of lakes on the high prairies, in the region of Devils' Lake, latitude 48° north.¹⁶

The most remarkable butte along that portion of the Missouri now under consideration is Blackbird Hill, named

¹⁵ This is perhaps the only instance in literature where the two opposite functions so often ascribed to streams are predicated in the same sentence. It is practically a paradox to state, as is constantly done in all descriptive writing, that streams *water* their valleys. Their function is exactly the reverse,—that of drainage. Only on their immediate shores is any watering effect apparent, except in low, flat lands, generally near the outlets, where they frequently convert extensive areas into swamps.

¹⁶ This is true only of the James river. The Big Sioux rises much farther south, near the sources of Minnesota river and Red River of the North.

for a great Omaha chief, and situated on the west bank of the river 177 [118] miles above the mouth of the Platte.¹⁷

* * * * *

From the Platte to the mouth of the Missouri the distance is 716 miles. In this distance there are thirty-two tributaries, the chief of which are: the Nishnabotna on the north; the two Nemahas on the south; the Nodowa on the north; the Kansas on the south, 235 yards wide at its mouth and navigable by steamboats several hundred miles; Grand river on the north, 190 yards wide; the Osage on the south, 400 yards wide and navigable for a great distance; and the Moreau and Gasconade flowing from nearly the same country. I shall add a last little stream, the Coldwater, a little above the mouth of the Missouri. It waters the clearing grounds of St. Stanislas near Florissant where stands the Jesuit Noviciate of Missouri.

The tributaries of the Missouri which have been given names number 123. The number of islands between the mouth and Fort Benton is 219.

From the mouth of the Missouri to the source of its three forks is 3,700 [2,945] miles. Add to this 1,253 [1,276] miles, the distance from the mouth of the Gulf of Mexico and you have a length of 4,953 [4,221] miles. From the mouth of the Mississippi to Fort Benton, 4,253 [3,561] miles, steam navigation is practicable.

The current of the Missouri is rapid and its water a muddy yellow. Throughout its whole course, in spring and autumn, the principal obstacles to navigation are its sandbars and snags against which the boats strike and are either wrecked or suffer great damage. Other difficulties are the rapids above the mouth of the Yellowstone, which are insurmountable in low water. There are neither falls nor rocks in this entire part of its course.

The magnificent prairies formed by the alluvial lands

¹⁷ Sketch of Blackbird omitted because already given in greater detail in other parts of this work.

that border the river are generally of extraordinary fertility and comprise what is called the Missouri basin. In the matter of fertility, there should be excluded a large portion of the upper watershed of the river in the neighborhood of the mountains; the land is sterile and arid, subject to long droughts and frequent frosts which destroy the harvests. The total extent of the territory watered [drained] by the Missouri is [considerably more than] 500,000 square miles.

The task which I imposed upon myself is accomplished. I dare not flatter myself that I have succeeded well, or have done credit to my subject; but I have at least the assurance of having tried to give you an idea of our great American river and its attributes by the aid of my recollections and impressions. There would remain, indeed, much more to say, if one wished to enter into all the details; but that would exceed the limits of a letter already very long. I will say in closing that at the mouth of the Platte, one is now in the midst of modern civilization and progress. One never ceases to admire, along the banks of the river, the succession of beautiful towns and villages, forges and mills, and manufactories of all kinds. Everything is in a state of transformation. There are new manors by the side of ancient forests, vast fields and smiling prairies, with innumerable herds of domestic cattle. Such is the aspect of things even to the Gulf of Mexico.

If it were possible to have a trial between the Mississippi and the Missouri to determine which has the right to be called the great and long river (*le grand et long fleuve*), it seems to me that the Missouri would win. At the place where the two rivers unite, it is larger [smaller] than its rival. The Missouri is the longer; it exceeds in length [the Mississippi above the mouth of the Missouri] by more than 2,000 [1,669] miles; it is the Missouri which furnishes the greater [smaller] abundance of water; in short it is this river that gives the Mississippi its current, its color, its salubrious and beneficial waters and all its other character-

istics. The name has remained with the Mississippi, because at the time of its discovery by Marquette the Missouri was, so to speak, unknown.¹⁸

¹⁸ Father De Smet here advances a very common argument that the name of the lower Mississippi should have been carried to the Missouri because it is the longer stream.

From this very general view there is excellent reason to dissent. It is not clearly a logical rule that the name of a stream should follow the longest tributary. The size and importance of a river may be more rationally gauged by the volume of flow than by the length of channel. From this point of view the Ohio has the strongest claim to the name and the Missouri the weakest, for the latter stream discharges less water than either of the others. But there are other reasons why neither the length of the stream nor the volume of flow should in this case control, and why the name as it actually applies is exactly right. The Mississippi river flows nearly south through its entire course; it is obviously the trunk stream and all others merely laterals. It divides the country into two great sections, the east and the west. On one side the streams come mainly from the Alleghenies, on the other side from the Rockies. The Mississippi is the great central water-course which gathers up the drainage from both sides and conveys it to the sea. Political divisions are based upon it. For almost its entire length it is a boundary between States. The phrases "trans-Mississippi" and "beyond the Mississippi," so well established in our national literature, would have no meaning if either of the great tributaries carried the name. In fact the naming of this stream is one of those striking instances where the common sense of the multitude is better than the wisdom of the wise, for no doubt if the matter had been left to some learned geographer or society of savants the name would have been placed on the Missouri river to the perpetual inconvenience of future generations.—*American Fur Trade of the Far West.*

CHAPTER III.

FAUNA AND FLORA.¹

Father Point's nosegay — Flowers — Shrubs — Trees — Birds — Reptiles — Insects — Fishes — Quadrupeds.

St. Ignatius' River, Sept. 10, 1841.

*Reverend and Dear Father Provincial.*¹

I INFORMED your Reverence that flowers are found in abundance near the rock called the Chimney. Whilst we were there Father Point culled one flower of every kind, and made a fine nosegay in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the day of the Feast. As we proceeded toward the Black Hills, the flowers diminished in number, but now and then we found some which we had not seen anywhere else. I have taken notice of many of them for the amusement of amateurs. Among such as are double, the most common and those that are chiefly characteristic by the soil on which they grow, are to be found on this side of the Platte river. The rose-colored Lupine flourishes in the plain contiguous to the Platte as far as the Chimney. Beyond it grows a medicinal plant, bearing a yellow flower with five petals, called the prairie épinette; and still farther on, where the soil is extremely barren, are seen three kinds of the prickly-pear; the flowers of these are beautiful, and known among botanists by the name of *Cactus americana*. They have already been naturalized in the flower gardens of Europe.

The colors of the handsomest roses are less pure and lively than the carnation of this beautiful flower. The exterior of the chalice is adorned with all the shades of red

¹ *Letters and Sketches*, p. 110. Addressed in French edition to M. Rollier, avocat à Opdorp, près de Termonde.

and green. The petals are evasated like those of the lily. It is better adapted than the rose to serve as an emblem of the vain pleasures of this nether world, for the thorns that surround it are more numerous, and it almost touches the ground. Among the simples, the most elegant is the blue-bell of our gardens, which, however, far surpasses it by the beauty of its form and the nicety of its shades, varying from white to the deepest azure. Adam's needle, found only on the most barren elevation, is the finest of all pyramidals. About the middle of its stem, which is generally about three feet high, begins a pyramid of flowers, growing close to each other, highly shaded with red and diminishing in size as they approach the summit, which terminates in a point. Its foot is protected by a number of hard, oblong, ribbed and sharp leaves, which have given it the name of Adam's needle. The root is commonly of the thickness of a man's arm, its color white and its form resembles that of the carrot. The Indians eat it occasionally and the Mexicans use it to manufacture soap.

There are many other varieties of flowers, some of them very remarkable and rare even in America, which are still without a name even among travelers. To one of the principal, distinguished by having its bronzed leaves disposed in such a manner as to imitate the capital of a Corinthian column, we have given the name of Corinthian. Another, a kind of straw color, by the form of its stem and its division into twelve branches, brought to our minds the famous dream of the Patriarch Joseph, and we have called it the Josephine. A third, the handsomest of all the daisies (*Reines Marguerites*) that I have ever seen, having a yellow disk with black and red shades and seven or eight rays, any of which would form a fine flower, has been named by us the Dominical, not only because it appeared like the Lady and Mistress of all the flowers around, but also because we discovered it on Sunday.

SHRUBS. The shrubs that bear fruit are few. The most common are the currant and gooseberry of various

sizes and colors, the hawthorn, the raspberry, the wild cherry and the service-berry. Currants, white, red, black and yellow, grow everywhere along the mountains. The best are found on the plains, where they are exposed to be ripened by the sun. I have classed the wild cherry and the service-berry among shrubs, because they are generally of low growth and do not deserve the name of trees. The service-berry (*cornier*) grows on a real shrub, and is a delicious fruit, called by travelers the mountain pear, though it bears no resemblance to the pear, its size being that of a common cherry. The mountain cherry differs much from the European cherry. The fruit hangs in clusters around the branches, and is smaller than the wild cherry, whilst its taste and color and the form of the leaves are nearly the same as those of the latter. Cherries and service-berries constitute a great portion of the Indian's food whilst the season lasts, and they are dried by them to serve for food in the winter. I may perhaps mention other fruits, plants and roots, that grow spontaneously in different parts of the Far West, and are used as food by the Indians for want of better sustenance.

Flax is very common in the valleys between the mountains. What must appear singular is that the root of it is so fruitful that it will produce new stems for a number of years. We examined one of them, and found attached to it about thirty stems, which had sprung from it in former years. Hemp is also found, but in very small quantities.

TREES. There are but few species of trees in the regions which we lately passed. Scarcely any forests are found [except] on the banks of rivers, for which I have already assigned a reason. On the plains we find bushes, and now and then the willow, the alder, the wax tree, the cottonwood or white poplar, whose bark is used for horse feed in winter, and the aspen, whose leaves are always trembling. Some Canadians have conceived a very superstitious idea of this tree. They say that of its wood the cross was made on which our Savior was nailed, and that since the time

of the crucifixion, its leaves have not ceased to tremble! The only lofty trees found on the mountains are the pine and the cedar, which is either white or red. The latter is chiefly used for furniture, as it is the most resistible wood of the West. There are several species of the pine: the Norwegian, the resinous, the white and the elastic, so-called because the Indians use it to make bows.

So great is the violence of the winds in the vicinity of the Black Hills that the cottonwood, which is almost the only tree that grows there, displays the most fantastic shapes. I have seen some whose branches had been so violently twisted that they became incorporated with the trunk, and after this, grew in such strange forms and directions that at a distance it was impossible to distinguish what part of the tree was immediately connected with the roots.

BIRDS. I shall say but little of the birds. They are various in form, color and size; from the pelican and the swan to the wren and the humming-bird. Muratori, speaking of the last, compares him to the nightingale and is astonished that such shrill and loud sounds should proceed from so small a body. The celebrated author must have been mistaken, unless the humming-bird of South America be different from that of the Rocky Mountains. The latter does not sing, but makes a humming noise with his wings as he flies from flower to flower.

REPTILES. With respect to reptiles, they have been frequently described and I mention them only to give thanks to God by whose Providence we have been delivered from all such as are venomous, chiefly from the rattlesnake. Neither men nor beasts belonging to our caravan have suffered from them, though they were so numerous in places that our wagoners killed as many as twelve in one day with their whips.

INSECTS abound in these regions. The ant has often attracted the notice of naturalists. Some have seemed to doubt whether the wheat stored up by this little insect serves for winter provisions or for the construction of its

dwelling. No wheat grows in this country. Yet the ant piles up small pebbles of the size and form of grains of wheat in hills a foot high and three or four in diameter, which inclines me to believe that they use both for the construction of their cells. In either case the paternal providence of God is manifest. They display as much foresight in providing dwellings that are out of the reach of humidity and inundations as in laying up food for future wants. It is probable, however, that here they find food of another kind, and this might easily be ascertained. Fleas are not known in the mountains, but there is another sort of vermin nearly allied to it, to which I have alluded in one of my former letters.

And what shall I say of mosquitoes? I have suffered so much from them, that I cannot leave them unnoticed. In the middle of the day they do not trouble the traveler, if he keep aloof from the shade and walk in the burning sun. But at nightfall they light on him, and hang on him till morning, like leeches sucking his blood. There is no defense against their darts, but to hide under a buffalo skin, or wrap one's self up in some stuff which they cannot pierce, and run the risk of being smothered.—When green or rotten wood can be procured, they may be driven away by smoke, but in such case the traveler himself is smoked, and in spite of all he can do his eyes are filled with tears. As soon as the smoke ceases, they return to the charge till other wood is provided and thrown on the fire, so that the traveler's sleep is frequently interrupted, which proves very annoying after the fatigue of a troublesome journey. Another species of insects, called *frappe d'abord* or buffalo gnats, are found by myriads in the desert, and are not less troublesome than the mosquito. They are so small that they are scarcely perceptible, and light on any part of the body that is uncovered, penetrating even into the eyes, ears and nostrils. To guard against them the traveler, even in the warmest weather, wears gloves, ties a handkerchief over his forehead, neck and ears, and smokes a short pipe or a

cigar to drive them from his eyes and nostrils. The fire-fly is a harmless insect. When they are seen in great numbers, darting their phosphoric light through the darkness, it is a sure sign that rain is at hand. The light which they emit is very brilliant, and appears as if it proceeded from wandering meteors. It is a favorite amusement with the Indians to catch these insects, and after rubbing the phosphoric matter over their faces, to walk around the camp, for the purpose of frightening children and exciting mirth.

FISHES. As our hunters were scarcely ever disappointed in finding game, we have seldom had recourse to fishing, except on fast days; hence our acquaintance with the finny race is rather limited. On some occasions, when provisions were becoming scarce, the line had to supply the place of the gun. The fish which we generally caught were the mullet, two kinds of trout, and a species of carps. Once, while we lay encamped on the banks of Snake river, I caught more than 100 of these carps in the space of an hour. The anchovy, the sturgeon and the salmon abound in the rivers of the Oregon Territory. There are six species of salmon. They come up the rivers toward the end of April and after spawning, never return; but the young ones go down to the sea in September, and it is supposed that they re-enter the rivers the fourth year after they have left them.

QUADRUPEDS. The beaver seems to have chosen this country for his own. Every one knows how they work and what use they make of their teeth and tail. What we were told by the trappers is probably unknown to many. When they are about constructing a dam they examine all the trees on the bank and choose the one that is most bent over the water on the side where they want to erect their fort. If they find no tree of this kind they repair to another place, or patiently wait till a violent wind gives the requisite inclination to some of the trees.

Some of the Indian tribes believe that the beavers are a degraded race of human beings, whose vices and crimes have induced the Great Spirit to punish them by changing

them into their present form; and they think, after the lapse of a number of years, their punishment will cease, and they will be restored to their original shape. They even believe that these animals use a kind of language to communicate their thoughts to each other, to consult, deliberate, pass sentence on delinquents, etc.

The trappers assured us that such beavers as are unwilling to work are unanimously proscribed and exiled from the republic, and that they are obliged to seek some abandoned hole, at a distance from the rest, where they spend the winter in a state of starvation. These are easily caught, but their skin is far inferior to that of the more industrious neighbors, whose foresight and perseverance have procured them abundant provisions and a shelter against the severity of the winter season. The flesh of the beaver is fat and savory. The feet are deemed the most dainty parts. The tail affords a substitute for butter. The skin is sold for nine or ten dollars' worth of provisions or merchandise, the value of which does not amount to a single silver dollar. A gill of whisky, which has not cost the trader more than three or four cents, is sometimes sold for three or four dollars, though the chief virtue which it possesses is to kill the body and soul of the buyer. We need not wonder then when we see wholesale dealers in this poisonous article realize large fortunes in a very short time, and that the retailers, of whom some received as much as \$800 per annum, often present a most miserable appearance before the year expires. The Hudson Bay Company does not belong to this class of traders. By them the sale of all sorts of liquors is strictly forbidden.

The otter is an inhabitant of the mountain rivers. His color is dark brown or black. Like the beaver, he is incessantly pursued by the hunters, and the number of both these animals is yearly diminishing. Among other amphibious animals we find two species of the frog. One does not differ from the European, but the other offers scarcely any resemblance. It has a tail and horns and is only found

on the most arid soil. By some of our travelers it was called the salamander.

Opossums are common here. They are generally found near marshes and ponds that abound in small crawfish, of which they are extremely fond. To catch them he places himself on the bank, and lets his long hairless tail hang down in the water. The crawfish are allured by the bait, and as soon as they put their claws to it, the opossum throws them up, seizes them sideways between his teeth, and carries them to some distance from the water, where he greedily but cautiously devours his prey.

The badger inhabits the whole extent of the desert; he is seldom seen, as he retires to his hole at the least approach of danger. Some naturalists refer this animal to the genuine [genus?] *Ursus*. Its size is that of the dormouse; its color silver grey; its paws are short, and its strength prodigious. A Canadian having seized one as he entered the hole, he required the assistance of another man to pull him out.

The prairie dog, in shape, color and agility, more resembles the squirrel than the animal from which it has taken its name. They live together in separate lodges, to the number of several thousands. The earth which they throw up to construct their lodges, forms a kind of slope which prevents the rain from entering the holes. At the approach of man, this little animal runs into his lodge, uttering a piercing cry, which puts the whole tribe on their guard. After some minutes, the boldest show a part of their heads, as if to spy the enemy, and this is the moment which the hunter chooses to kill them. The Indians informed us that they sometimes issue in a body, apparently to hold a council, and that wisdom presides over their deliberations. They admit to their dwellings the bird of Minerva, the striped squirrel and the rattlesnake, and it is impossible to determine what is the cause of this wonderful sympathy. It is said too that they live only on the dew and grass roots, a remark founded upon the position of

their village, which is always found where the ground is waterless and barren.

The polecat, or *Mephitis Americana*, is a beautifully speckled animal. When pursued, it raises its tail and discharges a large quantity of fluid, which nature has intended for its defense. It repeats these discharges in proportion as the pursuer comes near it. So strong is the fetid odor of this liquid that neither man nor beast can bear it. It happened once near St. Louis that Reverend Father Van Quickenborne saw two of these cats. He took them for young cubs, and pleased with the discovery, he alighted from his horse, and wished to catch them. He approached them cautiously, and was just ready to put his large hat over one of them, when all at once a discharge was made that covered him all over. It was impossible to go near him for several days — all around him was infected. His clothes could no longer be used, and the poor man, though rather late, resolved never again to attempt to catch young bears!

The cabri (antelope) resembles the deer in form and size; the antlers are smaller and have but two branches; the color of the animal resembles that of the stag; the eyes are large and piercing; and its gait in the wilderness is a kind of elegant gallop. Sometimes the antelope stops short and rears his head to observe his pursuer; this is the most favorable moment to kill him. When startled or shot at and missed, he darts forward with incredible swiftness, but curiosity induces him to halt and look back. The hunter tries to amuse his curiosity, by holding up and waving some bright-colored object: the animal approaches, and curiosity becomes the cause of his death. The flesh is wholesome and easily digested, but it is used only where deer and buffalo meat are wanting. The antelope hunt is a favorite sport with the Indians. They choose a spot of ground from fifty to eighty feet square, and inclose it with posts and boughs, leaving a small opening or entrance, two or three feet wide. From this entrance they construct

two wings or hedges, which they extend for several miles.— After this they form a large semicircle, and drive the antelopes before them till they enter between the hedges, where they press so hard upon them that they force them into the square inclosure, in which they kill them with clubs. I have been told that the number of antelopes thus driven into the inclosure, often amounts to more than 200.

The meat of the buffalo cow is the most wholesome and the most common in the West. It may be called the daily bread of the traveler, for he never loses his relish for it. It is more easily procured than any other, and it is good throughout. Though some prefer the tongue, others the hump, or some other favorite piece, all the parts are excellent food. To preserve the meat it is cut in slices, thin enough to be dried in the sun; sometimes a kind of hash is made of it, and this is mixed with the marrow taken from the largest bones. This kind of mixture is called bull or cheese, and is generally served up and eaten raw, but when boiled or baked it is of more easy digestion, and has a more savory taste to a civilized palate.

The form and size of the buffalo are sufficiently known. It is a gregarious animal, and is seldom seen alone. Several hundreds² herd together, the males on one side, the females on the other, except at a certain season of the year. In the month of June we saw an immense herd of them on the Platte. The chase of this animal is very interesting. The hunters are well mounted; at a given signal, they fall upon the herd, which is soon dispersed; each one chooses his own animal, for he who slays the first is looked upon as the king of the chase — his aim must be sure and mortal, for the animal, when wounded, becomes furious, turns upon his hunter and pursues him in his turn. We once witnessed a scene of this kind. A young American had the imprudence to swim over a river and pursue a wounded buffalo with no other weapon but his knife. The animal turned

² Fr. thousands.

back upon him, and had it not been for the young Englishman, whom I have already mentioned, his imprudence would have cost him his life. The greatest feat of a hunter is to drive the wounded animal to any place he thinks proper. We had a hunter named John Gray, reputed one of the best marksmen of the mountains; he had frequently given proofs of extraordinary courage and dexterity, especially when on one occasion he dared to attack five bears at once. Wishing to give us another sample of his valor, he drove an enormous buffalo he had wounded, into the midst of the caravan. The animal had stood about fifty shots, and been pierced by more than twenty balls; three times he had fallen, but fury increasing his strength, he had risen after each fall, and with his horns threatened all who dared to approach him. At last the hunter took a decisive aim, and the buffalo fell to rise no more.

“Approaching” is carried on without horses. An experienced hunter, though on foot, may attack a whole herd of buffaloes; but he must be skillful and cautious. He must approach them against the wind, for fear of starting the game, for so acute is the scent of the buffalo that he smells his enemy at a very considerable distance. Next, he must approach them as much as possible without being seen or suspected. If he cannot avoid being seen, he draws a skin over his head, or a kind of hood, surmounted by a pair of horns, and thus deceives the herd. When within gunshot, he must hide himself behind a bank or any other object. There he waits till he can take sure aim. The report of the gun and the noise made by the fall of the wounded buffalo, astound, but do not drive away the rest. In the meantime the hunter reloads his gun and shoots again, repeating the manœuvre till five or six, and sometime more buffaloes have fallen, before he finds it necessary to abandon his place of concealment.

The Indians say that the buffaloes live together as the bees, under the direction of a queen, and that when the queen is wounded, all the others surround and deplore her.

If this were the case, the hunter who had the good fortune to kill the queen, would have fine sport in dispatching the rest. After death, the animal is dressed, that is, he is stripped of his robe, quartered and divided; the best pieces are chosen and carried off by the hunter, who, when the chase has been successful, is sometimes satisfied with the tongue alone. The rest is left for the wolves. These voracious prowlers soon come to the banquet, except when the scene of slaughter is near the camp. In such cases they remain at bay till night, when all is still. Then they come to the charge, and set up such howling that they frighten the inexperienced traveler. But their yells and howlings, however frightful, have little or no effect upon those whose ears have become accustomed to such music. These sleep with as little concern as if there were not a wolf in the country.

Of wolves we have seen four varieties, the grey, the white, the black and the bluish. The grey seems to be the most common, as they are the most frequently seen.—The black wolves are large and ferocious animals. They sometimes mingle with a herd of buffaloes, and at first appear quite harmless, but when they find a young calf strayed from its dam, or an old cow on the brink of a precipice, they are sure to attack and kill the former, and to harass the latter till they succeed in pushing it down the precipice. The wolves are very numerous in these regions. The plains are full of holes, which are generally deep, and into which they retire when hunger does not compel them to prowl about, or when they are pursued by the huntsman. There is a small sized wolf [coyote], called the medicine wolf, regarded by the Indians as a sort of manitou. They watch its yelpings during the night, and the superstitious conjurers pretend to understand and interpret them. According to the loudness, frequency and other modifications of these yelpings, they interpret that either friends or foes approach the camp, etc., and if it happens that on some occasion they conjecture right, the prediction is never for-

gotten, and the conjurers take care to mention it on every emergency.

There are also four kinds of bears, distinguished by the colors white, black, brown and grey. The white and grey bears [grizzlies] are what the lion is in Asia, the kings of the mountains; they are scarcely inferior to the lion in strength and courage. I have sometimes joined in the chase of this animal, but I was in good company, safe from danger. Four Indian hunters ran around the bear and stunned him with their cries; they soon dispatched him. In less than a quarter of an hour after this another fell beneath their blows. This chase is perhaps the most dangerous of any; for the bear, when wounded, becomes furious, and unless he be disabled, as was the case in the two instances mentioned, he attacks and not unfrequently kills his pursuers. Messrs. Lewis and Clark, in their expedition to the sources of the Missouri, adduce a striking proof of the physical strength of this animal, which shows that he is a most formidable enemy. One evening, the men who were in the hindmost canoe discovered a bear, crouched in the prairie, at a distance of about 300 yards from the river. Six of them, all skillful hunters, left the canoe and advanced to attack him. Protected by a little eminence, they approached without being perceived, till they were but forty steps from the animal. Four of the men discharged their guns, and each one lodged a ball in his body — two of the balls had pierced the lungs. The bear, frantic with rage, started up and rushed upon his enemies, with wide extended jaws. As he approached, the two hunters who had kept their fire, inflicted two wounds on him; one of the balls broke his shoulder, which for a few moments retarded his progress, but before they could reload their guns, he was so close upon them that they had to run with the greatest speed to the river. Here he was on the point of seizing them; two of the men threw themselves into the canoe and the four others scattered and hid themselves among the willows, where they loaded and fired with the greatest expedi-

tion. They wounded him several times, which only served to increase his fury; at last he pursued two of them so closely, that they were compelled to provide for their safety by leaping into the river from a perpendicular bank nearly twenty feet high. The bear followed them, and was but a few feet from them, when one of the hunters who had come from his lurking place, sent a ball through his head and killed him. They dragged him to the shore, and there ascertained that not less than eight balls passed through his body.

All the mountain Indians confirm the statement that in winter the bear sucks his paw and lives on his own fat. They say furthermore that before going into winter quarters, namely into the hollow of a rock or of a tree or into some underground hole, he purges himself, then fills himself up with dry seeds, which he does not digest at all. Then he remains lying upon one side for some weeks with the heel of one paw all the time in his mouth, and turns over only four times in the course of the winter.

Tigers [mountain lions?] are very numerous in the regions whence I am writing; but it appears that the fear of man is upon them not less than upon the other animals. Only a few days ago an Indian hunter came back to camp with three fine skins, eight to nine feet in length from the tip of the tail to the nose. He had come upon their tracks, and though armed only with a bow and arrows and accompanied by two small dogs, he had boldly followed them until he found them in a tree, where he had succeeded in killing them with arrows. These animals have extraordinary strength in their tails, and make skillful use of them to choke to death deer, bighorn, elk and other animals which serve them for food.

I remain, etc.

CHAPTER IV.¹

THE MORMONS.

Rapid settlement of the West — A forecast — Salt Lake Valley — What the Mormons have accomplished there — Proposed emigration to Sonora — Their rise, doctrine and present status.

* * * * *

TRULY, the United States is a region where marvels of every sort follow one another so swiftly that one can scarcely follow them or believe what he hears. Towns and villages appear as if by enchantment. In 1837² I traversed a desert of some hundred and fifty leagues in which there was neither a house nor a cabin to give shelter to the traveler; once in a great while I met an Indian out hunting. Will you believe it? to-day that desert contains upwards of fifty cities, towns and villages, and thousands of the finest farms that one could ask to see.

The first civilized man who set up his tent amongst the Indians on the spot where now stands St. Louis, has just recently died. He built the first house; he leaves a city which contains already 90,000 to 100,000 inhabitants, and which will have 200,000 before 1860. I have just been down and up the Mississippi and the Ohio for more than 400 leagues. I know plenty of people here who remember the time when the Indian was lord of those waters and the whites only navigated them in secret, or else in large numbers and well armed; to-day, on those two rivers and their tributaries, over 700 steamboats, like floating palaces, sail majestically in all their

¹ Extract from a letter to his nephew Charles, March, 1851 (in French).

² This date is wrong. It was probably 1838.

splendor, employing 25,000 sailors and carrying 140,000 tons of every kind of produce and merchandise. These boats are valued at \$12,000,000, and expend \$10,000,000 annually, while the value of the merchandise that they transport in the course of a year from city to city and from one State to another, may be estimated roundly at \$250,000,000. Of the lands watered by these great rivers, not one acre in ten is cultivated. What will it be like when the nine that remain are subjected to culture? Then 7,000 steamboats will be required to carry the products and the merchandise. The time is not far distant when on the banks of the Mississippi and the Ohio, from St. Louis and Cincinnati to New Orleans, there will be seen but a single unbroken village, surrounded with fair gardens and lovely fields. At another time I will speak to you in detail of the immense resources of this country, which could with ease employ and nourish all the inhabitants of the British Isles, France, Germany, Belgium, Holland and Spain.

But I forget myself; I started to tell you of a recent and genuinely American occurrence. It has to do with the new Territory of Utah. In 1846³ I found myself involved with a single companion in some very difficult and dangerous mountain passes. The character of the region appeared to me at that time very singular; its situation is different from that of any other section of North America. The summits of these precipitous and rocky mountains are covered with perpetual snows; the valleys are very narrow, sterile and arid; the earth and rocks are covered with bitter and saline incrustations; no other vegetation is to be seen than sagebrush of large growth, sufficient in that region for firewood for the lone traveler in those parts. As soon as one is through these passages, always arid in summer and choked with snow through five months of the year, he comes into a lovely and very extensive valley, which is the only habit-

³ This is probably a slip for 1841, when the Father did have an experience, like that here related, in the country now occupied by the Mormons.— See p. 303.

able part; it is called to-day the Great American Basin, and it lies some 5,000 feet above sea-level. This basin is 560 miles in diameter; it has its own system of lakes and rivers, and has no apparent communication with the ocean. It is possible that gulfs may exist in the Great Salt lake, through which its waters discharge themselves into the Pacific, or it may communicate with other lakes in the regions of Lower California. The Great Salt lake, which is about 300 miles in circumference, lies in the northern part of the Great basin. It is rather shallow in the portions thus far explored; but is supposed to be very deep in the central parts. The water of the lake is more salty than sea-water. Three gallons of it yield a gallon of salt of the greatest purity, whiteness and fineness. On the northeast of the lake is the termination of the valley of Bear river. This valley is thirty miles long by twenty-two wide, and communicates with another valley which is fifty miles by eight.⁴ It is in this first valley, inclosed by picturesque mountains, which has taken the name of the Valley of the Mormons, that their capital stands, called by some Great Salt Lake City, and by others Mormonville. These two valleys contain the principal body of emigrants belonging to this sect (a species of socialism and communism), more than 30,000 in number. They are capable of supporting in time a population of over 1,000,000.

In the fall of 1846, as I drew near to the frontiers of the State of Missouri, I found the advance guard of the Mormons, numbering about 10,000, camped in the territory of the Omahas, not far from the old Council Bluffs. They had just been driven out for the second time from a State of the Union (Illinois had received them after their war with the people of Missouri). They had resolved to winter on the threshold of the great desert, and then to move on-

⁴ Cache Valley, one of the most beautiful of all the mountain valleys, and now occupied by a dense Mormon population with some thirteen flourishing villages which can all be seen at once from any vantage point in the surrounding hills.

ward into it, to put distance between themselves and their persecutors, without even knowing at that time the goal of their long wanderings, nor the spot where they should once more build for themselves permanent dwellings. They asked me a thousand questions about the regions I had explored and the spot which I have just described to you pleased them greatly from the account I gave them of it. Was that what determined them? I would not dare to assert it. They are there. In the last three years Utah has changed its aspect, and from a desert has become a flourishing territory which will soon become one of the States of the Union. It is bounded by California, Oregon, New Mexico and the region called of old the Great Western Territory.

In 1847, in the month of April, the first Mormon pioneers left the place of their winter quarters at Council Bluffs; on the 22d of July of the same year they entered this valley and halted at the place which forms to-day the centre of the city. In the afternoon of the same day they were at work with three plows and a harrow, and had begun the first ditch for the irrigation of the field. On the 24th they planted five acres in potatoes. On the 28th they laid out the plan of the future city. It is divided into ten-acre blocks with eight lots to each block and a vast garden and yard to each lot. The streets are eight rods in width and the sidewalks on each side twenty feet. There are to be shade-trees along the sidewalks. Each block is surrounded with a stream of limpid water, coming down in abundance from the mountains. Every house stands twenty feet from the street line, and no two houses are built opposite each other, so that a man in his own front door cannot look into that of his neighbor, but has a fine view of his garden. There are four great public places, which will be adorned with beautiful fountains and trees brought from the four quarters of the globe. The square of the temple will have a fine garden. Already their missionaries have made arrangements in the Eastern States, in England, France, Italy, Denmark, Germany and the

islands of the sea, to make collections of the choicest seeds and fruits, or anything else that can serve for the embellishment of this garden. By the first plan the city contained 135 blocks; since then there have been added 65 blocks on the east and 60 on the west of the city. The University place is a mile square.

It is barely three years since the first house was built in this city and to-day there are several thousand comfortable houses, built of sun-dried bricks, and they have an abundance of all the necessaries of life. In the vicinity of the city there are a great number of springs of all temperatures, mineral, sulphurous and pure water. The fields have to be irrigated to render them productive. The city lies twenty-two miles southeast of the Great Salt lake. Southward from it, at a distance of fifty miles, are Utah lake and valley, where the Mormons have built the city of Provo on the bank of a river which bears the same name. The water of this lake is pure; it is eight miles by four and abounds in fish. A hundred miles south of this valley a colony of some 200 families have settled in a place called San Pete, where ruins have been found covered with hieroglyphics, and a mountain, strange to say, of rock salt. While I was at St. Mary's, among the Flatheads, in 1844-1845, I sent several times to this mountain for salt.

For five months of the year there is no communication with the north, east or west, by reason of the snow, which renders the passage of the mountains impracticable. The capital of the Mormons is 111° west of Greenwich.

Such is the change that has come over this desert in so short a time, and such the spot chosen by these new sectarians for a shelter against the tyranny and persecutions that other sectarians have brought upon them. In the midst of the desert they have added a new star to the grand and beautiful American constellation. The Mormon sect has not been in existence thirty years. Already they have 200,000 converts or adepts, all of whom propose to go out and join their Utah brethren. The locality is well chosen, and will

be able to render immense services as a place for rest, refreshment and provisioning for the army of emigrants who pass year after year on their way to settle in California or Oregon; and when the great railroad is built, which is to join the Atlantic to the Pacific, this territory will be of great assistance, and will serve as a great support, or station by the way.

* * * * *

University of St. Louis, December 12, 1857.

Very dear FRANCIS:

* * * * *

Things are going on very easily in America. It will take a long time to restore confidence among the people. A whole new banking system is projected with assured guarantees. Hitherto these kinds of establishments have, for the most part, been nothing but regular traps, arrangements for smart scoundrels to get hold of the people's money with impunity.

There is a good deal of talk just now about war with the Mormons. These polygamous fanatics have lately been committing infamous atrocities upon the poor peaceable emigrants. A war of extermination is being prepared for them. The Mormons could make it a long and hard one in their almost inaccessible mountains. I think that the Mormons will pass the winter in doing the Americans all the damage they can, and early in the spring take up their march and take possession of the province of Sonora in Mexico. They have a political system that is inadmissible in a republic, and a religious system still less admissible, which is the "abomination of abominations," invented in the present century. The place where they live, the Great Salt lake country, is most miserable. Wood, fresh water and grass are scarce. The region would never allow a heavy settle-

ment. The climate is not wholesome. Sonora offers all kinds of advantages, and the Mormons, after they have done all the harm they can, will take refuge there.⁵

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University of St. Louis, Jan. 19, 1858.

*Reverend and Dear Father:*⁶

I propose to give you in this letter a short sketch of the fanatic sect of Mormons, against whom the Government of the United States has just sent troops, in order to subject them to the laws, or force them to leave the country. The facts which I will relate on the origin and history of this singular people are chiefly drawn from a recent work by John Hyde, who had been an elder or minister of the Mormon sect.

The founder of the Mormons was one Joseph Smith, born of an obscure family, December 23, 1805, at Sharon, Windsor county, Vermont. The whole life of this man, from youth up, was marked by fanaticism, fraud and vice. More than fifty persons of good reputation and in every way worthy of respect, who knew him at Palmyra, New York, where he had settled with his family, have testified under oath that Joseph Smith was regarded as a man of no moral character and given to vicious habits. In 1820 Smith embraced Methodism. In April of that year he pretended to have had a revelation from heaven, while praying in the

⁵ The general outcry against the Mormons at this time had its influence upon Father De Smet, as is evidenced by his change of view in the six years between the dates of this and the preceding letter. Perhaps his ready acceptance of the report that the Mormons contemplated an exodus to Mexico was a case of "the wish is father to the thought." That would, indeed, have been an effective solution of the Mormon question in the United States.

⁶ To the editor of the *Précis Historiques*, Brussels.

woods. He said that God the Father and Jesus Christ his Son had appeared to him, and had declared to him that his sins were forgiven, that God had chosen him to restore his kingdom on earth and propagate anew the truth of the gospel which all christendom had lost. In 1823 Smith, forgetting his revelations and his pretended divine mission, plunged as deep as ever in blasphemy, fraud, drunkenness and other vices. Then, he said, an angel appeared to him and revealed the existence of a book written on gold plates and containing the history of the ancient inhabitants of America. This is the origin of the "Book of Mormon," or Golden Bible, the Koran of these Mahometans. The next day Smith visited the spot designated by the angel as the spot where the book was. This was on the slope of a hill between Palmyra and Manchester. There he pretended to find in fact golden plates in a stone box; but this time his efforts to raise them were vain. There was, he says, a great contest between the devil and the angels as to it; but although the devil was beaten, the angel did not give the book to Smith, who received it only four years after, on the 22d of September, 1827.

