

GRAPHIC STORY OF OPPELOUSAS BEAUTIFUL.

Being A History of St. Landry's Catholic Church, Its History, Its Priests, as Compiled from Original Documents--Documents in Church.

(This historical narrative is a story of one of the oldest Catholic churches in the State, compiled from original documents in the possession of the church. It recently appeared in the Morning Star, of New Orleans, in a Catholic newspaper of much worth and extensive circulation. There being nothing accompanying the serial article to indicate that it is copyrighted, the Clarion takes the privilege of copying it. It is not only a history of the St. Landry's Church, but it deals with the growth of the city from an obscure, struggling Spanish Post to the present. It will appear in serial form each week until completed.—Editor Clarion.)

BY F. L. R. SASTIS, IN MORNING STAR.

Part 6—Continued from last week.

A TRYING EPISODE—HEROISM OF PRIESTS.

The year 1867 was a disastrous one for the parish of Opelousas. Yellow fever made its appearance in the latter part of September and raged with remarkable fury till the end of October. Washington was the focus of the epidemic where eighteen persons succumbed to the dread disease. Father Francois Raymond had his hands full. Not only did he have to visit the stricken and bury them afterwards, but two priests, who fell victims to their heroism, also required the ministry of this intrepid priest. The register of funerals show eighteen interments at Washington; one in Opelousas (although there were four cases that proved fatal); four on the plantation of Sosthene Lambert; one at Edmond Johnson's place; one at Ville Platte, and seven without mentioning the place of burial.

At the outbreak of the fever, the Rev. F. M. Nachon, S. J., went to Washington to help the unfortunate sufferers; he hardly had reached there, when he, too, succumbed to the insidious disease, and was buried by his confrere, the Rev. A. de Chaignon, also a Jesuit Father. For two weeks this noble priest stationed himself in this fever stricken town, to continue the work of Father Nachon, when the same disease carried him off. He was buried by Father Raymond. These two entries are well worth mentioning.

"In the year 1867, and on the 1st of October, I gave ecclesiastical burial to the Rev. Father Francois Marie Nachon, of Society of Jesus. He died at the age of forty-seven in Washington, whither he had gone to assist the sick. He himself was stricken down with yellow fever, to which he succumbed. A. de Chaignon, S. J."

The other entry reads: "In the year 1867, and on the 16th day of October, I gave ecclesiastical burial to the Rev. Father (Antoine) de Chaignon of the Company of Jesus. He died of yellow fever at Washington, whither he had gone to exercise the sacred ministry amongst the stricken. He died at the age of sixty-two years. J. F. Raymond, Cure."

This is heroism, indeed, prompted by true charity. Their names are an ornament to the Registers, and an honor to the Society which has given the Church so many martyrs and saints since the beginning of its existence.

ST. LANDRY'S CHURCH AND HER SPIRITUAL DAUGHTERS—END OF RAYMOND'S LONG ADMINISTRATION.

Having returned to Opelousas in 1881, the Very Rev. Gilbert Raymond, D. D., V. G., remained with his brother and devoted all his energy to St. Mary's Academy. In spite of his advanced age, he was still hale and hearty, until a deplorable accident put an end to his useful career. Discharging some freight from a wagon, his thumb got caught between a barrel and the wall and was badly mashed. Strong and robust as he was, he paid scant attention to his mishap. Blood poison set in and the insignificant wound took an alarming turn. For thirty-seven days he suffered untold agony with great cheerfulness. Lockjaw put an end to his sufferings. He died on the 14th day of April, 1889, greatly mourned by his parishioners and his former pupils. His brother remained six months longer, when the machinations of the Marguillers forced him to resign. His last entry appears Sept. 14, 1889.

Already in 1819 the immense parish had been divided and the new

parish of Grand Coteau formed, which remained in charge of the secular clergy until the Jesuit opened their celebrated college of St. Charles in 1837. Seventeen years later the parish of Ville Platte was formed, but three years later it reverted again to the parish of Opelousas and remained part thereof until 1868, when Father E. Forge became its resident pastor. Between 1869 and 1873 the Parish of St. Landry was divided several times. Chataignier received its first resident pastor in 1869; Washington about one year later was erected into a separate parish with Father Jacquet as its first pastor. Port Barre followed suit in 1873, with Father M. Bardi as its first resident pastor. Lake Charles was detached from Opelousas in 1869, and comprised the whole of Calcasieu and Cameron. There is sufficient material to form a separate article on the work, success and sufferings of the Rev. J. F. Raymond, whilst missionary to Cameron and Calcasieu. The Morning Star hopes to publish this very interesting article at no distant date.

