

CHAPTER X

SNAP-SHOTS

WHEN we were in Kootenay,—indeed, I may say, in any part of British Columbia,—the name of Father Pat was one to conjure with. The face of our interlocutor would light up as we spoke, and a flood of anecdote would pour forth. He was a hero in the land.

An interesting account of him is given by the Reverend Charles Ault Procunier, an ex-Methodist minister, now Rector of the important town of Revelstoke, British Columbia.

“When I first met ‘Father Pat’ (he says), I was an ex-minister of ‘The Methodist Church of Canada,’ having resigned from the membership and ministry of that religious society for the express purpose of becoming a candidate for Holy Orders in the Church of England. His Lordship, the Bishop of New Westminster, who had made all arrangements for my ordination to the Diaconate in Victoria, British Columbia, by the Bishop of Columbia, on June the 5th, 1898, was in England. At this important time appeared the inevitable flaw in mundane affairs. The ordination was postponed. However, after voluminous telegrams and letters the ordination was again arranged, the time—June the 22, 1898, the place—S. George’s, Rosslands, and the Bishop was The Rt. Rev. Lemuel Henry Wells, Bishop of Spokane.

“On June the 21st I arrived, with my young son, who was five years old—his mother was in the hospital in Kaslo, British Columbia—on the train at 11.30 P.M., and as I stepped out of the train crowded with a Western populace—miners, speculators, gamblers, etc.—the circle of my life, for the first time, touched the invisible circle of the deep life of ‘Father Pat.’

“‘Hello, Procunier, old boy,’ were his unconventional

words. There was no red-tape of social forms, no conventional snobbishness, but a man with a human heart. As his guest at the Lancaster Club I was lodged ; and while we had a quiet glass of Scotch whisky and a soothing pipe, late though it was, there was a steady flow of wit and wisdom, humour and advice, which I shall never forget. But, however, the conclusion was practical details and arrangements for the future.

“ On the following day, in his church, the Confirmation and Ordination took place. Then came his practical insight for specific details. Having a innate inclination for missionary work, he had long desired a favourable opportunity to visit the various mining camps and towns, which were springing into existence like blades of grass in the spring, and, behold ! here was the chance. I was left in charge of S. George’s Parish, Rossland. The difficult task of his Church work was, with fear and trembling, undertaken. In my quiet moments of higher insight, I have sometimes questioned his objective interest in the wild ways of mining camps at that particular time. Was it not rather pure self-sacrifice and self-denial, in order that he might provide an open door to organized work, and an infallible income for a raw “tenderfoot”—as they say in the West—in the Church ?

“ However, he was a true missionary, and a tried exemplar of the profound principle of practical Christianity. If God speaks to us in nature, in history, in conscience, and in Revelation, most assuredly, in his saintly life, there was heard the ‘small still voice’ of God. It was his feasible advice, open church and free hand, that made the rugged path of my life smooth and plain.

“ Thus with his hand to my hand, and heart to my heart, we laboured until the missionary district of Fort Steele, British Columbia, was opened, and all arrangements had been completed for my incumbency there. Again, into conspicuous prominence came his noble traits. He must needs go and spy out the lie of the land and the look of the people. After weary days of long tramps, along the surveyed route of the Crow’s Nest Rail Road, he made the journey to and fro. On

his return came the 'tips and pointers' as he called them; the history of the people and the places; how they had a Moses and an Aaron as licenced lay readers in S. John's Church, Fort Steele—one was Low Church and the other was High; how there was jealousy between Fort Steele and Cranbrook; how I could steer my way, safely and successfully, between the Scylla and the Charybdis of the various circumstances on that mission field.

"In the meanwhile, my family had been comfortably ensconced in Rossland. I left them under his paternal care, and proceeded to my chosen mission. After doing parochial duty for some time, I returned for them. And dear 'Father Pat' could not do enough for us.

"We left Rossland, *via* Northport, for Kaslo, British Columbia, where my household effects were stored, and lo! when ready to start—*semper et ubique*—'Father Pat' appeared on the scene. He went with us to Goat's River Landing—the temporary port in connection with the new Crow's Nest Rail Road.

"It would be beyond our present scope and intention to describe our journey on a lumber wagon, drawn by four horses, for twenty miles, then in a freight car on a construction train, which was laying rails. Suffice it to say that we reached our mission safely, and through the sound advice—which we had received—('To be forewarned is to be forearmed')—we found the key to the people and the places.