The Book of Mormon, like the Koran, is a tissue of contradictory plagiarisms and absurd inventions. The whole is interlarded with passages from the Bible. It has been proved that the portion given as historical is merely a plagiary of a romance of Solomon Spalding whose manuscript had been stolen by Smith. Spalding had written, under the title of *The Discovered Manuscript*, a romance on the origin of the American Indians. He died before publishing it. After his death his widow removed to New York and Smith is known to have worked near her house. Some time after the publication of the Book of Mormon she discovered the loss of her husband's manuscript. Many of Spalding's relatives and friends detected *The Discovered Manuscript*, slightly altered, in Smith's book. Spalding had been in the habit of reading long passages from his novel; the singularity of the facts, names and style, which was biblical, had so struck them

that they did not forget it. Now, the Book of Mormon had the same characteristics, the same strange names, the same incredible facts, the same style. John Spalding, the author's brother, thus expresses himself on the point: "My brother's book was entitled *The Discovered Manuscript*. It was an historical novel on the first inhabitants of America. Its object was to show that the American Indians were descended from the Jews, or the lost tribes. There was a detailed description of their voyage, by land and sea, from their departure from Jerusalem to their arrival in America, under the orders of Nephi and Lehi. I have recently read the Book of Mormon. To my great astonishment I have found almost the same historical matters, the same names, etc., such as they were in my brother's writings." Many other persons, who knew Solomon Spalding well, and who for the most part knew nothing of Joseph Smith, gave similar testimony under oath.

The Book of Mormon probably derives its name from one of the chapters of this novel. A descendant of Lehi obtained the plates of gold, brass, etc., on which the prophets had engraved the history of the voyages and wars of their race, and this descendant was called *Mormon*. He abridged this history, and gave it to his son Moroni. The latter, having added a sketch of the history of Jared, inclosed all in a box, which he buried on a hill, A. D. 400. Smith, declaring himself chosen to give this wonderful book to the world, pretended to have received the gift of understanding and translating it. He did not write this translation himself, but dictated it. During the dictation he was concealed behind a curtain made of a bed-quilt, for the plates were so sacred that he did not even permit his secretary to gaze on them. To give a still higher idea of his golden bible, he explained the title after his own fashion. According to him, the word *Mormon* comes from the Egyptian *mon*, signifying *good*, and the English word *more*; so that *Mormon* means *Better!* Now, the bible, says Smith, in its widest signification, means *good*, since our Lord says in the gospel, "I am the good

shepherd." The ignorant and fanatical believe all those fables.

The Book of Mormon, although most known, is not the chief book of the sect. The *Book of Teachings and Covenants*, containing some of the revelations which Smith pretended to have received from heaven, is regarded by his disciples as a book of the law which God has given this generation. Smith also published other revelations, which are contained in a little book called *The Pearl of Great Price*. Much of the doctrine of Smith is a mere repetition of the works of various Protestant sects. He has imitated Mahomet in his infamous immorality by permitting polygamy. To all this his successor has added abominable doctrines on the nature and attributes of God.

Smith organized his new religion in 1830. He could then number only six disciples. The next year, having obtained new adherents, he sent elders, two by two, to preach the new doctrine. When the number of his disciples had sufficiently increased, he founded a colony in Missouri, but their conduct induced the people of that State — first those around Independence, where the Mormons had first settled, and then those of Liberty — to expel them from the State. In 1834 the Mormon sect adopted the pompous title of "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints," and thence the Mormons called themselves Latter-Day Saints, or simply Saints.

Smith and his adepts having acquired, in 1839, a large tract in Illinois, in a beautiful section on the banks of the Mississippi, built a flourishing city, which they called Nauvoo, erected a magnificent temple, now in ruins, and lived there till 1844, when they rendered themselves odious to the people of that State. They were attacked by an ungovernable mob, and the false prophet and his brother, Hyrum, were massacred in prison at Carthage.

In 1845 these persecutions continued and the Mormons, driven at last from Nauvoo, resolved in council to seek a solitary and permanent abode in some fertile valley at the

foot of the Rocky Mountains. They carried out this project in 1847, penetrated into the desert some 1,200 miles, and founded a new city on the banks of the Great Salt lake, at the foot of a lofty chain of mountains forming a portion of the eastern limits of the Great basin. Brigham Young, Smith's successor as prophet and chief, was their leader in this long and painful march.

The valley of the Great basin is about 500 miles long from north to south, and 350 from east to west. It is formed by the Sierra Madre bounding it on the east, and by the Goose creek and Humboldt Mountains on the west. Utah Territory, thus occupied by the Mormons, contains in all 187,923 square miles. (The lake, which is now only seventy miles long and thirty-five wide, probably filled, at a remote epoch, the whole valley. On all sides, on the slopes of the mountains, at a uniform height, are traces which water alone could have made.) In 1841 I traversed much of this valley in my rambles in the Rocky Mountains. The country was then wooded and agreeable, watered by springs and streams, winding through the valley. Since the Mormon emigration the forests have disappeared on the slopes of the hills and mountains, and, as the snows are more exposed to the rays of the sun and melt quicker, the springs dry up, and the streams give scarcely water enough in the spring to irrigate the cultivated fields and supply the domestic animals.

Salt Lake City contains at present 15,000 inhabitants. They are mostly English, Scotch and Swedes. Hardly one-fourth of the Mormons are Americans by birth. They are scattered up and down in the villages and towns of all the plains and valleys of Utah, so called from an Indian tribe of that region. The Territory is bounded on the north by Oregon, on the west by California, on the east by the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska, and on the south by New Mexico. The total number of the inhabitants of the Territory is less than 50,000, although the Mormon leaders,

for ends of their own, represent it as much higher. The number of Mormons in different countries is estimated at 300,000. They send their emissaries to all parts of the globe. These take good care not to present Mormonism in its true colors to those who are not as yet prepared to accept it such as it is. Many of the Mormons at Salt Lake, it is said, adopted the new sect only in hopes of finding there an earthly paradise, with unlimited abundance for every want. Once in Utah, it is no easy matter to escape the snares and despotic power of the leader.

Brigham Young, president of the Mormon church, and now rebellious Governor of Utah Territory, enjoys absolute authority over his people. This man is, like Joseph Smith, a native of Vermont, born at Whittingham, June 1, 1801. Having embraced Mormonism in 1832, he soon became Smith's intimate friend. Since he became chief of the Mormons, he has displayed boundless ambition and talents far superior to Smith's. He labors to establish Mormonism all over the American continent. As to the Territory which he governs, he wishes to make it an independent State in the confederation. He has often declared that he will permit no one else to be Governor of Utah. He defies the authority of the President and of all the Union. The judges and other officers appointed by the General Government for the civil administration of Utah have been expelled from the Territory, after seeing it useless to attempt to exercise their functions. Young has set up tribunals of his own, and in the United States courts which he tolerated before his rebellion, the juries gave verdicts according to his direction. The Government at last resolved to resort even to force to make him respect its authority. Accordingly, last fall (1857), a detachment of 2,500 men was sent to the Territory to maintain the new Governor and his suite.

On this Young prepared to resist. The troops have already entered Utah, but the severity of the winter arrests them about 150 miles from the Mormon capital. The Mor-

mons are not idle. They have surprised a train of seventy-six wagons, pillaged and burned them, carrying off all the animals, horses, mules and oxen. This loss is estimated at a million of dollars. The troops, ill-lodged and ill-fed, will suffer terribly if the winter is severe, as it is usually in the elevated parts which they occupy. As soon as the spring opens large reinforcements will be sent. There is a great diversity of opinion here on the matter. Many think that the war will be long and bloody, and that the Mormons will resist to the death. A great manifestation on the part of the Government will, doubtless, be necessary; and I think that as the new forces approach the rebel territory, the Mormons will retire after setting fire to their towns, and march to occupy some new district — Sonora, perhaps, or some other thinly-settled tract in the vast Mexican territory. This fanatical sect will find repose only outside of all other civil jurisdiction. It will master and subject all, unless it is mastered and expelled in season.

One more word on the Mormons and I have done. A new organization has been given to the Mormon troops. In 1840 Smith organized the Nauvoo Legion, and compelled all his disciples from the age of sixteen to fifty to enter it. This little troop has continually increased, and preserves its old name. No effort is spared to render the soldiers perfect in military discipline and exercises. They have at their head officers who served under General Scott in the Mexican war. Young's whole army might, in case of necessity, be brought up to 8,000 men. This number would not be formidable, were they not all animated with a spirit of fanaticism which will make them fight, if it comes to that, with an obstinacy like that of the first Mahometans. Besides the community of religion and interest there exists among them another bond. A great number of them are bound to the president and Prophet Young by horrible oaths. There exists among this people a society called the Mormon Endowment, into which members are admitted amid cere-

monies most capable of inspiring superstitious terror. The initiated take an oath of blind obedience, as understood by the secret societies of Europe. The penalty of death awaits him who violates his oath. If the Mormons wish war, as they so loudly proclaim, they will have a chance this year, but they cannot long resist the troops of the United States.

I have the honor to be, etc.

CHAPTER V.

INDIAN ANECDOTES.

Principle governing courtships — The minister and the vowing savage — Brotherhood — Lying — A Blackfoot episode — A cherry-tree feud — On the destination of Calvinist ministers.

THERE¹ was an old Indian chief, who was a great observer. He had spent several years among the whites, and he said that the Indians not only had quicker ways of getting a wife, but were at the same time more certain of getting a good one. "Because," said he, in his bad French, "white man spark, spark, long time — maybe whole year, maybe two years, before marry. All right! Maybe wife good — maybe heap bad; maybe scold. Suppose wife scold; get up in morning, scold, all day scold, scold till go to sleep. Maybe scold, maybe not scold — all same thing; white man have to keep her long as live. How Indian do? Indian, see girl plenty work — go up to her, show her two finger right hand, heap close — two finger all same one — Indian look at girl, see girl smile — all right! Girl say yes. Then make feast and live together. No danger wife scold — wife know what husband do when wife scold. Husband run off, hide! Indian woman like heap buffalo meat, deer meat — no husband, no buffalo, no deer. Wife heap try please husband — husband heap try please wife — all live happy together, all same fingers on hand."

Once a Protestant dominie was preaching to the Indians, and took for his text "Make vows to the Lord your God, and keep those vows." As soon as the preaching was over,

¹ From a letter in French to his niece, Rosalie, July, 1855.

an Indian who had been present accosted him, saying, "Dominie, me make vow to go home with you." No ready evasion occurring to him, the preacher answered, "All right, come along." When they reached home, the Indian said further, "Me make vow to eat supper with you." It was so done, to the not very great pleasure of the minister's wife. Supper over, the Indian went on "Me make vow to stay all night in your house." The Indian's vows might have gone much further, if the Dominie had not cut them short by saying, "You can make all the vows you please, but I make a vow in my turn that you shall get out of my house early to-morrow morning." The Indian judged from his host's tone that there was no use in his making any further vows, and left the house the next day without ceremony.

A white man one day met an Indian and honored him with the title of Brother. The redskin stopped, and inquired disdainfully how and since when they had been brothers? The white man answered, "Oh, through Adam, I suppose." The Indian thereupon expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Great Spirit that the relationship was no closer.

The Indians have a horror of lying. Here is a case in point. An Indian courier came to a village of his tribe, and immediately called together all the chiefs and braves, having need of a prompt reply to an important message. They assembled accordingly, but after the messenger had discharged his errand and was waiting for the response, none was given him, and he soon became aware that his hearers were departing one by one and that he would shortly be left alone in the council lodge. A stranger who had been present inquired of the head chief the reason of this strange proceeding. "It is," he replied, "because he lied to us once."

²The Blackfeet are generally accounted brave, though instances have been known of three or four whites defeating a large party of them. On one occasion, three trappers fell into an ambuscade of these Indians, and two of them were instantly shot from their horses, but the third was left untouched, and spurring his horse to the height of its speed, broke through the whole throng and was soon out of reach.

Four mounted Indians immediately started in pursuit, and gained rapidly upon him until they came within shooting distance, when the lone trapper turned upon them, and with his double-barreled rifle picked off two of their number, and again fled.

Confident of securing their intended victim, now that they supposed his fire-arms were uncharged, the remaining two hurried after him, and in a few minutes were within range of pistol-shot. The trapper then again halted, and the discharge of a pistol brought the third to the ground.

Drawing forth a second from his belt, the work of slaughter would have been complete, had not the terrified savage, in his turn, fled with the utmost precipitancy. The trapper pursued, but was far in the rear when the Blackfoot regained his comrades, and hurriedly exclaimed:

“Haste ye! flee! It was the Big Medicine we pursued, and at his word three of our warriors breathe not, and of four I only have escaped! His single medicine-iron twice spoke the death-word, and at the same time; then with his pipe-stem he bade a third one go to the Spirit Land; and, as he drew forth his butcher-knife to shoot me, I had fled beyond reach, that I might tell you how to escape! Haste ye, flee! It is the Big Medicine that comes from yon! Flee, lest he kill us all!”

Following his advice, the astonished savages immediately fled with the greatest consternation, fully persuaded it was

² From the published work of Rufus B. Sage, entitled *Rocky Mountain Life*.

their only mode of escaping from certain destruction at the hands of the Big Medicine!

Last summer a great Assiniboin brave or chief left his tribe and came down to attend the Great Indian Council that was held in the Platte valley, near Fort Laramie. When he returned to his own country they told him that several members of his family had eaten too many cherries and died, having been attacked by cholera. The bereaved chief at once loaded his gun with fine shot and went out against some cherry trees, full of fruit, that were near the place. Then he addressed them, as if the fruit and the trees had been alive, and accused them of being the murderers of his children and relations. "And now," he said, "it is the hour of my vengeance, I shall kill you also," and there-upon fired several times into the trees. "Now that you are dead," says he, picking up the fruit that had fallen, "I will finish you by eating you up." But unfortunately he ate too much — the cholera seized him and in a few hours he too was dead.

³ Now if you want something about Indians to fill a corner with, here is an anecdote, not altogether savage. I doubt in fact if your *Précis Historiques* contain many better. Among the converted Indians on the Canadian frontier there was once a certain Jean Baptiste, whose further appellations are unknown to me; doubtless he was the owner of other vowels and consonants, forming one of those terrifying names, well called by the Americans "jaw-breakers."

Jean Baptiste it appears had done a little thieving in his time, and when he was converted the Black-robe enjoined upon him to restore two dollars to the Calvinist minister of the neighborhood. Jean Baptiste accordingly presented

³ From a letter to Father Terwecoren, December 6, 1854.

himself before the minister, and the following dialogue ensued:

"Well, what do you want?" said the preacher to the native.

"Me, one time, rob you. Black-robe tell me, Jean Baptiste, you give that money back."

"What money is that?" inquired the reverend.

"Two dollar. Me, bad Indian, rob you; now, me good Indian, got water on forehead — me, heap child Great Spirit — here your money."

"All right — don't steal any more — good bye, Jean Baptiste."

"Ah — good bye no good; me want something else."

"What do you want?"

"Me want receipt."

"A receipt! What do you want a receipt for? Did the Black-robe tell you to ask for one?" said the surprised minister.

"Black-robe say nothing. Jean Baptiste (pointing to himself) want receipt."

"But why do you want a receipt? You stole the money, and you have given it back; that is all there is about it."

"That not all about it; listen. You old — me young; you die first — after while, me die. Understand?"

"No, I don't. What is it you mean?"

"Listen — me mean heap. Me go heaven after while, go knock on gate. Great Chief Saint Peter come open — say 'Hello, Jean Baptiste, what you want?' 'Me want come in Great Spirit's lodge.' 'How about your sins, Jean Baptiste?' 'Black-robe forgive sins all right.' 'How about that two dollar you stole from minister? You give him back? You show me your receipt!' Now then, poor Jean Baptiste, poor old Indian, got no receipt; have to run all over hell to find you!"

CHAPTER VI.

OBSERVATIONS UPON AMERICA.¹

On gold in California — Bigness of the Republic — Inland navigation — Thrift and loftier motives — Chances not good for young foreigners of the better class — Nothing stops the Americans — Missouri in war-time — Brigandage and terror — The Mason and Slidell affair — Scenes at the firing on Sumter — Essay on the causes of the war — Both sides of the quarrel — The North and the South on slavery — Situation at the close of hostilities — The Missouri Test Oath — Persecution of Catholics — Grant's election.

* * * * *

IN the last two months thousands of emigrants have passed through St. Louis, going to the California mines; every day some of them come to see me to ask counsel and advice. I have succeeded in curing some of them of the gold fever. Imagine thousands of adventurers of all countries, deserters, sailors, robbers, murderers, the scum of the States, of Mexico, Peru, Chile, the Sandwich Islands (with some honest men among them, no doubt), all living lawless and unbridled lives, and that is the condition in California at this time. The news of the abundance of gold seems to have shaken the United States to the foundation. The fever seems to be slackening a little. Twenty million dollars in values and specie has been sent to California.

* * * * *

P. S.— In 1840 I climbed a lofty mountain a few days' travel from the Sacramento. The bed of a stream that came down from it seemed to me to be of gold sand. It was so abundant that I could not believe the thing was real, and I

¹ Extract from a letter in French to his brother, Charles, April 26, 1849.

passed on without examining it. To-day I have little doubt that it was really the precious metal.²

St. Louis University, Nov. 2, 1849.

DEAR CHARLES:

I received your kind letter of the 18th of August last. All you tell me and all your good father mentioned of you to me in his own letter has been most pleasing and welcome to me. I now begin a long epistle, which will be followed by several others, according to the leisure left me, on the actual position and progress of this country. I will endeavor in the series of letters I purpose to send you to give a succinct idea of what has happened and of what is taking place daily in this great country. Henceforth I will write to you in English to encourage you not to neglect that beautiful and at present most important language. You will please to translate whatever I write to you to your good parents — this certainly will be a most pleasing and agreeable *passetemps* in the long winter evenings in which we are now entering.

I have sent to you many a long letter from the great American desert, speaking of its wild inhabitants, of its animals, its flowers and trees, its rivers and lakes, its wastes, its mountains and plains. I have said little of its civilized portion. I now enter upon a lofty and vast subject, a subject which I hope you shall find full of interest, on which I will give you my thoughts, my feelings, what I have heard and read and know to be true. I will generalize in this, my first letter; I will enter into particulars in my next.

What nation on earth presents such a spectacle as the United States of North America, of a confederated Gov-

² In 1840 Father De Smet passed very near, if not exactly over, the site of the famous Alder Gulch, Montana, the richest of all gold placers. It was more than "a few days' travel" from the Sacramento, however.

ernment, so complicated, over such a vast extent of territory, with so many varied interests, and yet moving so harmoniously? I went within the walls of the Capitol at Washington, and there, under the star-spangled banners that wave amid its domes, I found the representatives of eight Territories and of thirty States or nations — nations, in many senses, they may be called — that have within them all the germ and sinew to raise a greater people than many of the proud, now tottering, principalities of Europe; all speaking or learning one and the same language, all acting with one heart and all burning with the same enthusiasm — the love and glory of the Great Republic — even while parties do exist and bitter domestic quarrels now and then arise.

I take my map and I mark from whence the representatives come. What a breadth of latitude and longitude, and that too in the fairest portion of North America! What a variety of climate, and then, what a variety of production! What a stretch of sea coast on two oceans, with harbors enough for all the commerce of the world! What an immense national domain, unsurveyed, of extinguished and unextinguished Indian tribes, within the States and Territories and without, estimated in the aggregate to be worth the immense sum of \$1,500,590.70, [?] of which lands 760,000,000 acres are without the bounds of the States and Territories and are yet to make new States and to be admitted into the Union! The revenue now, from the sales of public lands, is over \$6,000,000. The national debt may be considered more than extinguished; and yet within seventy-five years, starting with a population of about 3,000,000, they have fought the war of independence; again struggled, not ingloriously, with the greatest naval power in the world, with fresh laurels won on sea and land — and now the Union has a population of over 23,000,000 souls.

One cannot feel the grandeur of this Republic unless he surveys it in detail. For example, two senators may soon

be expected on their way to Washington, one from California, the other from Oregon. They must be constantly moving for months before they arrive at their journey's end. I never shall forget the rapture of a traveler who left the green parks of New Orleans early in March — that land of the orange and the olive, then teeming with verdure, freshness and life, and, as it were, mocking him with the midsummer of his own northern home. He journeyed leisurely toward the region of ice and snow, to watch the budding of the young flowers and to catch the breeze of the spring. He crossed the lakes Pontchartrain and Borgne; he ascended the big Tombigbee in a comfortable steamboat. From Tuscaloosa he shot athwart the wilds of Alabama, over Indian grounds that bloody battles have rendered memorable. He traversed Georgia, the Carolinas, ranged along the base of the mountains of Virginia; and for three months and more he enjoyed one perpetual, one unvarying, ever coming spring — that most delicious season of the year — until, by the middle of June, he found himself in the fogs of the Passamaquoddy where tardy summer was even then hesitating whether it was time to come. And yet he had never been off the soil of his own country! The flag that he saw on the summit of the fortress on the lakes near New Orleans was like that which floated from the staff on the hills of old Fort Sullivan, in the eastern-most extremity of Maine; and the morning gun that startled his slumbers among the rocky battlements that defy the wild tides of the Bay of Fundy, was not answered till many minutes after on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico and hours after on the shores of the Bay of San Francisco in California. The swamps, the embankments, the cane-brakes of the Father of Waters (the Mississippi), on whose muddy banks the croaking alligator displayed his ponderous jaws; the cotton fields, the rice fields of the low southern country and the vast fields of wheat and corn in the regions of the mountains, were far, far behind him, and he was now in a hyperborean land, where nature wore a rough and surly

aspect, and a cold soil and a cold clime drove man to launch his bark upon the ocean, to dare wind and wave, and to seek from the deep the fisheries, and from freights the treasures his own home will not give him.

Indeed such a journey as this, in one's own country, to an inquisitive mind, is worth all "the tours of Europe." He who wishes to feel the full importance of an American congress must make such a journey. Let him take an excursion on the Sacramento which drains the far-famed and new Eldorado of the West. Let him stand upon the levee at New Orleans and count the numbers and the tiers of American vessels that lie there, four, five and six thick along its embankment. Let him hear the puff, puff, puff of the high pressure steamboats that come sweeping in almost every hour, perhaps from a port 2,000 miles off, from the then frozen winter of the north, to the full burning summer of the south — all inland navigation — fleets of them, as large as the world can show; with their elegant rooms, neat berths, spacious saloons and costly pianos, it may be, so that travelers can make their way to Louisville (Kentucky), as if they were on a party of pleasure. Let him survey all these, as they come in with products from the Red river, 1,200 miles in one direction, or from Pittsburg (Pennsylvania), 2,000 miles in another direction; from the western tributaries of the vast Mississippi, the thickets of the Arkansas or White river, from the muddy, far-reaching Missouri and its hundreds of branches. * * * Let him see the adventurous flatboats of western waters on which, frail bark! the daring backwoodsman sallies forth from the Wabash, or rivers hundreds of miles above, on a voyage of Atlantic distance, with hogs, horses, oxen and cattle of all kinds on board, corn, flour, wheat — all the products of rich western lands. * * *

Take the traveler where the clear, silvery waters of the Ohio become tinged with the mud from the Missouri, and where the currents of the mighty rivers run apart for miles, as if indignant at the strange embrace. Ascend with him

farther to St. Louis, where, if he looks upon the map, he will find that he is about as near the east as the west, and that already thousands upon thousands of emigrants, who are borne on the wave of population that beats at the base of the Rocky Mountains, are now overleaping its summits. They will speak of him as he now speaks of New England, as far in the east. And then tell him that far west as he is he is but at the beginning of steam navigation; that the Mississippi itself is navigable about a thousand miles upward; and that steamboats have actually gone on the Missouri, on that mad and muddy stream, 2,200 miles above its mouth, and that they can go 500 miles farther still! Take him then from this land where the woodsman is leveling the forest every hour, across the rich prairies of Illinois where civilization is throwing up towns and villages, pointed with the spire of the church and adorned with the college and the school; then athwart the flourishing fields of Indiana to Cincinnati, well called "The Queen of the West"—a city of over 100,000 inhabitants, * * *—and this in a State of 2,000,000 souls, * * * where the fierce savages, even within the memory of young men, made the hearts of their parents quake with fear. * * * Show him our immense inland seas, from Green bay to Lake Ontario, not inconsiderable oceans, encompassed with fertile fields. Show him the public works of the Empire State (New York) as well as those of Pennsylvania [and Ohio]—works which are the wonder of the world, such as no one people in modern times have ever equaled. And then introduce him to the busy, humming, thriving population of New England, from the Green Mountains of Vermont, the Switzerland of America, to the northern lakes and wide sea coast of Maine. Show him the industry, energy, skill and ingenuity of those hardy people, who let not a rivulet run nor a puff of wind blow without turning it to some account; who mingle in everything wherever a cent of money is to be earned; whose lumbermen are found not only in the deepest woods of the snowy wilds of

Maine, * * *; but on the banks of the St. Lawrence, and
 * * * streams whose names geographers hardly know.
 * * * * *

Then lift him above considerations of a mercenary character and show him how New England men are perpetuating their high character and holy love of liberty, and how, by neat and elegant public buildings that adorn every village; by comfortable schoolhouses that appear every two miles or oftener upon almost every road, free for everybody, high-born and low-born, and by academies and colleges that thicken even to an inconvenience; by asylums and institutions munificently endowed for the benefit of the poor. And let him see too with what generous pride their bosoms swell when they go within the consecrated walls of Faneuil Hall, or point out the heights of Bunker Hill or speak of Concord and Lexington where their bitter enemies, the British, were crushed.

Dear Charles, if you come to America, you may make such a tour as this — the best that can be made — and I am sure your young heart will beat quick when you will see the proud spectacle of the assemblage of the representatives of all these people and all their interests within a single hall. You will revere the offspring of those revolutionary patriots, who not only left us such a heritage, won by their sufferings and their blood, and such a constitution, such a Government here in Washington regulating all the national concerns, but who left us also, in effect, thirty-four other governments, with territory enough to add twenty-four to them by and by, that regulate all the minor concerns of the people acting within their own sphere. Now, in the winter, assembling within their various capitols, from San Francisco on the Pacific ocean * * * to Augusta on the Kennebeck. Show me a spectacle more glorious, more encouraging, than this, in the pages of all history — a constellation of free States, with no public force but public opinion, moving by well-regulated law, each in its own proper orbit, around the brighter star in Washington; thus

realizing, as it were, on earth, almost practically, the beautiful display of infinite wisdom that fixed the sun in the centre and sent the revolving planets on their errands. God grant it may end as with them!

In my next I will enter into details — meanwhile I will expect a long letter from you. Present my best love to your good father and mother; kiss little Paul for me; and tell a thousand things from my part to the whole family and to my best friends and acquaintances.

I am, etc.,

St. Joseph's College, Bardstown, Ky., Dec. 6, 1852.

Dear Alexander (BARDEMAEKER) :³

I received your good letter just as I was starting from St. Louis. I was at the moment writing to my brother Francis, and he will no doubt already have communicated to you my opinion concerning your son William's coming to America. Since then I have given the matter careful thought, but am only the more confirmed in my view. I would not think I was doing right by you, nor by the friendship which I owe you on so many accounts, if I gave the slightest encouragement to William to leave his native land and come to seek his fortune in the United States. I will tell you just what I think. I conjure you, do not send your son to America. Ten to one it would be his ruin. He would find himself in misery, practically a galley-slave; that is what usually happens to young men of education who come to this country, provided they find employment at all. The business-houses, the banks, the city and State offices, the colleges, the schools, all have their employees, and when a place becomes vacant, or a new house is opened, the number of applicants is legion. How could it be otherwise in a city of 100,000 souls, where three-fourths of the inhabitants are newcomers, and this number growing every day?

³ From the French.

It is just the same with lawyers and doctors; the city is simply encumbered with them; everywhere the walls and doors are covered with their signs.

Who are the ones that succeed then? The merchants employ their own children or the children of their near relatives and friends, and of the public employees ninety-nine per cent. are Americans, and they make great efforts to keep foreigners out of these positions. European merchants succeed in America, when they have means at their disposal. They can readily obtain credit then, and establish business houses. Poor and honest young men succeed in America if they have some education, but they have to begin by sweeping the floor and running on errands and carrying customers' bundles. Little by little they become clerks, sometimes even partners, though these cases are infrequent. Workingmen of all kinds, especially machinists, stonecutters, brickmakers, masons, street and railroad laborers, carpenters, blacksmiths, all get good wages in America, and with industry and perseverance a great many of them come to be pretty well off.

People in Europe have illusions concerning America. The greater part of the young men, who can justly claim to be something, and who know nothing of the miseries of life from experience in their families, who have received a good education, do not succeed in the least. Accordingly we see very many of them, if they have the means, go back to the old country, and that is the best thing they can do, and I tell them so every chance I get.

* * * * *

I presume I will have told you in Belgium that I wondered that the Belgian merchants and business houses were so slow in extending their commerce and establishing branch houses abroad, especially in the United States. The English, Germans, French are doing so and in general they succeed. Then later they can employ in such houses as this their sons or the sons of their friends, and success is reasonably certain for the latter. St. Louis has no Belgian houses.

New York probably has some, connected with firms in Antwerp. You should make inquiries in this line and find one of these houses, where William would be sure of being received, before you allow him to come to America. To do otherwise would be imprudent in the extreme.

Give my love, etc.

St. Louis University, March 12, 1853.

My dear FRANCIS:⁴

I have just received your good letter of the 9th of February and I thank you for it most sincerely. The news that you gave me of the indisposition of our dear brother Charles disturbs me greatly. I pray and hope that nothing bad will come of it. My malady is leaving me gradually, and I have been able to resume my little tasks and to make my customary journeys. There are no less than twenty-five letters on my table which I have to answer. My post of Procurator-General of the Province of Missouri demands much time and gives me a great deal to do.

* * * * *

The great news of the day in America is the inauguration of the new President, which has just taken place in Washington with a blaze of glory. This morning the papers announce that three large banks in our neighborhood have failed. There will be a great panic in the city, where thousands of inhabitants will find themselves ruined at a blow. But all this will not prevent the railroad to the Pacific from being begun. It is a strange people in the midst of whom we live. Nothing frightens them; they will undertake anything. Sometimes they halt — stumble once in a while — but they get up again and march onward. Several great new territories are about to be formed in the Indian country, and soon the steam-engine will go out and give a shock to the buffalo and the bear of the desert; and the poor unhappy

⁴ From the French.

savages, what will become of them? They will no doubt be turned out and pushed back anew, farther into the sterile regions, where they will find only misery and death.

* * * * *

I will write you again early in the month, at the time set for my departure — provided, as I hope, nothing comes up to prevent my starting. Once more I must beg you not to speak of my journey to Europe to any one in Belgium whomsoever, unless to our brother Charles.

In the sweet expectation of seeing and embracing you, believe me for life, etc.

St. Louis University, Dec. 4, 1861.

My very dear FRANCIS:⁵

I am on the eve of a rather long journey and very busy, and as the winter besides is very severe, I have little time for writing letters. I am still without replies to several of mine, but I feel sure that you have written me and I attribute their failure to reach me to the unhappy circumstances in which we find ourselves since my return to America in April. Your letters may have gone astray, or been suppressed, which is the more probable; or perhaps mine have been held up. Who knows? I have received letters from Felix and Elmiere, with ample news of the family, which have given me the utmost pleasure and consolation amid the sad and confused spectacles that surround us. The American newspapers are placed under the strictest police supervision, for good motives, doubtless, and can give only false or mutilated reports, from which you will obtain but a faint idea of the state of the war. I will say nothing in regard to this, you will easily guess why. But I will give some details concerning what is happening in Missouri, where the horrors of civil war seem deeper than else-

⁵ From the French.

where. It would be impossible to describe them *in extenso* and in all their blackness.

Sensible men prophesied at the commencement of our civil troubles that the people might expect horrible scenes, but without foreseeing probably the full extent. You have read of the horrors of the first French Revolution, histories of civil wars in various ages and countries, where every thing was turmoil and confusion and robbers and assassins had free and open field for murder and devastation of property. All this will give you but a faint idea of the horrible situation to which Missouri finds herself reduced. Her own children, divided between the two great parties, the North and the South, are dipping their hands in blood and cutting one another's throats, burning and sacking one another's dwellings; while enemies from outside enter the State to glut their insatiable vengeance, and to aid eagerly in the diabolical work of devastation and heighten still further the horrors and the misfortunes of the country. To-day it is a Federal leader who is taken and put to death; to-morrow it may be a judge, sympathizing with the South, who will be assassinated in spite of his having a guard to protect him. At present there is little or no union among the citizens of Missouri; there is only hate and suspicion, and hence brigandages and vengeance without number and of every sort. The general-in-chief of the rebels in Missouri has just issued a manifesto in which he promises \$200,000,000 in spoils to 50,000 brigands who will enlist under his standard. Means will be found I hope to withstand this wild Secessionist; but in any case he will do much harm. At this moment hundreds of families, poor, miserable and in want of everything are leaving the interior of the State and coming to take refuge in our city, or crossing into Illinois, having been forced to leave their sacked and burned houses and fields. This is what the detestable secession has brought Missouri to, and we are yet only at the first page of its history.

If I have time I will write you from Washington or New York before long, to which places I am called by some little business matters. You absolutely must write me as soon as you can; when I don't hear from you it makes me sad and gloomy. If you have not received my long letters I will copy them off again.

* * * * *

Your devoted brother, etc.

December 23, 1861.⁶

The universal aspect of our country is really sad and mournful. A year ago here was a great united nation, prosperous and fortunate, and from a material point of view full of hope for its future glory; to-day we see it in a manner dislocated and reduced to fragments, and a beautiful land, once rich in the flowers and fruits of a peaceful agriculture, is now splashed with blood and blackened by devastating fires. Examine the map of the United States that I left at St. Michael College; throughout the great expanse from the Potomac to the Rio Grande and from the Atlantic to the Missouri, the voice of legal justice is dumb, replaced by the incessant sound of the beating drum and the deafening noise of artillery. In all this vast space the power of the law is *de facto* annulled. The law has had to make way for arms. Let us, however, take comfort; a piece of good news, coming from the highest source, announces that the calamities with which the land is afflicted are rapidly drawing near their close; that the same almighty arm that sustained the cause of Washington and his brave soldiers, to establish the glorious Constitution, will not be withdrawn from their children in a not less difficult war for its maintenance. For the moment, assuredly, we live in the shadow of a very heavy cloud, black and gloomy, which seems to envelop the entire nation as in a shroud. But please God,

⁶ Extract from letter in French to Father Boeteman of Brussels.

the eye of faith and patriotism may soon discern in the sombre cloud the bow of the promise, already announced to us, which is to envelop under its beautiful arch the coming of a calmer and more serene day. The hope of a speedy return to peace, order and law encourages and comforts us, in spite of our doubts and deep apprehensions.

Just at present all eyes are turned toward England. What will she do in the Mason and Slidell affair? The characteristic motto of that nation toward America has always been "*divide et impera.*" For a long time past, and doubtless with this design, she has contributed largely to maintain abolitionism by annual contributions. The secret thought and all the efforts of *la perfide Albion* have always leaned toward overturning and breaking the Great Republic, whether in two fragments or more, in order afterward to keep the new governments in endless disputes and quarrels, if not in open warfare one against another; exploiting them meanwhile for her own interest.

From the first indication of actual separation, England has never ceased to sympathize with the South, as the most effective means to succeed in her plans. She has encouraged the rebels in all ways, except formal recognition of their independent sovereignty, and it is only too evident that she lacks but a pretext to do that, or anything else that may tend to dissolve the Union.

Her indignation, apparently so virtuous and sincere, at the capture of Mason and Slidell, need not astonish any one; nothing less was to be expected. If the English do not carry out their threats and engage in war with the United States, it will be because, after a sober second thought, they have come to the conclusion that after all, in view of their own interests, it is better to let the Northern States alone.

Altogether, judging by what one sees and hears, it is safe to say that our Americans feel easy with respect to England, and show not the least fear. The substance of the English ultimatum, sent to Washington concerning the Mason and Slidell affair, is not yet known — *sed quid quid*

sit, those two gentlemen will not be set at liberty, neither will any apology be made for the taking of the *Trent*. If the English want to fight, why, they will fight. Where one volunteer presents himself to defend the flag against the rebels of the South, twenty will come forward with eagerness to march against the English.

I am expressing to you the pure American thought. With regard to France joining with England — which seems likely enough — it should not be forgotten what France was able to do alone against the European coalition. Not only did she manage to defend herself against all the countries united, but she beat them on their own ground and besieged them in their capitals. “Surely,” say our Americans, “we need not be frightened nor discouraged at the idea of a coalition of two powers who will have to send their armies 3,000 miles across the ocean to attack us.”

* * * * *

St. Louis University, February, 1863.

Mr. JOS. VAN JERSEL, *Utenhout, Holland*:⁷

Very Worthy and Respectable Monsieur.— “Better late than never” says the old proverb. I shall say little by way of excuse for my delay in writing you. My occupations have been numerous and my journeys long; that is all that I can advance as an appeal to your indulgence and charity. To atone for my apparent negligence, I propose to write you a rather long letter. A few details regarding political matters in the United States, which the entire world is now watching, may perhaps be agreeable to you. * * *

I will begin at the beginning: that is, since I had the honor of paying you a visit at Utenhout, in the midst of the snow toward the end of December, 1860. On the 27th of March, 1861, I said farewell to my brothers in religion and to my

⁷ From the French.

family and acquaintances and left Belgium. My journey to Paris and thence to Havre was agreeable and without accident. On the 30th I took my place on board the steamer *Fulton*, with my three companions. On Easter Sunday I had the consolation of offering the holy sacrifice of the mass, to commend us especially to God in the long and dangerous journey by land and sea that we had before us. On the 2d of April about noon the vessel ran in to Southampton, where it lay at anchor a good part of the day waiting for passengers and the mail. In the evening of the 4th we lost the coasts of England from view. It was still winter on the Atlantic and we had rough weather, but everything passed off favorably and without accident. The days passed agreeably on board, in the society of very intelligent people, among whom I had the happiness of finding several old and good acquaintances. Nothing especially noteworthy came up to break the habitual monotony of a long ocean voyage. I will only mention that in latitude $42^{\circ} 11'$ and longitude $65^{\circ} 39'$ we passed near an immense solitary iceberg, which resembled an ancient cathedral in ruins or an old chateau with dilapidated towers. So novel a sight, in the absence of any other, was certainly not without interest. We reached New York during the night of the 14th-15th of April.