Opelousas received a successor to Father Raymond in the person of the Rev. A. Dubourg, a nephew of the prelate of the same name, at one time bishop of Louisiana and later on, the Archbishop of Bodeaux. Father Dubourg remained in charge of parish from January 29, 1890 to April 1895. After his departure to Thibodeaux no pastor was appointed until the present incumbent, the Very Rev. J. Engberink, rector and dean, took charge of the church, Dec. 1st., 1895.

THE OLD SYSTEM OF MARGUILLERS DISCONTINUED—SECOND CHURCH DEMOLISHED—TEMPORARY CHURCH BUILT.

Since the arrival of Father Engberink, the parish has changed considerably. He first constructed a new presbytery, which was completed in 1899. After its completion the old Board of Marguillers resigned and was replaced by the new system, introduced by Archbishop Janssens, with Messrs. J. Lassealle and Louis Bihm as lay trustees. The following year a temporary church was built at an expense of \$3,000.00. This church is located on a valuable lot, belonging to the Sisters. In 1902 the church, built by Father Ross, was demolished in order to make room for the new edifice. The bricks of the old building were used in the construction of the concrete foundations. These were begun in 1903, and finished in the month of November of the same year at an outlay of \$10,000.

PARISH READY TO BE DIVIDED—MORE PRIESTS NEEDED.

Since the last twelve years Father Engberink has toiled ceaselessly for the betterment of the parish. The task, however, has become too onerous for one man. The town of Opelousas and immediate neighborhood alone demand the presence of two active priests. To afford the people, living at a distance from the church, the means of practicing their religion, Father Engberink had constructed a chapel at Plaisance, about eleven miles from Opelousas. Five arpents of land was donated to this purpose by Lucien Perrodin. The chapel measures fifty by twenty-six feet. Most of the lumber of the old presbytery of Opelousas was used in its construction.

The Colorado Southern, having been lately opened to traffic, has given a new impetus to the rapid development of the country. A new town was started about eight miles from Opelousas, called "Lawtell." Father Engberink is very anxious to have a church built at this place and have it formed into a separate parish. The country is thickly settled, being known by its old name in the registers as "Plaquemine" or "Plaquemine Ridge." An energetic, active young priest, of a hustling disposition, could make a splendid parish of this place in a short time. A resident

pastor at this locality has really become a necessity.

The town of Melville, on the Atchafalaya, too, has sent a delegation to Opelousas with the request of having regular service. This is a new place on the Opelousas and Gulf Railroad. It would be easy for the priests at Palmetto to take charge of his town, but it seems, that they are prohibited by the rules of their Order (Josephites) to minister to the whites. Something ought to be done. The Sects are doing their utmost to turn the isolated Catholics of that pale away from their faith. No doubt but that the diocesan authorities might be able to arrange matters, if they were brought to their notice.

There is still another new town on the Opelousas & Gulf, which also expects to be in the race for a church and pastor; it is the town of Lewisburg, thus far only recognizable by the stakes which mark the streets. This, too, would cut off a large slice from the Parish of Opelousas.

Southwestern Louisiana is truly the Mother of new parishes. Already more than one score of flourishing parishes hail Opelousas as the first mother; what will it be twenty years from now?

THE NEW CHURCH—AN IMPOSING STRUCTURE.

Since the last four years the work on the new church has been interrupted in order to afford a chance to the foundations to settle thoroughly. There was little danger that they would settle to any extent, being so strongly constructed. However, Father Engberink would not take any risks; he was determined that the foundations should become as hard as natural rock. 2000 barrels of cement were used in their construction, sufficient to carry the weight of any sky-scraper which the enterprising genius of modern architects delights in, the distinguishing characteristic of the Twentieth Century. The courageous pastor intends continuing the work during this year. The next eighteen months should see the building under roof.

Once finished, this new church of St. Landry will be the finest structure amongst the rural churches. In fact there will be few that can vie with none that will be able to surpass it in the whole diocese. The outside dimensions, tower included, are 190 by 78 by 164, exclusive of tower. The walls are 80 feet high and have a thickness of 2 feet above the foundations. The gable is very high, having a pitch of 64 feet. The temple will rise majestically above the centenary oaks and its carved stone cross, at the height of 153 feet above the ground, will loudly proclaim to the thousands of parishioners, who live for miles around, that we have to follow the Via Crucis during our earthly pilgrimage and that there is no salvation but in the Cross. The inside arch is 58 feet from the floor. The church will be fireproof, no wood being used in its construction. Even the rafters will be of steel, and the floor of mosaic.