"As Rector of S. Peter's Church in Revelstoke, British Columbia, sitting quietly in my study, I try to form a just judgment of Mr Irwin's subjective and objective influence—what he was to me and what he was to men in general.

"On the one hand, I did not read under him. He was appointed deputy-examiner by the Bishop of New Westminster, and as necessity knows no law, he held the examination in a bedroom of a public-house in Cranbrook. Nevertheless, one could not read the profound volume of his daily life with attention, and not receive great thoughts which sustain the mental and the spiritual life. Thus came,

“ ‘ Truths that wake,
To perish never
Which neither listlessness nor mad endeavour
Can utterly abolish or destroy.’ ”

“ As Tennyson makes Ulysses say :—

“ ‘ I am a part of all that I have ever met,’ ”

therefore I owe more than I can say to his fond memory. But as a student and a preacher, he left no distinct impression upon me. His great book was human nature, and his best sermon was a pure life. On the other hand, as we consider his objective immortality in men, we may say that he lives and will always live in the memories and affections of the old timers in British Columbia. Characteristic tales are told of him, again and again, in the mines and homes, on the street and in the saloons. And it is a pity that these rich gems of a rare life should be forgotten. A distinct line differentiated him from men in general and priests in particular. Always and only ‘ Father Pat.’ And when we try to sum up we, as children sometimes say when guessing riddles, ‘ Give it up !’ As well try to trace the sunbeams of last summer’s sun in every bud and bulb, flower and fruit. Wherever the broad circle of his Catholic life reached, he lives and will live forever. Truly can it be said :—

“ ‘ His life was gentle ; and the elements
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world : This was a man.’ ”

“ And in conclusion :—

“ ‘ Sir, fare you well ;
Hereafter in a better world than this,
I shall desire more love and knowledge of you.’ ”

Mr Irwin alludes to the writer of the above in the following letter to his Bishop, Dr Dart ; and we may see in the whole letter what a bright state of growth and energy pervaded the diocese,—active, earnest clergy raising new churches in the rapidly growing townships.

" ROSSLAND CLUB, ROSSLAND, B.C.,
" April, 21st '99.

" MY LORD,—I have just returned from Fort Steele and Cranbrook, where I had Easter Communion last Sunday. Procnier is flourishing and has opened a nice church in Fernie—the parsonage in Fort Steele is finished.

" There is to be a fast C.P.R. service put on through the Crow's Nest Pass which will save a day nearly. If your Lordship thought of coming in that way, Procnier could meet you at Fernie—and he is quite ready for his ordination. I got the '*De fide symbolo*' for him. Nelson church is most beautiful and exquisitely finished, and they have it crowded to the doors. Akehurst deserves more than ever he'll get for his almost single-handed labour in getting it up. An ordination and consecration there would be something after your Lordship's heart. Our church committee have consented to take *Festina Lente* as our motto for the present. In my report to the Archdeacon I am showing a year's 'raise' in this parish, and my stipend has almost touched \$500; that is a change to the \$100 your Lordship referred to as 'a good *beginning*' about two years ago.

" Many thanks for your last letter *re* the Kootenay Diocese. I think the committee are troubled and troubling about many unnecessary questions.

" Hoping your Lordship will have a good journey out, and that you will soon be with us again,—I am, my Lord, your grateful servant,
H. IRWIN.

" P.S.—My Easter offerings came to \$186 which I have easily disposed of."

· During the three years of his sojourn at Rossland, Father Pat drew largely—too largely—on his store of vitality, which seemed inexhaustible. The secret of it all was that he had no desire to live, only to do God's work so long as life should be granted. A friend observes: "He was all over the country, holding services and laying the foundations of a church at Trail, 7 miles east of Rossland, and 2000 feet below, and at Grand Forks and other points in the Boundary, the nearest point being 40 miles over the mountains west

of Rossland ; two days' journey for most men up and down steep trails, but only one day's for Father Pat, whether on foot or in the saddle.

" His journeys over the mountains were phenomenal ; he seemed to be tireless, and he loved the wilds where he was in close touch with Nature ; and sometimes to intimate friends he spoke of his frequent sense of the nearness of the Spirit world, with which he seemed in closest touch out on the trails at night."