A few hours before the arrival of the *Fulton* the great American metropolis had been thrown into the utmost confusion and consternation by the news that Fort Sumter, in South Carolina, had been captured and the great star-spangled banner of the Union lowered and torn to pieces by the Southern rebels — an irremediable and ineffaceable insult in the eyes of all America.

* * * * *

When the insulting and arrogant outrage to the national flag was known, a number of the American passengers on the *Fulton* wept with rage, uttering imprecations and threats against the South. The scenes of which I was an eye-wit-

ness on landing moved me deeply ; but my career is not that of earthly weapons, and I abhor war. Mine are spiritual arms. I humbly offered my poor prayers to heaven that the aroused passions might be soothed and peace come anew to cement the old Union and restore tranquillity and happiness to a country formerly so happy and prosperous.

But "there is no peace." I left New York on the 17th of April and reached St. Louis on the 19th. Throughout that 1,000-mile journey nothing was heard save the rattle of arms and cries of war, repeated from one end to the other, in every town, city and village that we passed through, and from every height, steeple and housetop floated the insulted banner.

From the statistics that have thus far been published, it is safe to assume that half a million of men have already been killed or have died in the hospitals. The property sacked and destroyed on both sides, amounts to a great many millions of dollars. The cost of the war cannot be less than two to three millions a day, and it has been going on for nearly two years. God alone, in his mercy, can put an end to these bloody and deadly combats. Thus far no one is able to see any outcome for it, and the numerous battles have not had the slightest definite result. They seem urged on by hatred, without seeing that Union by force would be but a whited sepulchre. It is a most deplorable and horrible war, in which brothers are called on to cut each others' throats and battles are often the merest butcheries.

Whence has this war arisen, and in the midst of a prosperity incomparable on earth? The man who answers this question in all its details will have a long and difficult task. I will give you the immediate cause, as it appeared to me at the outbreak of the war.

Two principal causes brought it about. The first is the question of the extension of negro slavery into the new territories. The second is the tariff question. The South has always been more favorable to free trade than the North. I am persuaded that the tariff question counts for little in

the present rupture. The question of slavery is the principal, perhaps the only one. The South wishes and declares that slavery must be protected like any other property-right in all the Territories belonging to the United States. The North opposes this doctrine and wishes to confine slavery to its present limits, and that is the great difficulty and the ostensible cause of the war.

Senator Douglas and his party advocated that the decision concerning the introduction of slavery into the Territories and its protection there should rest with the citizens of those Territories. The ultra-South declared against this doctrine. The Cotton States wanted slavery protected in the Territories whether the citizens of those Territories (that is, the majority) desired it or not. This was the great cause of the division in the Democratic Convention at Charleston, which led to the nomination of two Democratic candidates for the presidency — Douglas and Breckenridge.

The South, or the Breckenridge party, knowing that the Republican party would never consent to have slavery thus forced upon the Territories, and desiring to find a pretext for separation from the Union, insisted upon this question being decided in their favor, as a condition *sine qua non* of their fidelity to the Union. The consequence was that the two Democratic candidates were defeated in the election, and Mr. Lincoln, the Republican, elected upon the platform "that slavery should be protected where it existed, but should not be extended to the new Territories."

After Lincoln's election South Carolina at once withdrew from the Union, even in defiance to the Constitution of the United States. Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Texas followed this rebellious course. Afterward came Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Arkansas. In fact it is probable that all the slave States would withdraw if they had the strength; namely, Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri.

How has this question of slavery been able to produce results so surprising and deplorable, considering especially

that all the Territories suitable for slave labor were already in the hands of the advocates of slavery? Slavery exists in the fifteen Southern States, which are the only ones, by the admission of the South itself, where it can exist advantageously. Moreover the Territories of New Mexico and Arizona, the ones, as both parties agree, adapted to slave labor, were already in the hands of the Southerners. The Northern Territories, Washington, on the Pacific slope, Colorado, Dakota, Nevada, were and are unsuitable for slave labor, and no one has ever thought of introducing slavery into them. But the South insisted absolutely upon that privilege; that is, upon the *right* to introduce slavery, even though it were useless and unreasonable. The South was striving for a point of honor, ridiculous and unreasonable — a point which she had no idea of carrying into effect.

“What,” you will say, “are the two great sections of the Union quarreling over a trifle?” I reply that this is only the pretext of the quarrel. The two sections were in bad humor against each other. The extreme party in the North, or the Abolitionists, whether orators, preachers or newspaper editors, had covered the South with insults and opprobrium. The South took offense at their insults; the Southern slaveholders were indignant at being called “barbarians, sinners, dealers in human flesh,” etc. The South was deeply stirred over these accusations and at seeing the possession of slaves ranked as an iniquity. They therefore determined to break all the bonds which had united them for a great many years, and separate from a people who slandered them and their institutions, particularly that of slavery. Excited by passion, and in bad humor, the Southern States have abandoned the Union.

That in my humble opinion is the origin and commencement of the great quarrel or war which is now desolating the North and South of the United States.

Whatever may be the original history of secession, and whether or not the South be right in having broken the bonds which attached it to the Union, a large number of our pro-

found statesmen grant her the right to act thus, in the name of the national sovereignty proclaimed by 8,000,000 of free men, and she has maintained this right by existing for two years as a nation.

St. Louis, April 24, 1863.

Most Dear PAUL:

I must essay to write to you a letter in English. I wish you to study and apply yourself to acquire the knowledge of that beautiful and almost universal language. Let me know how you make it out, which will decide the course of my writing. I will here sketch you a little view of the actual state and condition of the country and the principal cause of the war without entering into minor details.

As I have written before, slavery is the undoubted cause of the war at present raging in the country. Perhaps no other cause could have produced it; for though there have been sharp disputes between the different sections of the Union on the subject of the tariff, they were easily settled. Not so with slavery. Here, what one party looked upon as of divine origin and every way right, another party regarded as barbarous and wrong. There was and is no room for compromise on such a question. Still the institution of slavery in the slave States was in no immediate danger, for the Constitution of the United States guaranteed its protection and the General Government would never have set the Constitution aside — indeed it has no power to do so.

But the difficulty was about the Territories belonging to the United States. There is an immense territory sufficient to form several large States yet unsettled. The anti-slavery party, or Freesoil party, as it is called, concluded that slavery should not be extended to the Territories, though protected in the already formed States. The pro-slavery party demanded the right of carrying slavery to every foot of the

Territory. The anti-slavery party, for the first time since the organization of the Government, triumphed in the election of Mr. Lincoln to the presidency, and the pro-slavery party seceded from the Union, or rather I should say, ten or eleven of the fifteen slave States seceded and set up what they call a Confederate Government for themselves. What are called the border slave States, as Missouri, Kentucky, Western Virginia, Maryland and Delaware, have declared for the old Union; but they are made the battle-ground of the contending parties. It is evident that, according to the Constitution of the United States, no State has the right to secede from the Union. The Union was intended to be perpetual. But the Secessionists contend that the States, as separate peoples, have, at any rate, the right of revolution when sufficient cause exists; and they further contend that a sufficient cause does exist in the hostility of the free States to the institution of slavery. But I have already remarked that the General Government was bound by the Constitution to protect slavery in the States where it existed. This is true; but the slave States regarded the hostile feelings of the Northern people as a sufficient cause for the act of secession. They regarded the fact that they were excluded from the Territories as a sufficient cause.

The truth is that the present state of the country is due to an angry controversy, long ago begun, on the subject of African slavery. Several compromises between the parties had been entered into, looking to the settlement of the difficulty; but the feeling remained with the one party that *slavery is right*, and with the other that *slavery is wrong*. These two hostile feelings have culminated in a revolution, or rebellion, the most formidable that the world has ever seen. What will be the end of it? No one can say. One thing seems evident, namely, that slavery will be extinguished; for though the General Government does not claim any constitutional power to interfere with the Constitutions in the States, yet, as a war power, as a means of putting

down the rebellion, the General Government does claim the power of liberating the slave; and hence the emancipation proclamation of the President more than six months ago. Thousands of slaves are making their escape from bondage and are now scattered over the free States.

But how long the war will continue no one can tell. The General Government is greatly stronger than the revolted States, but these latter can defend their own soil against superior numbers. The General Government has an immense fleet but the seceded States have strong fortifications. The resources of the General Government for sustaining armies in the field are vastly superior to those of the slave States, but the latter seem prepared for desperate extremes. Norfolk, Nashville, Memphis and New Orleans have been already captured by the Union forces, but many strongholds remain in the possession of the insurgents at this moment. According to the telegraph Charleston, South Carolina, is being bombarded anew; the result is in great doubt.

The bloodshed and the suffering caused by the war so far have been great. How could it be otherwise when the contending forces are counted by hundreds of thousands? God only knows what and when the end will be. Yet as the resources of the General Government are vastly superior to those of the seceded States, it is reasonable to conclude that the rebellion will finally, perhaps many years hence, be put down. One thing appears certain, either slavery or freedom must triumph in this gigantic contest. There will not be apt to be any more compromises. Should the rebellion be subdued, slavery may for a while linger in some of the States, but it will cease to be a great power and will gradually pass away. Slavery must either triumph in this war or be left in a condition which will insure its final extinction. Already the State of Missouri is on the eve of enacting emancipation laws, and I have no doubt that the State convention, which I understand will shortly meet, will effect this object. The friends of the human race every-

where must feel a deep interest in the fate of the Great Republic and of African slavery.

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Your devoted uncle,
PETER JOHN.

St. Louis University, Sept. 23, 1865.

My Very Dear GUSTAVE:⁸

I have received your good letter of the 22d of June last. I think I have answered it in part. If I can trust my memory, I believe I have sent you photographs of Lincoln and Johnson. You ask for details concerning political affairs in America. I am not in the habit of mingling in matters of this sort; still I am glad to give you a little account of the course of the Government in emerging from a most terrible and disastrous crisis, as it appears to my mind.

I will begin with my arrival in this country last June. On the 19th of the month we were in sight of Sandy Hook. The American pilot had come on board the night before with his bundle of newspapers. As soon as he set foot on deck he was besieged by the curious multitude eager to learn the recent great events. The papers were devoured and discussed with avidity, for we had many politicians on board, of both hemispheres, and a great number of interested merchants.

I learned then, with consolation, and later events confirmed me in the thought, that calm and reflection were beginning gradually to take hold of the masses, after the saddest and most unfortunate of wars, and that law and order, with the total extinction of slavery, were being re-established by degrees in the States where secession had caused so much destruction and so many misfortunes. The spontaneity of the Southern people, which had precipitated so great a number of States into rebellion, has produced like-

⁸ From the French.

wise a general return of Union sentiment. No one in the South seems now to think of hostile undertakings against the Government. The majority of the people want nothing but a chance and means to get on their feet again. True statesmanship must tend to insure a solid peace and a durable prosperity. It is to be hoped that President Johnson, in his wisdom, will set aside the vengeful agitators (the radicals) and then ere long the return to the Union will render this country more beautiful, prosperous and great than it ever has been. The war has been a great shock to the nation and very disastrous in its effects, but the wisdom of the President and the people will overcome it in the end. Johnson is beginning to inspire the greatest confidence. He appears to be the chosen man *par excellence* in these times of agitation and political divisions, to impose, like his predecessor, Andrew Jackson, his own individuality upon the administration of the Government. He will succeed in destroying the demarcation of the political parties, which have hitherto been too much in vogue in this country, and the hope is already felt that he will call to his aid a great national party, the motto of which will be "Solidity. Strength and Glory," for the reconstruction of the (formerly) United States. It is evident from all his acts that he has resolved to maintain the national union, honor and credit. Always in sympathy with the great masses and the nation's heart, there are good grounds for hoping that he will administer the Government upon large and real principles, seeking the greatest good of the greatest number. Any attempt on the part of the radicals, who are seeking by any means to put obstacles in the way of his administration, will end in their own confusion.

The old proverb says *sunt bona mixta malis*, and that is the case to-day in Missouri. Upon emerging from the war and at the beginning of the return of peace we find ourselves in fresh trouble and in a state of cruel uncertainty. This is the way of it. The radical party has installed itself, *per fas et nefas*, at the head of the State Government. The

new Constitution, which has been adopted by a slender majority and which is publicly denounced as fraudulent, requires the clergy of all denominations, all professors of seminaries and colleges and all school teachers of either sex (including nuns) to take the following oath: "That they have at no time in the past uttered a word nor sympathized in any manner in favor of the rebellion," etc. Preaching and performing the marriage ceremony are expressly forbidden to the clergy by this law. The priests are generally agreed that, on principle, such an oath cannot be taken, because our authority does not emanate from the State and we cannot, without compromising the ecclesiastical estate, consent to take such an oath. No Catholic priest in Missouri will take it; the Protestant ministers have generally done so. The penalty for those who refuse to take this abominable *ex post facto* oath is a fine of \$500 and imprisonment. The Governor has announced in a speech "that he has had the State prison enlarged and that the law shall be executed." If this cruel law is really enforced our churches will have to be closed and our schools and colleges will be ruined.

We have thus far been left in peace at St. Louis, but in the interior of the State, in places where the radicals are in a majority, religious persecution is beginning to seethe. Four priests have been cited before their tribunals "for having preached the gospel" contrary to their iniquitous law. One of the priests is actually in prison, the other three have given bail. Two Sisters of Charity have also been cited before these famous judges "for having taught children" and have been released under bail. Serious as this matter is, it has also its curious side; it is wonderful that a land so proud and jealous of its liberty can hatch so many tyrants of the lowest and most detestable kind. This law is at the same time so absurd that I am inclined to believe that the odious act, after a few vain efforts, will be smothered and expire after having seen the light of day. This black and infamous blemish in the Constitution of Missouri will, it is hoped, react promptly upon its contrivers.

The sad circumstances in which we find ourselves do not in the least interfere with our ordinary tranquillity. Each one keeps at his work as if nothing was plotting around us. This tyrannical law of Missouri being *ex post facto* is unconstitutional and therefore null and contrary to the Constitution of the United States, which prohibits laws of that sort. Meanwhile our churches remain open and we preach and administer the sacraments as usual. Our college opened on the very day of the promulgation of the law (the fourth of this month) with an attendance of about 600 pupils. We pray and keep our patience under the wings of the eagle, the emblem of the Constitution of the United States — or rather we repose without uneasiness under the safeguard of the Lord! May his holy will be accomplished in regard to us!

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Your devoted uncle, etc.

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⁹All the world seems ready to go to war. In the United States the agitation just at present is very great. There is a gleam of hope that President Johnson may succeed in the peaceable reconstruction of the Southern States; the elections in November will decide it. Among clear-sighted persons serious fears are felt that the radical party will move heaven and earth to keep itself in power, and that the shock will be terrible and fearful in its results. In Missouri we continue to be in a very critical state. The horrible test-oath, which forbids our preaching the gospel without taking it, continues in force. There are constant arrests and imprisonments.

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⁹ From letter in French to Terwecoren, August 24, 1866.

¹⁰You say that you read with pleasure my little tales of missionary adventure among the Indian tribes. A new volume (the fifth) is soon to go to press in New York; I will make it my business to send you a copy as soon as it appears. I am working in my leisure moments on the history of the Potawatomi tribe, which will appear probably in the course of the next year and which shall likewise be sent you.

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You speak with enthusiasm of all that you hear and read of America and express a great desire to visit this beautiful region some day. Really, I do not think your travelers can give you any proper idea of what is going on in this country, nor of its progress toward grandeur and toward the lofty position which it must occupy one day among the nations of the earth. The starry banner of the United States bears above it the emblem of grandeur, the American eagle, the same that the ancient Romans put upon their military standards. I have seen an old geographical chart, which shows the eagle soaring in the air above the great extent of North America, with the numerous islands adjacent to both coasts. He is casting a penetrating and greedy look over the vast Canada and all its dependencies, and his open beak seems ready to snatch them up. All those immense regions of which the United States occupy the centre rest under his shadow. His fine widespread tail covers all of Mexico and the adjoining regions as far as the Gulf of Darien and the Bay of Panama. And the two tips of his wings are dipped in the two oceans beyond San Domingo and the Sandwich Islands. And that is the grand future, perhaps not far off, to which the great American republic aspires, and which she will attain if she is wise. In Mexico, where the Emperor Napoleon improvised his celebrated comedy at a time when

¹⁰ Extract from letter in French to Henri and Clemence, November 3, 1866.

he thought the United States permanently divided, it has come to a farce in spite of him, and much more promptly and swiftly than he had intended. The "*chez nous*" will be "*chez eux*" in *la belle France* before the New Year; and it is stated as a fact that Mexico will be put under a Yankee protectorate as a preliminary move to being joined to the States.

The Irish Fenians in their great hatred for *la perfide Albion* are extremely active, and this at the very moment when the United States are claiming damages from England for all the harm done their commerce during the war by the famous *Alabama* and her mates. This thorny question must be decided soon and favorably, else the English will have all the Fenians on their hands in Canada, backed by the bayonets of 100,000 Yankee veterans. They would start to-morrow if the Government said the word.

But the United States have one very dangerous weak side; they are too much led by party spirit, and they go in "neck or nothing." If they are not careful this party spirit must bring them to anarchy, toward which the radicals seem to-day to be traveling in haste. Things are at such a point here that our deep thinkers are looking for another civil war, which may become more disastrous than the first; should that calamity take place, the Great Republic will take long strides toward the ruin which she has so barely escaped. The radicals, without the least patriotism, are determined to risk everything, at any price, to maintain themselves in power. They are now working for the disfranchisement of all the conservatives opposed to their party, and to give votes to the recently enfranchised negroes who are still in a species of semi-barbarism, and to this end they are employing the most tyrannical and unjust measures. In the city of St. Louis they wish to proscribe 10,000 voters.

If they succeed in erecting their infernal yoke, there are plenty of papers that proclaim that proscription of the Catholics will soon follow. We are already proscribed in

Missouri, according to the Constitution of the State. We can no longer preach the gospel here without taking an impious and iniquitous oath. It seems to date from the time of Nero, of Henry IV, of Germany, or Henry VIII, of England. All our churches, cemeteries, charitable institutions, have to support enormous taxes, while all the sectarian establishments, including those of the Jews, are exempt from taxation. That is what the much vaunted liberty of our grand and famous Republic has come to. It is strange and startling to see the great number of tyrants and monsters she has been able to bring forth in so short a time. In Missouri we are surrounded by German magistrates of '48.

Your devoted uncle, etc.

November 10, 1868.¹¹

On the 3d of this month we had the happiness of seeing the end of our great political agitations in the election of the new President. For months and weeks previous it seemed as though we were on the eve of another civil war and as if the whole land would be deluged with blood. The day of the election arrived, a lovely day; the civil authorities closed all the drinking places and a vigilant police was on foot. To everybody's surprise the great day of the election was in St. Louis the quietest day of the year; the next day the city resembled more a Belgian convent. Ever since the election an unparalleled tranquillity has succeeded the numberless menaces and all apprehensions of mobs and violence.

I have never felt the least doubt of Grant's election. He is the future President and the choice of the people by a vast majority, and all seem now to accept him cheerfully. Grant has already announced his motto, "Let us have peace," and it is hoped that he will apply himself with firm-

¹¹ Extract from letter in French to Ch. DeCoster, Belgium.

ness to re-establishing and conserving the old Constitution in all its integrity. The Democrats seem to expect this and it is quite possible that the radicals, who to-day fill all the lucrative offices with the assurance of holding them until the end of Grant's administration, will gradually let things drop back into their regular constitutional course. Let us wait patiently and hope.

CHAPTER VII.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION.

Turbulent foreigners — The boasted liberty and tolerance of America — Anarchy has arrived — Mobs and violence — Predicts annexation of Cuba, Hawaii, Mexico and Canada — Contrasts material and moral condition — The Know-nothings — The Church and party politics — Test Oath in bad odor — Supreme Court decision — Inequality of taxation.

St. Xavier College, Cincinnati, Aug. 2, 1854.

Dear FRANCIS :¹

¶ I HAVE just received your good letter, etc.

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I am at present accompanying the Father Provincial in his visits to our establishments in Ohio and Kentucky. I shall be back in St. Louis about the 20th of this month. The heat has been excessive in Cincinnati for the last month. A very large number of people have died from sunstroke, twelve yesterday. For my part I suffer greatly, and find no solace save in the bathtub.

There is much excitement everywhere in the United States against our holy religion, and as fast as the radicals and reds arrive from Europe the excitement increases. Several churches have been set on fire already and there is open talk of murder and pillage. Every day the papers tell of attacks on Catholics, especially on the Irish. It is certain that a priest cannot appear on the streets in Cincinnati without being insulted by renegade Germans, Swiss and Italians. These gentlemen are in their element in the States. As soon as they are able and can gather the force, a system of persecution unknown as yet in America will be established.

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¹ From the French.

St. Louis University, Nov. 28, 1854.

My dearest ELMIRE:²

I have received your dear letter, etc.

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I have no great personal news to impart just at present. I am quite well, I thank God. I am now in Ohio, now in Kentucky, sometimes in the extreme western part of the State of Missouri. Our colleges, residences and missions are very far apart, and I have to go with the Father Provincial in all his visits. Though I have my head and hands always full of business, it is not of a nature to overburden me and I am always happy among my brothers in all the different districts. There is one thing, however, that gives me anxiety from time to time. I hold the general or common purse and have to supply all needs; and this purse is never full; the greater part of the time it is flat; while I receive demands from all sides, especially from our poor Indian missions. Those poor Indians are always present to my thoughts. I frequently receive letters and very pressing invitations from them to return among them.

Last September the Bishop of New Mexico, on his return from Rome, was absolutely determined to take me along with him among the tribes of the Pueblos, Comanches and Navajos, who occupy a great territory in his vast diocese. He had been authorized to that effect by our superiors in Europe; but I could not at that moment leave my post here. It is probable, and I hope, that in the course of coming spring I shall be able to return once more among the Indian tribes, especially those who have been thus far most forsaken. Poor unfortunates! They are deprived of all religious succor, of all instruction and consolation. They are indeed deserving of pity. Pray often for their conversion.

I cannot say much of the United States. This vast land, with all its advantages, must grow great and mighty. No doubt the European papers speak of it often; but the Ameri-

² From the French.

can liberty and tolerance, so highly boasted, exist less in this Great Republic than in the most oppressed country of Europe. Catholic churches are burned and those who try to prevent it are assassinated. In the city of Ellsworth they snatched one of our Fathers from his abode; despoiled him of all his coats; tarred and feathered him and afterward rode him upon a rail. He was borne up the principal streets of the place, with the most outrageous and indecent insults. All the city applauded it — this horrible scene. They made it a crime to this priest to come and preach and say mass to the Catholics!

St. Joseph's College, April 19, 1855.

Dear CHARLES and MIMI:³

It is really a long time since I have received a letter from you. I have written you often, too, and to Sylvie, Elmire and Rosalie, and I am waiting impatiently for some news from the family. I fear that your thoughts and those of my nearest and dearest nieces turn but seldom toward America, where you have a brother who thinks of you constantly and never ceases to form vows for your happiness and theirs. An expedient has occurred to me, which I hope may prove successful. In January I wrote to our correspondent in New York to send you by the first boat for Antwerp, in Mr. Key's care, the latest and handsomest map of the United States. It has been on the way since February, and Gustave Van Kerkhove has been charged with looking after it when it arrives.

Well, then, you are to hang this map somewhere in your house where it will be in plain sight, and I am sure you will think oftener of me, who have lived for so many years in this country, and have ranged over this vast region from New York to the mouth of the Columbia, and from New Orleans to Halifax in Nova Scotia and as far as the glaciers

³ From the French.

of the Athabasca north of the Rocky Mountains. You will let your eyes travel over what I have traveled in reality, in many different fashions and amid thousands and thousands of dangers; in ocean vessels, in steamboats, in skiffs, in bark canoes, in dugouts; in vehicles of every description, on railroads, on horseback and on foot.

Last year I had planned to resume my travels in the desert in the course of the present spring; but a war⁴ of extermination against the Sioux and several other tribes is soon to take place, which obliges me to defer my journey until better times. Poor, unfortunate Indians! They will have a terrible adversary to meet with; their chances are but small; they are drawing near their last scene. It matters not how great the provocations and wrongs of the whites against the Indians; the latter are always the dupes and victims. It is thus in this present case.

I lately wrote to Francis that we were advancing rapidly toward anarchy; we are there already. Everything indicates a violent persecution of our holy religion. Our churches are being burned; Catholics, priests and nuns are publicly insulted; preparations are being made in certain places for more terrible excesses. Mobs are the order of the day. Poole, a prizefighter, is murdered by a tough of his own species, in New York, and demonstrations and honors are paid this wretch at his interment, such as no President of the United States has ever received. It was a true ovation, in which thousands turned out to take a part. It is evident that such a state of things cannot last long. Liberty, in this country, is a perversion of the word; it is rather pure license which has got the upper hand and is advancing with head in air. The unhappy land is flooded with crimes and misdeeds of every sort. Every honest man's heart bleeds, but they are in a great minority. The Protestant ministers in general, and the Presbyterians or Calvinists es-

⁴ The Harney campaign against the Sioux as a result of the Grattan Massacre. See footnote, p. 1216.

pecially, are the great instigators and promoters of all sorts of outrages and of an open persecution of the Catholics.

Your devoted brother, etc.

St. Louis University, July 10, 1855.

— CONWAY :

Most Honorable Sir.— Owing to my long absence from St. Louis I have delayed answering your very kind favor for which indeed I feel very grateful and thank you sincerely. I learned with the greatest pleasure, that both you and your lady are in the enjoyment of good health, and am happy to know that the maps of the United States, etc., have reached you. It would afford me at all times the greatest satisfaction to render you any service in my power, either in the transmission of information or otherwise, as may be most acceptable to you. Command me, I shall consider it as a great honor and a very agreeable task.

A few passing reflections on America, by one who has been an inhabitant of it since 1821, and a quiet observer of passing events, who never meddled, but with his poor little missions and their cares around him, may perhaps afford you a moment's pleasure; and with this alone in view, though grieved myself at the actual aspect of affairs in this country — for we live in a state of uneasiness, hanging between hope and fear — I send them to you.

Nowhere on the globe is the spirit of progress so rife; the go-ahead, railroad, and lightning principle in such full operation, and popular opinion so omnipotent as in this country. Nowhere else on earth are to be found, in the same community, so many elements of discord, so many isms; and ultraism is the culmination of all other isms, and the besetting evil of the day. In politics, morals, social intercourse, religion, everything, the tendency is to extremes. The United States would truly be the wonder of the world, if the moral condition of the country were to

correspond with the marvelous unfolding of its material resources; with the astonishing increase of its inhabitants; with its immense and almost unbounded territory which threatens eventually to swallow Cuba and its numerous islands around, and the Sandwich Islands in the Pacific. In the long run, it must incorporate the whole of Mexico and will not rest till the two Canadas have been added to the mighty confederacy. Add to all this the wonderful prosperity of its ever-increasing commerce and wealth.

Scarcely seventy years have rolled by since the whole country west of the Alleghany Mountains, now filling up with a dense population, was one continued wilderness, the abode of numerous Indian tribes, which, like the snow before the rising sun, have melted and disappeared at the approach of their ever dreaded foes, the pale-faced European settlers or their descendants.—On the waters of the lakes and rivers which drain the middle or great Mississippi valley, on which at present are seen hundreds of beautiful steamers and thousands of crafts of various dimensions, crowded with passengers and laden with the rich produce of various climes, a few years ago was met the solitary Indian canoe, descending or slowly ascending the rivers and crossing the lakes, with its small band of savage painted warriors adorned with eagle feathers and armed with bows and war clubs. How wonderful the change! Now, along these same waters, hundreds of cities and villages are springing up with the utmost speed and rapidity, as if by enchantment. I have known St. Louis, Cincinnati, Pittsburg, when comparatively small villages; the number of inhabitants in each will soon reach over 200,000. Ten years ago Chicago and Milwaukee were only little trading posts, hardly thought of or known; the first counts already 80,000 and the latter 40,000 inhabitants. All these great cities are perfect bee-hives, filled with industry. As you travel along these waters, or penetrate into the interior, you find the forests fast disappearing and large and beautiful parks and fields taking their place, with

their farms and barns filled with grain, well stocked with numerous herds of horned cattle, or with sheep and large bands of horses. Railroads and macadamized roads are crossing in all directions. English, Irish, German, French, emigrants from every country and from every clime, have come here in the hope of bettering their condition in life, a prospect which they could never realize in the country of their birth, owing chiefly to its dense population.

The moral aspect, however, of this country differs widely from the picture drawn of its material prosperity; for here all the European vices and crimes are found, I dare say, more deep and dark. The depraved, the criminals let loose, or who have escaped from justice, the vagabonds and scum of every country come here to find a congenial home and only serve to increase that moral disorganization which the numerous American Protestant sects, Mormonism included, were fomenting already so much by their destructive principles.

In a country which prides itself on its unbounded liberality and liberty we might have hoped that the Catholic religion, if not protected, would at least have been screened from persecution. This is no longer the case. A party has arisen under the name of "Know-nothings," the principal aim of which appears to be, should they be able to reach it, to crush our holy religion throughout the land. The members of this secret society are bound by abominable oaths and extend their innumerable branches through every State. It may be said, in general, that the ministers of all the different Protestant sects belong to it; many have become notorious by exciting the rioters in various parts to burn churches; to insult publicly priests and even religious ladies [sisters, nuns, etc.]; they are trying every nerve to bring forward a code of anti-Catholic blue laws; and threaten to establish inquisitorial tribunals wherever their power might extend.

This picture, sad and shameful as it may appear in this nineteenth century, is not, however, without its better side.

The American nation is a great, imitative people; they cannot live without some or other great excitement. In their time Fanny Elssler, the dancer, and Jenny Lind, the singer, were idolized by them and called divine. Kossuth was the idol during six months; he tried with success his fortune at it, and he issued bonds and gathered a good round purse while his excitement lasted. In short, he returned to Europe incognito, leaving his dupes ashamed of themselves for having been so craftily humbugged by that greatest humbug of the age, as he now stands here acknowledged by even his once greatest admirers. The present anti-Catholic excitement, though of a very different nature from the above facts, can possibly not last long; other matters may soon present themselves that will attract more and all their attention. The anti-Catholic movement of England is only aped at, at present, in the United States. Witness the ridiculous nunnery questions in both countries. England had the wisdom to leave it alone and the Yankee legislating parsons of Boston burned their fingers at it and are now held forth to scorn by their very adherents who placed them in office.

At first I feared that the Know-nothing movement would prove disastrous to the Catholic church. I feared that the great majority of the American people, constituted as it is by Protestants and quasi infidels and those in general who take no thought of religion, would unite to put down the Church. This fear was increased by the recollection of the facts that mobs had burned convents and churches with impunity in some of our eastern cities. I saw no hope for Catholicity but in the promise: "Lo! I am with you all days," etc. But now, even humanly speaking, I feel confident that instead of being injured, the Church will be benefited by this Know-nothing warfare against it. Political parties are generally tolerably equally divided. Recent State elections have shown that Know-nothingism is not all-powerful and it is more than probable that the majority of the American people will be found on the side of those prin-

ciples with which Catholicity in this country has been identified. The Church identifies itself with no political party, but her enemies, the Know-nothings, have assailed all who are opposed to them as the tools and minions of the Pope and Church. Know-nothingism includes Protestantism in all its shades and degrees, from Episcopalianism to the most inconsiderable sect. Its fundamental principle is opposition to the Church, opposition to foreigners is a secondary malice. A Protestant foreigner makes the best, or rather the worst sort of a Know-nothing.

Now I firmly believe that the result of this political agitation will be that thousands will become Catholics, and that tens of thousands will have their prejudices removed, who, but for the present state of things, would remain enemies of the Church because ignorant of her claims. Already I perceive a disposition on the part of the great party opposed to the Know-nothings, to defend the Church with which they have been *nolens volens* identified. The Democrats (for they constitute the majority of the anti-Know-nothing party) will feel bound to look into the question of Catholicity in order to meet the objections, arguments and misrepresentations of their opponents. Moreover they will sympathize with the Catholics; they will become hostile to Protestantism in general; it will be their interest and pleasure to expose its frailties and follies. Woe to Protestantism when men of sense begin to examine it with the disposition to find fault with it! Woe to it when fact and logic and ridicule are brought to bear upon it! It is needless to say that all that is necessary in order to conviction to the superior claims of the Catholic Church is that these claims be examined without prejudice. These claims will be thus examined, now perhaps for the first time, by vast masses of the people, and be assured that the result will be a glorious one for the cause of truth. The conflict which the preachers mainly have brought on will well-nigh annihilate their influence and strengthen the Catholic Church in the United States. For such a result I confidently look.

Permit me, on the present occasion, to express to you my most sincere thanks and gratitude for the many favors you have so kindly bestowed on me during my visits to my native land. I shall never forget the interview you procured me with his highness, the Duke of Brabant. We pray daily at the holy altar, during the sacrifice of mass, that the Lord may preserve this most Christian Prince, and his august family, for the welfare and happiness of Belgium, and may continue to grant them his choicest blessings. We receive regularly the *Précis Historiques* of Father Terwecoren, which frequently gives very interesting details of the Duke and Duchess, and which we always peruse with the greatest pleasure.

Please present my kindest regards and respects to Mrs. Conway, and believe me to be, etc.

November 26, 1866.⁵

* * * * *

My personal views are not worth speaking of. You know the routine of our houses — we get up early in the morning; about ten o'clock in the evening we go to bed; in the meantime every one works at his little tasks.

My health is, thank God, pretty good just at present. I seldom have recourse to the doctor and still less often to his drugs. Two little bottles have stood full on my mantel for the last three months to bear witness that the druggist has been appealed to in my behalf. Thus far I have done nothing but look at them and take care that they do not evaporate, for perhaps I might want them later. I shall soon enter upon my sixty-seventh year, an age when ordinarily the overcoat covers a multitude of infirmities. I shall end in believing that I bear my years pretty well, for everybody

^b Extract from letter in French to Nephew Paul.

tells me so, and I only make them laugh when I try to assure them that my end is drawing near.

* * * * *

You ask me about the political situation in the United States. I gave you some details in my last letter. Since then the elections have taken place, and despite the formidable opposition of a pronounced majority, the radical minority has won a signal victory. Nobody wonders at it; the radicals hold the power and make use of it *per fas et nefas* without the least scruple, and risk and dare everything regardless of the consequences to the country to perpetuate their odious power.

The thing that is especially agitating the Union at this moment is the tendency of the radicals to try at any cost to crush the South entirely. The Southerners risked everything in their efforts to separate from the Union while preserving their honor intact, and to-day, conquered and yielding, they have returned heart and soul to the Union, attached to the Government and desiring only peace; and the radicals seek to impose conditions upon their return so humiliating and impracticable that the South looks on them with horror and will never accept them.

* * * * *

Should the radicals succeed in their schemes, it is evident that the land is making rapid progress toward anarchy and all the inevitable miseries that it brings with it. As far as religious persecution is concerned, what I think is this: The radicals will not find it easy to bring it about in a land where the spirit of liberty of conscience established by Washington is still held in great honor. Every one fears, and with reason, that after the Catholics his own turn would come. At the last Missouri elections the radicals must have seen that the impious test-oath which the priests refuse to take, is in very bad odor even among the greater part of our Protestant sectarians. But for the unjust and iniquitous disfranchisement of 25,000 conservative voters, the new

State Constitution with all its impious, anti-Christian, unjust and tyrannical laws would be already overturned and trampled under foot. Opposition to this radical persecution is so strong in St. Louis that up to the present they have not dared to invoke their impious laws against the Catholics, etc.

January 26, 1867.⁶

* * * * *

Minds are still very much agitated in the United States. You will have learned from the papers that a radical ticket was elected, by means of fraud at the last Missouri elections and that we are at the mercy of these gentlemen. A good case has just been decided finally by the Supreme Court. Five judges out of nine pronounced against the execrable test oath; so to-day we can preach the Lord's gospel without being exposed to fines or imprisonment. Taxes, however, continue to weigh heavily upon Catholic institutions, while those of the Protestants and Jews are exempt. Our University of St. Louis has had to pay an enormous tax, about \$6,000, whereas the Presbyterian university alongside of us does not pay a cent. Our orphan asylums, hospitals, poor-schools, suffer greatly in this way. That is how matters stand with us in the great and famous Republic. But we do not despair of a better future.

⁶ Extract from letter in French to Ch. De Coster, Heyndonck, Belgium.

CHAPTER VIII.

UNCLASSIFIED LETTERS — LARGELY PERSONAL.

First aspirations for mountain travel and labor — Bad Hand Fitzpatrick — A glimpse of Ireland in 1843 — Writes Dr. McLoughlin about missions — Charles Larpenteur about his soul — Zephyr Rencontre about the Sioux — Draws his own portrait — The devil and jokes — Advice to an intending Oregon emigrant — A puzzling letter to a Provincial — Answers charges made against his writings — Denig's studies — Bridger's children — A relaxation — Old friends up the river — Has drawn some maps — Dining with the great — An interview with President Lincoln — Gold in the mountains — Pleads for Sioux murderers — The Jesuits and the war-draft — Tells at last what he knows about gold — The southwestern Indians — Gratitude and a meerschaum — About authorship of his letters — Early Nebraska history — The Church and Indian agents — Last plans.

*Reverend and Very Dear Father in Jesus Christ:*¹

I RECEIVED your letter of July early this month. I was beginning to fear that you too had deferred your answer to the Greek calends. Will you believe it, Reverend Father? Since the month of June, I have filled up a score of sheets; I have written to fathers and brothers whom I cherish the most in the world, at St. Louis and roundabout. Well, I have received in return, aside from your letter, *five lines*. Ah! how gladly would I attribute this afflicting delay to the negligence of the postal authorities. Here, in this veritable corner of the world, remote from our brothers and friends, surrounded with all sorts of miseries, poor as hairless rats, constantly witnessing the most revolting scenes, which are at the same time irremediable, in the midst of strangers and infidels, I will tell you plainly, every letter that we receive makes a great feast-day for us. Ah! if they knew the joy and consolation, which news from them brings

¹ Unaddressed letter (in French) dated Dec. 18, 1839.

us, and how, after we have received them, our ardor and zeal revive, in the most arduous functions of the ministry, I am sure that each one of them would take pains to contribute his mite to aid us so effectually. I have only a few minutes to give you to-day, the courier is waiting impatiently; but you shall soon receive a longer letter.