FATHER ENGBERINK—AN INTREPID BUILDER—UNDAUNTED BY UNJUST CRITICISM—APPEALS TO THE GENEROSITY OF ST. LANDRY'S PARISHIONERS—A MONUMENT TO OPELOUSAS.

Father Engberink considers this new church as his life work; to see it brought to completion, is the dearest wish of his heart. Opelousas may well feel proud of its energetic, active and intrepid pastor. He is endowed with qualities which are indispensable to bring to a successful termination an enterprise of such gigantic proportions. Undeterred by adverse and, often harsh, criticism; ignoring the ridicule heaped upon the audacious priests, Father Engberink is straining every nerve to accomplish his purpose. Very few people, outside of professional builders, can form a correct idea of the work in hand. The majority of his fellow priests, ignorant of the true nature and the vastness of the undertaking, have misjudged Father Engberink's abilities. The writer himself pleads guilty to harsh criticism, he stowed upon the enterprising pastor, before he had access to the plans. It is with genuine pleasure that we profit of this opportunity to apologize to Father Engberink. A careful perusal of the plans, and a close study of all its details, have

convinced us and, we make bold to say, will convince anyone that Engberink's method of building churches is the only correct one. In any other respect he is American; thoroughly up-to-date; as hustling and bustling, the most enterprising Yankee could be; but in this instance, this practical priest has deemed it preferable to follow the building methods of Europe. He believes in raising an edifice that will resist the tooth and the ravages of Time. And he is correct. "Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute." Says the Frenchman. The church, once finished, will not become an annual drain upon the resources of the parish, but will render it possible to the succeeding pastors to devote their whole time and the revenues of the parish to the building and beautifying and spiritual faculties of the growing generation, which must be developed by a sound christian training of the mind and the hearts at the same time.

It would be a serious reflection upon the well-known financial abilities of Father Engberink to ask where he intends to find the necessary funds wherewith to build his church. His successes in the past are a sure guarantee that he will bring the present enterprise, vast as it may seem to the timid parishioners, to a successful issue. The picture, which the Star printed at the head of this article, conveys but a poor idea of the magnificence of the new church. The Morning Star anticipates with pleasure the time when it shall be in a position to bring a photograph of the finished church, together with a graphic description of the dedicatory ceremonies. May the generosity of the parishioners of St. Landry hasten this auspicious moment. May every man and woman of the parish stand shoulder to shoulder in this undertaking and thus lighten the heavy burden which, at present, rests almost exclusively upon the willing shoulders of the courageous, intrepid pastor of Opelousas.

(THE END)

NEWSPAPER WOMAN SUICIDES.

Mrs. Call ("Willie Dearborn") Succumbs to Nervous Strain—Daughter of Kansas Governor.

Chicago, Ill., April 19.—Mrs. Jessie Llewellyn Call, daughter of former Gov. Llewellyn, of Kansas, and well known in Chicago as a versatile newspaper writer, ended her life by taking prussic acid in her room today in the Newberry Hotel. Nervous trouble, relief from which Mrs. Call had sought in vain in European sanitariums, was the cause assigned in letters she left.

Mrs. Call was about forty years old and a widow. When her father was Governor of Kansas she lived in Topeka. She was a brilliant woman intellectually, and attractive. She succeeded the late Harold Vynne in 1903 as the writer of the society column on the Inter-Ocean under the pseudonym of "Willie Dearborn." She handled her pen with a peculiar delicacy and displayed a wit peculiar to herself.

Two years later she resigned her place to her sister, Miss Louise Llewellyn, newspaper writer, and sought relief from the excessive nervousness which was making itself apparent. Miss Louise Llewellyn quit the paper to go to Europe to study music. Mrs. Call met her in Paris. The sisters traveled considerably abroad, but without material benefit to Mrs. Call's ailment.

For nine months Mrs. Call was at a sanitarium in Switzerland, near Lake Geneva. About a month ago the sisters returned to America.

ROCK ISLAND AND FRISCO RAILROADS WILL DIVORCE.

Fort Worth, April 17.—Reports received from St. Louis and Texas points to-day, state that the agreement in Texas between the Rock Island & Frisco will be dissolved. Coming after the New York report that the two lines would be separated in every particular it tends to confirm the belief that the joint control is about to end. Officials here of both lines deny any knowledge of a change but admitted that the affairs of both lines had taken action recently which leads to the belief that separation is contemplated.

Aaron Jacobs, Pres. J. F. Dezauche, Sec'y.
Adolphe Jacobs, Treas. Leon S. Hass, Atty.