Anecdotes abound of him at Rossland. One shows his blunt way with the miners, taking them in their own vein : He was a hard football player, and in a match at Nelson, British Columbia, he got a pair of black eyes. Returning to Rossland on Saturday evening, he met a miner in the street, who noted the catastrophe, though his hat was pulled down over his eyes.

" I just stood and looked at him (said the man), and Father Pat came up to me and said, ' What's the matter with you ? Can't you speak to a man ? ' ' I was just thinking,' said I, ' what a pretty pair of eyes those are. Prettiest pair I ever saw.' ' It's not the first time,' said Father Pat. ' Well, you're a nice one for a minister,' said I, ' you're not going to preach with eyes like that ? ' ' It wouldn't be the first time for that either,' said he. ' Well, I'd be ashamed, if I was you. How did you get 'em ? ' ' We had a rough game,' he said, ' over in Nelson, and I ran up against a fellow, but he's no better off.' "

He preached the next day, but felt bound to make an apology for the eyes.

Another story illustrates the good and bad side of society in Rossland : There was a poor girl who had led an evil life, but in whom Father Pat saw the seeds of better things. Encouraged by him, some young fellows clubbed together to put her in a decent lodging, and to buy a sewing machine with which she might earn an honest living ; and this she was sincerely endeavouring to do. A man meeting her in the hotel, greeted her with insulting words. Father Pat happened to be there, and, with his fist in the fellow's face, said : " You scoundrel, get out of this very quick, or I'll

help you out." The man speedily vanished, for the Padre's skill as a boxer was well known.

It was his courage and directness that gave him his influence, though he was no great preacher. Yet he *did* preach in a most practical way.

One of the finest comments I heard on Father Pat's preaching, was a reply given to a reflection some one made in regard to his pulpit utterances, by a typical old timer.

"Father Pat no preacher? Well, I guess he was—right to the point. I'll tell you a story about his preaching.

"There was a young fellow down at Trail very ill. The doctors said there was no salvation for him, he'd got to die, so they sent for Father Pat. He talked to him a bit, and the young chap felt better, and held out his hand and said, 'Thank you, Father Pat; good-bye!' 'Good-bye?' said Father Pat, drawing back. 'Good-bye! What do you mean by that? D'ye think I am going anywhere else, but you? I'll say *good-night* to you if you like; at Doomsday, I'll say good-morning! It's only over the other side of the Divide, and we'll meet together there.' Now that's what I call preaching;—brought it all right home to the boy and he died easy."

It is impossible in a memoir like this, compiled from the recollections of many persons, to avoid a certain amount of repetition; and so we need hardly apologize for introducing here one or two extracts from Canadian newspapers. They show as well as anything can, the general feeling about the beloved Padre of the miners.

The first is from the *Toronto Globe*, December 10th, 1898:—

"It is something to be part and parcel of a growing country like this. There is, after all, more honour in it than in descent from the men that spurred by William's side when he smote Harold's followers at Hastings. Here at Rossland is one pioneer whose career and personality endear him to the Kootenays, and whose memory will ever be a tradition and a blessing. And he is an Episcopalian minister, and an Irishman, the Rev. Henry Irwin. He is known from Fort Steele to Okanagon Landing. There is not a trail through

the mountains, nor a road through the valleys, that he has not trudged over and over, and always on errands of mercy and of love.

“He has been the friend and confidant of every pioneer and prospector that has lived in the Kootenays for fifteen years. He saw them come here, poor, eke out a hard existence far from towns and cities and refinement and civilization, but he was always among them with a cheery voice and a kindly smile, and they all loved him, and in pure affection called him ‘Father Pat.’ He has seen multitudes of his old friends grow rich and famous. He tells of the bacon-and-bean days of the log cabin, and talks kindly of the old friends now dwelling in palatial mansions, and sitting round tables laden with the richest viands and luxuries drawn from every land and clime. But Father Pat prefers the bacon and beans, and hard luck, and black coffee, in the miner’s log cabin to the banquet halls of the rich, the great, or the famous. He could have grown rich like others, but he says he wants to be like Him whom he preaches, ‘Who had not whereon to lay His head.’

“And thus he ‘gangs his gait,’ going about doing good with cheerful words and kindly smiles, and a warm clasp of the hand for the Jew and the Gentile, for the orthodox and the heretic, and thus he has won the hearts of the young people who are engaged in upbuilding this glorious young country.”