I notice in your letter, with very real satisfaction, that you still persevere in your good resolution of devoting yourself wholly to the conversion of the savages. Perseverance, Father, will bring you to your goal. I think, however, that for the moment you are fulfilling your real mission. I would not dare nor wish to have any hand in withdrawing you from it. If it were a question of opening a mission in the mountains, for example, then I should say to you, try to get there as soon as possible, for the Protestants are preparing for that campaign; thousands of well-disposed savages are awaiting you, and the contamination of the whites has not yet spoiled these people; they will listen to you with pleasure, they will follow your precepts with docility and willingly fall in line under the standard of Jesus Christ. It is a healthy country; sickness is unknown; a sick man would soon regain his health there; no one dies except from famine, force or fire. Is it not thus that our predecessors died? What I tell you is merely what I have heard from mountain travelers. But here things look very different. I would not dare advise any one to come here. The great profit that there is in the liquor traffic, and the ease with which it can be brought in, throws the dregs of all the States upon us. They flood the country with this veritable scourge of the Indian, and are turning the heads of all of them. I do not mean to say that we are doing absolutely nothing; by baptizing children, we doubtless open the gate of salvation to a large number. I have often noticed that many of them seem only to await the holy rite of baptism to go and take possession of their eternal happiness, for they die almost as soon as they receive it. Enough about this.

(Letter not complete.)

St. Louis, May 10, 1849.

Colonel McKAY:

Dear Sir.—When I had the honor of calling at your house, before your departure for Fort Leavenworth, I regret that the thought did not strike me of speaking and recommending to you, Captain Fitzpatrick. Were he to be attached and to accompany the expedition to Fort Hall, he would indeed be a great acquisition to the party.—The captain is identified with the whole of that region, having spent the greater part of his life in it. He knows the localities well, and is acquainted with all the tribes who reside in it.—Captain Fitzpatrick is too well known to need any recommendation. I had the pleasure and happiness of traveling in his company during the whole summer of 1842, being my second expedition to the mountains, and every day I learned to appreciate him more and more.

The captain arrived in St. Louis two days ago. He would willingly accompany the expedition, should the Government approve of it. He is still in its service as Indian agent over the whole upper region of the Platte river.—His attendance would, in my humble opinion, be of the greatest advantage to the expedition.

Colonel, please to excuse my boldness, in writing to you on such a subject. I do it from the best of motives and with the best of intentions. I need scarcely add, that, should you approve of this suggestion, a note immediately addressed to the proper authorities here, and thence telegraphed to Washington would enable you to secure the valuable services of Captain Fitzpatrick in time to meet you at Fort Laramie.

I remain, etc.

Liverpool, July 7, 1843.

Reverend and Most Dear Father:

No doubt your Reverence must feel anxious to receive a letter from your poor unworthy servant. I will not enter

into the minute details relating to our journey, for we had an editor of the State of New York with us, and the papers will reach you before this. I was as usually pretty much indisposed and the same evening of the day I left York I paid my tribute to the sea. We had the best of captains, the most polite cabin passengers as usual of all nations, and upward of 150 quiet steerage passengers. Every Sunday we had a sermon and attended by all, showing the greatest attention and respect. Our progress at sea for the first twelve days was cheering in the highest degree, during which we made more than two-thirds of our journey; next followed some eastern winds, and at last we found ourselves becalmed in the channel. Passengers became impatient; they left the vessel in crowds in small fishing boats, and I followed the bishops in a ship to a most delightful little village called Court McSherry on the southern shore of Ireland. In an instant the whole little village was in commotion; the news of the landing of two American bishops and two priests spread like the fires of the far western prairies, among the should-be happy and peaceful, but oppressed inhabitants of the village and its neighborhood. An English officer shortly after our landing waited on us. Though very cautious and polite, uneasiness was very perceptible in his countenance, the more so as it had been spread about that French officers were expected to land under the disguise of priests. A few days afterward the London *Times* had a whole rigmarole on the subject.

The morning after our landing, being the Feast of St. Peter, we celebrated the holy sacrifice to return thanks to God for our preservation and to call for blessings upon Ireland while she is so nobly struggling for her rights and liberty. The church was crowded, and more sincere piety and devotion I never beheld. At the elevation of the sacred host the whispering prayers of the prostrated hundreds struck me with awe and veneration, and the expressions that caught my ear replenished with the most holy faith, drew tears from my eyes.

After mass we proceeded to Cork, via Randon, in a jaunting-cart, a distance of about twenty-six miles. It was in Randon that the celebrated Doctor England performed his first mission in his native land. Judge of the old prejudices of the place when Orangemen wrote on its gates: "Here Jew, idolater and pagan may enter but not a Papist." The distich the servant of Dean Swift wrote underneath you know too well for me to repeat it. The country between Court McSherry and Cork is most delightful and highly cultivated; it is undulating and regularly divided into squares representing a checker-board. We had the inexpressible pleasure of shaking the hand of the second apostle of Ireland, the celebrated Father Matthew. I asked him whether there was any truth in the rumor spread in the United States of his visiting that country. His answer was that he hoped next spring to visit it. I paid my respects to the Right Reverend Doctor Murphy, Bishop of Cork, a most apostolical man and founder of many monasteries. His library consists of upward of 30,000 volumes.

On Friday evening we proceeded to Dublin by stage, where we arrived the next day at four in the afternoon. I proceeded to the house of our Fathers and was received with the greatest kindness and politeness. On Monday I visited Daniel O'Connell in company of Bishop Hughes. What a man! I cannot express my sensations and feelings on that occasion! Never did I behold a brighter eye, a more benevolent face and a more imposing and commanding person. His words flow like honey from his lips; he enraptures and captivates and places you at your ease in a moment, just like an old friend and acquaintance. As we expressed a desire of assisting at the repeal meeting in Dublin he offered us to ride with him in his own carriage, which we gladly accepted. The procession which passed by his house lasted for three hours. It was supposed that upward of 160,000 people attended. We were literally carried to the place where this immense multitude were to meet. The sight was sublime, the order perfect, and Irish eloquence

flowed like torrents and cataracts from many an orator. The most conspicuous speakers were Daniel O'Connell, Mr. Grattan, son of the famous lawyer of that name, and John O'Connell. The meeting lasted for five hours and thousands must have gone home with sore throats for they kept up a constant roar of applause and hurrahs.

I will relate to you two little incidents as a sample of the warm feeling of that nation. An old woman had come many a mile to look at the Liberator. She had forced her way with difficulty through the immense crowd; she had even climbed on the platform from whence O'Connell spoke. I stood near him; she asked me, "Is this the man?" At my answering yes, she pulled his coat exclaiming — "Sir, let me look at you!" He turned with a smile and a bow. A gift of a thousand pounds could not have been more welcome to her. Another old man had reached the carriage. He took the hand of the Liberator and with tears in his eyes he exclaimed — "I have come far to see you, Sir, and to touch this hand; now I am happy and return home rejoiced." As the man retired O'Connell whispered aloud "*What a nation!*" his broad chest heaved. No doubt his benevolent heart answered to his whispering — "They must be free."

St. Ignatius' Mission, July 18, 1845.

To the Honorable MR. McLOUGHLIN, Esq.:

Most Dear Sir.— I received your kind favor at the Dalles and I return to you my sincere thanks for the good news and information you gave me concerning New Caledonia. Having preceded Father Nobili to Walla Walla I left a letter with the very kind and good Mr. McKinlay, for him, with a request to follow the brigade and to pass the winter among those interesting Indians. Next summer or spring he is to return to make his report, and I hope arrangements will be made to establish a permanent mission in that quar-

ter. Father Nobili in his letter to me appeared to be very desirous to undertake the task. May the Lord bless his endeavors, and bless all the gentlemen of the honorable company who have taken so warm a part on the subject.

I arrived on the 12th instant at the mission of St. Ignatius a few miles below the Kalispel Bay. Since the commencement of the present year about 600 Indians of the upper and lower Kalispel tribes have been baptized. I will probably leave to-day to visit the Flatbow and Kootenai Indians, who have expressed a desire to see me for these three years past. My next thoughts are to proceed to the numerous and treacherous Blackfeet; the moment appears to be rather unfavorable on account of a late battle which has taken place between them and the Flatheads and Kalispels. The Blackfeet lost five chiefs and sixteen warriors, and many were wounded. The Kalispels or Pend d'Oreilles had five killed, the Flatheads only one. The Indians think it a most dangerous expedition at present, though all are willing to accompany me thither. If I succeed in my visit to our most implacable enemies and penetrate their country to the hunting ground of the friendly Crows, I may thence once more proceed eastwardly to the civilized world for the interest and strengthening of our different missions (this last point I tell you confidentially and as not as yet altogether certain).

In case of your going to the old continent, I wish you beforehand a most happy and prosperous voyage. Your visit to England will certainly benefit in a great measure the cause of our holy religion in Oregon. I will write from St. Louis to Father Jenkins in London, where you will find a letter concerning the missions of this country. We are happy indeed to have found in you so kind a benefactor and protector, and certainly your endeavors to promote the interests of religion and morality among the different classes of inhabitants in the country will assuredly meet with its deserved reward in this world and hereafter. Probably you may hear of some reports as coming from the Reverend Mr.

Soderini. I deem it necessary to acquaint you that I have found myself in the unhappy necessity of dismissing him from our Society. I learned with great grief of the death of the Honorable Mr. Rae; it must greatly afflict his numerous friends, and bring deep mourning in his family; may the Lord have pity on his soul, and let us take, Dear Sir, in the spirit of religion and with resignation the painful visitations the Lord permits to befall us, keeping our eyes constantly attached toward heaven.

Please, Dear Sir, to give my best respects to your good lady, to Mr. and Mrs. Douglas and to the gentlemen at Vancouver.

I remain with the profoundest esteem and respect,

Most Dear Sir, etc.

P. S.— The Reverend Father Hoeken requests me to send his best respects to you. Father Ravalli is here daily expected. I wrote rather in a hurry. The Indians are saddling my horses.

If any letters from Belgium for me should arrive at Vancouver to your address, please to leave orders to have them sent to the Reverend Father Hoeken.

St. Louis University, Dec. 17, 1849.

Mr. CH. LARPENTEUR, *Baltimore, Md.*:

My Dear Sir.— I received your very kind and interesting favor of the 4th instant two days ago. I am indeed sorry to hear of the continuance of your indisposition, the consequence of your many exposures, no doubt, in times past. I hope it will not be permanent. I also begin to suffer from the same cause, with my share of provocation during several years, for such attacks. In fact, disguise it as we may, old age, like the cholera, has its premonitory symptoms, and will creep slowly but persistently into our entire frame. I

read with the greatest pleasure the edifying sentiments you have expressed to me in your letter; permit me to say a few words in reply on so important a subject. I doubt not but you will receive my poor little advice as coming from a friend who sincerely loves and esteems you, and who, like Father Point, has always thought, since he had the pleasure of making your acquaintance, "that it would take but a little time and exertion on your part to become a good and perfect Christian."

You tell me "that you visited several of the churches in Baltimore, and you admire their beauty of structure and the holy and divine services performed in them." Only one step more is necessary for you, dear friend; join with heart and mind in those latter; approach with a contrite and humble heart the holy tribunal of penance; partake of the bread of angels, now that you have so favorable an opportunity and are surrounded by many good and zealous priests; and be assured beforehand, you shall find an inestimable treasure, a source of consolations and delights, a peace of soul and mind which you would in vain look for in the world. You lived for many years far away from all opportunities of practicing the duties of your holy religion; avail yourself of the present occasion and make a sincere return.

For the good of your little children, you express a wish and desire to accompany us and to settle near us in the Indian country. I appreciate highly your offer, more for us than for yourself, and I hope it may at some future day be realized. We contemplate starting out next spring for the Indian Territory, but have not as yet determined the spot where we shall establish ourselves. The whole season may probably be spent in visiting the various tribes and sounding their dispositions, before any decision will be taken on this subject. Once determined upon, we will then take the necessary measures to form a settlement, and most of the half-breed families on the upper Missouri have promised me already that they are willing to join with us in the undertaking. Your presence and experience among the Indians will, no

doubt, further our own endeavors in converting and civilizing the heathen nations — such being the principal and chief object we have in view in penetrating and settling on their lands. In due time I shall let you know our proceedings and determinations on this subject.

I have the honor to be, etc.

Dear Monsieur ZEPHYR:²

I hasten to reply to your good letter of the 6th from St. Joseph. I am really very sorry that I am unable again this spring to come among my good friends in the Sioux country; but I have so much business on my hands here, with nobody to take my place, that my superiors have put off my departure to the Indian country to some other time; when, I cannot say. There is nothing that I have more at heart, and I feel a great desire and plenty of courage to return to a post which I regret constantly, and to spend my days in laboring for the happiness and salvation of the Indians. But I dare not make any positive promises; it depends upon my superiors. I hope that before long they will be able to replace and release me.

I thank you very cordially for having so well discharged my commission, and for all that you have said to the Sioux. Dear Zephyr, continue still to give good advice and counsel to the savages and the good Lord will give you credit for it. Tell them from me that I often think of them; that I desire ardently to see them again; that I pray daily for their happiness; that they must take care not to offend the Great Spirit, who always takes pity on his good children, and who will send them Black-robles to instruct them in the word and the prayer which alone can make man happy on earth and happy for eternity in heaven.

You tell me, dear Zephyr, in your letter that you came to

² To Zephyr Rencontre, June 11, 1850.

St. Joseph at my request, and that you received the commission from me by a Mr. Entoine. This is really some mistake. I have never given such a commission to anybody. In future don't believe reports of this kind. When I have any request to make, I shall make it by letter. Adieu! All sorts of good wishes from me to all your family, to all my friends and acquaintances, and to the Indians whom I had the pleasure of meeting on my last journey.

Your devoted Father and friend.

October, 1850.

My Very Dear SILVIE:³

I have just received your dear letter of the 15th of July, and I hasten to reply to it. You announce to your Uncle Pierre one more consolation: he is so inclined to share the happiness of those who are happy, especially when it is a question of a little niece called Silvie. So then, praise be to the Good Lord for all that has been done, for I have a solid hope that it is his holy will that has been accomplished. I am glad, very glad, of your union with Mr. Edmond De Bare, and my only regret is that I was not there to bless you both, and to share with your dear parents and friends the joys of the occasion.

Since I now love my nephew, Mr. De Bare, as much as I love my niece Silvie, you must be careful to give him a faithful description of your uncle, so that if I should happen in on him in your absence, he could recognize me without ever having seen me. Uncle Pierre, tell him, is a man of medium size, with gray hair, tending to white. The centre of his wide face (a foot, or near it), is occupied by a nose with which a Greek or a Roman would not find much fault. Its nearest neighbor is a mouth of ordinary size, which hardly ever opens save to laugh or to make others laugh. It makes people love the Good Lord in that manner.

³ Extract from a letter in French to a niece.

The rest resembles a man of fifty years, who weighs 210 pounds. If ever you build a new house, give the door of my chamber six inches extra width, because I don't like to be bothered in getting into a room. Joking aside, a thousand compliments to my dear nephew, etc.

⁴I have just received your letters of the 14th of last September. The Reverend Father Provincial, being somewhat indisposed at this moment, asks me to reply.

As far as the order for sending Father L' Vercroyssse back to Belgium is concerned, on the strength of what you say regarding this good Father, the Reverend Father Provincial will leave this affair entirely to the discretion of the superiors of Oregon, and gives his consent to his remaining in the missions. You tell me "that he suspects me of the blow that has struck him." He is very much mistaken. If a blow has struck him, it has certainly not emanated from me in any way. If he will just reflect and look around a little, he will not have far to go to find the guilty party. Enough on this subject. Assure Father Louis that everything was forgotten and forgiven years ago; that no bitterness against any one whomsoever ever entered my heart. There have been misunderstandings, there are discords, and many wretched little things that have had sad enough results. I have attributed all these things to the devil, jealous of the good disposition of the Indians and of the great good that was being done in the missions. Courage, dear Father, do not abandon the post that has been intrusted to you. The Good Lord will come to your aid, I hope, before long.

Our Indian missions east of the Rocky Mountains are very flourishing; everything is going well enough in the various houses of our Province. I have read the note and

⁴ Extract from letter of January 21, 1851, to Father Joset in Oregon.

the Gazette that the Reverend Father Accolti sent me. I have brought the affair of the respectable Doctor McLoughlin to the attention of Senator Benton.

St. Louis University, Nov. 13, 1851.

Reverend Father HELIAS, S. J., *St. Xavier's Church, P. C.*:

Reverend and Very Dear Father in Christ.—Dear Father, since last I wrote to your Reverence I have suffered much and lost much. I lost my good companion, Father Hoeken, and was left alone like an orphan to find my way through the wilderness, surrounded by a thousand dangers. At my return I found my superior buried, in whom I lost not only a father and brother in Christ, but a faithful friend and a true and sure guide, by his good counsels and examples. The Lord be praised — both died like saints — this consoles and strengthens me in my loss.

Whilst traveling in the plains and mountains, kind Providence has watched over me. I escaped from a dangerous illness, from the attacks of wild beasts and enemies, from the smallpox and cholera. I passed through a camp where people were dying and rotting, alive, unhurt and untouched. I slept among the dying and dead for over a month, handling and attending on the cholera patients, and returned safe and sound. I had the happiness to place the holy waters of baptism on the foreheads of 1,586 children and adults, of whom many have since fallen victims of the two mentioned diseases, and are now forever happy.

Let us be friends. I will be more serious in my letters for the future, as I have perceived that they have not been taken as I meant them (in a joke); for I certainly could not and would not act against your Reverence for whom I shall ever entertain the highest esteem and respect.

Reverend and Dear Father, etc.

St. Louis University, Feb. 27, 1852.

Mr. GEORGE THOMPSON, *Chapel Hill, Perry Co., Ohio*:

Dear Sir.—I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, in which you ask me some information concerning Oregon. As it is asked by way of advice which may decide you and eight or ten more families, as you say, to emigrate to that country, I am indeed at a loss what to say, and I must acknowledge that till now I have never taken it upon me to encourage any one to undertake the journey. Oregon, no doubt, has great advantages, several of its valleys are beautiful and rich; the grazing, even in winter, is fine and abundant; and the great discoveries in California have opened up a large market for its products. In no country are cattle easier raised, and its wheat is most beautiful. The climate may be put down as fair, if you except the rainy season, which lasts between three and four months. I must say, at the same time, that it can bear no comparison with most of our Western States, all things well considered. The richness of the lands in general, with all the other advantages connected with it, are much greater here than there.

I left Oregon in the fall of 1846, and since that time extensive emigrations to that country have taken place; so that I think by this time the best and most suitable spots must have been taken up.

Besides, the great difficulty is to get there, for the road is long and dangerous. Last summer I paid a visit to the different Indian nations as far as the Rocky Mountains, and returned to the States by the Oregon route, which I struck in the neighborhood of Independence Rock, about 200 miles above Fort Laramie. The scene we witnessed on this road presented indeed a melancholy proof of the uncertainty which attends our highest prospects in life. The bleached bones of animals everywhere strewed along the track, the hastily erected mound, beneath which lie the remains of some departed friend or relative, with an occa-

sional tribute to his memory roughly inscribed on a board or headstone, and hundreds of graves left without this affectionate token of remembrance, furnished abundant evidence of the unsparing hand with which death has thinned their ranks. The numerous shattered fragments of the vehicles, provision, tools, etc., intended to be taken across these wild plains, tell us another tale of reckless boldness with which many entered upon this hazardous enterprise. It is rashness to undertake this long trip except with very good animals, with very strong vehicles and with a good supply of light provisions, such as tea, coffee, sugar, rice, dried apples, peaches, flour and peas or beans.

I remain, Dear Sir, etc.

St. Louis University, March 12, 1852.

⁵*Reverend Father Provincial, Holland:*

P. C.:

Very Reverend Father.—Perhaps your Reverence may already have received the letter of the Reverend Father Provincial, of Missouri, in which he announces to you his intention, in concert with all his consulters, of sending me to Europe as Procurator of the Vice Province of Missouri, and of the Indian missions; and by which he desired beforehand to consult your Reverence. The plan is one that Reverend Father Elet had formed in the time of his provincialate, and seems to have already received the approbation of his Paternity.

In so far as this plan regards me, I will speak openly to you. I have nothing whatever to do with their choice, nor with the adoption of the plan. I affirm, nevertheless, that I am ready to execute in all things the will of my superiors. I will even admit to you, that in my secret soul, and after mature reflection and much prayer, I desire that the plan

⁵From the French.

should be accomplished; and for the sole reason that I would be glad to be able to spend the few years that remain to me, should the Lord grant me any, in the strict observance and practice of all our holy rules, and in perfect submission to the orders of my superiors. I feel the need of it, after having passed so many years in these remote American missions. The beautiful death of the Reverend Hoeken, whom the Lord has seen fit to recompense on the field of battle, and that of the worthy Father Elet, who has been to me for so many years not only a brother in Christ, but also a guide by his good counsels and his example, make me sincerely desire this.

I venture to assure you in advance, Very Reverend Father, that I shall give you entire satisfaction in everything, and if the Reverend Father Provincial's request is granted by your Reverence, I shall personally be under the greatest obligations to you. To live as a good religious, submissive and obedient to my superiors, and if occasion should present, to be still useful to America, always subject to the good pleasure of my superiors, is, before God, my sole desire.

Believe, me, etc.

St. Louis University, May 1, 1852.

Right Reverend Bishop VAN DE VELDE, *at the Council, Baltimore:*

P. C.:

Right Reverend and Most Dear Father in Christ.—I received your kind and most welcome favor of the 22d instant. It relieved my mind, which had been uneasy by not receiving an answer to three letters, pretty much about the same subject, which I had the honor of writing to you.

* * * * *

When you were my superior, you frequently corrected me for being too easily affected and dejected when things were

said against me, to which I must plead guilty. Something of the kind has occurred again, and from headquarters, which has brought me low, indeed — the more so, as I have the full conviction in my heart that the charges against me are untrue, false and unjust, and bring along great evil in their consequences — the neglect, in a great measure, of Indians, for whom I would have gladly sacrificed the remainder of my days. I stand accused of the following: First. That my letters have done a great deal of harm in America. Second. That my letters are only imagination and poetry, false and untrue. Third. That I have lost the missions by over-liberality to the Indians, and by promises to them which the Fathers have been unable to fulfill.

I pardon, from my heart, the men who have made these false accusations. The letters written from Oregon for several years in succession by the Fathers on the good dispositions of the Indians, after I had left the missions, are alone sufficient to cover the calumniators with shame and confusion. Many of these letters I have sent to Rome in the very handwriting of those Fathers, and culled [others] from the newspapers as they had been published; but to all of which no answer has been returned. All my letters have been written by special requests of my superiors, chiefly Very Reverend Father-General. I declare to have written them all with uprightness and sincerity, and that I have never exaggerated, at least not willfully, in speaking of the dispositions of the Indians, and of the good which was done in their midst; and of this in particular, most of the Fathers have said, spoken and written more highly than I ever did (Fathers Point, Joset, Mengarini, Ravalli, Hoeken, Accolti, De Vos, Nobili, etc.). I have many of their letters still in my possession. *They have written the truth and so have I.* Even as late as the 1st of November, 1851, Reverend Father Joset writes to me as follows; and his letter was published in the *Shepherd of the Valley*: “You will learn with pleasure that the Pend d’Oreilles, the Cœur d’Alènes, the Kettle Falls Indians and the tribes of the lakes of the

Columbia river are giving the greatest satisfaction and consolation to their missionaries, and I may say, have never behaved better," etc., etc. I could fill sheets of paper with extracts of the letters of the Fathers of Oregon, filled with praise of the Indians, and that for years after I had left them.

In the spring of 1851 the Flathead mission was abandoned. The why and the how I could, I think, pretty easily guess at. I left it in a flourishing condition in 1846; the testimonials and letters of Fathers Joset, Mengarini, Ravalli, Point, and Accolti, bear testimony to my assertion. It is abandoned five years later and I am accused of being the cause of this "by my liberalities and promises to the Indians, which they have been unable to sustain." Liberal in what? Promises of what? I am at a loss to imagine.

Let the above suffice. I have given you this little statement, because I have no doubt that Very Reverend Father-General, for whom I have always had the highest esteem, respect and veneration, will allude to some of these points, and I ardently wished to acquaint you with it, "lest blame be imputed, where no blame is due." (The writing I took this from has wonderfully pleased us. Thank you.)

There is some appearance of my being sent to Europe as Procurator of the Vice Province. Should this come to pass, it will be a struggle for me to leave America, with many dear brethren and many happy recollections. The thought of being still useful to it, though at a distance, encourages me in the strict practice and observance of our holy rules, and in a perfect submission to the orders of my superiors. I feel and am sensible of the necessity of this, after having passed so many years in the wild and distant missions of America, in which all my thoughts and endeavors have, as it were, so long been centred, in the midst of great struggles and contradictions. The examples of the beautiful death of Father Hoeken, whom the Lord has deigned to crown on the very battle-field; and the death of our worthy Father Elet, so edifying to all, have made a

deep impression upon my mind, by which I hope I shall profit till the end. May God's will be done.

Remember me, etc.,

St. Louis University, May —, 1852.

EDWIN T. DENIG, Esq., *Fort Union*:

Dear Sir and Friend.— Your welcome letter of the 28th of January reached me in due time. I was glad to learn of the safe arrival of our good friend Mr. Culbertson at Fort Union, but how the great pioneer could be found manœuvring some time between the waters of the Missouri and those of the Columbia, I am truly astonished at. I hope he has kept a journal, and I would be glad to have a peep at it, as his mishap would considerably improve my great map.⁶ Tell him that I read with the greatest pleasure and profit to myself the ably written journal of the expedition to the Upper Missouri of his worthy brother Thaddeus, in which he so frequently and honorably refers to so many names that I shall always remember with a grateful heart.

I communicated your favor to Colonel D. D. Mitchell, who read with delight your statement of the actual dispositions of the Indians. Your remarks are certainly just and true. The colonel is well convinced of it and he has repeatedly urged upon the Government the ratification of the treaty. What a pity that so little is known in high quarters of the nature and character of the Indians — they would not be so slow in their decisions. It is hoped, however, that the treaty will ere long be ratified by Congress and carried out in full without further delay. I thank you likewise for the view you kindly give me of the future formation of missions on the upper Missouri, and for your good feelings toward me, my brethren and the religion we profess. I am truly grateful to learn that even the Crazy Bear and his

⁶ Literally copied, but exact meaning of last two sentences is obscure.

people have commenced appreciating the value of such establishments. You are well convinced that nothing but the propagation of the principles of the Christian religion, and motives of charity toward the aborigines could induce us to embark in such undertakings. Dear Sir, I have not lost sight of this object, and I am allowed to state that we have it in contemplation, and that great hopes are entertained that before long a mission will be established within, or in the vicinity of, your district. Should such a task devolve on me I shall certainly look out for a spot sufficiently convenient [for us] to meet occasionally, where we might quietly and pleasantly pass a few hours in friendly discourse on religious topics, on politics, on socialism, red republicanism and Kossuth, and the manners and customs of the Indians. Let me here express my gratitude for the manuscript you have had the great kindness to prepare for me, and which I shall be most glad to receive and to peruse.

I see you are still perusing Mochler's *Symbolism* and you look upon him as an able writer. The book is calculated to be the instrument of much good, particularly at the time like the present when men's minds are turned to the consideration of religious controversy with an earnestness and activity unexampled at any other period. Cardinal Wiseman, whose very name is an authority, calls it "the most profound work upon the Philosophy of Divinity which our time has produced."

I send you by the steamer another book, in reading which I will venture to say that you will think some of your leisure hours well spent, so various are its topics, so rich are its views and suggestions. Balmes is a Spanish priest, but one of the best known and most influential of the contemporary political and philosophical writers of his country, enjoying a high European reputation, and deservedly ranking among the first authors of our times. He is at once learned and philosophical, profound and popular, a man of the nineteenth century and a rigidly orthodox pious Catholic. You will pronounce him, I know, not the worse for it.

I have not forgotten the locust sprouts and shall do my best to send them by the steamer. Assuredly I shall not forget a dozen of H. S. [?], and I hope they will not be "swooped," as the previous have been, but will be enjoyed by yourself and friends.

St. Louis University, Sept. 27, 1852.

Reverend P. J. VERHAEGEN, S. J., *St. Charles*:

Reverend and Dear Father.—I will thank your Reverence for an immediate answer to the following. Captain Bridger,⁷ an old Rocky Mountain friend of mine, has sent his two children (half-breeds) to the States to be educated. One is a girl about seven years old; the boy is a little over eight. They have never been baptized, at least I think so, and shall inquire on the subject. He has left means with Colonel Robert Campbell for their education and clothing. Inquire of Madame Hamilton whether she will admit the little girl? and at what price? Will Madame Barada admit the boy as a boarder, pay for his schooling at your school, and for how much a year? Please answer without delay. I am afraid Protestants will try to get them; the sooner they are away from here the better.

Pray for me, etc.,

⁷ James Bridger was one of the most widely known of the pioneers of the fur trade and emigration periods. He was born in Richmond, Va., March 17, 1804, and died in Westport, Mo. (now a part of Kansas City), July 17, 1881. He first went to the Indian country in 1822 as a member of the Ashley Expedition of that year. He visited Great Salt lake in the winter of 1824-1825 and, so far as now known, was the first white man to see that body of water. He was a member of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, the founder of the celebrated Fort Bridger, a trusted guide in many Government and private expeditions, and altogether one of the most quaint and romantic, yet important, characters in the early history of the West.

St. Louis University, Sept. 30, 1852.

Mr. [ROBERT] MELDRUM, *Upper Missouri*:

Dear Sir.— I received your kind favor of the 29th of last July. I had received previously the garnished buffalo robe, the elk-horn bow and the dressed sheep skin, which you had the kindness to send me, and for which I return to you my sincere thanks. I learned to-day that Mr. Culbertson had arrived in St. Louis and would leave the city immediately. I could not let him depart without sending him these few lines. The news you gave me about the Crows and their happy and religious dispositions has greatly pleased me. Please remember me to them; assure them that they are not forgotten in my heart and mind and that I long to visit them once more. When this shall be I am not able, at present, to tell you. Should I receive good news in the course of this fall or winter concerning an establishment or a visit among the Crows, I will let you know in due time. Meanwhile, endeavor to continue, as far as lies in your power, to keep up a good religious spirit among them, which will greatly lead to their advantage and welfare.

Believe me to be, etc.,

St. Louis University, April 1, 1853.

Mr. J. BRIDGER, *Fort Bridger and Vasquez*:

Dear Friend.— Our good friend, Colonel R. Campbell, acquainted me yesterday that a departure for the mountains was about to take place and I avail myself of this opportunity of writing a few lines to you. A few days ago I had the pleasure of paying a visit to your children who reside at present in St. Charles. They appeared to be well pleased and are certainly well taken care of. Felix frequents our school and is making progress. His sister lives in the Academy and under the immediate care of the

Ladies of that well-conducted establishment, who have every regard for her that good Mothers could have for their own children. Both have been somewhat sickly during the winter, but are now doing well. You may rest assured that all shall be done to make them comfortable and happy.

You have promised me a letter with regard to the Flat-heads, and I have anxiously expected it during the whole course of last year. Should you see them remember me to them and assure them that I daily address my prayers to the Lord for their welfare and happiness; but to attain this end they must remain faithful to God and not listen to bad counsel, and to ill-disposed persons. It would be for me the height of happiness to learn that they still cherish the idea of seeing a Black-gown in their midst, and were this the case, of which I wish to be informed, I would do all I can to see this their desire accomplished. I send you by this occasion a couple of pistols and a knife, as a present to my dear friend Insula, whose remembrance I shall always cherish.

Remember me to all, etc.

April 22, 1853.

Mes Très Chères SYLVIE ELMIRE et ROSALIE:⁸

Exilement, even when it is voluntary, or when, rather, it is imposed by conscience or religion, cannot destroy in a man's heart the sweet sentiments there implanted by kinship or love of country. Hence the vacancy that I feel within me, from not having received for so long a time any of your letters, always so good and interesting and so consoling to your American exile. Still, I am not in a position to complain; if reproaches were in order, it is, I presume, upon me that they ought to fall. So if you should require a big "meâ culpâ" from me, a resounding one shall fall upon my broad breast. I will admit, in fact, that I ought

⁸ From the French.

long ago to have sent you a full account of my very long journeys in our great American deserts, because I made you that positive promise long ago.⁹ I would have liked nothing so well as to have let you follow, step by step, without danger to yourselves, my wanderings as missionary, traveler and observer. You would have seen many lands, traversed many deserts, sailed upon many rivers. Exposed to the uncertainties of the weather and to the rigors of the climate, you would have spent many somewhat chilly nights under the open sky or the tent of the savage, victims to a thousand devouring insects. Lovely nature, sublime nature, terrible nature — the plains, the valleys, the hills, the mountains hiding their snowy summits among clouds — nature in all her forms would have roused in you a thousand reflections, each more philosophic than the rest. And then the forlornness, the misery, the brutalization of the poor natives of our country, would have moved your tender hearts and lifted them to heaven in prayer.— Yes, you can imagine what a comfort it would have been to me, to talk to you about these things so dear to my heart. The best part of my existence has been devoted to the savages, these sorry waifs of our race. I have in days gone by had the happiness to dry a few tears among them; to bind up some wounds, those of the soul in especial; to guide them toward the only true destiny of mankind. My hair has whitened at it, and my vigorous health has received some small shocks.

But I am straying; I meant to tell you how much I would have liked to keep my promise; how much my friendly feeling for you and my good will to my poor Indians inclined me that way. But for the last few years I have been worked to death, and have had frequent and long journeys to make. I have put off the fulfillment of my promise from week to week and from month to month, until to-day I find myself

⁹ Another of the numerous examples in Father De Smet's writings of his fancy for excessive repetition of certain words.

still your debtor. I know that you will lay my apparent neglect of you to these causes, and that you have never doubted my good will. My hair may turn gray, my sight become dim, my strength fail me, but I can say in all truthfulness that my affection for you, my dear Sylvie, Elmire and Rosalie, remains to me in its full vigor. Every day at the altar I implore the aid and blessing of heaven upon you and all the family. The only thing that I expect from you in return, is that I may always hold the same place in your affections, and that sometimes you will address to God your good prayers for your Uncle Pierre and for the conversion of his poor savages.

You must not despair, though I am not able even yet to pay the debt that I owe you. Who knows if I may not repay you the whole with interest, one of these fine days, and in currency more available than paper money. There is, however, my good nieces, nothing to prevent your scolding me as roundly as you please. I would even consider this a mark of affection on your part, as showing how much you think of my poor correspondence. And then let us leave it to time, or rather to Providence, to arrange everything for the best and for the greatest satisfaction of us all.

I hope Papa will have received my letter of the 24th of March. Please remember me, and say a thousand things from me, to your dear parents, to your Uncle François, to Charles, Paul, Clémence and all the family at Termonde and Antwerp.

And now I have only to wish you every one increased prosperity, hoping that the Lord will grant the ardent vows that I form to that end.

Your devoted, etc.

St. Louis University, Feb. 4, 1854.

W. S. ROSECRANS:

Dear Sir.— I received your kind favor of the 21st ultimo, a few days ago. In answer to your letter, I would counsel

you to open a correspondence with Mr. Philip Van der Maelen, Founder and Director of *L'Etablissement Geographique de Bruxelles*. He is known all over Belgium and Holland and I may add, Europe in general. Should he accept of your proposal, you will find in him a most responsible business correspondent and at the same time a most worthy Catholic. Should his occupations prevent him from accepting your proposals, he will, no doubt, indicate a person in every way competent and willing to open a correspondence, and to whose care you might safely intrust the applications you may have to make for the procuring Belgian *Brevets d'Invention* for American clients.

As I have the honor of being well acquainted with Mr. Van der Maelen, and visited several times his great and interesting establishment, it may perhaps be good to tell him in your letter the circumstance of my recommending him. Anything in the way of new inventions and of natural curiosities interest him exceedingly and I am inclined to think your proposal will be gladly accepted, and that your acquaintance will be highly appreciated by him.

I have the honor to be, etc.

St. Louis University, March 11, 1854.

Reverend Father VERHAEGEN, S. J. :

Reverend and Dear Father.— We are all enjoying good health at the University and Father O'Loghlin has recovered. I spoke to Mr. Campbell the other day about little Rocky Mountain Felix and told him that I had written to your Reverence to procure the necessary clothes for the child, for which he thanked me and said it was all right. His father will probably soon arrive in St. Louis and may again proceed to the mountains, taking his two children along with him. All expenses incurred for Felix, up to the day of his departure, Mr. Campbell has promised shall be settled, but, in the doubt that he may perhaps not be left in

St. Charles, does not like to pay in advance. This much was said to Mrs. Barada, but has not been well understood by her. You may assure her that all is right.

I hope Major Bridger will find his children in good health at his arrival in St. Charles. He has spent upward of thirty years among the Indians and is one of the truest specimens of a real trapper and Rocky Mountain man. He has been always very kind to us, and as he has much influence among the various tribes of the Far West he may still continue to exercise it in our favor — I hope he will call on your Reverence.

* * * * *

Remember me, etc.

One of Father De Smet's Relaxations.

St. Louis Spiritual Rolling-mill,¹⁰ April 12, 1854.

*Reverend Father Horstmann, S. J.,
P. C.:*

Reverend and Dear Father and Friend of the Roll-offs.— Your two last short rolls put me into a rolling humor once more, for the particular benefit of all the reverend rollers of St. Xavier College, who rolled out, as you say, a rolling laugh and a rolling shout, at my first endeavor at rolling off an epistle. Our old folks, however, know full well that I was not a bad hand at a log-rolling party in our first days of fervor at St. Stanislaus — indeed we rolled thousands of logs out of sight to make the rolling land look decent all around. How proud Father Rolloff must be of his rolling name — to see it roll in and roll out, roll up and roll down, in a perpetual rolling motion!

