

war. It is an incident of the never-to-be-forgotten retreat from Mons: 'I had driven them for three years. I tell you I could talk to them just as I am talking to you. There was not a word I said that they did not understand. And they could answer me—they could, indeed. I was never once at a loss to know what they meant. When I was astride one of them, why, I had only to think what I wanted him to do, and he would do it without being told. Early in the retreat from Mons a shell crashed right into the midst of the section with which I was moving. A driver in front of me was blown to bits. My gun was wrecked. I was ordered to help with another. As I mounted the fresh horse to continue the retreat I saw my two horses struggling and kicking on the ground to free themselves. I could not go back to them. I tell you it hurt me. Suddenly a French chasseur dashed up to them, cut the traces, and set them at liberty. I was a good way ahead by that time, but I kept looking back at them, and I could tell that they saw me directly they were on their feet. Those horses followed me for four days. We stopped for hardly five minutes, and I could not get back to them. There was no work for them, but they kept their places in the line like trained soldiers. They were following me to the very end, and the thought occurred a thousand times: "What do they think of me on another horse?" Whenever I looked there they were in the line, watching me so anxiously and sorrowfully as to make me feel guilty of deserting them. Whenever the word "Halt!" ran down the column I held up my hand to them, and they saw it every time. They stopped instantly. Whether they got anything to eat I do not know. I wonder whether they dropped out from sheer exhaustion. I hope to heaven it was not that. At any rate, one morning when the retreat was all but over, I missed them. I suppose I shall never see them again. That's the sort of thing that hurts a soldier in war.'

How much these sufferings hurt a soldier, and how close a bond of sympathy and affection springs up between rider and horse who have so often faced suffering and death together is well illustrated in a most touching passage in the late General Butler's fascinating work, *The Great Lone Land*. It is a description of the death of the General's favorite horse, Blackie, when the party were attempting to cross the frozen river Saskatchewan; and it shows that the great Irish soldier was as considerate and tender-hearted as he was brave. 'It froze hard that night, and in the morning the great river had its waters altogether hidden opposite our camp by a covering of ice. Would it bear that was the question. We went on it early, testing with axe and sharp-pointed poles. In places it was very thin, but in other parts it rang hard and solid to the blows. The dangerous spot was in the very centre of the river, where the water had shown through in round holes on the previous day, but we hoped to avoid these bad places by taking a slanting course across the channel. After walking backwards and forwards several times, we determined to try a light horse. He was led out with a long piece of rope attached to his neck. In the centre of the stream the ice seemed to bend slightly as he passed over it, but no break occurred, and in safety we reached the opposite side. Now came Blackie's turn. Somehow or other I felt uncomfortable about it, and remarked that the horse ought to have his shoes removed before the attempt was made. My companion, however, demurred, and his experience in these matters had extended over so many years, that I was foolishly induced to allow him to proceed as he thought fit, even against my better judgment. Blackie was taken out, led as before, tied by a long line. I followed close behind him, to drive him if necessary. He did not need much driving, but took the ice quite readily. We had got to the centre of the river, when the surface suddenly bent downwards, and, to my horror, the poor horse plunged deep into black, quick-running water! He was not three yards in front of me when the ice broke. I recoiled involuntarily from the black, seething chasm; the horse, though he plunged suddenly

down, never let his head under water, but kept swimming manfully round and round the narrow hole, trying all he could to get upon the ice. All his efforts were useless; a cruel wall of sharp ice struck his knees as he tried to lift them on the surface, and the current, running with immense velocity, repeatedly carried him back underneath. As soon as the horse had broken through, the man who held the rope let it go, and the leather line flew back about poor Blackie's head, I got up almost to the edge of the hole, and, stretching out, took hold of the line again; but that could do no good nor give him any assistance in his struggles. I shall never forget the way the poor brute looked at me—even now, as I write these lines, the whole scene comes back in memory with all the vividness of a picture, and I feel again the horrible sensation of being utterly unable, though almost within touching distance, to give him help in his dire extremity—and if ever dumb animal spoke with unutterable eloquence, that horse called to me in his agony; he turned to me as to one from whom he had a right to expect assistance. I could not stand the scene any longer. "Is there no help for him?" I cried to the other men. "None whatever," was the reply: "the ice is dangerous all around." Then I rushed back to the shore and up to the camp where my rifle lay, then back again to the fatal spot where the poor beast still struggled against his fate. As I raised the rifle he looked at me so imploringly that my hand trembled and shook. Another instant, and the deadly bullet crashed through his head, and, with one look never to be forgotten, he went down under the cold un pitying ice.'

It may have been very foolish, perhaps, for poor Blackie was only a horse, but for all that I went back to camp, and, sitting down in the snow, cried like a child. With my own hand I had taken my poor friend's life; but if there should exist somewhere in the regions of space that happy Indian paradise where horses are never hungry and never tired, Blackie, at least, will forgive the hand that sent him there, if he can but see the heart that long regretted him.'

Diocesan News

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

From our own correspondent.

April 3.

A mission will commence at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, Thorndon, on Low Sunday. It will be conducted by the Marist missionaries.

A team from the Marist Brothers' Old Boys' Cricket Club left for Wanganui to play matches in that town. The team is in charge of Mr. F. J. O'Driscoll, who was appointed manager for the tour.

Mr. F. J. G. Temm, secretary of the Auckland Diocesan Council of the Catholic Federation, was in this city during the week, and called on several members of the Dominion Executive. He is a delegate to the conference of Federated Catholic Clubs at Timaru.

The missions conducted by the Very Rev. Father Taylor, S.M., at St. Francis' Church, Island Bay, and the Rev. Father McCarthy, S.M., at St. Patrick's, Kilbirnie, concluded on Sunday evening, after a most successful week. The services were all well attended, and it was most edifying to see the number of communicants each morning. On Sunday evening both churches were packed, when sermons on 'Perseverance' were preached, and those present renewed their Baptismal vows. The Papal blessing was imparted by the missionaries.

Last Monday afternoon the Very Rev. Dean Regnault, S.M., and Mr. T. Shields paid a visit to the Marist Brothers' School, Thorndon, for the purpose of presenting the boys with the Duthie Cup and a set of silver medals, all of which had been competed for on