Veteran C. Y. M. A. Basketball Stars To Play Ramblers

Followers of the C. Y. M. A. Ramblers, city semi-pro champions, are in for a treat Friday, Dec. 16, when Coach Walt Mura's Old-Timers tackle Mike Frank's team at the Franklin Square court. Mura has an aggregation of veterans, some really old-timers and others of more recent vintage, whom, he claims will give the Ramblers a game. With both the Rangers and Tigers, former C. Y. outfits, presenting complete line-ups, and with several of the old Superiors and Imperials' star players in uniforms, Mura expects to keep a fresh quint on the floor throughout the fray. The veterans' roster includes Ed Schlitzer, Al Mura, Johnny McDowell, George Wolf, Andy Schwind, Gene Leicht, Herb Minch, the Maier and the Fischer brothers, Ray Bayer, Gene Callan, Joe Hohmans and others who are really veterans. Every player in uniform will see some action, and the boys around the club are wondering just how good the Ramblers will look against such a formidable array of talent. Manager Rufus F. Maier requests any of the old-timers whose names have been overlooked to be on hand at the gym by 8:30 Friday evening. Laurie Wagner will referee the game, which will begin at 9 o'clock.

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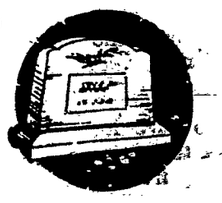

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Back Through the Years

A Glimpse Through the Files of The Catholic Courier and Journal

February 27, 1892

Madame Charlotte Frances Hendrick, of the Religious of the Sacred Heart, died February 2 at the convent of her order, Eden Hall, Torresdale, Pa. She made her first vows at Kenwood, June 9, 1873.

* * *

At the annual meeting of the Perpetual Help Society held in St. Mary's Hospital, the following officers were elected: President, Mrs. W. C. Barry; Vice Presidents, Mrs. T. A. O'Hara, Mrs. J. T. Cunningham, and Mrs. M. Kolb; Secretary, Mrs. C. V. Lee; and Treasurer, Mrs. F. A. Shale.

March 6, 1892

A successful fair and bazaar was held for the benefit of St. Alphonsus Church, Auburn.

* * *

Council 20 of the Catholic Relief and Beneficiary Association was instituted in Seneca Falls. Officers elected were: President, Michael E. Reagan; First Vice President, N. McDermott; Second Vice President, P. O'Reilly; Corresponding and Recording Secretary, John Cleary; Financial Secretary, J. E. Mackin; Treasurer, Charles Fornesi; Marshal, Thomas W. Kelly; Guard, E. Baldassari.

March 12, 1892

A retreat was announced to be given in St. Mary's Church, Auburn, for the men of the parish.

* * *

The Young Ladies Sodality of St. Mary's Church, Auburn, announced that they would give a musical and dramatic entertainment on March 16 and 17 including the presentation of "The Irish Heroine" with Miss Nellie Sullivan and John Colbert taking the leading parts.

* * *

At a meeting of the Cardinal Newman Reading Circle, the Rev. T. A. Hendrick of St. Bridget's Church, read an interesting paper on St. Thomas Aquinas.

* * *

Announcement was made of plans for the erection of a building to be used as a girls' hospital. The new building was to be erected in the rear of St. Mary's Boys Asylum and fronting on Clifton Street.

A Crib in China

The election and maintenance of the Christmas crib is a matter of great importance on the Catholic Missions in China. Chinese, old and young alike, look forward eagerly to this occasion, and pay frequent and devout visits to the Infant Saviour. This picture was taken as a Chinese child knelt devoutly before the image of the Infant Jesus at the Maryknoll Loting Mission, in South China.

Propagation of the Faith

(Continued from Page B-4)

preparing for the Christmas tree celebration to be held that evening. The presents I had brought were gathered up by the men and arranged on the Christmas tree.

Sacks of tobacco and bright-colored handkerchiefs came out of my Santa's pack for the old folks. I tried not to forget any one. I wish I could picture as I saw it, the scene in that lowly chapel far from what are considered the centers of civilization. In happy groups on the floor, Indian men and women sat, typing up packages and putting somebody's name on each, making sure that no one was forgotten. I was sorry I could not stay for the final act in this cheery Christmas setting. But my good Indians of St. Paul's knew that if I stayed it would mean that elsewhere some Indians would be disappointed. So I left them to their simple joys and traveled back to Porcupine where there were many little children.