¹⁰ A new priest, named Roeloff, had it seems arrived at St. Xavier's. Father Di Maria and his mare, and her colt that bit off Father Truyens' thumb, and his law-suit with a St. Louis dentist over a set of teeth, were the theme of a good deal of good-humored badinage about this time.

Now let us roll for a moment into business. Your twenty-nine intentions of the 24th ulto and the seventeen of the 1st instant, I have all rolled out to good quarters. The old corn-crackers, I think, do well to roll in on your rolling-mill, to obtain pious rolls — Father Di Maria paid dear enough for his two new sets of corn-crackers [false teeth]. He wants silver rollers to keep them sharp and to keep his old mare in corn and in good humor, lest she, too, like her angry little one, cracks off another Father's thumb, and like Truyens would make him feel the loss of the thing. Roll out of course a part of your kind intentions to the old corn-crackers, it will keep them in a good rolling, corn-cracking mood.

We rolled everything in good order in our Bishop's room, for we expect the second High Priest of the Upper Corn-crackers will roll in on us soon after Easter. The second cook is already engaged in baking hot rolls for the occasion — his friends know what he is rolling after and will be, no doubt, prepared to furnish him a goodly roll of shin-plasters, to enable his Lordship to erect the corn-cracking cathedral of Covington.

Roll on with your accounts with your usual prudence; they will roll into a happy conclusion at last, and St. Xavier, I trust, will roll and roll smoothly forward for many a happy year to come. The silver rolls alone ought not altogether to absorb our thoughts. Robinson-like, you must keep them rolling in and out, for to be rolled about is their nature.— Your church is your chief rolling mill and a great deal of good rolls out of it. Upward of 30,000 sinful rolls yearly, of which many are generals, are there unrolled, and the dark rolling consciences, being freed and made clean, roll toward home in peace and joy. And again, how many are there in the Queen City, who are yearly rolled into a happy eternity by Father Rolloff & Co., whose names find a place on the celestial roll. Roll on patiently and cautiously with your temporal rolls, so that the spiritual rolling-mill may be kept in a constant rolling operation.

The clock has struck half-past eleven, and my eyes begin to roll — before I roll under my blanket and roll my head in my pillow, allow me, Dear Father, to beg you to roll forth another good prayer for me, and obtain in my behalf, from each Father and Brother, a short pious roll. I rolled out of my retreat a few days ago with a store of good and resolute rolls — I wish to make them roll faithfully as long as my breath is rolling within me, and when this rolls off, may I roll out of this world as a true son of St. Ignatius.— Roll out my best respects to Father Rolloff & Co.— Most respectfully rolling,

Reverend and Dear Father,
Your devoted roller in Xst,
P. J. DE SMET, S. J.

[About May 25, 1854.]

E. T. DENIG, *Mouth of the Yellowstone:*

My Dear Friend.— I received your very kind letter of the 20th of December, and I sincerely thank you for your kind remembrance of me. I shall anxiously be on the lookout for the return of the boat and hope I shall be favored again with one of your interesting epistles, which I consider as most agreeable treats and which I always peruse with the greatest pleasure and with great advantage to myself. Nothing, dear friend, could come nearer to my heart than to be again employed in the midst of the Indians and to spend all my time for their spiritual and temporal welfare. The several years I passed among them I call the happiest of my life and nothing shall efface from my memory the many tokens of sincere affection and kindness I have received from this benighted people, and their great willingness to listen to my instructions and to put them into practice. I remember to have told you that a good and faithful Jesuit is a soldier of Jesus Christ. He has his Gen-

eral and his other subordinate and immediate superiors, who employ him in the service of the Lord wherever his services may be best required, for his own good and to prepare him for a happy eternity, and for the better promoting of his neighbor's welfare. My station at present is in St. Louis, and I am satisfied and pleased. My next may be among the poor aborigines again, and I should rejoice indeed if it came within the limits of your jurisdiction; and that for several reasons. You know the Indian nature and character so well; you truly sympathize with them in their forlorn situation and sincerely wish to promote their happiness and welfare. I for my part value your friendship highly and would assuredly profit by your advice in furthering the great end, the conversion and civilization of the Indian tribes.

Allow me to make a request of you, which will, I think, advance the object we have so often spoken of, and which you take so much to heart, the establishment of a Catholic mission on the upper Missouri. I would ask of you to address a statement and request to that effect to the Right Reverend Bishop Miège, residing at present among the Potawatomes in the Nebraska Territory, stating the necessity and advantages to be derived from such an establishment, the actual disposition of the Indian nations, and particularly the great desire of the chiefs to promote it. Send it to me and I will forward it myself to the Bishop. I doubt not he will give it all due consideration and attention and use every exertion to carry it into effect.

Last year I entertained some hope of going to the upper country again to accompany the Right Reverend Bishop in his first contemplated visit to the upper Indian tribes. We were both called to Europe on business, which alone broke up our plans. This year the agitation of the Nebraska question does not permit him to leave the Potawatomie and Osage Missions, for the whole of that beautiful region will soon be taken possession of by white settlers. Rest assured,

and you may tell the Indians so, that the idea of establishing missions among them has not been abandoned by their friends the Black-robbers, but has only been postponed, and that perhaps for only a short period.

You may not forget to tell Crazy Bear, the Three Bears and others, that the old Black-robe thinks frequently of them, and begs daily of the Great Spirit to bless and protect all his Indian friends, to make them happy here in this world and grant them the favor of knowing him, of loving him, of serving him in this world, to be made happy with him in heaven for all eternity. I will always take great interest in their welfare.

I give you no news either from the States, or from Europe. I could only take it from the papers, which of course you will read, and with eagerness, I dare say, for the Eastern war will procure us very thrilling and interesting subjects.

Major Vaughan will bring you a great deal of news. I had the pleasure and happiness of seeing him several times in St. Louis. You will not lose, I hope, by your kindness toward him. The razors I now send you by the present occasion will, if anything, I think shave cleaner [than those sent before]¹¹ and assist you for many long years to come as you very beautifully express it in your letter, "to shave and lather the inner man occasionally." We cannot often enough think of this and we ought to prepare for the life to come.

I beg of you as a great favor, not to forget to write to me as often as you conveniently can — If you have an elk-horn bow to send with a quiver of arrows, I would greatly thank you for it. I promised to procure one to a friend in Europe.

I remain with great respect, Dear Friend,

¹¹ Presumably religious instruction of some sort. Some eighteen months before Father De Smet had sent him two razors and a penknife.

St. Louis University, August 23, 1855.

Mr. E. T. DENIG:

My Dear Friend.— I must write in a great hurry and be short. Mr. Rolette, our good friend, just arrived from Canada and tells me he must be off to-day for St. Paul and Red river, in order to meet you in due time and to continue together your trip to Fort Union. I cannot see him start without giving him a few lines for you. He will give you verbally the contents of our long conversation and all the news concerning me. I rejoiced greatly indeed in meeting with him, the more so as he lives with you under the same roof and in a country so dear to my heart. I need not tell you how sadly I was grieved that while you were in St. Louis circumstances prevented me from seeing you and communicating with you. I can assure you, it has been a serious trial and sacrifice on my part. I hope my friends here will have explained well to you the particular situation in which I found myself, for according to our rules and customs, the religious exercises once begun, cannot be interrupted. Mr. Rolette understands these matters well and will give you further satisfaction on the subject. I can assure you that in these religious exercises I have not forgotten you and daily have I remembered you in a most particular manner in my poor prayers to God. O dear friend, as long as I live I will not cease to offer a prayer for you to the Lord that he may grant you his choicest blessings and favors. I was happy to learn that during my absence you still consented to be married by Reverend Father Daeman and that your children have been baptized.

At the end of my religious exercises, on the 19th inst., I proceeded immediately to St. Louis and to the Virginia Hotel, in the expectation of still finding you. To my great sorrow I arrived about two hours after your departure and had to forego the pleasure and happiness of embracing you. I hope I shall see you perhaps in the course of the next year. Assure the Indians that the Black-robe has not forgotten them and try your best to prepare the way.

Mr. Rolette will present you some books in my name, which I know you will peruse with pleasure in your leisure moments.

You will present my best respects to Mr. Culbertson and his good and kind family, to Mr. Meldrum and all other good friends and acquaintances.

I remain, etc.

St. Louis University, June 13, 1856.

E. T. DENIG, Esq.:

Most Dear Sir and Friend.—Major Culbertson, I hope, will already have reached Fort Union in good health and safety. I arrived in St. Louis only in time to shake hands with him and to wish him a happy and prosperous journey. He had the kindness to take charge of a short letter to you, which I scribbled out in a great hurry, to give you some token of life and of my continued esteem and attachment. I shall never forget the unbounded kindness and charity I have received from our good and great friend, the major. He has most liberally taken under his care all the little effects I have been able to collect to assist poor Father Hoeken and brethren in their missionary labors among the Flatheads and Rocky Mountain Indians. Please be my interpreter in returning him again my most sincere thanks.

If time had allowed me I would have sent you a little remembrance by the major. I rejoice for the present opportunity. Mr. Mackenzie tells me he will see you and I avail myself of the occasion to present you a few books from me. I know you will read them with pleasure in your leisure hours. I feel proud indeed for my country to have so able a man as Hendrick Consciens. He is one of those men whom God sends only at distant intervals and for the general elevation and glory of the human race. His tales are intensely national, they are characteristic to a T and altogether Belgian; but you will find them at the same

time universal, appealing to what is deepest, truest, and purest in the universal human heart. He is doing more for Belgium than Scott did for Scotland. Brownson says of him, "that no competent judge can deny the author a much higher order of genius than was possessed by the Wizard of the North." I have added Louis Napoleon's life. I have no doubt you will read it with pleasure. The author overrates perhaps a little too much his hero. It is certainly well written, and full of interest and valuable information, and I think you will find it so.

As I am no politician and never meddle in such affairs you cannot expect any news from me on the subject. For some time to come the papers will afford a great deal of interest and these, no doubt, you will occasionally receive. I hope, dear friend, that you will continue to favor me with your interesting letters; they are always a treat to me and most welcome. I would also feel most grateful for an occasional Indian legend, or something on their manners and customs. My kindest regards to Mr. Rolette. The Reverend Fathers Murphy and Damen wish to be remembered to you. Remember me also to your kind family and all other friends and acquaintances at Fort Union; likewise to Crazy Bear and the other chiefs I may happen to have seen in the country.

Most respectfully, etc.

St. Louis University, August 22, 1856.

*Dear Friend:*¹²

I received your kind favor of the 12th ultimo and thank you most sincerely for your kind remembrance of me. I see with great pleasure in your letter that you take the greatest interest in the spiritual welfare of the poor benighted Indians. Continue to encourage them. I have

¹² Letter to Joseph Rolette at Fort Union.

little doubt that in the course of next spring either myself or some other Black-robe of my friends will leave St. Louis for the Upper Missouri with the intention to carry out the long-projected missions. By the first occasion that will present itself I will send you some good controversial works, which will enable you to resist and confound all the enemies and opposers of the old and true Church of Christ. All their objections are only quibbles, calumnies or lies and are easily refuted. I am sorry indeed to be so much occupied at present; I would like to write to you a long letter. In a few days I will leave for Europe and may be back in St. Louis about New Year.

I hope my friend, Mr. Denig, will have received the letters and books I forwarded to him by Mr. Mackenzie before he left for Red river. Please remember me most kindly to him in your letters and let me know his address, so that I may communicate with him directly. Remember me to all kind friends at Fort Union and in the upper country. Assure the good Indians who know me that I do not forget them and pray often for their welfare.

Rest assured, etc.

St. Louis University, July 1, 1857.

Sirs:

I have the honor of acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 9th of April ultimo. My absence in Europe, until recently, will account for the lateness of this acknowledgment. In answer to your request for information on the important question proposed, I refer you to the map which I constructed at the request of Colonel D. D. Mitchell in 1851, which was sent to Washington together with the treaty. What reliance you can place on that map, you can best judge from a simple statement of facts. During the ten years I spent in the Indian country I occupied myself occasionally in drawing maps of the countries through

which I passed. I availed myself of the best information I could obtain from trappers and intelligent Indians who were well acquainted with the mountain passes and the course of the rivers. Not having had instruments with me, the maps were necessarily only an approximation to the true position. When I was at the council ground in 1851, on the Platte river, at the mouth of the Horse creek, I was requested by Colonel Mitchell to make a map of the whole Indian country, relating particularly to the upper Missouri, the waters of the upper Platte, east of the Rocky Mountains and of the headwaters of the Columbia and its tributaries west of these mountains. In compliance with this request I drew up the map from scraps then in my possession. The map, so prepared, was seemingly approved and made use of by the gentlemen assembled in council, and subsequently sent on to Washington together with the treaty then made with the Indians. In my humble opinion, therefore, it can be of very little service for your purposes, in which accuracy of instrumental measurement and observation seems to be absolutely necessary. Again, since that time, several scientific exploring parties, sent out by Government, have given the most reliable and accurate information on these subjects.

Should it ever be in my power to afford you any useful information, I not only deem it a duty but also an honorable as well as an agreeable task.

Most respectfully, etc.

Honorable Messrs. ALBERT and CAMPBELL,

Department of the Interior,

Washington, D. C.

St. Louis University, Jan. 13, 1858.

Mr. E. T. DENIG, *Red River of the North, British America:*

Dear Friend.—It is useless to make an apology; I must plead guilty, for I should have written to you long ago.

Surely I have not *suspended* like the banks. I shall be more prompt, however, for the future.

Ever since my return from Europe, where I spent about eight months among my relations and friends, not a week has passed but I determined writing to you; and now an excursion and then some urgent business made me postpone this truly dear obligation and pleasure. Your kind favor of the 1st of December ultimo reached me yesterday. I read it with the greatest pleasure and feel truly grateful for your kind and affectionate remembrance of me which I sincerely reciprocate in your regard. I rejoice greatly at your success and in the welfare of your family. With the first opportunity I will send you some fine pictures for your children, at the Sisters' Academy. You could not have placed them in better hands and I am sure they will be a pleasure and consolation to you. I will add some books for yourself and you may soon expect a periodical. I shall look out for a good and interesting one.

After having read your letter I visited Colonel R. Campbell in regard to your request. I think you will have no trouble to come to a good understanding with him in obtaining the goods you may stand in need of. Mr. Campbell stands among the highest in St. Louis and is not surpassed for probity and honesty. He read to me the letter he wrote you. Should Mr. Morgan come to St. Louis, please tell him, he must absolutely come to see me.

You receive the newspapers and so you are up in all that is stirring and going on in this Great Republic. Charles Primeau was here for some time with his wife and children. He followed your example and was lawfully married to his wife. I baptized her with all her children. I likewise baptized the three children of Bouis and two of Alfred Beeman. All have been well provided for and placed in various religious establishments.

If I can possibly do it I will take another trip to the plains and visit the various Indian tribes early in the spring. I received invitations from various quarters to that effect.

Most willingly would I spend the remainder of my days in endeavoring to promote the welfare of the poor abandoned savages. I have been strongly invited to commence an establishment either among the Crows or Blackfeet; this would greatly strengthen our missions among the Flatheads and Pend d'Oreilles.

About a fortnight ago I received a visit from Major Culbertson; he is now settled with his family near Peoria, Illinois; he requested me to visit him and to remain some days with him, to enable him to arrange matters and things. I think he intends to marry his wife and to have her instructed and baptized. I intend to visit him soon. He placed his daughters at a convent in St. Louis.

I beg you, as a favor, dear friend, to write to me as often as your leisure will permit. I promise you I shall be more punctual in answering all your letters. I wish you a most happy New Year with all the benedictions from above. I shall ever remember you and your family in my poor prayers.

Your humble servant, etc.

St. Louis University, March 31, 1858.

Lieutenant JOHN MULLAN, *U. S. Army*:

Dear Sir.—I just received your kind and interesting letter of the 26th instant. I thank you most gratefully for the great interest you have always taken in the welfare of our missions in the mountains, and particularly for all you have lately effected for them on your late visit to Washington. Not a fortnight ago I received a number of letters from Fathers Hoeken, Gazzoli, Menetrey, Joset, Ver-cruysse and Ravalli, in several of which you were most highly spoken of. They keep your name in benediction. The Fathers and the Indians will hail your return amongst them and your visit, I am sure, will be of the greatest ad-

vantage to all. The missions of Father Hoeken, near the Flathead lake, of Father Joset among the Cœur d'Alènes, of Father Ravalli at the Kettle Falls, were getting on slowly but prosperously. They do all they can for the welfare of their poor people. Father Menetrey gave several missions or visits among the Flatheads and brought them all round again with regard to the holy practice of religion.

In a temporal way the Fathers are sorely pinched and they sent me long lists of objects that are much needed. I am sorry that our private means in St. Louis, owing to the hard times, are in a condition that we are unable to relieve them fully. Two thousand dollars would hardly buy what they call for. I shall, however, do what I can to come to their assistance, and the little I shall be able to collect I will forward by the boats of the American Fur Company. I will avail myself of your kind offer and forward all mail matter for the mountains to Governor Stevens in Washington. I will probably accompany the boats as far as the Yellowstone river and pay a visit to the Indians in the plains, the Blackfeet, Crows, Assiniboins, Sioux, etc. I wish you, Dear Sir, a most happy and prosperous journey. I shall daily pray for you at the holy altar during mass. Please present my best respects to all the fathers and brethren you may meet with in your long journey.

Most respectfully, etc.,

St. Louis University, Oct. 7, 1859.

Reverend Father CONGIATO, S. J., *Superior of the R. M. Missions:*

Reverend and Dear Father:

I promised your Reverence a letter upon my arrival in St. Louis — here it is. I avail myself of this first opportunity to renew my sincere and grateful thanks to your Reverence for your exceeding great kindness in my regard, as likewise

to all the fathers and brethren in the Rocky Mountain missions. It will remain a source of consolation to me, Dear Father, to have been allowed once more to revisit those distant missions. Continue to be their promotor and protector. I shall do all in my power to help and assist you in your arduous task. Write frequently and let me know how and in what I can be particularly of service.

Did you find a suitable place among the Blackfeet? What is your final resolution with regard to the establishment of a mission among the tribes? Please send me your notice on Reverend Father De Vos, according to promise, together with your other writings on the missions. I will try my best to make good use of them for the furtherance of the good cause.

* * * * *

I shook hands with your Reverence on the 3d of August. I reached St. Louis on the 23d of September. My long trip has been favorable, happy and pleasant. I had a good set of young men to manage the skiff for upwards of 2,300 miles, when we met with a steamer on its way down. We found plenty of game, which served us as a relief and recreation both to body and mind. I met with thousands of Indians — Assiniboins, Minnetarees or Gros-ventres of the Missouri, Mandans, Crows, Aricaras, Sioux, Poncas, etc. Everywhere I was received with the greatest kindness and affection by these poor, unhappy and long-abandoned tribes, still longing to hear and know the word of God, and, at every distant chance they get, listening with the utmost attention. I had the great consolation to regenerate hundreds of their little children in the holy waters of baptism. I may later, when time will allow me, give your Reverence the little details and incidents and my dealings with the various Indians of this my last and long trip.

Dear Father, I recommend myself, etc.,

St. Louis University, Oct. 23, 1859.

R. P. MIÈGE, S. J., *St. Stanislas*:

Dear Father in Christ.—I learned with grief that my friend and brother in Christ, Bishop Miège, had become bilious. Without a minute's delay I applied to the great Doctor El Sol, renowned all over the world, who commissioned his agent, Jose Cresencio Borges, to send by me to my friend a box of most exquisite pills, with the following directions: These pills are not to be swallowed or chewed. One end is to be placed between the lips and the teeth; the patient must draw in his breath slowly; blow it out again majestically; he must sit in his room in the rays of the sun, and admire whilst he is puffing the ascending curling clouds, till the whole pill has melted to his very lips. A strict attendance to these prescriptions will have a most salutary effect on the patient and he will soon be rid of his bile.

* * * * *

Believe me to be with profound respect and esteem, Dear Father in Christ, etc.,

Another Relaxation.

St. Louis University, Nov. 21, 1861.

Reverend Father DE COEN:

P. C.

Reverend Dear Father.—I received your kind favor of the 12th instant. I bought Wooster's 8vo dictionary, upon the advice of Reverend F. Murphy, a man well versed in the English language. He says, and he ought to know, that it contains thousands of words more than Walker ever dreamed of. Walker died long ago and Wooster walked into his dictionary, and as he walked along supplied all Walker's deficiencies. Your Reverence, of course, according to the advice of our Reverend Father Provincial, will

better walk with Wooster than with Walker, to show your fine English walking-staff.

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¹³I dare not express to you my concern regarding our present situation. It is very unhappy and we may expect to undergo all the horrors of war. In Missouri, especially, the division is greater than elsewhere. The devastations are terrible here and calamities multiply daily. Pray much and often for us.

In all probability I shall go and spend the summer among the numerous Indian tribes of the great desert east of the Rocky Mountains. They beg me urgently to come and see them. The upper Missouri river will be open by the 1st of May and I expect to start on the first boat leaving here for the Great Falls, 3,000 miles distant from St. Louis.

I returned two days ago from Washington whither I had been called by business of the Society. The Belgian ambassador, Mr. Blondeel, was very nice to me. I dined at his house with the ambassadors of France, Russia and Spain. I had a long conference with President Lincoln. At this moment the capital is guarded by an army of 200,000 men. The daily expenditures of the Government, we are assured, exceed \$3,000,000.

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University of St. Louis, Feb. 27, 1862.

*Reverend and Very Dear Father (Boeteman):*¹⁴

P. C.

I have received your good letter of the 19th of January last. Your good news concerning your interesting mission

¹³ Extract from letter in French to brother Francis, February 12, 1862.

¹⁴ From the French.

of Calcutta and the schools of the Orient have given me the utmost pleasure.

* * * * *

I have had a good deal of running around to do in the interest of our missions in January and February. I have been back in St. Louis since the 22d of this month. In Washington I had the honor of being presented to our President, Lincoln, and I talked with him for over an hour.

Mr. Blondeel, the Belgian ambassador, showed me a great deal of affection; he is very well disposed toward us. He obliged me to dine with him, together with the ambassadors of France, Russia and Spain. They all had their *grands cordons*, and I had a frock coat well worn and with two buttons gone. However, it all went off very agreeably. I did the best I could among these great personages; but I remain of the opinion that I shall always be more at my ease sitting on the grass and surrounded with savages, each one making his jokes and at the same time eating with good appetite a fair rib or roasting piece of buffalo or fat dog. I succeeded very well in the settlement of my business in Washington, insuring the existence of several of our missions, which had been in some danger for lack of pecuniary aid, due from the Government, for the support of four large schools, in which more than 400 Indian children are being educated, boarded, lodged and clothed.

On the 22d, Washington's birthday, I reached St. Louis and found the city all in movement. It was estimated that more than 40,000 citizens took part in the procession. It was three full hours in its passage. It was the greatest manifestation ever made in St. Louis, and all in favor of the Union "as it was." You will already have learned from the papers of the recent Union victories; I will not go into any political details to-day — the "*fiat lux*" is still a long way off.

In a good and consoling letter lately received from His Paternity, he permits me to return next spring among the numerous tribes of the great desert, east of the Rocky

Mountains. Pray, and have many prayers offered for me, and for the success of this important mission. In my leisure moments I am working at my long letter for the Reverend Father Terwecoren; he will get it soon, I hope. Meanwhile assure the good Father that my legs are still in good order, ready to perform a few more little errands of a few thousand miles or so, *Deo dante*. I stagger and fall sometimes on our slippery sidewalks, but I have always managed to pick myself up safe and sound and with nothing broken; you may add that I have not been threatened with burning alive by the Rebels. I do not think they will ever hate me as bad as that.

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St. Louis University, March 15, 1862.

*Very Reverend Father-General:*¹⁵

I have had the honor and happiness of receiving your Paternity's kind letter of the 14th of December and am very grateful for it. The Very Reverend Father Visitor and Vice Provincial do not seem opposed at present, if circumstances permit, to my going to spend the summer months in missionary work among the numerous pagan tribes of the great plains east of the Rocky Mountains, in accordance with the desires expressed in your letter. Whenever I have passed them these poor, unhappy people have always been very respectful and attentive to me, and each spring they look with eager longing for the Black-robe to come and confer baptism on their little ones. A very great number of little Indians and many adults owe their salvation, after God, to your Paternity, for I suppose that three-fourths of them die before they reach the age of reason.

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¹⁵ From the French.

Toward the end of last February, as in July, I had to go to Washington to arrange the accounts of our Indian missions among the Potawatomies and Osages. Since the outbreak of the war and the great expenditures which it occasions, the Government is necessarily delayed in the payment of its contracts with the Indian tribes, the motto for to-day being "the expenses of the war before everything else." A sum of over eighteen [thousand?] dollars was due the missions. I presented my request to the superintendent of Indian affairs, with the remark that a refusal or delay on the part of the Government, of its debt and promise, would singularly disarrange the ideas of our Indians, who have thus far been loyal and attached to the Union side; that if we were obliged by lack of means to send some 400 children back to their poor parents, they would conclude "that their Great Father, President Lincoln, had taken the money that ought to have gone to the support of their children, and used it for other purposes," and that they might be led in consequence to lend a favorable ear to the secessionists. This all-but *casus belli* made the superintendent smile and pleased him greatly, and he promised to do his utmost to satisfy our good savages. He gave me also some good advice and indicated several influential persons who might aid me in my just demand upon the Government.

During my short stay in the capital I had the honor of being presented to President Lincoln, and of talking with him about the present state of our Indians and our missions. He showed himself very affable and very well disposed toward us, and promised me that he would favor and aid us in our efforts to ameliorate the unhappy lot of the Indians. The Secretaries of the Interior and Treasury and the Attorney and Postmaster-General were likewise very favorable to me. I succeeded in obtaining a sum of over \$11,000, with the promise that the balance due the missions should be forwarded at an early date.

I called several times on the Belgian ambassador, Mr. Blondeel Van Cuelenbroeck, who seems very much attached

to the Society. He did me the honor to invite me, together with Reverend Father Maguire, to dine with the ambassadors of France, Spain and Russia. These kinds of dinners make a great contrast with the Indian feasts in which I have so often taken part; where they offer you with their hands a chunk of roast dog or bear or a stew of meat hashed with their teeth. I will admit that I am more at my ease among the latter.

When I was in Washington the city and its environs were filled with military movements and occupied by an army of 200,000 soldiers. Battles and skirmishes are very frequent at present, and the losses of men are very large on both sides. It is "everything or nothing" in this war. The consequences must be terrible, but it is impossible to foresee them. The secession movement is evidently on the decline. I beg your Paternity to excuse me for mentioning these little matters about Washington. The Reverend Father Provincial suggested that they might interest you.

St. Louis University, March 28, 1862.

Mr. B. G. CAULFIELD:

Dear Sir.— I received your kind favor of the 26th. Your health, I have no doubt, might be greatly improved by a trip across the plains and Rocky Mountains. As to the establishing of a trading post in those distant regions, indeed, I would not venture an advice on the subject. I feel convinced that great opposition in trade from California, Oregon, Washington Territory and the east of the mountains, will meet at the mines on Salmon river. Thousands must be on their way to these mines at present. Should you apply to Doctor McParlin, U. S. A., he will tell you much about the Salmon river mines which may be relied upon. The mountains will now be thoroughly searched; the results may reach the expectations of the gold hunters, and the massacres in

California of Nomecult valley, of Matole near Cape Mendocino, of Humbolt bay, etc., will be once more renewed among the Indian tribes of the Rocky Mountains. For their safety I have kept my secret for these twenty years past. My trip among the Indians is not as yet decided; it depends on circumstances. In case I can leave St. Louis I intend to give missions among the numerous tribes east of the Rocky Mountains. Should you come to the determination of making the trip, I shall be happy to make a long portion of it in your agreeable company. Of course, I will see you in St. Louis, where we shall have full leisure in conversing on the Far West and its great prospects.

Please remember me to the Right Reverend and Worthy Bishop of Chicago. I shall soon write to his Lordship about the promise I have made to him. Present my best respects to your good lady.

Most respectfully, dear sir, etc.

St. Louis University, April 23, 1862.

Honorable Sir:

I take this occasion to return to you my most sincere thanks for the many favors and the kind services you have so often rendered me, and for which I shall ever be grateful. My present object in writing is to acquaint you with my departure for the plains and my visit to the numerous Indian tribes of the Upper Missouri. Feeling, as ever, much attached to the Union of my adopted country, the United States, I shall do all I can to promote it among the Indians, to the best of my power. The thought came to my mind, that if I could go in some official capacity from the Government (I ask for no emoluments) my object might be strengthened by it and be more efficacious. I propose leaving in the beginning of May.

I hope the two little friends on whom I had the honor and

happiness to invoke a blessing, are doing well — may they ever be the joy and happiness of their worthy parents. Please present my kindest respects and regards to Mrs. Blair and to her mother.

With sentiments of the highest consideration of respect and esteem I have the honor to be, Honorable Sir, etc.

Hon. FRANK P. BLAIR, *Washington City, D. C.*

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A¹⁶ great number of passengers are going up on the same boat (the St. Louis Fur Company's steamboat) and on several others, bound for Fort Benton on the upper Missouri. The mines of the Rocky Mountains on Salmon river and tributaries of Lewis river and in the Kootenai country, which I have known for twenty years, have been discovered anew and thousands of miners are going up at present to take possession of them.

St. Louis University, Dec. 12, 1862.

Honorable Sir:

You will pardon me the liberty I take in addressing you these few lines. I do it under a particular conviction and with the assurance that it will meet with your approbation. I read in the public prints, the other day, that thirty-nine of the Indian prisoners in Minnesota would be executed on the 20th instant, on account of the numerous murders and cruelties they have committed against the white settlers along the frontiers. Surely they deserve no better lot. The consideration, however, of the lot of the white prisoners, children, women and men, who are still alive among the band

¹⁶ Extract from letter to Belgian Ambassador Blondeel, May 4, 1862.

of Santees and other tribes of the Sioux, and of whom I heard not later than yesterday, makes me shudder. I fear that cruel and savage vengeance will be taken on the innocent and unhappy white people as yet under their control. If I were allowed to express an opinion, I would say: Let the Sioux prisoners be kept as hostages; let it be known to the whole nation that, for every white man they kill one of the prisoners shall atone for the murder. The murderer or murderers would thus become answerable before their own people for the execution of the hostage.

With sentiments of the highest consideration and respect I have the honor to be, honorable sir, etc.

Honorable Mr. Mix,
Indian Department, Washington.

From¹⁷ recent accounts received from the Rocky Mountains, the mining prospects in that region appear fair and enticing, and in consequence it is supposed there will be a great emigration for the upper country early next spring. You ask me for information and maps of certain gold localities in the mountains, should I be at liberty to make disclosures on the subject. You can, dear friend, appreciate my motives and reasons for the silence I have hitherto kept on this matter. They still exist and I could not in conscience deviate from the course I have hitherto pursued. In all probability I shall take another trip on the Missouri early in the coming spring. I visited a great number of Indians on my return to St. Louis last summer and baptized hundreds of children. Remember me to Hugh and pray both for me. I shall not forget you. Most respectfully, dear sir, etc.

¹⁷ From letters to W. H. Campbell, Sacramento River, February 4, 1863.

St. Louis University, March 6, 1863.

Reverend Dear Father HOEKEN:

I received your letter of the 13th ultimo and am most thankful to your Reverence for it. I fully concur in all you advanced in it in regard to the Osage Mission. As to my neglect of writing to you, I must acknowledge it has been apparent, though not real. What with excursions and other occupations I have postponed it from week to week, and the guilt, if any, is altogether on my side. I must confine myself to a few words with regard to my last trip among the Indians.

Fathers Giorda and Imoda have, in my opinion, done wonders at Benton and have raised a beautiful little congregation at the fort itself. Several of its inhabitants have been married by them and the women have become very pious. I married Clark to his young wife. I brought the Fathers about seventy boxes, bags and barrels, several plows, a wagon and an ambulance, all free of charge. This included at least \$1,000 over and above their allowance which I had scraped together. Dawson, Clark, Champagne family, indeed, all were anxious to see your Reverence and made several inquiries concerning you. In the course of last winter the Fathers had baptized over 700 children (principally) and adults. A war between the Grosventres and other Blackfeet bands rendered traveling in the country somewhat unsafe.

In my visits among the Missouri tribes I baptized over 900 little children. I was prevented from pushing in the interior on account of the hostile dispositions of the Sioux, whose war bands infested the plains in all directions. How it will be this spring it is hard telling. It may be worse than last year on account of the hanging of thirty-nine Sioux in Minnesota, who, of course, will be revenged, if they can accomplish it. Harney is to go out against them with a large force. I will leave in all probability by the 1st of May, and may be accompanied by two or three Italian

Brothers, who are awaiting the good season to leave Maryland for Missouri. The same boat will contain a colony of nuns under Reverend M. Brouillet, Vicar General of Washington Territory, destined, I should suppose, for Vancouver.

With regard to any change taking place for the establishment of missions, on this side of the Rocky Mountains and under the superintendence of the Provincial of Missouri, no decision has been taken on the subject, neither by the Visitor nor Provincial; this must be arranged by the General and must abide its time. I would be most happy if it could be brought about, and if one or two missions could be established for the benefit of the numerous Indian tribes of the upper plains. I have written on this subject to his Paternity and spoken of it to the Visitor and Provincial.

Mr. Dawson may soon be here; he will surely expect a letter from your Reverence; you will not disappoint him, I hope. Father Visitor intends shortly to leave for California; he will be accompanied by Father Kenny. Father Provincial may soon be on his way to the Osage Mission. He read your letter attentively and will see you on the subject. I would feel happy indeed if arrangements could be made of your going up the Missouri river next May. We might pick upon a spot where a mission might be commenced in the course of the summer of 1864 — central enough for visits to the Crows, the Assiniboins, the Aricaras, the Grosventres of the Missouri, and the Mandans. If not in Missouri, means and men might be obtained in Europe. Please write to me again and remember me, etc.

St. Louis University, April 11, 1863.

*Honorable and Dear Sir:*¹⁸

In all probability, I shall leave St. Louis during the first week of next May, to make a missionary excursion among

¹⁸ Letter to Thurlow Weed.

the various tribes of the Upper Missouri, including, if I can, the warlike Sioux, to promote among all, religion and friendly dispositions toward the Government and its white travelers through their countries. I shall be happy indeed if I can effect any good by my humble endeavors. My adopted country, for these forty years I have lived in it, has been always truly dear to me. Its welfare has been the constant and uppermost wish of my heart and the end of my poor prayers. I have sworn obedience to it and from this sacred duty I have never and shall never swerve. If I take the liberty to address you, it is owing to the great kindness I have always received at your hands, and because I have the full conviction that I can do it with all openness of heart and mind, and the firm persuasion, that if it be in your power, I shall receive comfort from you, and shall go on my long trip rejoicing and consoled.

There is an important matter on which I must beg leave to ask your counsel. You are aware that the Jesuits are a body of priests and brothers, devoted, by solemn vows, exclusively to the service of God and the spiritual good of their fellow-men. In the West here we number about 200 members, some of whom would fall within the limits of the conscription law lately passed by Congress. Our members are stationed in various cities — Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Bardstown, Ky., and in other places — all laboring in one way or in another for the good of souls. We have been here for nearly forty years, devoting ourselves entirely to the education of youth, thousands of whom have been trained in our schools and colleges, or attending the numerous churches intrusted to our care, or laboring for the civilization of Indian tribes in the Far West. And we have thus labored purely for the good of our fellow-men, without ever having received any aid from State or General Government, satisfied with that support which the liberality of our patrons has prompted them to afford us.

As I have stated, we are bound to God by solemn vows, which our conscience forbids us to violate. These vows,

recognized and accepted by the Catholic Church, separate us from the world, consecrate us to a life different from that of other members of our Church, and subject us to the canon law of the Church which strictly forbids priests and religious men, who have taken these vows, from taking up arms in any cause whatsoever. We are ministers of peace, and in all ages this sacred character has been regarded as opposed to war and bloodshed. Such is the law of the Church, and this law binds our consciences. We cannot violate it without doing violence to our duty to God; and therefore we cannot obey any law which would require us to violate that duty. You perceive the predicament in which this places us at the present moment, and from which I desire your advice to enable us to extricate ourselves.

As to the remedy of paying \$300 for each member that may be subject to the draft, I must say that it is scarcely fair to require this of us, who are really not subject to military service, by reason of the life we have embraced and of the conscientious obligations it imposes upon us. And besides this, such a sum paid for all those who might be called upon among us, would prostrate all our establishments and leave us destitute of the means for carrying on the works we have undertaken for the good of our countrymen. We are struggling hard to keep these up; the war has inflicted severe losses upon us, as upon many others; and if we cannot escape the conscription without paying what the act prescribes, I do not see how we shall be able to continue our exertions.

Please give this matter your serious consideration, and if you can suggest any means of extricating ourselves from this perplexity, you will confer an infinite obligation upon me, by informing me of it. We have here a conflict of duties; we desire as far as possible to comply with both; but we cannot sacrifice our conscience, and our resources are too limited to allow us to comply with that condition on which alone the act of Congress will recognize our exemption.

With sentiments of the highest consideration and esteem,
I have the honor to be

Honorable and Dear Sir,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

P. S.— When passing through Albany, some six or eight months ago, I paid a visit to Miss Weed, who did me the honor of asking a photograph of my poor self, to place in her beautiful album. I remember to have left one, bearing but a small resemblance. Allow me, Dear Sir, to substitute the inclosed, with my best respects to your kind and good daughter.

St. Louis University, December 24, 1863.