Here is another extract from a local newspaper :—

“Were all the stories of endurance, self-sacrifice and bravery about Father Pat published, it would make an interesting volume. The latest one is very characteristic of him.

“A prospector lay sick away out on the lonely mountain side, thirty miles from doctor or medicine. Father Pat heard of it. He gathered together medicines, and hit the trail. While nearing the cabin, he came across three mounted miners who saluted him with the question, ‘Hello, parson, where are you going?’ He told them. ‘Bill needs a doctor instead of a parson!’ They commenced to abuse the minister.

They would not let him pass. Quicker than lightning the parson jerked one of the miners off his horse, knocked another one off, and cleared the trail.

“He reached the sick man’s side, and ministered to his wants. On returning the next day he met the three miners, who had camped on the trail bent on revenge. While being abused he appeared meek as a lamb. The trio surrounded him in a threatening manner. Then the parson spoke: ‘Will you see fair play if I will fight one at a time?’ said he. ‘Yes, yes, yes,’ exclaimed they, chuckling with delight at the prospect.

“A ring was formed, and soon one of the three measured his length on the ground. ‘Come on,’ said Father Pat, pleasantly, as the other two seemed somewhat dazed. One came on, and followed the first. ‘Next,’ said Father Pat. But the third miner took to his heels as though his Satanic Majesty was behind him instead of only a meek minister. The Father bathed the bruises of the two prostrate miners, and after preaching them a sermon on the iniquity of fighting, went on his way.”

To complete the series, we have a familiar and friendly letter to a lady, an English friend, to whom Father Pat desired to set forth the real colour and sentiment of his life in the Far West, and we find in it the brightest record of his existence in these latter years. The end was soon to throw its shadow over the story.

“ROSSLAND CLUB,
“Feb. 4, '99.

“DEAR MISS K,—Thank you for your kind letter. It’s like a breath from a warm land to us, as it’s 20 below zero up here just now. Whitest of snowy mountains round us on all sides, and such lovely clear, crisp, clean streets and roads: I think it’s the cleanness I like best in winter, though Irish. We are a peculiar—very—people up here in this sky-bench, ’way up above the clouds and fogs of the lower world, and in a little world of our own; that’s a funny wee one. If I could only have snap-shots of the queer people

here, I'd make my fortune. There are some 6000 of us here, mostly in shacks, with *one* good suit of clothes which we wear in the streets and on Sundays, but, as a rule, most rude in speech and dress on the trails.

"I think there's a charm here which people can't get at for some time ; and that is, we can be just what we please, what we jolly well like ; and we can show it in our speech. Slang answers slang, till we find out who is talking it, and then off we go back to pastures old in the dear old land, and actually talk English, and drop the nasal twang and slang, and become ourselves again. I've studied this carefully, and find that it's only that contrariness, in other nations as well as in my own, which *will* always put the worst side out at first, till it's sure of its ground. The numbers of languages used here is perplexing.

"I am glad you take an interest in our work. It goes on, on the quiet. We don't talk much, but we can get in and rustle as few can. For instance, we can run a Fancy Fair for a new church for two nights for three hours, and have our \$200 worth of stuff, and clear up nearly \$2000. That's a fair percentage even out here ! We hope to build in spring, but we have to be sure of which way the town will grow. It will not do to have 'Pat's Folly' pointed to as other follies are ; and we wait and watch. The most aristocratic portion of our community, named 'the Boys,' put up the present building which is dedicated and known as S. George's Church ; but it is but a barn with good furniture in it. Everything from reredos to altar cloths, has been made by the hands of Rosslanders, and we have a very handsome pipe organ fetched in by 'the Boys' too ; and so our services are good ; our full choral Sunday Celebration often astounds our brethren, and even our Bishops from the other side of the line. But you see we want to be, like all things in a Western camp, more than up to date. The church is lighted by electricity which is brought from fifty miles away, and though it sometimes goes out, it's good light. Just as we began the psalms at evensong a week ago, out it went, and down they sat, and my sermon happened to be on 'darkness,' which lasted till the light came on again, and on we

went with the psalms and the service. Little things like that don't even bother us. But though you may think this a flippant kind of letter—it's not. I'm only trying to give you an outline of the bench we're on, and the comicalities, so that you can understand the strange position I hold of being licensed by the American Bishop as well as our own, so that I can pray for the President now and then when I've a foot across 'the line.'¹ And I glory in proving that the forty-ninth parallel doesn't run through the church, even if it's found in Custom Houses.

