

CATHOLICISM IN MONTANA.

The Sect That Led the Van in the Wondrous March of Civilization to the West.

In advance of civilization in all quarters of the globe are to be found the self-sacrificing missionaries of the Holy Catholic Church. The wilds of Montana was no exception to the rule, and the advent of the first priest is almost contemporaneous with the hardest of the pioneers and adventurers who invaded the section. Lewis and Clarke had blazed their way many years before, but as far as the writer knows there had been no minister of any denomination to follow in the footsteps of the brainy, hardy and bold explorers until the year 1838. At this time Montana was wild and uninhabited, save by the savages, and was a portion of Oregon that was not thought worth cultivating or settling by white men. The Catholic Church, or the authorities thereof, thought different, and on the 10th of October, 1838, for the first time mass was celebrated on the summit of the Rocky Mountains by Rev. Francis Norbert Blanchet, then Vicar-General to the Most Rev. Joseph Signay, Archbishop of Quebec, and four days later the sacrament of communion was administered for the first time in this section, at Big Bend, on the banks of the Columbia River. There is no intelligent man in the United States who does not know of Father De Smet. His history is not a romance, but it is a record of loyalty to his creed and self-denial. His work for his faith speaks for itself and the good he has done humanity is apparent to everyone in Montana and the adjacent territories. This Apostle of the Rocky Mountains first directed his steps hitherward in the spring of 1840, having come from St. Louis, Mo., at the request of the Flathead Indians, and to carry and deposit the germ of faith among the benighted children of the forest. With an Indian guide, and after a long and tedious journey, he reached and camped in Montana, on the west bank of the Jefferson River, one of the three forks of the Missouri.

Father De Smet returned to St. Louis in August of the same year, but not before he had given his children of the mountains his solemn promise to return in the following spring. True to his promise, he returned, accompanied by two youthful missionaries—Fathers Nicholas Point and Gregory Mengarini, Brothers Joseph Specht, William Ciseseens and Charles Huet. He entered the Bitter Root Valley, and there, close to where Stevensville now stands, established, under the name of St. Mary's, the first Catholic mission in what is now the Territory of Montana.

A new impulse was given to the Catholic missions of the Rocky Mountains in the year 1844, by the arrival of the Jesuit Fathers, Joest and Zerleinate and Brother Margi, who crossed the plains, and Fathers Ravalli, Accolti, Nobili and Vercruysee, who arrived by sea with Father De Smet, several lay brothers and six Sisters of Notre Dame. In the fall of the same year Father Hoecken established the St. Ignatius Mission on the right bank of Clark's, or Pen d'Oreille River, about sixty miles below Sandy Point, in a place called Kalisfel, whence, in 1854, it was removed to its present locality, near the Jocko Creek, in Missoula County. New life and vigor was infused into the Catholic missions in 1859 by the arrival of Father Glorda, S. J. The mission of St. Peter was at this time started among the "Blackfeet," and from this time the work of the church grew and prospered, missions were established and maintained, churches built and church societies organized.

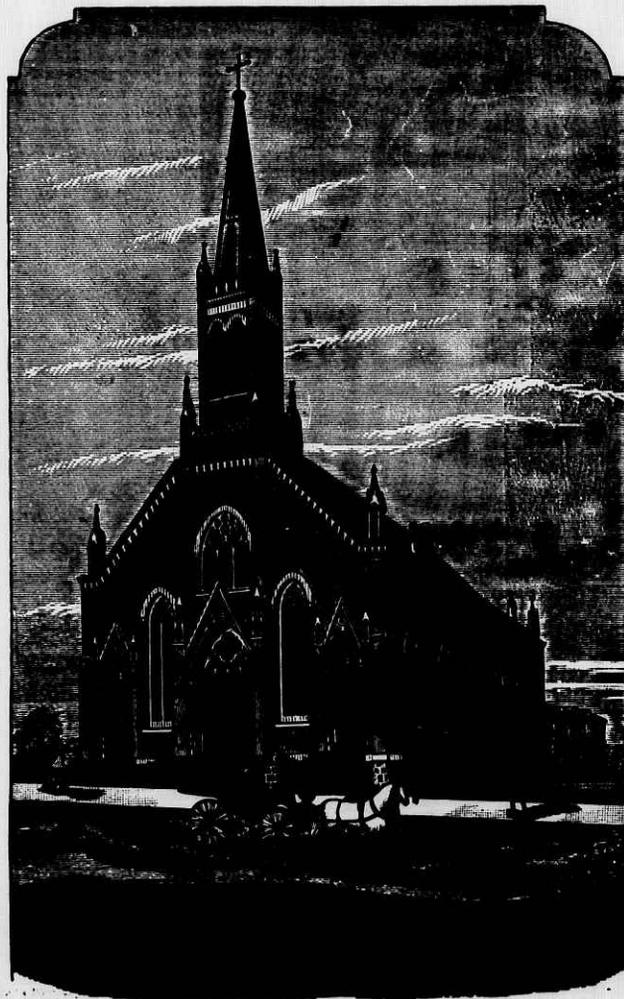
In August, 1863, Bishop Brondel entered upon his duties as the first Bishop of Montana, which office he still fills, to the entire satisfaction not only of his sect, but also to the non-Catholic population. The first synod of the diocese was held at Helena June 24, 1864, and was presided over by the Bishop. Of the priests who attended, there were but few who did not attend the second synod held last year. Death had robbed the church of Father Imoda, a few had sought other fields of labor, and several were unable to be present on account of their pressing pastoral duties. Yet the vacant places were supplied. There was added to the roll, Rev. E. Desiere, resident Missionary at Deer Lodge; Father J. Bandini, S. J., of Billings; Father L. Van Corp, St. Ignatius Mission; Rev. C. L. C. Panevelyn, of Miles City. Among the clergy who are still in the field, but who could not be present at the meeting of the synod, were Father Erberswiler, S. J., of Fort Assinaboine; Father P. Bandini, S. J., Pen d'Oreille Mission; Father J. Guidi, S. J., Pen d'Oreille; Rev. Jos. Menestray, S. J., Missoula City; Rev. J. Rossi, Missoula City; Rev. P. P. Frando, S. J., and Rev. A. Von der Velden, of the Crow Mission, with headquarters at Cheyenne. During the year there have been two new priests attached to the diocese, both of whom are natives of Belgium, Father G. Follet and Father V. Van der Broek. Both are located in Helena, but Father Follet attends the missionary stations in Lewis and Clark, Jefferson and part of Meagher Counties, and Father Van