Stockholder's Meeting

JACOBS NEWS DEPOT CO.

Landry Street. : : Opposite Court House.

OPELOUSAS, - - - - LOUISIANA.

--NOTICE--

The undersigned Stockholders of the Jacobs News Depot Company are hereby notified that the regular annual meeting for the purpose of electing a Board of Directors to serve for the ensuing year will be held at the office of the Company on

---MONDAY, MAY 11TH, 1908,---

between the hours of 4 and 5 p. m.

Proxy blanks will be furnished by the Company to those who will not be able to attend the meeting.

A full vote is earnestly requested to be cast.

At said meeting a Dividend of ten per cent, being Dividend No. 5, will be paid to the Stockholders on the number of shares held by them.

R. L. Amberg,.....	Opelousas, La.	Mason McBride,.....	Opelousas, La.
E. M. Boagni,.....	" "	J. J. Perrodin,.....	" "
Jos. M. Boagni,.....	" "	J. A. Perkins,.....	" "
Jno. P. Boagni,.....	" "	David Roos,.....	" "
C. T. Bienvenue,.....	" "	L. C. Soileau,.....	" "
H. Bodemuller,.....	" "	Authur Simon,.....	" "
Louis Christ,.....	" "	F. L. Sardoz,.....	" "
Gus Cahane,.....	" "	Chas. Ventre,.....	" "
J. L. Cahane,.....	" "	R. B. Wilkins,.....	" "
Albert Clary,.....	" "	E. Deukamp,.....	New Orleans, La.
A. I. Castille,.....	" "	Sylvan Levy,.....	" "
G. H. Cretin,.....	" "	Harry Chsholm,.....	" "
A. A. Comeau,.....	" "	R. Le Bourgeois,.....	Arnaudville, La.
J. Carrier,.....	" "	Walter W. Smith,.....	" "
R. B. Christman,.....	" "	J. W. Guidry,.....	Lake Charles, La.
Dardeau & Coreil,.....	" "	Frank Dimmick,.....	Shuteston, La.
Dietlein & Jacobs,.....	" "	O. A. Durio,.....	Plaisance, La.
Oscar Dardeau,.....	" "	E. T. Dupre,.....	" "
E. B. Dubuisson,.....	" "	A. Sovet,.....	" "
J. F. Dezauche,.....	" "	C. C. Devillier,.....	Amide, La.
F. A. Delarue, Jr.,.....	" "	Adam McBride,.....	" "
J. S. Evans,.....	" "	Pierre McBride,.....	" "
Louis Gosselin,.....	" "	E. T. Lafeur,.....	Andrepoint, La.
Jno. A. Haas,.....	" "	F. C. Shute,.....	Port Barre, La.
Leon S. Haas,.....	" "	Wm. M. Prescott,.....	Washington, La.
Fred L. Hollier,.....	" "	W. E. Hawkins,.....	Bayou Chocot, La.
Aaron Jacobs,.....	" "	Mrs. Nezzie Hawkins,.....	" "
Adolphe Jacobs,.....	" "	Isaac F. Hawkins,.....	" "
Mrs. Sol Jacobs,.....	" "	J. T. Hawkins,.....	" "
Miss Yetta Jacobs,.....	" "	J. E. Hawkins, Jr.,.....	" "
Miss Hannah Jacobs,.....	" "	C. E. Hawkins,.....	" "
Miss Agathe Lassalle,.....	" "	W. E. Hawkins, Jr.,.....	" "
Armand Lafeur,.....	" "	C. H. Neely,.....	Washington, D. C.
J. G. Lawler,.....	" "	R. W. Neely,.....	" "
Littell & Lawler,.....	" "	W. R. Rose,.....	Chicago, Ill.
Sam Lanasa,.....	" "	Mrs. F. A. Hart,.....	Woodville, Miss.
Remi Morrhinveg,.....	" "	A. Fontenot & Son,.....	Ville Platte, La.

ESTIMATED STATEMENT

Which will be furnished at the Stockholder's Meeting.

Actual Cash paid into the Company from all Stockholders	\$18,400.00
Dividends paid out in Cash, May, 1904	\$ 1,200.00
" " " " " " 1905	1,389.80
" " " " " " 1906	2,149.80
" " " " " " 1907	2,509.80
" " " " " " 1908 about	2,700.00
Total	\$ 9,949.40
The Company owns Real Estate, actual cost and paid for	\$12,000.00
Merchandise, Bill Posting Plant and cash in Bank about	4,000.00
Total	\$16,000.00