"Yes, this mining district has gone on in great strides: little did I think in '85, riding 1200 miles every six weeks to give the scattered people a monthly service from Kamloops, that such a population would be here now, and that we are well within sight of a new Diocese (of Kootenay) under our old Bishop, but with our own Synod. Home Rule! With many thanks for your kind thought.—Yours gratefully,
"H. IRWIN."

"Ora pro nobis."

¹ As Mr Irwin's duty took him at times across the line dividing Canada from the States, his position was regularized by a license from the American Bishop.

CHAPTER XI

THE PROSPECTOR

Who has not read "The Sky Pilot," that most picturesque story of life in the Far West? By many Father Pat is called "The Sky Pilot," but Arthur Moore was no portrait of Henry Irwin, though some of the details coincide, and the author, "Ralph Connor," allows that there is an *aroma* of Pat's life and work in the history of the "Sky Pilot." But in "The Prospector," by the same hand, there *is* a portrait of Irwin in the person of Father Mike, the English clergyman, so hospitable and sympathetic with the young Presbyterian minister, Hamish Macgregor, known as "Shock," who follows his course with power and perseverance. And Shock's reward is to be decreed a failure, and on the lying misrepresentations of some of his blackest sheep, to be withdrawn from his outpost by the Presbyterian Superintendent at head-quarters. The following extract from "The Prospector" illustrates the position with a master-touch:—

" 'Hello, old man, there's a letter for you in my rooms; thought you'd be in to-day, so took care of it for you.' Father Mike drew near Shock's buckboard and greeted him cordially. 'By Jove! what's the matter with you?' What have you been doing to yourself?' he exclaimed, looking keenly into Shock's face.

" 'I'm rather seedy,' said Shock, 'played out, indeed'; and he gave Father Mike an account of his last week's experience.

" 'Great Cæsar!' exclaimed Father Mike, 'that was a close thing. Come right along and stretch yourself out on my couch; a cup of tea will do you good.' Shock, gladly accepting the invitation, went with him. 'There's your

letter,' said Father Mike, as he set Shock in his deep arm-chair; 'you read it while I make tea!'

And there and then, poor Shock reads the letter from his Convener, enclosing extracts from that of the Superintendent (a sort of Presbyterian Bishop, *Episcopos*, Overseer), stating that Macgregor seems to have failed in tact, and is to be withdrawn at any rate from the Fort, to the more populous and civilized part of his circuit.

"As Shock read the letter, his look of weariness passed away, and the old scrimmage smile came back to his face. 'Read that,' he said, handing the letters to Father Mike, who read them in silence.

" 'Withdraw!' he exclaimed, in astonishment when he had finished reading, 'and why, pray?'

" 'Oh! don't you see; funds overlapping, denominational rivalry!'

" 'Overlapping, rivalry—rot! You cannot do my work here, and I cannot do yours. I say, this petition would be rich if it were not so damnable,' added Father Mike, glancing at the document. 'Whereas the town is amply supplied with Church services, there is no desire for services by the Presbyterians,' 'or by any others for that matter,' interjected Father Mike. 'Let us see who signs this blessed paper?—Why, the whole outfit doesn't contribute a guinea a month. Isn't it preposterous—a beastly humbug? Who is this young whippersnapper, Lloyd, pray?' (Naming the chief witness against Shock, at head-quarters.) Father Mike's tone was full of contempt.

" Shock winced. His friend had touched the only place left raw by the letter. 'He is a college friend of mine,' he answered, quickly; 'a fine fellow, and a great preacher.'

" 'Oh!' replied Father Mike, drily, 'I beg pardon. Well, what will you do?'

" 'Withdraw,' said Shock, simply; 'I haven't made it go, anyway.'

" 'Rot!' said Father Mike, with great emphasis. 'Macfarren doesn't want you, and possibly the Inspector shares in that feeling—I guess you know why—but you are needed in this town, and needed badly.'

“ But Shock only replied, ‘ I shall withdraw ; I have been rather a failure, I guess, Let’s talk no more about it.’

