

available, these Marist lay-brothers went as companions and aids and cooks and tradesmen to each missionary. Prior to this, Venerable Father Champagnet, S.M., had founded the teaching body of the Little Brothers of Mary (commonly now called Marist Brothers). Some of these were allowed to go as companions and aids to the departing Marist Father. It was on their part an act of heroism. Now, Brother Claude Marie Bertrand was one of these, and, in his own language, a good scholar, while he also knew Latin. I used to sit beside him in the long studious silent evenings, and, while he read his spiritual books, I studied Latin and French, and, many a time, when I knew not the meaning of a French word or found a puzzle in French grammar, instead of losing time with my dictionary, I would ask Brother Marie the meaning or the solution of the difficulty. Thus I gained much time and made rapid progress. At the end of the three years, I could read an ordinary French book without the aid of a dictionary, and I knew my French grammar, especially the irregular verbs, perfectly. I never had any trouble with them afterwards in France.

At harvest time I had to go home and do my fair share of work in the harvest field. Machine reapers and binders were yet unknown in New Zealand. The crops were gathered by hand. I was, for a boy, a very expert reaper with a sickle, and did my half-acre a day, or thereabouts, as well as the men.

DEPARTURE FOR FRANCE.

I now come to a great crisis of my life, the decisive turning-point of my career. It was determined that I should go to France, study completely, and become a priest, the first fruit of the priesthood from this fair adopted land. But how had Divine Providence provided the means? They were shown with unexpected suddenness. And in this wise. A small brig, the Mountain Maid, 150 tons, suddenly arrived from Wellington. She was not a usual trader at Nelson, but she came, because Providence had foredoomed her coming, though some emergency cargo was the natural allurements. Father Comte, a Marist Missioner, was on board, bound to Sydney and from Sydney to London. Father Garin saw at once the unmistakable hand of Providence. He came to me and said: "Frank, Providence has acted in your behalf in answer to my long wishes and prayers. One of our Fathers is leaving the Maori missions for good, and is retiring to France. He is a Frenchman, but knows English fairly well. He will take you to Sydney and thence to France. He will watch over you, and improve your French on the voyage. He will introduce you to one of our colleges, where you can study and so in time, please God, become a priest. The vessel is to sail away on the third day from now. Make up your mind and seize the opportunity held out to you by God's favor and mercy, will you go?" I went to the little chapel, I prayed as I never before prayed, and I made up my mind to face the great sacrifice of home and parents and friends, and to go into an unknown land, guided, I felt, by the call and hand of God. A great, an extraordinary grace was given me, and that grace was for life. I came to Father Garin and said: "I will go." "God be praised!" he said. And now there is no time to lose. The brig sails in three days. I will prepare a letter for your father, who will come at once in his gig to Nelson, and we will settle with the Bank about your voyage to Sydney and France." He prepared the letter and I prepared myself to start on foot as usual, but not on the usual day of the week. I started at about 9 a.m., with the letter, and I hurried on more briskly than usual to Stafford Place. I tried on arrival to compose my features and temporarily conceal my errand. My sister Ann (Mrs. Goulter) happened to be staying with her husband at our house. At once she guessed the errand and exclaimed: "Frank, you are going to leave us, you are going to France, I see it in your face"; and she began to cry—womanlike. "Yes," I said, with tearless eye and firm voice—Grace helping me—"Yes, I am come to wish you all good-bye, and I am leaving Nelson by the Mountain Maid for Sydney on the day after to-morrow." Shortly after, I handed to my father the fateful letter. He read it; got his gig ready at once, and, taking my brother Charles with him, started with his fast

trotter for Nelson, and there arranged all matters with the Bank. I had to wish good-bye to my mother, and in very distressing circumstances. A few days before, unknown to me, she had met with a bad accident while driving home with my brother Charles. They were coming full trot along a good road and, near a hollow, were passing close to a post and rail fence, and one rail being turned into the road, the gig wheel ran up it, and the gig was instantly upset. Charley luckily escaped unhurt, but the gig fell upon my mother's leg and broke it. Charley got the doctor's assistance as soon as possible and the leg was set, but badly set, so that my mother was lame for life. I found her in bed with her broken leg. Yet grace sustained me, and I did not cry even then. I resisted all thoughts of not going, as I would a temptation, by prayer and by turning my mind from them. She was a strong-minded woman, and consented to my departure, with tears, indeed, but resolutely, seeing in it the hand of God. But after some moments of reflection, she looked at the matter with her sound practical sense, and said: "But you have no proper outfit for a voyage to Europe. A few shirts and socks won't do, how shall we manage?" And she thought awhile in silence. At length she said: "I have it; I see a way to meet your needs." Now, a young English gentleman, a non-Catholic, named Whitehead, had a fine outfit left at our house, while he was a hundred miles away learning sheep-farming at our Wairau sheep-run; for on that purpose he had become our guest. I used, for practice in letter-writing, to correspond with him, and we were firm friends. My mother said: "I will take what you want from Whitehead's outfit, and replace it by articles of equal quality." And this was done; so that much of my linen was marked Whitehead and some marked Redwood. And when, afterwards I was at college in France, the old French laundress said: "How's this? Some articles are marked Whitehead and others Redwood." "Oh," I said, "Whitehead and Redwood in English must mean to you the same thing. It's all right." She never asked another question; and Whitehead and Redwood served the same purpose admirably, all through my college course.

On the morrow, I left the dear old home, driven to town by my brother-in-law, Cyrus Goulter, and the most terrible pang, the most fearful wrench I felt was when, as I passed the last gate, I looked back at the old place. I shall never forget that wrench. All other wrenches—and I have had many—were nothing in comparison. But the great grace sustained me and gave me victory. I met my father returning from Nelson, and I bade him good-bye in the road, near Appleby, in a new road just cut and metalled through a swamp. I know the place to this day, and I never pass it without emotion. When Charley wished me good-bye he said: "Frank, what a happy fellow you are to go and see the wide world." He had at that moment no supernatural views like mine. I never saw my father again. On his death-bed he learned my appointment to the See of Wellington, but was too weak to utter a word about it. My mother, who died at 85, lived five years after my arrival in New Zealand as Bishop, and often saw and heard me; on one occasion, I had her, in company and care of Mrs. Tom Redwood, her daughter-in-law, for my precious guest for several weeks in Wellington.

THE VOYAGE TO SYDNEY.

Captain Cross, the pilot, a splendid specimen of a British captain, had previously taken out the Mountain Maid, with Father Comte on board, at high tide; and she was riding hove-to beyond the Boulder Bank. The captain of the brig, by name Peacock, had waited on shore with the crew of the pilot's whaleboat, in order to go on board at the last moment, and then, after wishing the pilot good-bye, to let him return ashore in his own boat. I went with the captain. As the tide was full, we crossed the Boulder Bank by a narrow boat passage (now widened and deepened into the present ship-passage of the Nelson Harbor). There was a north-west breeze blowing, and the boat, once in the bay, rocked very uncomfortably for me, who had not been at sea since I arrived as a child in New Zealand. An internal revolution of my vitals was the consequence; I felt faint and ill. After rowing a mile or so, we reached the brig and I in my turn climbed the rope

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