There I found the Indians anxiously awaiting me. The tree was set up and ready for the gifts I had brought to gladden the hearts of old and young. The children of the district had prepared a Christmas play as part of the celebration. I would like to have remained, but I know that back at Sacred Heart Chapel, the Sioux were remembering my promise and would be watching for my coming.

Sioux 'Angels'

Lights greeted me through the darkness as I drove up the hill from Wounded Knee Creek and came in sight of Sacred Heart Chapel. From all sides I was greeted with a "Merry Christmas." It was not quite six o'clock so I took time for a piece of bread and some cold sausage in my sacristy. Meanwhile, Dave Shot, the herald was calling all from their tents. As the Indians began crowding in, the church bell was rung. Inside the meeting-house Indian women with their children grouped around them were seated on one side, the Indian men on the other. At the far end of the room was the large Christmas tree gaily decorated. From the ceiling hung a star, a cross and a crown, all made by the Indians from cedar branches.

Tom Fast Wolf addressed his people, telling them the meaning of the Christmas star. Alexander Two Two explained the meaning of the cross. Antonine Fast Horse told how the crown reminded him of the crown of thorns. Old Ben Bear Lies Down spoke eloquently of the symbolic meaning of the Christmas tree. Then the Indians sang many beautiful hymns in their own tongue.

Finally, the grandfather, as the president of the Men's Society is called, brought together the young men who had been appointed ogilies, or angels, to read out the names and some Indian, large or small, came up to claim his gift from the ogilie. Mama dolls were crying, horns were tooting, mouth harps were giving forth a tune, and mechanical toys were adding their mite to the din. Little children receiving their first gift from the Christmas tree stood with shy eyes wide with wonder. Candy and apples were distributed to all.

Was that the end of a perfect day? Not yet. The meeting-house was cleared of its tree and the whole place swept clean. Then Indian women began to carry in pots of wild cherry soup and other tasty Indian food, while the herald summoned all to return to the Christmas feast. At the meeting which followed, officers for the St. Joseph and St. Mary Societies were elected. Next morning, I began Confessions early. For two hours the Indians came, and during the Mass which followed many fervently received Holy Communion.

After the last Christmas song had been sung, and the festivities were all over, I showed my Indians the beautiful chalice and monstrance which a kind friend of the mission had given for our little chapel. I told them these gifts had come in time to be a birthday gift to the Infant Jesus. The Indians were impressed with the beauty of the sacred vessels, and dared not touch them for awe.

Sioux Bring Gifts

There was one more of my missions to be remembered. So I returned home, packed my car with toys, candy and small gifts, and started for St. Madeleine Sophie's Chapel. The Sioux were expecting me. Old and young were gathered in the meeting-house when I arrived. Many hand-shakings and greetings were exchanged. Pawnee Leggins had seen that the fire in the sacristy kept the room comfortable. Louie Bull Head had a fine cedar tree standing in one corner ready for the trimmings which I had in my pack. That evening, some of the younger men helped arrange the folding crib which is small but very attractive. Others decorated the chapel. After supper there were confessions to be heard and Christmas hymns to be practiced.

Sunday morning our little chapel looked beautiful. Two red votive lamps brightened up the pretty little crib. It was touching to see the Indians gather around that beautiful picture of the first Christmas night in the warm glow of the lamps. If we have nothing else, we try to have a Christmas crib at each of our missions. For the Sioux there is no need for us to tell the beautiful story of Our Saviour's birth. The appealing figure of the Babe in the manger, the sweet face of His Mother and the kindly figure of St. Joseph kneeling near, tell the story to their hearts. The radiant figures of the angels, the gleaming star, the tiny sheep, the ox and the ass, the warm lights, the snow, every small detail of the setting carries its own message to our simple, faithful Sioux. The little folks, eager with surprise, recognize the Babe. "See the Baby!" they exclaim, "the little Jesus," as on tiptoe they try to take in everything at once. A beautiful ceremony characteristic of Christmas on our Sioux missions is that of presenting gifts to the Infant Jesus at the crib.