“ ‘ All right, old chap,’ said Father Mike, ‘ come along to tea. I wish to heaven there were more failures like you in the country.’ ”

This sketch portrait, drawn by a Presbyterian, shows the salient characteristics of Father Pat’s nature, the overflowing sympathy, the utter absence of jealousy, the ready hand held out to all downcast or in need of cheering, whether or no they saw eye to eye with himself ; the simple kindly hospitality. In the clever story, Shock is the Prospector, searching far and wide for souls to save ; but the name might have been given to Father Pat himself, for he was never found resting from the search for souls ; and when the community at Rossland had become more civilized, he felt the need of change, and urged his Bishop to send him to some new spot, to unbroken ground. The kindly Bishop saw that he was wearing himself away by incessant work, and by denying himself every comfort, almost every necessary. To and fro he rode on his well-known Indian pony, “ Tom,” covering more ground than one would think possible ; keeping down by incessant labour the ever-gnawing regret for a lost love and a lost life. The Bishop offered him easier work, a lighter post, but he implored to be sent out as a pioneer, and at last he had his way, and was transferred in 1900 to Fairview in the Okanagan district, one of the loveliest parts of lovely British Columbia.

Meanwhile, many things were happening in the diocese. In August 1898, half the city of New Westminster was destroyed by fire, caused by the sparks from a steamer alighting on a heap of straw by the riverside. The wooden houses burned like tinder, and in half an hour a vast extent was on flames. Even the pretty stone church of Holy Trinity, the Cathedral church, was gutted, and in a great measure destroyed. At the time, Bishop Dart was two thousand miles away, on his road to England to plead the cause of his diocese ; but in his absence all that was possible was done, Government sent aid, and in two years’ time,

the church arose from its ashes, a very well-proportioned and dignified edifice, completed in 1904 by a tower. It is interesting to compare Holy Trinity Church as it now is, with the first little log church in the wilderness built by the present Bishop of Norwich.

The number of clergy had doubled, organisations were multiplying (though not too fast, for Bishop Dart has always preferred quality to quantity in church work), and there was already a feeling that the vast diocese needed subdivision, and that such subdivision was possible, though as yet (even though the finances of the diocese had somewhat improved) there was but a meagre income for one Bishop—little over £500 a year—and no prospect of any for a second Bishop in Kootenay. But the thing had to be done, and done it was in time. The Kootenay or eastern district, where Rossland and Fairview lie, is now (1909) fully equipped with its own Synod, its own Archdeacon, but under the same Bishop, Dr Dart, who felt that it was easier for him to undertake the journey of 1000 miles to Kootenay to hold the Synod at Nelson, than for all the Kootenay clergy to spend their time and money in coming to a Synod at New Westminster. The following is Mr Irwin's answer to the Bishop's invitation to join a Committee on the subject of the new diocese, to meet at Nelson:—

“ FAIRVIEW, B. C.,¹

“ Aug. 3rd, 1909.

“ MY LORD,—Thank you for your kind letter. I shall be glad to be of use to your Lordship in any way, and shall be proud to act on the Executive Committee. But do you think I am likely to attend any meetings? It's far further from the end of track here than people think it: a *long* day's long journey.

“ However, I thank your Lordship for the honour conferred, and shall be glad to hear you have put some more

¹ Fairview is situated in the famous Okanagan valley, about 28 miles south of Penticton, which is reached by the Canadian Pacific Railway. It is the leading Free Milling Gold Camp in British Columbia.

central man, like Hedley, on the Committee. I feel that I could not, in any truth, say that I should like to go to Revelstoke, even if I had not my pet work on hand here. I guess, my Lord, that you have heard some yarns of my poverty-stricken aspect in overalls! but that's my way *parabolic*, and I think you must be the receptacle for some of the many yarns started on me and my work up here, by people who know nothing of the facts *or* the country; ahead of track we don't expect much 'style,' and I wear overalls, therefore I must be poverty-stricken, is the false logic. I have all I need and more, and have lots of good friends who are only too kind to me. If your Lordship will let me go ahead quietly here for a year or so, I think we shall have a strong body of good Church people. I should despise the man who would drop the plough just because of some rocky ground: and I get all the meals I want.

"Mr Robins was introduced to some camping out a little time ago, and I fancy he thought it a little rough under a tree in saddle-blankets! With many thanks for your Lordship's kindness and thought for me,—I am, your Lordship's humble servant,

"H. IRWIN."