der Broek in Gallatin and other portions of Meagher County. The number of priests in the diocese is now twenty-one, and the number of churches and chapels twenty-eight. During the year new churches have been built at Dillon and Billings, and there are under construction or arranged for, edifices at Anaconda, Phillipsburg, Helensville and Pioneer. The roster of the diocese shows that there are at present within the confines one college at Helena, five hospitals, eight academies, six parochial schools and two ecclesiastical students. Among the improvements for the year, in addition to those mentioned, it may be mentioned that an Archbishop's palace has been erected at Helena, and that the Sisters of Charity have built a fine academy at an expense of something over \$30,000, which is complete in all particulars. In September last His Grace, the Cardinal Archbishop, Rev. James Gibbons, of Baltimore Md., made a visit to Helena and was the guest of Bishop Brondel.

ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH, BUTTE, M. T.

Early in the history of the settlement of Butte, the Rev. Father De Ryckere, of Deer Lodge, came, held services, and administered to those of his faith in Butte, which was within the jurisdiction of his mission. Father De Ryckere continued his visits at intervals until the camp had grown considerably, and in 1866 he founded the subject of this article, and through his efforts the first Catholic Church was built. The old frame church still standing west of the new edifice now used by St. Patrick's congregation, was built in 1876 and

services were held in the same, which owing to the distance of the Bishop of this diocese (Montana then being in the diocese of Oregon), was not blessed until August 1, 1879, at which date the Most Rev. Bishop Seghers, Archbishop of Oregon, performed that holy service. The first regular pastor was Rev. J. J. Dols, who came to Butte from the Oregon Mission and assumed charge of the church March 8, 1881. The increasing congregation soon made it necessary to build a new church, which was soon accomplished, and the accompanying illustration will give an idea of it. In 1886 Rev. I. G. Tremblay succeeded Father Dols, and he in turn was succeeded by Rev. H. J. Van der Ven, who had spent three months in Helena after a very recent arrival from Holland. During the year the present incumbent has had 102 confirmations, including a number of adults; 230 baptisms, 68 marriages and 114 burials. He has arranged to open a Sisters' School, with three teachers, for the present in rented property, but has purchased eligible lots upon which he will build in the near future. The St. James Home, which is shown in one of the illustrations, is under the control and management of the Sisters of Charity, there being eight Sisters connected with that institution. V. Butte, M. T., 1888.



ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, BUTTE, M. T.

THE BOSTON CONSOLIDATED CO.

This company, which was only recently organized, own three of the greatest mines of the camp. The Mountain View, formerly the property of C. X. Larabee, and the Colusa and West Colusa, of which the Montana Copper Company were proprietors. They also own a fine smelter, which was used entirely to work the Colusa ores, and which will be increased by the erection of an addition to the smelter and new concentration works during the coming season. It is the intention of the company to develop the valuable mines as rapidly as possible. Thus far only preparatory work has been done, in the shape of making a three instead of a two-compartment shaft to the depth of 600 feet on the Mountain View, and the erection of a fine hoisting works. But little work has as yet been done upon either of the Colusas. The ore in all three mines is of very high grade, and when work is begun in earnest there is no doubt but that the production will rival that of the great Anaconda. The company has ample means to properly develop the properties, and will do so as soon as the necessary preliminary work is accomplished. The resident manager is Thomas Couch, a gentleman of experience in all the details of mining, milling and smelting.

H. A. D'ACHEUL.

Mr. D'Acheul's drug store, on the east side of Main street, between Park and Broadway, is the largest in Butte, in Montana, and one of the largest in the Northwest. He is a dealer in drugs, medicines, paints, oils, etc., at wholesale and retail, and his yearly transactions are the largest in Montana. A personal acquaintance of more than a decade and a half is sufficient assurance to the writer that "Harry" not only deals in the purest of drugs, but is destined to become better known in Montana's metropolis as the leading druggist.

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