My very dear Brother (FRANCIS) and my very dear
CHARLES and PAUL:¹⁹

I wish you a very happy New Year, filled with all the benedictions of heaven. I have just reached St. Louis after a long journey of about eight months and after having covered a distance of nearly 4,000 leagues. I have passed through many dangers, the details of which I will give you later. I set out from St. Louis at the beginning of last May. I went up the Missouri river for 2,400 miles, as far as the mouth of Milk river. I then continued my route on horseback for some 1,200 miles, visiting our various missions east and west of the Rocky Mountains. During my mission I had the consolation of baptizing upward of 400 Indians. At Walla Walla, a city of some 2,000 souls, in the Territory of Washington, I embarked upon the Columbia river for Portland, the principal city of Oregon — distance 400 miles. From Portland I went to Victoria, the capital of Vancouver Island; thence to San Francisco in California; thence to Acapulco in Mexico, and thence to

¹⁹ From the French.

Panama; distance, 4,500 miles. I crossed the Isthmus of Panama, forty-seven miles; at Aspinwall I took ship for New York, 2,000 miles, and from New York came to St. Louis, 1,200 miles. Upon arriving in St. Louis I found your good, dear letters of the 29th of July and 23d of November. I am very grateful to you for them. My health is not good, but that is generally the case after each long journey that I make. The cessation of fatigues uses me up more or less and it takes me some little time to get back into my ordinary equilibrium. I will write you more fully later.

Upon my arrival in New York I forwarded a box to Gustave van K.'s address. It contains two beautiful buffalo robes of extraordinary fineness, like silk; one painted deer skin, some moccasins or Indian shoes (my dear Alice is to choose the prettiest pair for herself), seashells from Aca-pulco and Panama, and some photographs of Pierre Jean. I wrote Gustave to divide them with Charles and Paul. In the same box are three copies of *Western Missions and Missionaries* and six of *New Indian Sketches*, recently printed in New York. Please have a copy of each work sent to M. le Chanoine de la Croix and to Reverend Father Terwecoren at Brussels.

* * * * *

In all probability I shall return to the mountains some time in April next. I ardently hope to hear from you soon and often.

Believe me, etc.

St. Louis University, February 26, 1864.

²⁰Dear FRANCIS:

I wrote you on the 24th of December, immediately after my return to St. Louis, in reply to your good letters of July and November. I was very much indisposed at that time and my letter was necessarily short by reason of my indis-

²⁰ From the French.

position. It is only in the last three days that I have begun to recover a little strength and to go out. I hope my strength may return and enable me to return among the plains Indians in April. Insensibly the years pass on. I find myself already in my sixty-fourth year, and I feel a conviction that my end is near — *fiat voluntas Dei*.

What is troubling me greatly at present is that I do not receive any letters from the family, nor any reply to mine of the 24th. It should have reached you by the 10th or 11th of January, and for the last fortnight I have been sending to the post-office in hopes of finding something from you. Charles and Paul called for a long letter from me; you can assure them that I am working at one in all my leisure moments, and in spite of the numerous occupations that have accumulated during my long absence and my sickness, my letter will be ready before long. * * *

Mr. De Coster will tell you all about the sad and fearful American war: it is going to be horrible this year.

* * * * *

Your devoted brother, etc.

* * * * *

The²¹ numerous gold mines that have been discovered in this new Eldorado in the last three years are drawing thousands of inhabitants and their number is continually growing. To-day the miners are spread over the country from the Gila to the Fraser and from the Pacific Ocean to the sources of the Columbia, the Missouri, the Colorado and the Rio Grande del Norte. While some, starting from the shores of the Pacific, push their search eastward, others begin at Pike's Peak and the Rocky Mountains and advance toward the West. From both sides they come together in

²¹ Extracts from a letter in French to Father Terwecoren, S. J., dated at St. Louis, March 26, 1864, describing Father De Smet's visit to the Rocky Mountain Missions in 1863.

Oregon, in the Territories of Washington, Nevada, Idaho and Utah, in the Caribou Mountains and in Arizona, and an immense population is sure to come to fill up all these countries. "On to Idaho!" is the great cry of the day, the *magnum Hadium* of our miners.

I have known of the existence of the precious metals in this region for many years past, and the thought has always filled me with apprehensions for the future of our Indian tribes who inhabit it. On the 3d of September, 1845, while I was on missionary duty among the mountain Indians, I wrote (page 125 of the *Oregon Missions*) "Poor, unfortunate Indians! they trample on treasures, unconscious of their worth, and content themselves with the fishery and chase. When these resources fail, they subsist upon roots and herbs; whilst they eye, with tranquil surprise, the white man examining the shining pebbles of their territory. Ah! they would tremble, indeed, could they learn the history of those numerous and ill-fated tribes that have been swept from their land to make place for Christians who have made the poor Indians the victims of their rapacity." When I wrote this paragraph, I did not think the discovery so near. To-day it is upon us; and this ceaseless current of immigrations, following one another like the waves of the sea, will, I think, be the sorrow and the ruin of our poor Indians.

Here is a little of what is going on to-day in Idaho. This Territory embraces the mineral and gold-bearing regions of the Beaverhead and Stinking Water rivers, upon which the towns of Bannock (East) and Virginia City have been built, east of the Rocky Mountains. West of the mountains, the main immigration is flowing into the Deer Lodge valley, on Salmon river, the Boise valley, the Orofino, the Warren mines and a large number of other mineral localities recently discovered. The principal new towns in this part of Idaho are Lewiston (the capital) situated at the junction of the Clearwater and Snake rivers; Orofino City, south of Lewiston; Elk City, Florence, Placerville and Bannock City (West). All these places are already of significant com-

mercial importance, and each has a population of about 1,500 inhabitants. A considerable trade has been developed also at Forts Boise, Benton, Owen, Lemhi, Hall and Bonneville. Some of these forts contain garrisons, or rather a few soldiers to protect the emigrants against the depredations of the numerous bands of Indians that roam all over the immense territory. These statements in regard to new towns have reference only to 1861. That same year the production of gold was valued at \$5,000,000; in 1862 it amounted to over \$20,000,000.

St. Louis University, Oct. 5, 1864.

*Very Reverend Father-General.*²²

I hope your Paternity will have received my long letter of the 20th of August last. In it I gave you a little outline of my missionary work and my latest excursion among the Indians of the Upper Missouri. Immediately after my return to St. Louis the Reverend Father Provincial sent me to Washington to look after the Society's interests. The Government had withheld for eight months the payments due, by treaty, to the Indian schools among the Potowatomies and Osages, amounting to the sum of \$13,810.60. The urgencies of the war required all the public funds; but upon my request, backed by several of the cabinet ministers, I was able to obtain the sum of \$10,197.06, with the assurance that the balance, \$3,613.54, should be allowed the respective missions in the course of a month.

There was another affair that was disquieting us greatly — the universal conscription from which neither priests nor members of religious orders are exempt. Father Verdin and Brother Flanigan, in Kentucky, had already fallen under the lot and been drafted. I addressed myself to the Secretary of War, and by the Lord's favor, through the

²² From the French.

intercession of the Holy Virgin and the prayers of my brothers, I was able to obtain their liberty, with the formal promise of the Secretary "that hereafter he would exempt all our people who might be called on for military service." In order to evade the law the Secretary orders our conscripts "to stay at their homes until he calls for them;" and this call, according to his promise, shall not be issued so long as the war lasts.

The Reverend Father Provincial has made known to me his request to your Paternity, to be allowed to send me to Europe in the interest of the Province of Missouri, and the reply which your Paternity has deigned to make. Since the season is advancing I shall set out toward the middle of this month. I implore, as a most particular favor, your permission to proceed as far as Rome, in the interest of the poor, numerous Indian tribes, who have been for so many years imploring the succor of the Black-robcs to come and announce to them the word of the Lord. This would procure me at the same time the aid of your paternal advice and the benediction of the Sovereign Pontiff and that of your Paternity. I shall await your response at Brussels.

I have the honor to be with the most profound respect and the most sincere esteem

St. Louis University, Aug. 22, 1865.

Major-General PLEASANTON, *Milwaukee*:

Dearest General.—I received your kind letter and am very sensible indeed to the continuation of your kind remembrance. All the letters I have received from you are carefully preserved and serve me as memorials of the happy days I have enjoyed from the time I had the honor and pleasure of making your acquaintance.

With regard to the inquiries you make in your letter, on the Pointed Arrow or Flint creek, I shall openly state to

you all I have heard about it. I think the time has come that I may do so, without injury to the Indians. I must add, that my sole authority rests on an old (to me) reliable Indian, whose name I do not now remember. When he saw the first gold dust and examined it, he smiled and exclaimed, "Is this the yellow sand the whites are in search of? I know a place," he added, "where all the sand in the hollows of the rocky creek looks like it." I interrogated him on the locality. He described the head of Pointed Arrow creek as being a very rough and elevated region, with rapid torrents, deep ravines and high water-falls, which can only be reached by scrambling on foot, at least for some distance. As to the different branches of said creek, no mention was made, and this leaves the direction of the yellow sand greatly in the dark. I proposed to my old Indian friend to take me to the spot he had spoken of. He readily accepted my request, and on the very instant showed great willingness to serve me as guide to his "yellow sand" region. This promptness, in my opinion, added strength to the information he had given.

Several causes prevented me at the time from executing my first design. First, there was then as yet much snow in the mountains; second, I feared my excursion might become known to the whites and half-breeds then in camp and might be detrimental to the Indians, and lastly, I was in hope that by hurrying on my journey toward Fort Benton (we were then in the beginning of July) I might arrive in time to meet the boat of the American Fur Company. I came four days too late.

Here I give you the whole account of the Pointed Arrow creek, as far as I heard of it. It may arouse curiosity and excitement; people may run in fruitless search of the coveted dust; they may run great risks and undergo great fatigues and privations in examining the numerous mountain torrents of that rough and broken region, and they may be long (should they find it at last) before they may discover the identical rich spot the Indian had spoken of. Was his

information truthful? I own I believed him; he is considered among his people as an upright and good man.

Should I be able to reach the mountains once more — I may perhaps try it next spring — I shall do my best to meet the same Indian, and so I might, and would be most willing to, be of service to your friends. I give you candidly both sides of the medal. The success of the affair appears rather doubtful. I would be sorry, indeed, to have been the instrument of useless and great trouble, to those you take interest in recommending so warmly. I have stated the for and against; I hope meanwhile, sincerely, that your friends may meet with full success.

Some days ago I received letters from General Frost, now in Canada, to obtain permission to return to his family in Missouri. He has taken the prescribed oath of allegiance and he writes to President Johnson. I have been round to obtain signatures of some of our most influential citizens, who signed a petition to the President for the return of General Frost. I have forwarded all the papers to Major-General Jas. Hardie with a request that he will take an interest in the matter. Should you know him, may I make bold enough to entreat you to drop a few lines to General Hardie, or to any other influential gentleman you know in Washington, to obtain the desired pardon in favor of Frost.

With sentiments of profound respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, etc.

St. Louis University, St. Louis, Feb. 26, 1866.

Governor GILPIN, *Denver, Colorado*:

Dear Governor.—I received your most friendly letter of the 2d instant. I shall ever be grateful for your very kind remembrance of me and shall daily pray for your success, happiness and welfare. I read your message with the deepest interest and pleasure. Henceforth the bright star of

Colorado must shine lustrous among the stars of our great Union.

The graphic and beautiful description you give me of your great estate in Colorado, with its primitive Catholic population, is truly very interesting and encouraging. The people, no doubt, are every way worthy to be looked to in a religious and temporal view. If my avocations permitted I would assuredly visit you. What I cannot do, for I am called to Montana on urgent business, another of the Fathers may more profitably and better be able to undertake. In all probability Reverend Father De Blicek may shortly leave on a visit to Santa Fé, where he has been invited by the Right Reverend Bishop Lamy, to give missions in his extensive diocese. On his way thither he might pass through Colorado, pay you a visit at Denver City and confer with you on the subject of your letter — on what might best be done for the welfare of the 6,000 Spaniards living on your estate. He speaks the Spanish well, which will be of great advantage.

I hope the whole affair will meet with the full approval of our friend, the Very Reverend Mr. Macheboeuf. As the rumor will have it — and it is assuredly a most favorable and happy one — he will be appointed first Catholic Bishop of Colorado. As you well know already, you will find him a most worthy and efficient gentleman, well worthy of your kind attention in assisting you to carry out your Christian and benevolent views. He will assuredly accomplish a great deal of good in Colorado, among his Catholic brethren and his Protestant friends.

At my return from Montana in the fall, should it be in my power, I shall make an effort to reach Denver City and shall be most happy to pay you a visit. As to the welfare of the numerous Catholic Spaniards settled on your estate, I see the possibility, with proper aid, of conferring a great benefit upon them by establishing a mission and schools in their midst. Three or four Spanish Fathers might, I think, be obtained from Europe, and some members of our estab-

lishments in St. Louis. Remark well, I only express here first and private thoughts, for I am not the Superior. I see in it a great act of charity and kindness on your part, and feel most inclined to urge the matter, by counsel and advice, to the best of my power.

I will leave St. Louis in the beginning of April next. Should this reach you in due time, I shall consider it a great favor to receive another letter from you before my departure. Should you have any commissions for Montana, forward them to me, and I shall faithfully attend to them.

The²³ Reverend Father Provincial tells me that there are rumors relative to the nomination of a Vicar Apostolic for the Territory of Montana. He has received letters on this subject from Father Damen of Baltimore and Father Hill of Cincinnati. He tells me that together with Fathers Giorda and Grassi, I appear on the list. I will explain to your Paternity all that I know in regard to this matter. Some four months ago Monseigneur the Archbishop of St. Louis informed me that Monseigneur the Bishop of Nebraska and Montana had sent him a letter from Father Giorda, wherein the Reverend Father urgently recommended the establishment of a new vicariate for Montana, where great numbers of Catholics are gathering, their numbers increasing from day to day. Monseigneur the Archbishop asked for information concerning Father Giorda, and has often expressed the desire that a vicariate should be conferred upon a Father of the Society. From information received by the Reverend Father Provincial, he thought the nomination will be made before long and I am assured that the thing will be decided at the approaching General Council, to take place in Baltimore in September of this year. Between now and then there will no doubt be great modifi-

²³ Extract from letter in French to Father-General in March, 1866.

cations. If my name appears on the list of Monseigneur of St. Louis, as the Reverend Father Provincial assures me, it is, I take it, with the idea of filling up the list, on which ordinarily three names are entered. In sincere conviction of my lack of virtues and talents for such a task, and believing that your Paternity will be consulted in so important an affair, I consider myself perfectly safe against such a danger. Nothing in the world, with God's favor, could part me from my vocation and from obedience to my superiors in which my only desire is to live and die.

St. Louis University, Nov. 6, 1866.

Dear General MEAGHER:

* * * * *

After I left you at Fort Benton my occupations have been somewhat arduous and laborious. I made several long visits and stays among the various Indian bands I met along the Missouri, particularly at Fort Berthold, at Sully and at the Yankton agency, near Fort Randell. The result of my intercourse with the Indians has been very consoling to me. I baptized over 500 children and a good number of adults. Among these was the old chief of the Yankton Sioux, surnamed Pananniapapi, or the Man Who Strikes the Ree. His band consists of about 3,000 souls. Should my health permit I intend to establish a mission among these Indians, in the coming spring, and if possible and practicable, shall visit most of the Sioux tribes in the interior north and south of the Missouri, in company with Pananniapapi and some of his braves. I have made all preliminary regulations with them to that effect.

I learn with the greatest pleasure and interest the pleasant and agreeable visit you have made with Mrs. Meagher to St. Ignatius Mission and rejoice that my wagon has thus been of some use to you. I am sorry indeed to hear of the

indispositions of our worthy and good Giorda. I trust and pray that the rest he is enjoying at St. Ignatius, after his laborious missionary excursions, may soon restore him. I am thankful, at the same time, for all the good news you give me of my other dear brothers in Christ and concerning the good Sisters of Providence. I hope ere this all the goods I brought over to Benton will have safely reached them. As I have heard nothing of them since, I must own I feel somewhat uneasy.

The letter you had the great kindness to write for me on the prospects of Montana was published in the *Guardian of St. Louis* and was extensively copied by the other Catholic papers in the Union. I forwarded the number containing said letter to your address in Virginia City, which, I hope, will have reached you. Your long and interesting letter on the Rocky Mountain missions, I sent to Very Reverend Father Weld, Provincial of the Society of Jesus in England, immediately after my arrival in St. Louis toward the middle of August. I confided it to the care of a friend on his way to Europe, together with several letters of my own on my late missionary excursion. I learned a few days ago that they did not reach their respective addresses.

* * * * *

I would gladly comply with your request, in your last letter, if I were in a condition to do it. For the present time I find it impossible. I am kept very much occupied with the performances of the numerous duties imposed upon me by my office, and together with indispositions and necessary excursions I find it indeed difficult to attend to all of them. After a little while I may probably have to proceed to Washington in the interest of our missions among the Potatomies and Osage Indians, which will occupy me for a good while. I shall not omit the occasion to recommend strongly our missions in Montana and Idaho. I regret exceedingly not to have a full knowledge and statement of their position and their wants. What you have written to me in your letter of the 18th of September last will, how-

ever, be of immense service and I intend to use it the best way I can. I am fully persuaded that it is now the best time to make proper application and to obtain redress. Colonel Bogy, who entered on the office of superintendent of Indian affairs on the first of the present month, and with whom I have been well acquainted for years, is a most conscientious and practical Catholic and determined, I feel confident, to do full justice to the Indians. On all occasions you have feelingly shown a particular and great interest in the prosperity of our Rocky Mountain missions. This would be the proper moment to present to the superintendent a statement of your views on this important subject. I am confident it will meet with the best of results. I have likewise informed the fathers of the appointment of Colonel Bogy and advised them to act without delay. I have communicated to General Sherman the paragraph of your letter relating to the military localities on Judith and Sun rivers. I see from the papers that the general will soon leave for Mexico to place the country under the protectorate of the United States until its future will be decided by the general elections.

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With sentiments of the highest consideration of esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, etc.

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I²⁴ have a special favor to ask of you, as follows: In my recent mission in the Indian country I stopped for three weeks at Fort Buford, opposite the mouth of the Yellowstone. The commandant of the fort, Colonel Rankin, entertained me at his private table for three weeks. I was awaiting there deputations from the Crows, Assiniboins and

²⁴ Extract from letter in French to Reverend Father Coosemans, September 3, 1867.

Santees to confer with us concerning the proposals which the Government sent them through me. During all my stay at the fort the colonel did everything possible for me, and I have thought it my duty, in a spirit of gratitude, to make him a return (American fashion); and knowing that a good meerschaum pipe would be very acceptable to him, may I venture to ask your Reverence, while you are in Europe, to give some connoisseur-amateur-smoker the commission of procuring me a meerschaum to present to the worthy colonel?

I should have written you in my last letters especially about the good dispositions of the Yanktons, of whom Pananniapapi is the chief. All the children of his tribe are now baptized. They desire most ardently to have a mission of our fathers; the money granted them for schools by their treaty with the Government has been pilfered from them by their previous agents. The principal chiefs of the tribe authorize me to assure you that they are willing to devote two to three thousand dollars a year to the establishment and maintenance of the mission.

St. Louis University, August 30, 1867.

*Very Reverend Father (Roder).*²⁵

I have often proposed writing to you, but as the affair is so personal to me and seems to have so little claim on your attention, I have always put it off. But as the motives which seem to urge me to it are on the increase, after having recourse to prayer and consultation, I have concluded to send you these few lines, confiding wholly in your indulgence and charity. I will try to lay my case clearly before your Reverence.

I have been more or less engaged in the Indian missions for something like thirty years. The Reverend Father

²⁵ From the French.

Roothaan, of blessed memory, imposed it upon me as a duty to write very fully in regard to them and to enter into minute details upon everything that concerned the Indian missions, the diverse countries inhabited by the Indians, the manners, customs, beliefs, etc., of these strange and unfortunate tribes. My numerous letters consisting of five volumes bear witness that I have at least endeavored to discharge the duty laid upon me, and with humility and assurance, I hope that I can add that I have tried to do it faithfully. The present Very Reverend Father-General encourages me by his letters to continue to give the details of my missionary labors year after year. All the superiors and provincials of Missouri have also called for them, and I have always been submissive to their requests in the spirit of obedience. Pardon me this long preamble, Very Reverend Father, which I have thought necessary to bring the case before you.

For some years past I have been subjected to criticisms, often personal and malevolent, on the part of several German priests, who are saying in America, on the testimony of one or several Fathers of your province, that my name is only an assumed name in the letters which are printed and the books that are published afterward bearing my name. The reverend and good Father Hasard, after his arrival at St. Louis, declared that it was the opinion in his province that I merely lent my name to the letters that were published. In the course of last month, in the Upper Missouri and during my mission among the savages, I met and made the acquaintance of the Reverend Joseph Anthony Maria Gaes of Freiburg in the Grand Duchy of Baden, Germany, cousin of the Reverend Father Augustus Gramm, S. J. During our familiar and fraternal conversations and interviews, I read him copies of three long letters upon the mission among the Indians in which I was then engaged. The reverend gentleman expressed his gratitude, accompanied by an admission which surprised me; this was "that the

reading of my letters had rid him of the unfavorable impression concerning me which he had received from the Reverend Father Rothenflue before his departure for America. That this reverend and very worthy Father (whose name is held in high esteem among us) had assured him in confidence that I was not the author of the letters that were published in my name," etc.

Pardon me for having thought that I might bring this little complaint to your Reverence's consideration. I will admit that I am sensitive to a personal attack which I have in nowise deserved and which has cost me much labor. My personality is a very small matter and deserves little attention, but our province of Missouri is more or less compromised. It would not permit such a fraud or imposture.

Regarding the letters printed in my name and with my superior's permission, I am alone responsible for them. In the mortuary notices of some of our brethren, I have asked for and received information and in accordance with the desire of my superiors I have compiled and had them printed. In all my long journeys and extended missions I have got information where I could obtain it, and have given it for what it was worth, always indicating the source. In my missions among the savages I instruct, question and examine them, and then give the result with anything edifying that belongs with it. Everything has been written *ad maiorem Dei gloriam* and under the impression of a duty toward my superiors. I declare, Very Reverend Father, that the printed letters bearing my name are due to no other person, and permit me to protest to your Reverence against those of your province who advance the contrary. Reverend Father Rothenflue, whom I cite, is very well known to us by his works and we hold him in the highest esteem and veneration. What he advances regarding me is upon hearsay; that hearsay is false. The whole province of Missouri, if need were, would subscribe to my declaration.

Pardon me for having written so long a letter upon so

poor and painful a subject. I am weak and sensitive and have been insulted several times upon the false reports I mention. The thirty-sixth chapter of the *Imitation* (book 3) consoles me and I try to profit by it. As Thomas à Kempis tells us, "St. Paul sometimes justified himself, lest his silence should be a cause of scandal to the weak."

In union of your holy sacrifices, etc.

I²⁶ have read with pleasure in your number [*Précis Historiques*] of September 15th the extract from the *Courrier des Etats-Unis* upon the death of the Omaha chief, Logan Fontenelle. At the time of my first mission at St. Mary's near the Council Bluffs among the Potawatomies, I was very intimate with his father, a fur trader among the Indian tribes. I gave him the last sacraments at the hour of his death. In 1838 I baptized his four children together with their mother, the daughter of the chief of the Omahas, Ongpatongha, or Big Elk. Logan, the oldest of the children, was my godson. Later, in his extreme old age, I also conferred baptism on Big Elk. After this chief's death Logan succeeded his grandfather and made himself liked and respected by all his nation, both by his bravery and by his wisdom. He ardently desired to have a mission of Black-robles for the instruction of his tribe, but for lack of men his wishes were never fulfilled, and others naturally came in and settled in the field.

The chief, Ongpatongha, always deserved and kept throughout his long career the respect and esteem of the whites, of his own people and of his neighbors. He was a man of peaceable disposition, in his dealing with others of exemplary honesty and rare intelligence. He was considered the ablest speaker of all the tribes of the plains.

²⁶ Extract from letter in French to Terwecoren, October 11, 1867.

St. Louis University, December 9, 1867.²⁷

Mr. N. RANEY, *Secretary of the Historical Society of St. Louis:*

Dear Sir.— I received your kind favor of the 5th instant and your kind invitation of the 16th ultimo. I intended to answer by attending your meeting of the Historical Society of St. Louis on the 7th. This being Saturday I was much occupied at St. Francis Xavier's Church, and I regret I was unable to accomplish my desire on this occasion.

The question of locality which has arisen about old Fort Atkinson, or Council Bluffs, built in 1819, I think I can answer satisfactorily. During the years 1838 and 1839 I resided opposite what is now called the city of Omaha. In 1839 I stood on the bluff on which the old fort was built in 1819; some rubbish and remains of the old fort were still visible, and some remaining roots of asparagus were still growing in the old garden. Fort Atkinson was located where now stands the town of Fort Calhoun, Nebraska Territory, about sixteen miles in a straight line above the city of Omaha, and forty miles by river. Mr. Cabanné's trading post was ten miles by land above where now stands Omaha city. Manual Lisa had a trading post one mile above Cabanné's. I met Captains Joseph and John La Barge, and proposed the question of the former site of Fort Atkinson, in order to test the accuracy of my memory, and they confirmed it in every particular.

Most respectfully, etc.

St. Louis University, December 26, 1867.

Mr. A. D. JONES, *Secretary Old Settlers' Association, Omaha, Nebraska:*

Dear Sir.— My absence from St. Louis has delayed my answer. You have the kindness to inform me that we are

²⁷ This and the following letter are from vol. I, Nebraska State Historical Society's reports.

still entitled to a reserve of land on which the old mission-house and graveyard were located in New Council Bluffs. All I could learn on the subject is: Several years after the last missionary among the Potawatomies left that location he was applied to by the Catholic bishop of Dubuque, and ceded to him all the right to the mission claim. How the bishop has acted upon this cession in his favor I have never been informed. I would feel obliged to you to obtain further information on this subject.

To the best of my personal knowledge, and assisted by Captain Joseph La Barge, the old explorer of the Missouri river, I will here answer your various queries: First, "Where was old Fort Calhoun located?" Fort Calhoun was never located; it took the name of Fort Atkinson, which was built on the very spot where the council was held by Lewis and Clark, and was the highest and first military post above the mouth of Nebraska [Platte] river. Second, "Where was old Fort Croghan?" After the evacuation of Fort Atkinson or Calhoun, either in 1827 or 1828, or thereabouts, the troops came down and made winter quarters on Cow island — Captain La Barge states it was called Camp Croghan. The next spring the flood disturbed the soldiers and they came down and established Fort Leavenworth. Colonel Leavenworth was commandant at the breaking up of Fort Atkinson. Third, "There is an earthen remain of fortifications on the east bank of Omaha; do you know who built it?" The remains alluded to must be the site of the old trading post of Mr. Heart. When it was in existence the Missouri river ran up to the trading post. In 1832 the river left it, and since that time it goes by the name of "Heart's Cut-Off," leaving a large lake above Council Bluffs city. Fourth, "Do you know of either soldiers or Indians ever having resided on the Omaha plateau?" I do not know. A noted trader by the name of T. B. Royce had a trading post from 1825 till 1828, established on the Omaha plateau, and may be the first white man who built the first cabin on the beautiful plateau where now stands

the flourishing city of Omaha. I cannot call to memory the signification of the word Omaha.

My time is much occupied at present. Should I find later any point worthy of communication in reference to our old mission, the New Council Bluffs, or the early history of Omaha and Nebraska, I shall take great pleasure in forwarding it to you.

Very respectfully, etc.

St. Louis University, Sept. 10, 1869.

(Mrs. General SHERMAN.)

Most Honorable Madam.—Your very kind favor of the 15th ultimo, concerning your charitable gift for our Indian missions, came duly to hand. I must on this occasion rely upon your great indulgence and trust you will, in your kindness, overlook my deficiency and fault in not answering sooner. I expected Father Converse to leave soon for the East, together with some of our young Fathers and scholastics, destined for the scholasticate of our Society in Maryland. It was my intention to hand him my letter and hence in part my delay.

I have had immediate use for your kind and charitable gift and have bestowed it in your name on our Indian missions in the Rocky Mountains, learning from recent letters that some of the Fathers needed assistance.

I took this occasion, Madam, to recommend you, the general and your whole dear family most earnestly to the prayers of the missionaries and their good neophytes. I pray daily at the holy altar for the pious intentions expressed in your two letters. I shall offer up once each week the holy sacrifice of mass for your private intention and that the Lord may favor you all with his choicest blessings. Allow me to recommend myself to your good prayers and to those of your dear children.

Since my return from Europe, my health has not been very good, owing particularly to the excessive summer heat from which we have now just escaped. Should I feel strong enough before the end of this month I intend to make an endeavor to reach Fort Rice before the great cold sets in. With this object in view may I ask you the great favor to obtain from the general a letter or note to be used if necessary as a passport in the upper Missouri country. On former occasions the kind recommendations of the general have been of a great avail to me among the military gentlemen in the forts who were always very obliging in favoring and aiding my intercourse with the Catholic soldiers.

I have consulted General Parker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, on my intended trip among the Sioux of the upper Missouri country. My views have been most favorably received by him and have met with his best approbation and good will.

Please present my best respects to our worthy and great general and recommend me to the pious remembrances of your dear children.

I have the honor to be, Madam, etc.

* * * * * * * *

My²⁸ health leaves much to be desired. The heat of July and August has been very oppressive and I continue to be under the influence of a general languor and feebleness. I have a more and more sincere and serious conviction that my end is near. Do not forget me in your good prayers.

I have just made a little test of my strength and have succeeded so well that I have hopes, *Deo dante*, of being able to accomplish my visit and mission to the Indians of the Upper Missouri. Upwards of 10,000 savages whom I visited

²⁸ To Nephew Paul and Niece Augusta, Oct. 7, 1869, in French.

in the course of the year 1868 have gone to the reservations appointed for them by the Government. My adopted brother (and consequently your uncle), Two Bears, head chief of the Yanktonnais at the head of 800 lodges or about 7,000 souls, invites me to come and is awaiting me impatiently.

I am just back from Omaha whither I have escorted six Sisters of Charity and I feel stronger. Those zealous sisters are on their way to Helena, the capital of Montana. I am glad to have been able to participate in their undertaking and to furnish all the funds for their long journey.

St. Louis University, October 4, 1869.

Governor BURBANK, *Yankton City, D. T.*:

Honorable Sir.—Though personally unknown to you, allow me to address you these few lines. I have been particularly and earnestly requested, by very respectable gentlemen in St. Louis, who take great interest in the welfare and affairs of Mr. F. F. Gerard, a trader among the Indians in the upper Missouri country, who applies for a renewal of his license to trade in that section. I have known Mr. Gerard and have been intimately acquainted with him for upward of twenty years, and with full confidence and assurance, I hesitate not and readily give him the following testimonial.

In my long intercourse and visits to the Indian tribes on the Missouri river I have often had occasion of meeting Mr. Gerard, particularly among the Aricaras, the Grosventres and Mandans at Fort Berthold. I have always considered Mr. Gerard as a true friend to the Indians, assisting them in their need and advising them to keep up peace and quiet toward the whites. I hesitate not in adding that it is particularly due to Mr. Gerard and to his well-timed advice and persuasion that the three united bands of Indians

at Fort Berthold did not go over to the hostile bands of Sioux who (the Sioux), to my certain knowledge, made strong endeavors and tempting promises to seduce the above three tribes from their allegiance to the Government. This occurred whilst the Berthold Indians were under severe sufferings from various sources which I need not here mention.

As regards the trade of intoxicating liquors to the Indian tribes, it has been my constant conviction, as far as my experience and information may tend, that Mr. Gerard among all the traders has been amongst the foremost to oppose the infamous and iniquitous trade.

Pardon me for the liberty I take in addressing you on the present subject. I write under a strong and sincere persuasion that Mr. Gerard is well worthy of your kind attention. I owe him great personal gratitude for the kind assistance he has given me on all occasions during my intercourse with the Indians around him and found him always their true friend and benefactor.

With sentiments of the highest regard of respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, Honorable Sir, etc.

St. Louis University, April 8, 1870.

Honorable E. S. PARKER, *Commissioner of Indian Affairs,*
Washington, D. C.:

Honorable Sir.—Hereby I acknowledge the receipt of your valuable report to the Secretary of the Interior for the year 1869, together with the report of the appointed Indian commissioners, for which accept my most sincere thanks.

Allow me to add a few personal words. Age is bringing on a decline of health. I am now in my seventieth year and somewhat suffering. Though I have not as yet been able to resolve on my trip to the Upper Missouri Indians with any degree of certainty, I am, however, desirous about it

and hope the advancing spring will somewhat renovate my strength and permit me to accomplish my wish. The welfare of the Indian has been for thirty years the dearest object of my heart. Should I be able, I intend to leave St. Louis for the upper country shortly after Easter.

Permit me most earnestly to recommend to your kind attention, my friend F. F. Gerard, who for a great number of years has been a trader among the Missouri tribes and with whom he has in great measure become identified. I have always considered Mr. Gerard as a true friend to the Indians, particularly at Berthold, and by his wise counsel and advice he has prevented these Indians on various occasions from joining the Sioux on the war-path. If in your power, and should you approve his bond and license as a trader, it shall be very gratefully remembered.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant, etc.

St. Louis University, Dec. 20, 1870.

Dear General:

I wrote this morning to Doctor Cody in answer to his recent letter and insinuations against young Mr. Keller. I am afraid there is something doubtful or wrong in the case; and feel happy that it is placed in your hands for examination and with the full conviction that justice will be done. I hope there is nothing very serious on either side.

I will give you here, verbatim, a copy of my letter to Doctor Cody, which perhaps may be of some use, knowing exactly what I have written: * * * "I am sorry to hear of the troubles you met with at the agency and particularly of the implication of Mr. Keller, which astonishes me greatly on account of my previous opinion of him. * * * I have had no particular acquaintance with the young man. I know him only from report. I know his worthy parents to whom he has ever been a true and filial child, assisting

them in their need as far as his means would allow him. At our college in St. Louis he has merited the esteem of all his professors by his conduct and application. General Harney during his stay in the Upper Missouri country valued highly his services, and so did the worthy Major Hearn until his departure from the agency. It is on those testimonies that I have particularly recommended Mr. Keller to you, and in so doing I acted under the persuasion that he would be of great service to you on account of his experience in the country and his knowledge of the people and their language. I never intended my recommendation of Keller as an obligation on your part to keep him in your service and I beg you to pay no further attention to it. General Stanley has written to me on the subject. In my answer I have let the general know the sort of relation or sympathy existing between Keller and me. I am confident that the case, having been referred to the general, will be strictly examined into and Keller will be treated accordingly.

“Dear Sir, allow me to state on this occasion that in my long missionary career of over thirty years I have made it a rule not to lend myself or interfere in any differences that may occur between parties. I try my best to attend solely to my spiritual ministry for the welfare of my white brethren and that of the well-disposed Indians who may desire to receive my services. In the case of Keller he should not be kept in office on my account as stated in your letter.”

The rest of my letter to Mr. Cody has no reference whatever to Mr. Keller.

You will pardon me, General, if I trouble you with such little matters. Should Keller prove guilty do not spare him; if innocent protect him. Please let me know the result as I have innocently been somewhat mixed in the affair and both parties have had recourse to me, the one to dismiss under vague accusations, the other for the protection of his good name.

With sentiments of profound respect and esteem, etc.

St. Louis University, June 19, 1872.

Honorable Secretary C. DELANO, *Washington, D. C.*:

Honorable Sir.—I received yesterday a letter from the Honorable D. Wood, Governor of Utah, of which the following is a faithful extract: “Having been informed that the Fort Hall Indian Agency had been taken from the Catholics, I had a conference with Honorable C. Delano, Secretary of the Interior, when he was here (Salt Lake City) recently, relating to the matter; and he informed me that he desired to make reparation in the premises. I suggested and strongly recommended that there should be a Superintendent of Indian Affairs appointed for Utah Territory, and urged the appointment of Major M. P. Berry, the late Indian agent at Fort Hall, a Catholic and a good man, thoroughly competent, and in every way worthy of the place, and stating that in my judgment the Catholic Church would be much better satisfied with the superintendency than with the agency. He consented to create the superintendency and said that if the Catholic Church would ask the appointment of Major Berry, he would appoint him. During my administration as Governor of Oregon Major Berry was an appointee of mine and I know him to be in every way worthy of your confidence.”

The Governor states: “That in his judgment the Catholic Church would be much better satisfied with the superintendency than with the agency.” On this point allow me to observe Governor Wood labors under a great mistake. The Catholic Church exercises no pretensions whatsoever of this sort. All that the Catholic bishops and missionaries aim at, in this country of religious liberty, is to be allowed to follow on their right, in accordance with their call from above, to evangelize the Indians who have received them with joy, and not be turned out of the missions where they have labored for years with zeal and fervor for the welfare and salvation of the Indians, as has been the case in several sections.

Governor Wood urges me to write at once to the Indian Department and ask the appointment of Major Berry as Superintendent of Indian Affairs in Utah. The Governor speaks in terms of the highest commendation of the major and I have no doubt he is a very competent gentleman. In this I feel as if interfering in an affair entirely out of my sphere and can only offer in excuse for my writing that I am complying with the request of the worthy Governor Wood.

Allow me to observe upon this occasion, with regard to my appointment in December, 1871, to represent the Indian Catholic missions in the United States, with the consent of several Archbishops; that this appointment should with all propriety belong to those bishops in whose dioceses Indian Catholic missions exist, or some representative they may name, and who may be consulted when occasion requires. My health and age and want of competent knowledge of the various districts in which Catholic missions exist, render me altogether unable to fill the important office with the due attention it requires and I humbly send in my resignation.

With sentiments of profound respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, etc.

Note.— This letter remained unanswered.

St. Louis University, Sept. 4, 1872.

Reverend and Dear Father:

P. C.

I must acknowledge the receipt of your very interesting letter from Elm Dale and wish your Reverence great success in the erection of a monument and chapel to the memory of our glorious Father Jogues.

The extract from Father Boeteman's letter, concerning Theophile Wickers, was literally copied. The boy, no doubt, resides either in Brooklyn or Williamsburg, in the one

where *Meserole* street exists. Father Boeteman's Apostolical College will not be opened before ——— 7, ———; there is, of course, plenty of time to send him the required information.