We read between the lines, and see in this letter certain symptoms of the trouble that was creeping over the heroic missionary! Tales of his self-denial and probable overstrain had reached the ears of the Bishop, who had delicately hinted at the need of more care and comfort, if illness were to be averted. But in the unwonted hesitation to bestir himself:—"Do you think I am likely to attend meetings?—a *long* day's journey;" and "if your Lordship will let me go *quietly* ahead here for a year or so,"—we note a change in Father Pat's view of life, which was before a longing for perpetual motion; no day was too long, no ride too hard for him.

The Rev. W. A. Robins here mentioned (now Vicar of Cirencester) came out for five years' service, and nobly attacked the difficulties of rough pioneer work; earned the affection and respect of all, erected a mission hall at Greenwood, was able to live on the stipend supplied by his

congregation without diocesan aid, and at the end of his five years, left behind him a sorrowing flock and a record of admirable work.

Two anecdotes illustrative of Father Pat's methods—forcible and effective!—come to us from the short sojourn at Fairview. Among a crowd of miners, one coarser than the rest and not quite sober, ventured to insult the Padre, who paid no attention to him till words were added which were an insult to religion and to our Lord Himself. Then Father Pat turned on him fiercely, saying: "I don't mind your insulting me, but you shall not insult my Master."

The miner drawing nearer, dared Father Pat to prevent him, expecting that his own superior bulk would give him the advantage over the parson. But after a further warning, Irwin turned on the man, using his fists scientifically, as he well knew how to do, and punished him severely. In the end, the man went down like a log, unconscious and bleeding. Down on his knees beside him went Father Pat, anxiously examining his injuries, and then and there in a fit of remorse he cried: "O Lord, forgive me for not telling this poor man that I was a champion boxer at Oxford."

The other story tells how Father Pat came wheeling his little portable organ with intent to hold a service in the boarding-house and saloon for miners near West Fork, Kettle River. The proprietor of this extremely rough hotel was one Cook, a well-known "character," Irish, like Father Pat himself, and not unwilling to let his saloon be used for the simple service to which the popular parson managed to attract a good many of the miners. The service commenced, and was listened to with attention, as Father Pat's services and sermons always were, because the men all knew him to be "white" (their expressive word of praise, meaning honourable, manly and straightforward). But when the time came for the hymn, generally the favourite part of the service, and when the tune had been played through on the little organ, lo! no voice responded, and there was silence. A leader was lacking. Father Pat was no vocalist, and all the men were shy. After repeated but vain ex-

hortations to the men to tune up, Father Pat turned to his friend Gorman West, who stood by him, exclaiming, "Gorman, you beggar, sing!" West replied, "Well, Pat, if I sing, every other son of a gun will walk out!" "For Heaven's sake then, *don't!*" rejoined Father Pat, and closed the service without a hymn.

Do these anecdotes seem trivial or profane or beside the mark? They are necessary to show the tone of the picture; and indeed those who have been in the Far West can easily realize that such freedom from formality means no irreverence. If irreverence be meant, there is no doubt about it! The language then excludes all misinterpretation.

One more of Father Pat's bright letters to a friend in England remains to us; but in it we can trace the overstrain, a certain physical shrinking from the hardships which in former days were salt to the life of the missionary. The poor earthly body cannot be misused for ever; in the end it revolts against the severity with which ascetics and enthusiasts treat it, and abruptly ends the scene.

"FAIRVIEW, B.C.

"Aug. 14th, 1900.

"DEAREST B.—Just got in from an eight days' trip on 'the camel,' that will show you what 'tough' means. After A.M. service here last Sunday week I did forty-one miles between 1 P.M. and 7 P.M. for P.M. service—that's not bad for an old creak of a horse—then on and up the Kettle River, another forty miles, and away back off trails into the forest some thirty more miles by Wednesday, when on came one of those awful rainfalls we have in summer, cold as charity, even colder, and one's light gum coat is no protection; nor would tarpaulin keep out the soak one gets from the brush as you fight your way in and out of deer-trail windings, cutting with your axe a tree here and a big branch there, to give the horse a hole to crawl through. How one could ever find one's way back except for the 'blazes' on the trees would puzzle a Quaker; but on a horse here you need never think of how to get back, as the horse does