Every Indian who comes to the crib offers a gift, no matter how humble, to the Saviour. It is with a heart full of gratitude to God for His goodness that the blackrobe witnesses the fervor and faith of his Sioux.

Christmas and Epiphany Feasts Kept Separately

(Continued from Page B-1)

Liberius as given by St. Ambrose in his work. St. Ambrose, when listening to these words by the Pope in the Basilica of St. Peter on the feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, was a young man. The event must certainly have left a deep impression upon him, for him to speak of it at such length in a book which truly came from his heart. It was in the year 377 that Marcellina personally besought her saintly brother to gather together for her instruction and that of others dedicated to God some sermons relating to virginity. St. Ambrose gladly complied with this request, not only because of his brotherly affection for his saintly sister, but also because, in keeping with the duties of his high office, it gave him the opportunity to speak at length on one of the capital points of Christian morals and perfection. The result was a work of Christian literature which has long been greatly admired.

The Christmas ceremony recalled in this work of St. Ambrose took place between 352 and 354 in all probability in the year 353. It testifies to the fact that at that time the Feast of Christmas was observed in Rome on December 25 as separate from the Feast of Epiphany.

Separation of Feasts

It is well known that in the first Christian centuries, especially in the East, the mysteries of the Nativity were commemorated on the Feast of the Epiphany, and that the Nativity as a separate feast on December 25 was introduced only later.

The book "De Virginibus," then, confirms the fact, already demonstrated by many other proofs that the separation of the two observances, and the introduction of the special Feast of the Nativity had its origin first of all in Rome, and that it spread little by little throughout the entire Church. Thus the work of the saintly Archbishop of Milan is a document not only pious but historical.

Moreover, it is a remarkable argument, since it goes to show that the usages of the Roman Church were not considered in the other parts of the Universal Church to be observed or neglected, indifferently, but rather that they enjoyed the highest consideration and veneration throughout the whole Church, which, encouraged by the example and authority of the Supreme Pontiff followed and heeded them.

Yule Observance In St. Patrick's Time in Ireland

(Continued from Page B-1)

are given as to the manner of its celebration.

The one definite conclusion arrived at from these researches, is that St. Patrick attached much more importance to the Spring-time festival of the Resurrection than to the mid-Winter feast of the Saviour's Nativity. In every one of his "Lives" there are graphic accounts of the celebration of the first Christian Easter, by the kindling of the paschal fire on Slane in defiance of the pagan High King's edict. In none is there a word about St. Patrick's celebration of the first Christmas of his mission in Erin. It may be regarded as quite accurate to assume, in company with Dr. MacNeill and other experts, that the Christmas of 432 found St. Patrick and his companions in the district of Saul where they had landed about the previous September.

Dr. Helena Concannon says in reference to the sojourn at Saul: "A temporary headquarters having been secured, Patrick and his missioners set to work at once, and during the first six months after their arrival were active in evangelizing the surrounding districts, and in making arrangements for the great advance they had planned for the following spring. Doubtless among other difficulties many of them had to tackle was that of language, and Patrick was glad that his Gallic and British assistants should have the opportunity Dichu's hospitality afforded, of studying Irish before he should go further in the great enterprise he had planned."

In a further reference, the same writer conveys the impression that the winter season was unsuitable for travel and so the Apostle waited until the "scent of the rising sap charged the breezes with heartening messages of hope and calls to fruitful activity." Then he bade good-bye to his host, Dichu and "set his face towards Tara." Thus was the first Christmas of St. Patrick's Mission spent in solemn preparation for the work of his Apostolate, which had its official opening before the pagan hosts at Tara the following Easter.

Slavery Recalled

A quarter of a century later, St. Patrick now bent and feeble and seeking the solitude of retirment, returned to his beloved Saul. He wished to prepare "to give an account of his stewardship, to make known the gift of God and to write against those who had misunderstood and despised him," the immortal words of his "Confession." So if his first Christmas on the favored spot was spent in preparation for his great career, his last was occupied in the grateful outpouring of his soul to God Who had so blessed his Mission.