As you say, the letters of Mr. Hickey have cleared up my doubts and I have since sent him a supply from my little Indian paper shop. My weak state of health does not permit me to write and to occupy myself with my former unprinted letters on this side of the Atlantic. I lack a good number of them. However, a new edition of all my letters (five or six volumes) is now under progress of publication in Belgium. When out I shall procure a copy of them for Mr. Hickey. He will find in the last volume all he may need.

I learn with pleasure from your letter that Mr. Hickey will tend to the translation. As regards the copyright, please arrange the affair with him. I am not versed in any such matters and cannot imagine that any importance can be attached to such a production. Should it meet with success, as translator, let him have the principal benefit of it. All I would expect would be a charitable remembrance in favor of our poor Indian missions, actually in the utmost want.

I have a series of letters on my expedition, as chaplain in the army under General Harney, during the Indian war against the Government in Montana and Idaho, in 1858-59. The contents, pretty much, of the two first letters were published in the *New Indian Sketches* (by Sadlier & Co.) shortly after my return from the expedition. I wrote them somewhat later in French, and I think more fully, for the *Précis Historiques*. Some little changes may make them suitable for the *Catholic Review* and would make the other letters of the same series more clear and readable. I note this to have your opinion, if it be not putting your Reverence to too much trouble. I would like to spare Mr. Hickey as much trouble as possible, and I am sorry to be rather un-

able, on account of my infirmities, to attend to these matters myself.

In union with your holy sacrifices and prayers, believe me to be, etc.

²⁹I have just received your good, dear letter of the 21st — a most agreeable surprise for me; for in these days it is an occasion of consolation, every time any family news reaches me. I shall continue to feel most grateful to all those who write to me and remember me. I pray especially for them every time that I have the happiness of being able to ascend to the altar and offer the holy sacrifice of the mass. Encourage them all to write to me often, though it be only a few lines. I am not well, dear Emile. Since last March, when I had my first attack at Brussels, I have had several severe recurrences, and my strength is leaving me very perceptibly day by day. Since my return to St. Louis I have hardly left my room, and my cane has become my support and my constant companion. "*Usque Quo?*" Is it hard to guess? I pray to God every day to obtain his holy grace, that he may grant me great patience in my little miseries and ailments. * * *

This is a really curious time here, and amusing for a neutral onlooker. The city of St. Louis, and it is just the same everywhere, is flagged from one end to the other, for Greeley and for Grant. Every night brass bands with their banners tramp the streets, accompanied by thousands of partisans uttering hurrahs, waking everybody up and burning enormous quantities of powder. It is a nuisance — and still I have come to find it amusing; the world has to go on and be busy. And after all there is no great harm in it, whether it be for Greeley or for Grant. One is about as good as the other.

Europe, you say, is in suspense to know which of them is to win: it seems just as difficult to decide here. The individual majority is in favor of Greeley; but Grant has

²⁹ Extract from letter in French to Nephew Emile, Sept. 6, 1872.

all the means of corruption and seduction on his side, and is ready with all his adherents in office to make use of this means to achieve his re-election to the presidency. You can consider it as a settled thing: it will even be hard hereafter to get Grant out of the White House. Grant is * * * a cipher in himself, a plaything and very humble servant of our American radicals, exactly as William of Prussia is the valet of Bismarck.

St. Louis University, Feb. 18, 1873.

Major J. C. O'CONNOR, *Grand River Agency*:

Dear Major.—I received your very kind favor of the 10th instant, from New York, announcing your immediate departure, via Chicago, for Grand River. I would have been very happy, as well as many of your friends, to have received a visit from you in St. Louis. I feel most grateful for the interest you take in my health. The severe winter we have had has rather gone against me and I have hardly been able to leave my room and I constantly remain under severe sufferings and pain. The fact is, together with sickness, old age is coming fast on me. I hope the approaching spring may be of some service in regaining lost strength and general health. In regard to my prospects of seeing the Indians in the spring later, it is difficult to determine beforehand and under my present indispositions. Should there be any prospect on my part, I shall certainly inform you in due time. It is probable that Captain Joseph La Barge will make a trip to Benton during the coming spring. I know he would grant me comfortable quarters, and if my health any ways allows of the trip I shall feel desirous of giving it a trial. I receive frequent letters from the Indians of Montana and Idaho entreating me to come to see them once more.

If you meet General Stanley and family, please present them my best respects. Remember me most kindly to my

friend, Mr. D. Keller, to Captain Hammon and lady and to Mrs. Galpin and her young daughter.

I obtained a fine photograph of Two Bears and Running Antelope, made in Washington, which I intend to send to my relatives in Europe where they will be highly prized, as I made mention of them in my letters.

Please remember me to all my Indian acquaintances and friends. I often think of them and remember them daily in my prayers, begging the Lord to bless them all.

Please write at your earliest convenience.

Most respectfully, etc.

St. Louis University, March 24, 1873.

Major J. C. O'CONNOR, *Grand River Agency*:

Dear Major.—I received your very kind favor of the 1st instant and am truly grateful for your kind and friendly remembrance. I am happy to learn that you reached Grand River agency in good health and found all the Indians under your charge quiet and well-disposed. I sympathize sincerely with my good Indian friends who have been very severely visited by sickness this last winter and lost many of their dear children. I pray for them daily that the Lord may have pity on them and take them under his holy protection. Among the whites in and around St. Louis, hundreds of children and adults have died and are still dying of a raging sickness in our midst. The Fathers are constantly on the go night and day to visit and console the sick and prepare them for a happy eternity. I add this particularly that you may acquaint our Indian friends with our pitiful situation here.

I learn with the greatest pleasure, and for the advantage of the Catholic missions, that you have great prospects of being appointed one of the five inspectors. You are well worthy of the honor and I sincerely hope and pray that you will be charged with the important office, and trust our

Fathers in Montana and Idaho will be highly pleased with your appointment. This will open a chance to our dear friend Dan Keller. You speak of him in the most recommendable manner and as well worthy of succeeding you in the Grand River agency.

As you have learned, I have sent in my resignation to the Secretary of the Interior and can no longer present the name for any Catholic agency. I am, however, confident that your own recommendation will bring the matter about and with good results, having been an eye-witness of Mr. Keller's good administration of the affairs of the agency during your various absences, and of the confidence and popularity he has acquired among all the Indian bands by the incessant interest he has taken in their welfare. Should you think it opportune, you might speak in favor of Mr. Keller to the worthy General Stanley, whose recommendation would be of the greatest service. General Ewing in Washington might also favorably be appealed to, as he takes great interest in the Catholic missions.

The coming photographs of our Indian friends, as promised in your letter, I shall most gratefully receive. Accept my sincere thanks. I thank you for the interest you have taken in settling my account and promise to Bazile Clement.

When you see General Stanley and family please present him my best regards, as likewise to Major Clark and lady.

Captain La Barge's boat (*De Smet*) is advertised for Benton and will leave St. Louis on the 12th of April. My room is kept ready and at my disposal. Should my health permit I shall gladly undertake the trip. I had of late a very severe attack of sickness. I am again convalescent and in good hope.

Please present my kindest regards to Mr. D. Keller, to Captain Hammond and lady, to Mrs. Galpin and young daughter and to all other acquaintances. Remember me most kindly to all the Indian chiefs and friends.

Most respectfully, etc.³⁰

³⁰ Apparently Father De Smet's last message to his "dear Indians."

St. Louis University, May 12, 1873.

Reverend Dear Father WARD:

Please accept of twenty-eight intentions, to be said at your earliest convenience (*dantium*).

My best respects to all, particularly my old friend Father Gailland. I would be happy to receive a letter and to let me know the exact dates of St. Mary's Mission and when established on Sugar creek?

When on Kansas river?

How many churches were built by the Fathers? By whom? In what counties? To what saints dedicated? Of what material built?

When was the college built?

When was the convent built, etc.?

In my sickly moments I collect materials which may be of great service for the future history of the Missouri province.

Pray for me.

*Rae Vae Servus in Xto,*³¹

P. J. DE SMET, S. J.

³¹ Father De Smet's last letter.

CHAPTER IX.

SELECTED LETTERS RECEIVED.

Nicollet on his plans — Demers to the unknown priests — McLoughlin on transportation — On cattle — On deserters — Harriote on Blackfeet and interpreters — Rowand on Americans — Some bishops and others on De Smet — Benton on De Smet's services to the nation — Stevens asking assistance — Correspondence from army people — Schoolcraft, Thurlow Weed, Seward and Lincoln — General Stanley's estimate of what De Smet accomplished in 1868 — Letters from Indian men.

Washington City, March 18, 1840.

Reverend and Dear Friend:

NOW much I thank you for the good letter you wrote me on the 5th of February last; it reached me in thirty-five days. The news you gave me interested me greatly, particularly poor Dixon's sketches relating to the Big Sioux. There was a difficulty about the lower portion of that river regarding which he and old Dorion, who lives at Fort Pierre, could not agree. One claimed that Broken Kettle river emptied into the Missouri, and the other said into the Big Sioux, and Dixon was determined to clear the point up. It turns out that Dixon was right, according to his sketch, which I am very glad to get and for which I thank you really with all my heart. Your zealous pains to help me arouse my profound gratitude. As to the mistake about the lakes higher up on the Sioux, that is all settled, because I explored that region completely two years ago. Poor Dixon! May God keep his good soul. He is a man whom I truly regret.

I write in great haste, to take advantage of the departure of Mr. Sanford, who leaves in a few hours for St. Louis, in

order to go up the Missouri with the company's steamboat, as he did last year. He will have the pleasure of seeing you and handing you my letter. I am very sorry not to be of the party, but I am forced to remain here three or four months yet to put all my works in safety, publish my maps and a long report before I start on any other expeditions in which some accident might destroy everything. But I have a plan which will permit me to see you again at your mission, and it is not impossible that I might spend the winter not far from you, so as to be ready to make a dash for the mountains as soon as the season opens. I am also very sorry about Mr. Fontenelle whom I had hoped to have with me.

If you should happen to see Mr. Gauss, please remember me to him and tell him about my plans and tell him to write me. I should be happy to learn that he still entertains the idea of making such a campaign with me. You must try to go as far as Fort Pierre this year where your apostolic zeal would be quite necessary. Then if you see Louison Fresnière, tell him too that I depend on having him with me for two or three years, and that when the time comes I shall come after him.

I would have liked to send you some souvenirs, but Mr. Sanford's departure allows me no time to attend to it. You will lose nothing by waiting; I shall bring you what I cannot send. I shall be really grateful if you can give me the information asked for in my last letter, as you offered to do. You see that we can correspond with security and that our letters come through all right. Mr. Chouteau is very careful to forward them when they come to his hands.

Adieu, dear and excellent friend. Think of me, as I never cease doing of you, and thanking you.

Present my respects to your dear partner in the mission and to good Mr. Papin. Wholly yours in respect and attachment,

J. N. NICOLLET.

Camp of the Pend d'Oreilles, August 6, 1840.

*Reverend Missionaries:*¹

Though I have not as yet the pleasure of knowing your names, I eagerly take the opportunity which is presented to send you news of the two poor missionaries of the Columbia, knowing that I am writing to Catholic priests, ministers of our holy religion, who have generously come to sacrifice themselves for the salvation of the savages. With what joy and contentment have I learned of your arrival among the Flatheads! I thought at first that you had been sent to our assistance to share the immense task which we have on our hands. For from the upper waters of the Columbia to the wild tribes scattered far down the Pacific Ocean is what we have to cover and visit, without mentioning the two Canadian establishments — one on the Willamette river and the other on the Cowlitz. It is at these two places that we have our principal residences. You have no doubt heard that we were sent hither in 1838 by way of the canoes of the Honorable Hudson Bay Company, which gave us our passage *gratis*. It was not long before we were aware of the need of help. We have written to Canada, but we have the grief of being still but two, to make head against everything, especially to arrest the progress made by so many Presbyterian and Methodist ministers, who are in occupation of the principal posts of the region because they got here before us. It would take too long to tell you all that they say to the Indians against us and our holy religion. We ought to have eight more priests, besides ourselves, to occupy various posts; there is a chance to do a great deal of good. I have left Fort Vancouver to make a missionary excursion in the upper region of the river, as I did last year.

I have come thus far this year. I am at no great distance from you, but I do not hope to have the pleasure of

¹ Addressed "Révérends Prêtres, Missionnaires Catholiques, Aux Têtes-Plates."

seeing you before I leave. I shall, however, wait at Kettle Falls for the return of Mr. McLean's people, who I hope may bring me word from you. While I am here, Monseigneur the Grand Vicar, Francis Norbert Blanchet, is occupied in visiting the posts below the river. I must hasten. I wish you health, strength and prosperity in your noble but laborious undertaking. You will succeed better than we among the savages, because you have no enemy to oppose you. I have heard to-day from an Indian that you are to come to Colville. In that case I should have the satisfaction of seeing you, since I do not expect to leave that place before the 21st or 22d of this month. Meanwhile receive the most affectionate respects and salutations of your

Very humble and obedient servant,
MODESTE DEMERS,
Ptre Miss.

Baltimore, March 12, 1841.

*Reverend and Dear Friend.*²

I have received in the course of the year the interesting communications which you have sent me. I need not tell you how agreeable they have been to me. They had only one fault, that of being too short. I would have been especially glad to have news from you since your return, but I suppose you are very busy making ready for your new campaign. Fortunately Mr. Geyer has been able in some measure to make up for this by telling me about your interview. I should be very happy, really, to be able to start out in the spring to continue my work to the other side of the mountains and to have you for a traveling companion. But I cannot get away this season. It is indispensable that I should stay here to finish my geographical works, which are by order of Congress to be published as soon as possible. Mr. Fremont is finishing a large map to give it to the en-

² In French.

graver and I am busy with a volume to accompany the map. We hope the whole thing may be finished for the next session of Congress. Then we will be able to turn our eyes toward the Far West and entertain the hope of coming out to meet you there. Congress has just voted the necessary funds for a new expedition to continue the geographical work which I have brought as far as the Missouri river. I do not know whether the new administration will cast its eyes upon me to direct this great affair, though the general opinion seems to leave no doubt on the subject; nor do I know whether my health, which has been greatly shattered by excessive labor, will permit me to accept when the time comes. In any case I do not disguise how greatly I should love to see the prairies once more and to cross the mountains. If, therefore, all these probabilities together should come to realization, I shall find myself in St. Louis in the latter part of next fall to make preparations for the expedition and to get it in motion as early as possible. Then, my dear and honored friend, I shall not forget the various recommendations that you have made me, both in the interest of my own enterprise and with a view to being of use to those whom you honor with your protection.

If you can, I beg of you to give me word of yourself before you start. Have you kept your instruments? I hope to be able to bring you others more numerous and more complete. The observations that you made for me at Council Bluffs are of inestimable value. You will see some day what I have said about them.

* * * * *

Adieu, dear and honored friend, etc..

J. N. NICOLLET.

Vancouver, Sept. 27, 1841.

To Reverend P. S. DE SMET, *Flathead Camp*:

Reverend Sir.—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your esteemed favor of the 17th ultimo by my

friend, Mr. Ermantinger, and I beg to congratulate you on your safe return and to assure you. I am extremely happy to find that you and your worthy associates are to be residents in this part of the world and intend to devote yourselves to the laudable object of teaching the doctrine of the Christian religion to these poor deluded savages and that the Almighty may vouchsafe to bless your endeavors in this world and reward you in the world to come is my prayer to our heavenly Father and with such sentiments as these I presume it is unnecessary for me to assure you it will be my great happiness to have an opportunity of affording you the least assistance in furthering your pious object and we will be happy to furnish you with anything our stores contain and to assist you as much as we can to transport it to the interior, but I beg to observe our means of transport as you may have been informed are limited and the packages ought not to be too bulky so as to go conveniently into a boat nor above ninety pounds weight so as to be easily handled and as our means of conveyance are not always at command it would be necessary you sent us your list of demands in the month of January for what you require in the spring in the month of March for what you require in June and in the month of July for what you may require in the fall and winter — and as I already observed our means of conveyance is limited I do not think we would be able to transport for you in one year more than thirty packages (though if we can we will do it) and perhaps some years not that quantity as far as the post of Walla Walla from whence your people will have to take them with horses to your place — the cost and expense of which you will have to pay by bill on London, and if there is anything else in which I can be of use to you, please command me as I am, with the greatest esteem and regard,

Your obedient humble servant,

JOHN McLOUGHLIN.

Vancouver, Sept. 27, 1841.

To the Reverend Mr. DE SMET :

Reverend Sir.— I am pressed for time as I cannot detain my courier any longer and I can only observe that after mature consideration for these several years I am fully convinced that the most effectual mode to diffuse the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church in this part of the world is by establishing it on a good foundation in the Willamette and Cowlitz among the settlers — as the Indians will form themselves on what they see done by the whites the Reverend Messrs. Blanchette and Demers have done and are doing an incalculable amount of good among the whites and Indians, but they are too few indeed there is more than sufficient employment for you all in this quarter — but of course this could not be — “the harvest is great, but the laborers are few.” But if one of you with one or two of the lay brothers could come to assist Messrs. Blanchette and Demers till their reinforcement came from Canada it would be an immense benefit to religion and the only apology I can give for thus obtruding my opinion is that from my long residence in the country I have a right to claim some knowledge of it — and I am certain from your zeal in the cause you only require information to act up to it if in your power. It is my intention to go this fall to the Sandwich Islands and next spring, please God, I hope to have the pleasure to see you here. Allow me to return to you my thanks for the pictures and chaplets for Mrs. McLoughlin and Mrs. Rae and kind respects to yourself and colleagues and my fervent prayers to our heavenly Father for the success of your labors.

I am, etc.,

JOHN McLOUGHLIN.

Vancouver, Sept. 28, 1841.

To the Reverend P. J. DE SMET :

Reverend Sir.— As I do not know in what part of the country you may be and as it may be convenient for you to get cattle from the Snake Country I do myself the pleasure to inclose you the accompanying orders — if you take the cattle I will to replace them purchase the like number on your account from the settlers here — and I beg to observe as next year it is probable I may order down to this place the supernumerary cattle at those establishments it is necessary you let me know by first opportunity if you will take any so as to enable me to decide on the number to have, and I also beg to observe that you will not be able to get these cattle this season, but will next summer.

I am, etc.,

JOHN McLOUGHLIN.

Vancouver, Oct. 12, 1844.

To the Reverend Father DE SMET :

Reverend and Dear Sir.— I beg to return you my thanks for your kind note by Doctor Barclay.

There is a man called Brown who deserted from Mr. McDonald at Colville some years ago and I understand is now at the Jesuit mission about the Flatheads or Pendant D'Oreilles bay. I beg to observe that you ought not on any account allow deserters to receive any employment or assistance directly or indirectly from the mission. These deserters are all bad men and make up plausible stories by which they work on the feelings of the good Fathers who often believe all that these men say take pity on them and give them shelter and the consequence is, the Fathers incur the ill will of others and excite opposition to the cause to which they devote themselves and all this to oblige men who

are not deserving of any favor. If I may presume to give you an opinion allow none of these men about any of your missions and praying that our heavenly father may Bless and prosper your labours.

I am, etc.,

JOHN McLOUGHLIN.

Vancouver, Oct. 14, 1844.

Reverend Father DE SMET:

Reverend and Dear Sir.—I forgot to mention to you that we have a trading establishment on the Umpqua about 200 miles to the south of this. The country is fine, the plains extensive, and we have forty head of cattle there and raise abundance of grain for the use of the establishment and there is a fine place for a mission on the banks of a river (we are going to place the establishment there) about eighty miles from the ocean and to which we believe vessels of 100 tons may come, taking it altogether from situation, means of living and population (there are about 150 persons) which is quite manageable — from a long intercourse with our people—It appears the best situation for a mission that I know and besides this you can establish a mission in another place farther south from which you can open a communication with California at once and where you are so desirous to penetrate and where I am certain you and your worthy colleagues would do a great deal of good — besides the great advantage it would be to those missions to have a communication through the country and with California. But besides the places to which I allude there are several small rivers along the coast between the Columbia and San Francisco which are accessible to small vessels and afford excellent situations for missions. I regret much it did not occur to me to mention this to you when you were here, but your sickness and occupation and my occupation pre-

vented my seeing you as much as I wished and other subjects drove this from my mind the short time I had the pleasure to see you and praying our heavenly father that he may assist protect and Bless you and your worthy colleagues in your pious labour

I am, Dear Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

JNO. McLOUGHLIN.

Endorsement to "Reverend Mr. P: De Vos, Catholic Mission, Willamet."

I have just received this letter, which I forward to you, from the worthy and excellent Mr. McLoughlin. If our [force] was double or triple and our means proportionate, establishments might be started in various parts of this vast territory with the greatest advantage to our holy religion. We must obtain information. Messrs. Blanchet and Demers can give you a great deal, but before deciding anything the different places must be visited and personal investigations made. Much good will, I hope, be done in Lower Oregon; the Reverend Father-General desires that it be not neglected, but the mountains also will require much care and money. The good Lord will provide. Thank Mr. McLoughlin in my name.

Yours,

P. J. DE SMET, S. J.

Rocky Mountain House, March 30, 1846.

The Reverend PERE DE SMET:

My Dear Sir.—The arrival of Vellenuer yesterday put me in possession of your kind favor of 13th March. I was extremely happy to learn that you had recovered from your indisposition, but am still anxious that you will have some difficulty in accomplishing the voyage you have undertaken.

I sincerely hope that you may overcome them all and have a happy meeting with your friends who must naturally be very anxious for your welfare.

I am sorry to inform you that I am still in bed but have some hopes of improving when the fine weather sets in. I do not suffer as I did some time ago.

We have seen a great number of Blackfeet and Surcees since I last wrote, but nothing of Bird or Munro. I am very doubtful whether we shall see them, from what the Assiniboin who saw them last say about them.

I have delivered your two horses and three mules with your little property to Lambert as per accompanying account. There are a few loose articles which Lambert may perhaps make use of which he promises to account for, and there were some articles that I retained to be deducted from your account with the company, a copy of which I shall transmit to you by the first conveyance.

I regret much not having the pleasure of seeing you before you took your final departure from us, but I must beg you accept of my most profound esteem and may the Almighty God, whom you serve, forever protect and preserve you, is the sincere wish of dear sir,

Your humble and affectionate friend,

J. E. HARRIOTE.

P. S.— The mule you left at Bow river was found by the Blackfeet and purchased from them by Lambert with some difficulty; they were very loath to give her up.

J. E. H.

En Route. Trading ground between the South Branch, going up, September 2, 1846.

PIERRE DE SMET:

My Dear Sir.—I pray sincerely to God that these few lines may find you in the land of the living in the full enjoyment of health and happiness.

Many is the time I have been speaking of you since we parted. Sir George Simpson I met at Red River would have been delighted to give you a shake of the hand. My poor daughters often mention your name, your ways and that of the Reverend Mr. Thibault are so very different. They cannot have the same regard for him. You know how often he comes to Edmonton in the course of a winter, when he is sent for only. At one time I had almost determined in my own mind to make the Willamette my home, but now that the Americans are to have the Columbia and every part worth anything, it will not do for British subjects. What will our friend the doctor think of that arrangement between the two Governments. I hope he will lose nothing by it. Perhaps the Hudson Bay Company may enter upon some sort of arrangement with the American Government. We will know more about this in due time.

We have troops coming up now for Red River. I left five boats to assist to bring them up. Mr. Francis is to be one of the conductors to bring them up as far as Harvey House. It is supposed he will not go home this season.

My daughters will be disappointed after what I said to them of the Columbia and of the good nuns at the Willamette. They and myself esteem and respect those remarkable fine women who have given everything in this world to make Christians, etc., of the poor natives. Were I this moment in Columbia I cannot say what I would do for the sake of my family. I was at Red River this spring, from there went down to the Factory.

What a summer for sickness! I had as many as thirty-five of my men sick at one time; we were not able to stir; but thank God none have died, whereas many belonging to the other different brigades are gone. The natives about Factory, Oxford House, Harvey House and Red River House have suffered greatest; no less than 300 died at Red River. At all the places I mention they have been dying;

also about Cumberland House twenty-four are dead. I do not know if the sickness has reached the posts on the Saskatchewan yet. I expect to be at Carlton in five or six days when I expect to get news from above.

* * * * *

Your sincere friend and obedient servant,
J. ROWAND.

Cincinnati, Feb. 22, 1847.

Would that I had words to express, or that we who love God, and who know what it is to save innumerable souls, could feel how exceedingly interesting to faith and to charity should be the Indian tribes of Oregon and Nebraska! Never, since the days of Xavier, Brebeuf, Marquette and Lallemand, has there been a missionary more clearly pointed out and called and sent for this great work, than Father De Smet, who is requested to present this testimony to the friends of our missions. His plans, I sincerely believe, are all heaven-inspired — as his labors have been sustained by heaven — and they who have the means and the will to aid in so glorious a cause of God and of religion will surely see in heaven the souls they shall have thus been rendered instrumental in placing there.

Should there be any in England, France or Belgium, who chance to be acquainted with or who may favorably regard anything to which my name is attached, to such I beg most earnestly to recommend the Indian missions, west of the Mississippi, in behalf of which Father De Smet again is willing to risk a life which has been too often already exposed, with a martyr's heroism, in the same sacred cause.

[SEAL.] X JOHN B. PURCELL,
Bishop of Cincinnati.

Baltimore, March 12, 1847.

Reverend and Dear Sir:

I cheerfully comply with your request that I should give you a few lines in behalf of the great missionary undertaking which induces you again to seek across the ocean additional means of prosecuting it to a successful issue. Although I must say that your modesty alone could have suggested the request; as your long and perilous labors among the ferocious savages of Oregon are known to the whole Catholic world and will commend you to the veneration and charity of all who shall have the happiness of seeing you.

You can the more confidently appeal to the friends of religion and humanity; inasmuch as looking for no earthly reward yourself, save privations and hardships, your only wish is to "spend and be spent" in the service of thousands of benighted and degraded souls who demand at your hands the blessings of faith and civilization.

You have my most earnest prayers for your success in your eminently good and heroic work. And I shall be happy to avail myself of any opportunity to shew you with what sincerity, I am your faithful and affectionate servant in Christ,

SAMUEL
Abp. Balt.

Reverend P. J. DE SMET, S. J.

My Dear Father DE SMET:

Will you allow me press on you the acceptance of the accompanying statement, not for you but for the object you have most at heart, with a request that if by chance it should be useful for your neophytes of the Rocky Mountains, you will not hesitate to use it.

The undersigned cannot allow the Reverend Father De Smet, S. J., to embark for England without doing himself the pleasure of stating, for the information of the friends of the Catholic Church in Europe, how greatly the bishops of the Province have been consoled by the wonderful success which has attended the labors of this devoted missionary and his colleagues among the savage tribes of the Rocky Mountains.

It is now several years since the bishops of the United States urged the good Fathers of the Society of Jesus to charge themselves with the apostolic work of evangelizing the red children of the forest on the eastern shores of the Pacific. Almighty God seems to have blessed the undertaking.

If the zealous Father De Smet could only find means to extend the good work to the new missions which invite him, and to consolidate what has been so happily begun in the others, there is every prospect that many hundreds and even thousands of souls would be thereby brought to the knowledge of Christ, and aggregated to the one fold of his holy church. It would be, of course, superfluous for me to recommend to the friends of religion, a missionary so well known and so justly revered as the indefatigable apostle of the Rocky Mountains, Father De Smet.

X JOHN HUGHES,
Bishop of New York.

NEW YORK, *April 22, 1847.*

I³ have reason to believe, Very Reverend and Dear Father, that a brief sketch of the present state of the rising church in Oregon will prove acceptable to your Reverence. There are now the following establishments:

³ Extract from letter from Father De Vos to editor of the *News Letter*, October 19, 1847.

1. The cathedral of St. Paul at Willamette or Oregon city.
 2. The church of St. John the Evangelist in Willamette.
 3. St. Francis Xavier at Cowlitz.
 4. The chapel of St. James at Fort Vancouver.
 5. The new church of the Willamette prairie.
 6. The Catholic school of St. Joseph at Willamette (Oregon city).
 7. The chapel, convent and female academy of St. Mary's, Willamette.
 8. The residence of St. Francis Xavier, Willamette.
 9. The residence and church of St. Mary's among the Flatheads.
 10. The mission and church of the Sacred Heart among the Cœur d'Alènes.
 11. The mission and church of St. Ignatius among the Kalispels of the Lake.
 12. The station and chapel among the *Chaudières*.
 13. The station and church of St. Francis Regis among the half-breeds, between the Kalispels and Chaudières.
 14. A church built by the Indians at Stuart's lake, New Caledonia.
 15. A church built by them at Fort Alexandria, New Caledonia.
 16. A church built by them at the Rapids, New Caledonia.
 17. A church built by them at Appatoka, New Caledonia.
 18. The station of St. Peters, upper lake of the Columbia.
 19. The station of St. Francis Borgia among the upper Pend d'Oreilles.
 20. The station of the Assumption among the Arcs à Plats.
 21. The station of the Immaculate Heart of Mary among the Kootenais.
 22. The station of St. Joseph's among the Okinagans.
- This is the result of what Almighty God has already done

and still does in this distant corner of the world, since the year 1838, when the first missionaries, the present Bishop and Reverend Mr. Demers, arrived in Oregon. There is not the least doubt that if we had a greater number of apostolic laborers, men endowed with humble and docile minds, with disinterested and prudent zeal, with sound judgment and robust health, and above all with solid and exemplary piety, incalculable good could and would be done among the settlers, but more especially among the native tribes.

Office Supt. Ind. Affairs,
St. Louis, April 19, 1851.

Rev. P. J. DE SMET, Present:

Dear Sir.— Understanding that you will shortly start for the upper Missouri country on your missionary labors, and intending, as you are aware, to hold a treaty or treaties with the various prairie Indians at Fort Laramie in September next, you will do me a favor by informing such of the upper tribes as you may see, of the intentions of the Government, which are more particularly set forth in the circulars herewith, which I will thank you to distribute to any persons that would be likely to make known their contents to the Indians. Should your other engagements permit I shall be rejoiced to see you at Fort Laramie. Any sketches that you can take and the outlines of maps of this prairie and mountain country will be of great importance and would be highly appreciated by the Government, as well as any information with regard to the habits, history or other interesting matters appertaining to the upper Indians.

Wishing you a pleasant and prosperous journey, I remain, Dear Sir,

Respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
D. D. MITCHELL,
Superintendent Indian Affairs.

St. Louis, April 7, 1852.

My Dear Father DE SMET :

I have just received a letter from Lieutenant Beale, of the United States navy, who was lately appointed a Superintendent of Indian Affairs for California, under a special law, and on account of his knowledge of those Indians and his just and humane conduct toward them. Mr. Beale desires me to enable him to make your acquaintance, and to obtain your co-operation in doing the best for these tribes, he having understood that your labors might extend to California, and being so well acquainted with your character as to believe that, in co-operation with the civil authority, you could do more for these poor people — more for their welfare and keeping them in peace and friendship with the United States, than “an army with banners.” I can add that this is not only his opinion, but that of the authorities at Washington, and my own. When I was there this winter I had a conversation with the Secretary of the Interior (the head of the Indian service) and also with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, on this subject, and they concurred in the views of Lieutenant Beale which I have stated to you. In fact it was I, myself, and in consequence of my knowledge of your meritorious services in the missionary field, and upon some intimation a year ago that you might go to California, that brought this point under the notice of the authorities, and I shall be happy to be of any further service in carrying it out. I shall write to Lieutenant Beale, and give him whatever answer that I may receive from you, and can assure you that if you meet with him you find a warm and generous heart, and one who duly appreciates your character and services. He has been much with Colonel Fremont in California, in whom, also, you know, you will always find a friend — the more so since your consolatory ministration in my house.

Affectionately,

THOMAS H. BENTON.

Father De Smet and Oregon Territory.

At the meeting of the National Institute, held at Washington on Monday evening, March 19th, Mr. Wilkes, in the course of some very interesting remarks on upper California and Oregon, took occasion to express his indebtedness to the Jesuit Father De Smet for much valuable information obtained from him in relation to the course of the rivers in Oregon and other matters, which he had incorporated in his map of that Territory, recently published in his narrative, and which was exhibited for the inspection of the members of the institute.

This acknowledgment for scientific information from so high a source does not derive its value from its personal connection with Father De Smet, but from the circumstances that it furnishes another example of the devotion to the cause of humanity which has always characterized the disciples of Ignatius of Loyola. At a moment when Europe is attempting to eject from its bosom these ardent cultivators of science, to whom it is indebted for so much of what is valuable in civilization, we find its members unostentatiously engaged, very far beyond the confines of civilization, in treasuring up those valuable observations which are to become the landmarks of the unlettered pioneers in the wilderness beyond the Rocky Mountains. It must be gratifying to Father De Smet to know that when that country shall have been peopled by an industrious population, his explorations will be spoken of as those of his predecessors now are in the valley watered by the Father of Rivers and upon the borders of Lake Superior.—*Newspaper clipping.*

Reverend and Dear Father:

Inclosed you will find a small sum of twenty francs which I have been commanded by the Duke of Brabant to send you for your missions. Will you have the kindness to re-

turn me the receipt of said sum, signed by you. I hope to have the pleasure of meeting you to-morrow at W. Donnets.

Ever most respectfully and affectionately yours,

J. H. CONWAY.

19 Oct. '52.

Washington, D. C., April 11, 1853.

Dear Sir:

The exploration of a railroad route from the sources of the Mississippi river to Puget's sound has been placed in my charge, and I am now busily engaged in making the necessary arrangements and collecting all possible information in reference to the route. Starting from St. Paul's about the middle of May, my intention is to keep to the northward of the Missouri and, passing through the country of the Blackfeet Indians, explore carefully all the passes in the Rocky Mountains between the sources of the Missouri and the forty-ninth parallel. From your work entitled "*Oregon Missions*" I have derived great pleasure and much information; but I understand that since its publication you have journeyed extensively in the western country, particularly between the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers. The object of my writing at this time, therefore, is to ask of you such additional information as you may be able to give me. The geography of the country, the Indian tribes, their numbers and character, the missionary and trading posts, I am particularly anxious to receive information about. The labors of the missionaries in that country I feel a great interest in and should be glad to receive from you letters to such as I shall probably meet upon my route.

I shall hardly be in St. Louis before the 1st of May, but I promise myself the pleasure of making your acquaintance then. My agent, however, Lieutenant Saxton of the army, precedes me to make arrangements and will reach St. Louis in a week's time. I have requested him to call upon you to

get your suggestions in reference to matters of transportation, etc., and shall feel under great obligation for any suggestions you make make.

Yours very respectfully and truly,
ISAAC I. STEVENS.

Telegram.

St. Louis Telegraphery, April 22, 1853.

The following dispatch has just been received, dated Washington city, April 21, 1853:

To Father P. J. DE SMET:

Sir.—Is it an absolute impossibility for you to go with my expedition? It will be a great opportunity to meet your friends among the Indian tribes, and you would render great service to them and the country.

Answer by telegraph paid here immediately.

Yours, etc.,
ISAAC I. STEVENS.

War Department,
Washington, May 13, 1858.

Sir:

The President is desirous to engage you to attend the army for Utah to officiate as chaplain. In his opinion your services would be important in many respects to the public interest, particularly in the present condition of our affairs in Utah. Having sought information as to the proper person to be thus employed his attention has been directed to you, and he has instructed me to address you on the subject, in the hope that you may consider it not incompatible with your clerical duties or your personal feelings to yield to his request.

It is proper that I should apprise you that the existing laws do not authorize the President to appoint and commission chaplains; but should you consent to join the expedition for Utah and remain sometime with the troops there, you will be allowed a reasonable compensation for expenses and services. When the law authorized the employment of chaplains, as it formerly did, the pay and emoluments were \$1,000 or \$1,200 per annum. This amount would be readily allowed, together with expenses of traveling to and returning from the army.

Should you conclude to accept this invitation you are requested to advise me of the fact, and proceed to the headquarters of General Smith at Fort Leavenworth, to receive from him such suggestions as he may have to offer.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN B. FLOYD,

Secretary of War.

Reverend P. J. DE SMET,
St. Louis, Mo.

St. Louis, Mo., August 10, 1858.

Father DE SMET:

My Dear Sir.—General Harney desires me to state to you, that he has just received orders to repair to Washington to report to the War Department. From the announcements in the newspapers, the general is under the impression he is to be placed on service in Oregon, and in such an event, there is no one whose aid could be more valuable than your own, in the capacity of your profession.

The general proposes, therefore, that you continue your commission with the army and accompany him to Oregon in case he is sent, due notice of which he will telegraph to you on his arrival in Washington.

The general begs to assure you that every facility and encouragement will be given to the advancement of the good work you have already so successfully commenced in that country.

With the highest considerations of respect and esteem, I remain, my dear Father,

Your sincere friend,

A. PLEASONTON.

(Private.)

My Dear Father:

I send you your letter and also the orders for the officers of the different posts, through which you will pass, to deliver on your arrival.

I shall always look back upon the agreeable moments we have passed together as among the most pleasant of my life and if you will accept the best wishes of so humble an individual as myself, for your health and success through life, rest assured they will always remain with you.

With sentiments of the highest esteem and regard I remain, Father,

Your sincere friend,

A. PLEASONTON.

To the Reverend P. J. DE SMET, S. J., etc., etc.

Headquarters, Department of Oregon.

Fort Vancouver, W. T.,

October 28, 1858.

To the Reverend Father P. J. DE SMET, *Chaplain, etc.:*

Dear Sir.—The general commanding instructs me to say, that he most cordially approves of your proposition to

visit the Cœur d'Alène Mission this winter; for he conceives the happiest results from your presence among the Indian tribes of that vicinity. He has directed that every facility shall be furnished you to enable you to perform in safety the inclement and trying journey you are about to undertake. A copy of his instructions is inclosed herewith. The general desires you to impress upon the Indians you are to counsel the strong necessity existing for them to live up to the conditions to which they have so lately subscribed in the treaties they have made, more especially in the surrender of such persons as were demanded of them. Two of these persons, Kamiakin and Schloom, it is reported, have gone away among the Flatheads, but that circumstance must not prevent the tribes concerned from using every endeavor to obtain possession of them for the purpose above indicated.