But Patrick had known other Christmas seasons in Eire, when, as the boy-slave of Milucs, for six weary years he had herded flocks on the bleak slopes of Slemish Mountain. With scant food and clothing, he was exposed during those years of bondage to the biting winds of winter.

In his own words he tells us: "Before daybreak I used to be roused to prayer, in snow, in frost, in rain; and I felt no hurt, nor was there any sluggishness in me—because, as I now see, the Spirit was burning within me." Like those shepherds on the hills of Bethlehem, who on the first Christmas morn heard with "feelings of great joy" the Angels' hymn of praise, may it not have been on another Christmas night on the lonely slopes of Slemish that the "herds-boy saint" heard that angel Voice telling him make good his escape and go, "thy ship is ready"?

Though the Cribs and chiming bells, the holly and ivy, the carols and Adestes of our modern Christmases were unknown in those far-off days in Erin, much of interest is disclosed by a peep into conditions in the country during that season of the year. The physical features of the country presented a striking contrast to its present appearance and this contrast lay chiefly in the abundance of woods and forests. They were all over the country; they contained a great variety of trees and were the haunts of wild animals, such as deer, wild swine, wolves and other beasts. Outside forest and bog, there were open plains, fields and hillsides under cultivation and pasturage, all well-populated.

There were few towns, the population being chiefly rural. The few towns there were, centered round the capital seats of the Kings, and chief of these was at Tara. Dwellings were mainly of wood; they were circular in shape and had pointed roofs, resembling in appearance a round haystack. The more opulent landlords had larger dwellings of varying shapes surrounded by earthwork fortifications, to ward off the raids of wolves. These forts are now traceable in our still numerous raths.

The domestic animals were the same as now, but the saddle horse was the distinctive property of the higher social order, while the horse-chariot was the vehicle of travel for long distances. In this connection, Tirechan, a seventh century writer, describes as quite an ordinary incident a number of persons, including St. Patrick, travelling in chariots from Tara to Killala.

In those days it was customary at the end of autumn to cure a supply of meat—beef, mutton and pork—for the needs of the household during winter. The distinctive national article of diet, however, was oatmeal porridge; even in the fourth century its renown was a by-word on the Continent. Brewing was a domestic craft, and ale took the place of tea, as a beverage for guests or as a stimulant.

Family Life Established

Though in many ways a "simple people," the Irish of the period had a written language and a bardic literature of great antiquity. They were highly intellectual and refined; cultural culture; even the professions of law and medicine had women votaries. Family life was established on a firm basis and in every household the arts of spinning, weaving, dyeing, sewing, embroidery, and probably tanning, were practiced.

Picture then an Irish homestead in mid-winter, or during a Yuletide season in the fifth century. When the biting winds howled outside and the snow fell thickly on the roofs, the family gathered round the open "four-cornered fire" of logs or turf, generally the former. See the women with busy fingers ply the instruments of their traditional arts; watch them spin and weave the wool from the sheep of their farms into material from which they make warm garments for all the family. Look at the fine hand-embroidery they work on wool or linen. Above all admire the marvelous colours they produce from the process of dyeing.

And the men folk are busy too, perhaps fashioning shoes or gloves (which were worn even then) from the leather they had tanned or greased in the finer arts of metal-work or iron work. Then listen to the low, sweet crooning of an old Irish air or to the [illegible] of some venerable, telling his people of the [illegible] and adventures of [illegible] or Lugaidh Eireann, with the [illegible] of the Gaeil.

Reflecting on this picture at an Irish winter, in the time of St. Patrick, we can at least identify our Yuletide with the Christmas of 1932. It is the gathering round the hearth fire of the children of the Gael for mutually re-unions in the same circle, the still-unbroken tradition and as inviolable Christmas custom. There is another and a stronger link between the past and the present of Christmas tide. It is the Great Mystery Sacrifice, the Feast of Love, the even though unknown and in the practice of what we now know and regard as the great time of spiritual rejoicing, there was no doubt that St. Patrick and his contemporary priests celebrated Mass reverently at Christmas.

Our experts tell us that Mass was celebrated for the people on Sundays and Festivals. [illegible] Christmas was another [illegible] day it has its Mass [illegible]

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