While informing the Indians that the Government is always generous to a fallen foe, state to them that it is, at the same time, determined to protect its citizens in every part of its territory; and that they can only expect to exist by implicitly obeying the commands they receive.

The same troops are permanently stationed in the country who met them in the field the past summer, and these will most assuredly be placed upon their trail in the spring with instructions to give no quarter, should they again turn a deaf ear to what has been told them.

I am instructed to say you will communicate freely with these headquarters. The best wishes of the general will attend you in the holy mission of charity to which you have devoted yourself in so generous a manner. I remain, Father, most respectfully,

Your obt. servant,

A. PLEASANTON,

Captain 2d Dragoons, Asst. Adjt.-Genl.

Headquarters, Department of Oregon.

Fort Vancouver, W. T.,

October 28, 1858.

Special Orders,

No. 4.

1. The Reverend P. J. De Smet, chaplain, etc., being about to proceed to the Cœur d'Alène Mission under instructions from the general commanding; officers commanding posts and stations in his route are directed to furnish the reverend father with every facility and means for prosecuting his journey securely, and in an expeditious manner. Orders will, therefore, be given to provide such guides, interpreters, escorts and animals to Father De Smet as will attain the object of this order.

2. The assistant quartermaster at Fort Walla Walla will defray the expenses of such expressmen as may be sent to that post, from time to time, by Father De Smet.

By order of Brigadier-General Harney,

A. PLEASANTON,

Captain 2d Dragoons, A. Asst. Adjt.-Gen'l.

Rev. P. J. DE SMET, *Chaplain, etc.*

Headquarters, Department of Oregon.

Fort Vancouver,

January 1, 1859.

My Dear Father:

Your communication of the 9th ultimo, from the Cœur d'Alène Mission, has been submitted to the general who desires me to express to you the great gratification it has given him to learn of your safe arrival at the mission.

The interesting information you have furnished relative to the Indian tribes of your vicinity confirms the statements which have been tendered the general from every quarter, more especially the reports of the Reverend Fathers Con-

giato and Ravalli, who have lately returned from that country.

The confidence you feel in the peaceful desires of the Indians toward the whites is shared by the general. They have only to act up to these desires to obtain the good will of the whites toward them.

The general approves your proposition of permitting some of the chiefs of the various nations to accompany you to this place to pay him their respects. He will be glad to see them and to explain to them the intentions of the Government as far as they are concerned. Their expenses and food will be provided them during the journey to and from their homes, but they must not expect presents for the general has none to give.

It would be well that you return as early in the spring as practicable, for some contingency may arise requiring the general's presence elsewhere.

I am most sensible of the kind feelings you have been pleased to entertain toward myself, and tender you the assurance of an unworthy but devoted regard and friendship. May you always enjoy the blessings you so generously solicit for others.

Your letters have been duly forwarded.

I remain, Father, with the highest respect,

Your obedient servant,

A. PLEASANTON,

Captain 2d Dragoons, Asst. Adjt.-Gen'l.

Reverend Father P. J. DE SMET, S. J.,

Chaplain, U. S. A., Cœur d'Alène Mission.

Fort Vancouver, W. T.,

May 28, 1859.

My Dear Father:

The general desires me to say he has notified Agent Owen not to interfere in any way with the Indian chiefs now at

this place. He wishes you to inform the Indians of this, and that they are now solely under his orders.

I send you a package of books, which I pray you, my dear Father, to accept for the benefit of your red children of the mountains. With the best wishes and prayers of your sincere and humble friend.

A. PLEASONTON.

Father DE SMET.

Headquarters, Department of Oregon.

Fort Vancouver, W. T.,

June 1, 1859.

Sir:

I have the honor to report, for the information of the general-in-chief, the arrival at this place, on the 28th ultimo, of a deputation of Indian chiefs from the upper Pend d'Oreilles, lower Pend d'Oreilles, Flatheads, Spokans, Colville, and Cœur d'Alène Indians, on a visit, suggested by myself through the kind offices of the Reverend Father De Smet, who has been with these tribes the past winter, and has counseled them, both as an agent of the Government and in his clerical capacity, as to the advantages accruing to them by preserving peaceable and friendly relations with the whites at all times.

These chiefs have all declared to me the friendly desires which now animate them toward our people, and they assure me that their own several tribes are all anxiously awaiting their return, to confirm the peace and good will they are hereafter determined to preserve and maintain. Two of these chiefs,—one of the upper Pend d'Oreilles and the other of the Flatheads,—report that the proudest boast of their respective tribes, is the fact that no white man's blood has ever been shed by any one of either nation. This statement is substantiated by Father De Smet. The chiefs of

the other tribes mentioned state their people now regret they had been so deceived and deluded as to go to war with the whites the past year. They tender the most earnest assurances that such will never be the case again. All of these chiefs assert there will be no difficulty for the future as regards the whites traveling through their country, or in the occupation of it.

They request the Government to secure a reservation to their people, upon which they desire to live and be protected.

Kamiakin, the noted chief of the Yakimas, came in with these chiefs as far as Fort Walla Walla, with the intention of surrendering himself to my custody, but in consequence of an officious interference with these Indians on the part of Mr. T——, agent for the Flatheads, Kamiakin became alarmed, and returned to his people. No censure is to be attached to Kamiakin for this act, and I have caused him to be notified that I am satisfied with his present peaceful intentions. * * * *

I have also the honor to inclose a copy of Father De Smet's report as to the Indian tribes he has visited the past winter, which shows that peace exists among themselves as well as with the whites; and from my own observation I am convinced that with proper care, another Indian war of any magnitude cannot soon occur in this department.

It gives me pleasure to commend to the general-in-chief the able and efficient services the Reverend Father De Smet has rendered.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

W. S. HARNEY,

Brigadier-General Commanding.

Assistant Adjutant-General,

Headquarters of the Army, N. Y. City.

Letter of Captain Pleasonton.

Headquarters, Department of Oregon.

Fort Vancouver, W. T.,

June 1, 1859.

My Dear Father:

The general commanding instructs me to inclose a copy of his special order, No. 59, of this date, authorizing you to return to St. Louis, through the different tribes of the interior, which you are so desirous to visit once again, for the purpose of confirming them in their good disposition toward the whites, as well as to renew their zeal and intelligence in the elements of Christianity,—the means so signally productive of good-will and confidence, in your labors of the past winter, requiring such self-denial and resolution.

On your arrival in St. Louis, the general desires you to report by letter to the adjutant-general at Washington, when your relations with the military service will cease, unless otherwise ordered by the War Department.

The general is anxious that I should communicate to you the deep regret with which he feels your separation from the service, and in making the announcement he is assured the same feeling extends to all those who have in any way been associated with you.

By the campaign of last summer submission had been conquered, but the embittered feelings of the two races, excited by war, still existed, and it remained for you to supply that which was wanting to the sword. It was necessary to exercise the strong faith which the red man possessed in your purity and holiness of character, to enable the general to evince successfully toward them the kind intentions of the Government, and to restore confidence and repose to their minds. This has been done; the victory is yours, and the general will take great pleasure in recording your services

at the War Department; for such services no one feels more sensibly than yourself the proper acknowledgment is linked with the hopes that are cherished in the fulfillment of a Christian duty.

Satisfied that all necessary blessings will be bestowed upon you, in whatever sphere of duty you may be called to serve, the general will always be happy to tender to you the evidences of his esteem and friendship. I remain, Father, with the highest respect,

Your most obedient servant,

A. PLEASANTON,
Captain Second Dragoons, A. Adj.-Gen.

Reverend P. J. DE SMET, S. J.,
Chaplain, etc., Fort Vancouver, W. T.

Headquarters, Department of Oregon.

Fort Vancouver, W. T.,

June 3, 1859.

Sir:

I have the honor to inclose, for the information of the general-in-chief, an interesting report from the Reverend P. J. De Smet, describing the country of upper Washington Territory, in the vicinity of the Rocky Mountains, now occupied by various Indian tribes.

This report is valuable from the rare advantages Father De Smet possessed for many years, in his position as missionary among those tribes, to obtain accurate information of the country; and his purity of character will always give respect and importance to his statements.

The description he gives of the upper Clarke's Fork, the St. Mary's or Bitter Root valley, the valley of Hell's Gate

Fork, the upper valleys on the headwaters of Beaver river, and the Kootenai country, in connection with his suggestion of collecting the remnants of the Indian tribes in Oregon and Washington Territories in that region upon a suitable reservation, is well worthy the serious consideration of the Government.

The country spoken of will not be occupied by the whites for at least twenty years; it is difficult of access, and does not offer the same inducements to the settler that are everywhere presented to him on the coast.

The system adopted in California of placing large numbers of Indians upon a single reservation, and causing them to adopt summarily the habits of life of the whites, failed in consequence of the abrupt transition brought to bear upon these simple and suspicious people. The plan proposed by Father De Smet is not open to this objection; it places the Indians in a country abounding with game and fish, with sufficient arable land to encourage them in its gradual cultivation; and by the aid of the missionaries at present with them, that confidence and influence will be established over their minds, by degrees, as will induce them to submit to the restraints of civilization, when the inevitable decree of time causes it to pass over them.

From what I have observed of the Indian affairs of this department the missionaries among them possess a power of the greatest consequence in their proper government, and one which cannot be acquired by any other influence. They control the Indian by training his superstitions and fears to revere the religion they possess, by associating the benefits they confer with the guardianship and protection of the Great Spirit of the whites. The history of the Indian race on this continent has shown that the missionary succeeded where the soldier and civilian have failed; it would be well for us to profit by the lessons its experience teaches, in an instance which offers so many advantages to the white as

well as to the red man, and adopt the wise and humane suggestion of Father De Smet.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

W. S. HARNEY,
Brigadier-General Commanding.

ASSISTANT ADJUTANT-GENERAL,
Headquarters of the Army, New York City.

Fort Vancouver, Nov. 9, 1859.

My Dear Father:

Your very kind and interesting letter of October 5th from St. Louis University was received by the last mail; and what may appear a little singular to you, I was discussing in my mind the propriety of writing to you when your goodness in sending me your letter relieved me from all doubts on the subject of your safe arrival at the end of your long trying journey. Permit me to assure you that no one has taken a deeper interest in your welfare and success than myself; it has been tinged with regret that I was unable to do so little in promoting the one or advancing the other; but now that you have triumphed over all your difficulties my satisfaction is the greater from the signal proofs you have shown how thoroughly you have understood the divine mission of charity intrusted to your keeping. How pleasant it must be for you to view all your good works and observe their benefits to others? For such were the labors our Saviour referred to when he spoke of "The one thing needful" to Martha.

We all miss you so much; I have not met an officer of your acquaintance who has not expressed great regret at your departure, and we all feel indebted to you for the good understanding that exists between the poor Indians and the whites at this time. No disturbance of any kind has occurred and I feel confident there will not be any.

Fathers Congiato and Brouillet dined with us yesterday; they both desired to be most kindly remembered to you. Father Congiato is to spend the winter in California and will return to the mountains in the spring.

I have sent the maps to Washington and Governor Stevens has promised to have them published. Your sketch of the Cœur d'Alène Mission I inclose; pardon me for having retained it so long.

The general desires me to express his warmest remembrances of the good offices you accomplished for his command and he assures you of his highest esteem and friendship always. For myself, I felt in separating from you the loss I incurred, for your benevolence and goodness deeply impressed me and disposed my waywardness to desire the same. Let me then cultivate your friendship in the hope of realizing from my honest intentions the unspeakable benefits that fixed principles of virtue and religion always confer.

With my humble prayers to God, to continue his blessings to you, I remain, my dear Father, with the kindest feelings of consideration and esteem,

Your sincere friend,

A. PLEASANTON.

The Reverend P. J. DE SMET, S. J.,
St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo.

Headquarters, Department of Oregon.

Fort Vancouver, W. T.,

June 1, 1859.

Special Orders No. 59.

1. The Reverend P. J. De Smet, chaplain, etc., having accomplished in a highly satisfactory manner the important duties confided to his charge in Special Orders No. 4 of October 28, 1858, from these headquarters, and

being now desirous of returning to his clerical station at Saint Louis, visiting the various Indian tribes of the interior in his route; he is authorized to do so. Commanders of posts and others belonging to this Department will afford every facility and assistance to the Reverend Father, when called upon by him to aid in his mission of peace to the unfortunate race whose confidence he has always most generously maintained.

* * * * *

By order of General Harney.

A. PLEASANTON,
Captain Second Dragoons, A. A., Adjt.-Gen.

Reverend P. J. DE SMET.

My Dear Governor:

This will be presented by the Reverend Father De Smet, the heroic missionary of the Indians among the Rocky Mountains. He was a great favorite of poor Schoolcraft and Mr. Weed on our voyage across the Atlantic in 1843. He is the same guileless Indian missionary now as he was then.

Ever yours faithfully,

X JOHN,
 Abp. of New York.

Hon. WILLIAM V. SEWARD,
New York, July 14, 1861.

New York, Aug. 28.

Dear Sir:

My friend, Father De Smet, whom I think you saw a year ago, has just returned from a visit to his Indians beyond the Rocky Mountains and can impart useful information to you.

No white man knows the Indians as Father De Smet, nor has any man their confidence in the same degree.

I hope that you have sufficient leisure to give Father De Smet an audience.

Very truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

President LINCOLN.

Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs.

March 21, 1864.

Reverend P. J. DE SMET, *St. Louis, Missouri*:

Sir.— This department has made arrangements with P. Chouteau, Jr., & Co., of your city to transport the annual supplies for the Indians bordering upon the Missouri river. and it is expected that the boat with them will leave St. Louis between the 1st and 10th of September next.

Referring to our conversation at the last interview, I have now to state that I am desirous of availing myself of your experience upon the subject of our relations with the Indians generally, and your knowledge of the character and habits, as also of your influence over the particular bands of the Sioux who have given us so much trouble in Dakota, and to solicit you to accompany the expedition with the hope that they may be induced to lay down their arms and establish peaceful relations with the Government.

It is believed that you can safely visit them in their camps and convey to them any message that the Government may wish to send them either from the Interior or War Departments. You will be accompanied by the agents of these people. It is also believed that an expedition under orders from the War Department will either accompany you or be in the country during your stay so that you may be able with the agent Latta to confer and co-operate with the commander of said expedition as to the best course to be pur-

sued to put a stop to the depredations of the Indians and to secure a permanent peace with them.

* * * * *

Tell them how good it is to be at peace with the Government, whereas their utter extermination will be the result if they continue in hostility to the white people.

I have very great confidence in your prudence and capacity for this mission and therefore forbear to give you specific instructions for your guidance.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. P. DOLE,
Commissioner.

Fort Sully, Dakota Territory, July 12, 1864.⁴

H. G. MONSEIGNEUR ARCHBISHOP PURCELL:

Monseigneur.— Herewith I send you a testimonial which the Peace Commission, lately sitting at Fort Rice, has given to our well-beloved missionary, Father P. J. De Smet.

Probably you are informed in regard to the work of this commission during the last year. In the month of May of the current year the commission succeeded in convoking at Fort Laramie, on the Platte river, a certain number of chiefs belonging to the most formidable and most warlike tribes. The Hunkpapas, however, still refused to enter into any arrangement with the whites, and it is unnecessary to say that no treaty with the Sioux was possible, if this large and hostile tribe was unwilling to concur in it. In this condition of affairs, the Reverend Father De Smet, who has consecrated his life to the service of the true religion and of humanity, offered himself, despite his great age, to endeavor to penetrate to the hostile camps and to use his influence with the chiefs to induce them to appear before the commission at Fort Rice. As the letter of the members of the

⁴ From the French of the third Belgian edition. The original of General Stanley's letter was not available to the editors.

commission will inform you, there is reason to believe that his mission has been wholly successful.

I could give you only an imperfect idea of the privations and dangers of this journey, unless you were acquainted with the great plains and the Indian character, which is naturally inclined to vengeance. Father De Smet, alone of the entire white race, could penetrate to these cruel savages and return safe and sound. One of the chiefs, in speaking to him while he was in the hostile camp, told him, "if it had been any other man than you, Black-robe, this day would have been his last."

The Reverend Father had with him, as interpreter, Mr. Galpin, who is married to an Indian woman of the Hunk-papa tribe. This lady is a good Catholic and an excellent person, a striking example of what the influence of religion and civilization can accomplish for the welfare of the Indian. On leaving Fort Rice, Father De Smet had to direct his course straight west. The enemy had pitched his camp a little above the mouth of the Yellowstone river, near Powder river. The distance to be traveled, going and coming, was 700 miles. The country is a barren desert. Nothing in the way of vegetation is to be seen save sagebrush, the *artemisia* of the plains. No buffalo are to be found except along the Yellowstone, where they are very numerous.

The Reverend Father is known among the Indians by the name of "Black-robe" and "Big Medicine Man." When he is among them he always wears the cassock and crucifix. He is the only man for whom I have ever seen Indians evince a real affection. They say, in their simple and open language, that he is the only white man who has not a forked tongue; that is, who never lies to them. The reception that they gave him in the hostile camp was enthusiastic and magnificent. They came twenty miles to meet him, and the principal chiefs, riding beside him, conducted him to the camp in great triumph. This camp comprised more than 500 lodges, which, at the ratio of six persons to

the lodge, gave a total of 3,000 Indians. During his visit, which lasted three days, the principal chiefs, Black Moon and Sitting Bull, who had been redoubtable adversaries of the whites for the last four years of the war, watched constantly over the safety of the missionary; they slept beside him at night, lest some Indian might seek to avenge upon his person the death of some kinsman killed by the whites. During the day time, multitudes of children flocked to his lodge, and the mothers brought him their new babies that he might lay his hands on them and bless them.

In the gathering of the Indians the head chiefs promised to put an end to the war. Sitting Bull declared that he had been the most mortal enemy of the whites, and had fought them by every means in his power; but now that the Black-robe had come to utter the words of peace, he renounced warfare and would never again lift his hand against the whites. The chiefs delegated several of their principal warriors, who, in company with Father De Smet, arrived at Fort Rice on the 30th of June.

The arrival of the Reverend Father with the Indian delegation gave rise to great rejoicings among the friendly tribes assembled at the fort. They escorted him thither with great ceremony. The warriors formed a long file and marched with true military precision. It was a really remarkable spectacle, though little in accord with the tastes of the good Father, who does not love the sound of trumpets and the glare of parades.

Not in fifty years, very likely, had there been seen so numerous an assembly in our country as that which had come together at Fort Rice. The interests at stake were far above anything that our friends can imagine. The first chiefs or representatives of nine bands of the Sioux nation were present. I do not think it necessary to mention the strange names of these different bands, which are besides for the most part unknown to you; suffice it to say that the tribes represented at the meeting cover with their habitations an extent of territory equaling in area six times that

of the State of Ohio; and any one who is at all acquainted with the Indian question, is aware that no peace with the Indians can be worth anything if it does not comprehend the Sioux, who are the most numerous of all the tribes with which we have had to treat down to this day, and the most warlike as well, and the one that has had the most to complain of on the part of the whites. The treaty signed by all the principal chiefs now needs only the sanction of the Senate to become a law.

I am persuaded that it is the most complete and the wisest of all the treaties thus far concluded with the Indians of this country. Without going into details, by the provisions of this treaty the Indians are to be abundantly provided with victuals, clothing and agricultural and mechanical implements. No money payments have been stipulated, as unfortunately money excites the covetousness of more than one and often converts commissioners, governors of territories, superintendents, agents and traders into a band of thieves. Without doubt the fulfillment of the provisions of this treaty will assure peace with the Sioux. The importance of this result will be understood, if it is considered that a distinguished general [Sherman] stated, last fall, that a war undertaken with the object of exterminating the Indians of the plains (and he thought it would have to come to that extremity) would cost the country \$500,000,000. I will say in passing that this method of pacification seems to me altogether too much like violence. The same general, at the time of the Rebellion, said that not less than 200,000 men would be required to bring Kentucky and Tennessee back to their duty; his words seemed at the time to be wild, but later events showed the contrary.

But it is time to close this long letter. Whatever may be the result of the treaty which the commission has just concluded with the Sioux, we can never forget nor shall we ever cease to admire, the disinterested devotion of the Reverend Father De Smet, who, at the age of sixty-eight years, did not hesitate, in the midst of the heat of summer,

to undertake a long and perilous journey, across the burning plains, destitute of trees and even of grass; having none but corrupted and unwholesome water, constantly exposed to scalping by Indians, and this without seeking either honors or remuneration of any sort; but solely to arrest the shedding of blood and save, if it might be, some lives, and preserve some habitations to these savage children of the desert, to whose spiritual and temporal welfare he has consecrated a long life of labor and solicitude. The head chief of the Yanktonnais, Two Bears, said in his speech: "When we are settled down sowing grain, raising cattle and living in houses, we want Father De Smet to come and live with us, and to bring us other Black-robcs to live among us also; we will listen to their words, and the Great Spirit will love us and bless us."

DAVID S. STANLEY,
Major-General, U. S. A.

Helena, M. T.,
Dec. 8, 1869.

Dear Father DE SMET:

Your very welcome letter dated November 10th I received two days ago on my return from the Yellowstone, where I had been for the last three weeks attending to my Crow children. You know I have built this year an agency for them. I went to visit them to see about their receiving their annuity goods according to the treaty. They were not very well pleased with the treaty, and far less with the class of goods they received, which certainly were ill-fitted for Indians as wild as the Mountain Crows are. It will take many years before they begin to be civilized. Yet as a nation they are friendly and well disposed toward the whites, but bitter enemies to the Sioux and other Indians, and very superstitious. The young officer they have there is I fear not fitted for the position. They require some one

of more character to control them. I believe there is a good opening for your Society there and if you think the matter worthy of the trial, I will do all in my power to assist you. I hope to be able to visit the East before spring and shall of course take in St. Louis on my way, but I have much here to do before I leave. In the first place I will try and regulate the present difficulties with the Blackfeet. The chiefs are on the Teton and will meet me. Then I go again to the Flathead country to try and effect a treaty with the [illegible]. In making that treaty I will do all I can for the Mission of St. Ignatius. For the good they have done these Indians they deserve every consideration on the part of the Government. I find my duties here very arduous. I have to travel most of the time, and when I return my stay here for a few days is occupied at the desk attending to my papers and accounts.

I thank you for your kind attention to my stepdaughter. I write to you with much trouble on my mind. My wife is very sick and troubled with the complaint that was near causing her death last February. I shall always be happy to hear from you when you have time to write.

Truly your friend,

ALF. SULLY.

Cheyenne Agency, D. T.,

March 13, 1870.

Reverend P. J. DE SMET, *St. Louis, Mo.*:

Reverend Father.—It is no idle motive which prompts me to address you. I have been asked so often by the Indians what has become of you that to satisfy myself and them I have taken this liberty. The "Log," an Indian who accompanied you and Major Galpin to the hostile camps, speaks daily of you. He says he is in the same good road you put him in and he and a number of his people intend planting corn this spring. He is one of the most anxious to hear from you. He tells me to write to you that the death

of Major Galpin has left him as an orphan, that the only hopes of the Indians were in Major Galpin and you; and one being dead their hopes are now solely in you. He says they know you are their friend and wish them all well and that you will do all in your power to help them; he and all the Indians wish to hear from you in response to this.

The Indians of this agency and Grand River have behaved exceedingly well all winter, and most of them intend farming this spring and it is my opinion that if let alone by the hostile Indians and treated fairly by their agents and the whites in the country they will get along well enough.

Trusting that I may get an early answer from you as to when the Indians may expect to see you, I am, Father,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

GUS. GUELBERTH.

Sioux City, May 1, 1870.

Reverend P. J. DE SMET:

Dear Father.— I left Fort Berthold April 13th in a mackinaw boat and arrived at this place on the 28th ultimo. I have made several trips at this season but this one was the severest I have experienced. I left the Indians at Berthold in a good condition; there have been less suffering from hunger and fewer deaths this last winter and spring than the two previous, and they are better satisfied than they have been for years. The Sioux from Grand River have been a little troublesome the past winter, killing several of the Indians at Berthold. Our Indians do not intend to go to war until another raid is made against them. White Shield and Son of the Star told me to tell you that they would like very much to see you. On my way down I found two missionaries at Yankton agency, Episcopal and Methodist, and there is some talk of their coming up to Berthold and at other points. I sincerely hope you will endeavor to have

at least one Catholic mission somewhere in the upper country. The Berthold Indians have been expecting you for the last two seasons. I should like very much to see you on this subject and was in hopes of having that pleasure, but on arrival here I found it would not be necessary to go on to St. Louis so I return from here on the *Emilie La Barge* when she arrives.

Should it be decided that you establish a missionary for these Indians, the most eligible place that I could suggest is opposite the Little Missouri where there is a point of land from half to three miles wide between the two points of timber, and seven miles bottom land to the hills, heavy timber on the opposite side of the river, and the same in the two points above and below on the Berthold side. Lignite is in abundance on the Little Missouri side opposite the site. The Indians would readily move from Berthold and with very little inducement I think the Assiniboins might be prevailed upon to join them at that point. It will be advisable to act promptly before the Indian agent goes to too much expense at Berthold. Since he has to build, I think it would be preferable to be nigher to timber and fuel. Around Berthold everything is ruined in the way of timber, grass, etc. My cousin tells me he thinks, if our troubles are ended, that it was through your influence with the official, for which, dear Father, please accept my sincerest thanks. Your kind and friendly interference in my behalf shall never be forgotten.

Beauchamp and son were well when I left; they intended opening a woodyard. Pierre Garreau is still at Berthold; he is declining very fast, although not sick.

Please write me at Fort Stevenson and if there is anything I can do for you up there please command me. I do not think that I will be down to St. Louis before next spring, when I intend to bring my children up to see their mother. I should like to hear where Mrs. Meaker is at; she has forgotten her godchild at Berthold. Good-bye. Your friend.

F. F. GERARD.

CHAPTER X.

FUNERAL ORATION ON FATHER DE SMET.

By Bishop Ryan.

Onias, that truly good and gentle man, so modest in his countenance, so regular and moderate in his ways, so agreeable in his speech and who had practiced all kinds of virtues from his youth up. Macc. II.

¹**S**UCH were the eminent qualities of that Onias, high priest of Judea, whom the Jews so bitterly bewailed and whose loss was regretted by even Antiochus himself, mindful of the amenity of character of the great priest and of the upright life which he had led. These words, my brethren, are admirably suited to the apostolic man whose mortal remains are here exposed to your view before the holy altars. He was, as you all know, of a lovable and simple nature, and he served God in faithfulness from his infancy. It is right that we should be met together to pay to his memory the homage of our veneration. Wherever the name of the zealous missionary is known, not only throughout the United States but in Europe as well, wherever the renown of his great and noble labors has spread, the news of the mournful event which has brought us together and occasioned our grief, will be received with profound sorrow, and all men who have come in contact with this godly man, regardless of the creed to which they may belong, cannot but admire and exalt the virtues and merits of this worthy priest of the Lord. Yes truly, in the tent of the poor Indian as in the heart of our populous cities, people will speak with love and respect for a long time to come of

¹ From French version.



STATUE OF FATHER DE SMET IN TERMONDE.

the Reverend Father De Smet, whom death, alas! has just taken from us.

Despite the lustre which his apostolic labors shed over his person, and all the meritorious works which marked his life, this man of God displayed in all his conduct the simplicity of a child; he was kindly, candid, modest, and even showed the timidity of tender years, and the language of Tertullian may be applied to him, which he was wont to use in speaking of the old servants of Christ in his time: "They are old men, but at the same time they have the graces and simplicity of youth. The purity of their lives and the cleanliness and uprightness of their souls enable them to preserve to the close of their lives the springtime freshness of their earlier years." Our divine Master, my brethren, signalized this innocence and childlike candor as a characteristic token of the heavenly vocation, saying, "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."

Such was our regretted and venerable friend: he was at the evening of his life what he had been at the dawn of his career and at the noonday of manhood. It was his rare qualities of rectitude and simplicity that won him the confidence of so many friends, and it was the support of this confidence, with God's help, that enabled him to effect such great things. Nearly fifty years of his existence were spent in the fulfillment of the mission for which God sent him into the world. Yes, my brethren, this zealous priest busied himself for a half-century, with the most perfect purity of intention, in the service of God, in saving souls, in propagating the glory of the Master of heaven and earth:—what a noble life! And think that he expended his strength in behalf of the poor savages, those outcast, disinherited children of the desert, and this despite the fact that they were mere strangers to him, wholly unknown to him—he had never seen them, and would naturally feel no sympathy for them. Yet almost the whole of his life was passed in the service of the great cause whose invincible champion he

made himself, namely, the civilization of the wild and nomadic Indians. It was for their sake that he so often visited Europe, in quest of auxiliary missionaries and of financial and other aid, needed for the establishment and maintenance of missions among the red men.

He loved these unhappy savages as the apple of his eye; he studied to win them to himself, to deserve their confidence; he defended them against their detractors, with that calm energy and continuity of action that we knew in him. I once heard some one say in my presence to Father De Smet, "But, Father, how is it possible for you to be so contented among these frightful savages?" "Frightful savages?" he replied. "You don't know what you are saying. You do not know those simple, kindly people. I have met more savages in the great cities of America and Europe than I have ever seen in my life in the plains and deserts of the United States." And indeed, brethren, the Father was right. The civilized man to whom the truths of the gospel have been revealed, but who, despite the light that he has received, abuses the Lord's gifts, that man more rightfully deserves the name of savage, than those miserable Indians who have never enjoyed the same advantages.

Consider the works and deeds of these so-called civilized men. Have they not in these last days horrified the whole world with their unheard-of crimes? Look at the horrors of the Paris commune, the massacre of Archbishop Darboy and the other hostages. Are not the monsters in human form who committed these misdeeds, more hideous in their perversity than the worst among the savages? Taking into account on the one hand the means of intellectual and moral culture which the scoundrels of the Commune had at their disposition to be honest men, and on the other the absence of even elementary notions of civilization among the Indians, unfortunate race, whom the scriptures depict to us as "sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death," — must we not conclude that the most blameworthy are found in our great cities, and that they have not even the excuse

for their unnatural instincts, of the almost invincible ignorance of every law of decency which seems to be the lot of our unfortunate red men?

“I have been in a position,” said our dear friend, “to appreciate these poor Indians. A band of them once came to me to receive holy baptism. I gave them the proper instruction, and made them children of heaven. Then they besought me earnestly to come again to them the following year, and I promised to do so. I returned at the appointed time, and as they showed an eager desire to approach the sacraments, I asked them what faults they had been guilty of since my last visit. They looked at me with astonishment and a kind of stupor, and said, ‘do you suppose, Father, that after all the benefactions we have received from God, those of creation, redemption, the knowledge of the true son of God, Jesus Christ, and your coming to us, do you suppose that we could be so wicked as to offend the Lord and appear before you charged with sins or crimes?’” You see, brethren, those unhappy Indians were hurt, at the thought that any one could think them capable of ingratitude toward God. Admirable sentiments! which explain why they had no faults upon their consciences to reproach themselves with.—How many Christians, even among our practicing Catholics, could say as much?

Always, yes, always, brethren, our missionary took up the defense of his Indians. He suffered for them, he sympathized with them, and he used to say that in order to judge them justly one must live among them and be able to put himself in their place. The Indians have often shown themselves, it is true, embittered against the whites and inclined to revolt; but the reason of their behavior is easily understood. Have they not been hunted and driven like wild beasts? Do they not know that they have been thrust back by successive degrees from the shores of the Atlantic to the edge of the Pacific ocean? They have learned from their forefathers, and experienced it themselves, that they are to be despoiled of their lands, foot by

foot. It irritates them to have to leave the land of their birth, where the ashes of their fathers repose.

Let me tell you, brethren, a story related by Lord Erskine, the celebrated Scottish lawyer. An American Governor, in quest of Indian lands, once asked the chief of a certain tribe, "Tell me: why is it, that this river has its source in those lofty mountains and comes down to empty into the sea? Who is it that puts in motion these furious winds which rage in winter, but blow with only a feeble breath in summer? What hand planted the century-old trees of your forests, so thick that the sun's rays cannot penetrate them? Tell me, what is this mysterious power that launches the thunderbolt and is able to put the whole world ablaze? Who is the author of these wonders?" "It is the same Supreme Being," the Indian replied, "who gave you the vast lands on which you live on the other side of the water; but he it is also who had made us masters of the land we dwell in and which you covet; it is he who caused us to be born here, and it is under this title that we shall defend our homes." When he had said thus, the savage brandished his tomahawk and struck up with enthusiasm his nation's hymn of war.—Such, my brethren, are the sentiments by which the savages of our America are animated. Let us not judge them too severely, and let us see to it that we are just toward them. Let us remember that one of the effects of Christian civilization is to make the human heart incline toward forgiveness.

A remarkable fact, brethren, in the annals of the Catholic Church, is this; the conversion of rude and uncultured peoples has always been due to the zeal of our missionaries. Look at the Indians of South America, of Canada, and the savages of other countries; they have been led away from their sensual and barbarous habits to a clean, regular and peaceable life, by apostles like Father De Smet. It is the bright beams from the Cross that have dissipated the darkness of error and vice which had hitherto enveloped these degraded populations; it is the preaching of the gospel that

has brought forth these fruits of salvation and effected the astonishing changes in their manners of which we in our day are witnesses. It is under the shadow of the standard of Christ that this so profound moral revolution has its beginning and ending. These phenomena belong to history and are undeniable. But whence comes this efficacy and this civilizing power of the Catholic apostolate? No doubt, my brethren, we must first attribute it to the action of God, that is, to grace; but we must also remark this: the Catholic pastor identifies himself with his flock, he loves his sheep with his whole heart, he is devoted to them under all circumstances, and if need be, he is capable of defending them at the peril of his own life. A Protestant, as impartial as he is learned, Mr. Arthur Help, tells us that when the Spaniards had conquered the New World, they set about torturing the poor Indians. Well, would you know what energetic influence it was that neutralized the unjust aggressions of the Spanish invaders? It was the devotion of the illustrious sons of St. Dominic. Those were the first missionaries who evangelized the uncultivated field of America and watered it with their sweat.—In speaking of the persecutions which the Indians suffered from the Spanish conquerors, I must not forget to add that their most intrepid defender was that admirable bishop, Bartolomeo de las Casas, the Father De Smet of his day. He and his it was who protected the Indian inhabitants of the forests and deserts.

* * * * *

Our dear and regretted dead friend followed the same line of conduct; he loved the poor savages from the bottom of his heart, and he had a mother's tenderness and devotion for them. He made allowances for their weaknesses, attributing them to their nomadic habits of life, to which they are so madly attached. "What is there strange," said our wise and peaceful colonizer, "in the fact that the Indians have but an indifferent opinion of the benefits of our pretended civilization, when they can only judge of it from the examples of perversity and vice which the whites dis-

play to their eyes? What criterion have they to examine the conduct of the emissaries or agents of the Americans, other than the memory of having been often duped and robbed by them?" Father De Smet was guided in his apostolate by very different motives; his views were supernatural. How many times have I heard him utter this wish; "Oh! how I should like to pass my life and end it, among our dear Indians!"

When he felt his end at hand, one of his greatest consolations was to think of the many little children whom he had regenerated in the holy waters of baptism, and whose prayers would, at the supreme moment, be of such great aid to him. He had also the greatest trust in the merits of the adult savages who had persevered in their faith, and who would be praying for him also. When I saw Father De Smet last, on Wednesday, the 21st of May, two days before his death, I found him full of courage and hope. He said to me, "I have served the good God for many years; I am going to come before him pretty soon, and my heart is very full of confidence and of real consolation. I have the greatest hope," he said further, "in the efficacy of the prayers of all those to whom the Lord has sent me in times past; I count especially on the merits of Jesus Christ, poor sinner that I am, and I love to think that the Lord will have pity on me in the hour of my agony." — Tell me, my brethren, could a man who had passed fifty years of his life in crime, and in whom remorse for his sins had inspired the deepest repentance, have spoken of himself with greater humility and contrition? Forgetting his stern toil and his incontestable merits, the good Father thought only of turning lovingly toward the infinite satisfactions of Jesus Christ, and of reposing upon the Lord's inexhaustible mercy. Such should be the sentiments of every true Christian. The more nearly we approach God by the exercise of virtues, the more also we become convinced of our own infirmity or weakness; the more too does our conscience become enlightened and delicate, and the more do

we deplore our slightest faults and dread the effects of divine justice, and the more, finally, do we put our hope in God, leaning upon the Lord's kindness and his merciful promises.

Learn, then, my brethren, from the example of Father De Smet, to practice piety and to display in your own behavior Christian simplicity, and while amid your tears you offer your prayers for him to the Lord, purify your hearts at the same time and remember that in all your acts you should seek alone the glory of your Creator.

The scene of this world is quickly past. If you practice this purity of intention, it will bring with it that other Christian virtue, uprightness of heart. Walking under the eye of God, you will have nothing to conceal; there will be nothing in your conduct to resemble duplicity or intrigue. A man who works for God has no other object than God; his works are all manifest, they bear the stamp of sincerity; he goes forth full of light and truth; his conduct can be known and judged by all the world. It was thus that when the red man of the forest saw Father De Smet, he judged favorably of that countenance upon which such frankness, honesty and innocence were imprinted. The Indian felt instinctively drawn toward this man of God, whose behavior was dictated by no motive of self-interest. The savages understood perfectly well that the zealous missionary came among them, not to make a fortune, not to win renown or acquire standing, but purely to labor for the salvation of their souls. This is why they instantly understood whatever the Father said to them; they read in the features of the worthy priest the uprightness of his life, and they fell prostrate at his feet; they implored the aid of his sacred ministry, and asked to be taught. It is a remarkable thing, brethren; Father De Smet never needed, so to speak, but to show himself, and on the instant a current of active sympathy was established between him and those he approached. The red men felt themselves fascinated by his gaze, by his expressive speech and his masculine energy. We admit

that Father De Smet was fortunately endowed by nature — but nature, my brethren, is God; he it was who fashioned the instrument, and shaped it to the work for which he destined it. Religion perfected nature and lent lustre to the natural gifts of this gentle, generous man. Religion will likewise perfect you, and teach you how to act for God; it will gain you the grace of living in conformity to the nobility of your origin and the grandeur of your destiny; and thus prepare for you a happy and holy death.

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