all the thinking in such case. Three to four miles away through the very depth of a thick pine forest, in and out of the thickets of underbrushed deer coverts—and lots of deer too to look at—*on a wet day*, with a shirt and pants and socks and boots and straw hat and nothing more on, will give you my feelings—with nothing to eat but some chocolate and a lump of cheese from Wednesday 7 A.M. till Thursday 9 A.M., in the saddle the whole time, then into camp where the tents were the only dry places, as fires have no roofs, so had to roll up in a saddle blanket and rig a gum coat over one's things in front of the fire so as to get 'em dry. There's a bit of a trip for you! I think the one thing that makes it so 'winsome' is the fact that away there in the forests you are alone in places seldom trodden by the foot of man. To pursue my way: next night found me out on the heights of the summits, on a vile bad trail, tracking back to this place, some sixty miles; about dark I struck a tent of two Rosslanders lost in the mountains, with whom I stayed to give them the last items of war news, etc. I wish I had a snapshot of the old waggon spread—for that was the tent!—under which lay the two owners side by side, and I, at the mouth across their feet, slept as guard with a great fire of logs three feet high blazing on to the graceful scene! Then up at 3 A.M. to hunt for the horses, which had to huddle together under some thick brush of willows, so that it took an hour to track them, as the bears in these parts scare the life out of horses at nights, and mountain lions lie for them, so that a rock or black stump is a *bête noire*. Off then and away at 4 A.M. and twenty miles to breakfast, leaving the pair snoring under their roof and the night's fire just dying out in smoking gasps.

“Those fellows *were* glad to see me, as they had used their last match.

“Then another day of forty miles and back here to get to a bed again, with the old whitey 'Tom' as fit as a fiddle, glad to get out of the wild mountains to those ranges again. I wish you were here with me for the deer and birds. My! but those big mountain grouse are whoppers; they are as big as a Brahma fowl; and when they blow out peacocky-

wise to guard their young, they look like a great Chinese fan with a bird's eyes and bill stuck in the centre and a little pair of bird's claws gummed on below ; and such colours too ! The golden Oriole is the only other to beat them.
So long, B.—Yours in love, "PAT."

CHAPTER XII

THE END

THE end now drew rapidly near. Things were rather bad in Fairview Camp ; business black, the clergyman's income from his impoverished flock very slender indeed ; and we may be sure that if he had a loaf and a pot of tea, everyone was welcome to share it. The letter, dated November 21, 1900, addressed to the Bishop, tells its own tale :—

“ FAIRVIEW, B.C.
“ Nov. 21st, 1900.

“ MY LORD,—I should have answered your last, but I have been waiting to hear some news which will either make or break this camp. This Fairview Corporation has now a deal on in New York, and upon it depends the future of this place. At present in this warm southern valley we have four below zero, and things are *very quiet*. I just manage to live, and that's all, on what collections I can get. Penticton is my safety and stay in these hard times. I don't know how to thank your Lordship for the \$25 a month you have so kindly let me have for the whole year. It is quite impossible for a man to live *here* and work Penticton without a grant ; but perhaps in the spring things will have taken a turn for the better. There are not more than ten of our own church people here ! But we get about forty or fifty in church. I try to keep the services going in as many places as I can, but it's hard this winter time : no wonder the Kirk have no students out in the hard months of the year !

“I am always glad to be in hard places, and I hope the development this next year will make both Fairview and Penticton very important.

"I fancy the new roads from twenty mile Camp and from Princetown will make Penticton a very large place.

"With my most grateful Christmas wishes.—I am, my Lord, yours humbly,
"H. IRWIN."

So things went on. The Bishop, realizing that the pathetic silence of this brave worker covered a depth of tragic suffering, urged him to take a rest, and to go home to his friends in Ireland for a time. At length, after considerable persuasion, Mr Irwin consented to do so; and it was arranged that after a rest at home and on his return to British Columbia, he should act as an itinerant missionary to the wilder districts where it was impossible to keep a settled clergyman. In a new country such districts abound. Men come out and establish themselves as ranchers far from civilization or "the sound of the church-going bell." They need space and pasture for their herds of cattle, and discourage others from settling near them on this account. Yet it is bad for them to live these lonely lives; they often deteriorate in character, or become morbid, and suicide too often ends the sad tale. To such men, the visits of a Father Pat would have been invaluable. To the northern districts of Cariboo and Chilcoten he would have ridden from time to time—four or five days' hard riding; settlers ten, twenty, thirty miles apart, separated by streams, precipices, forests. Even yet the problem is unsolved, and the Bishop is appealing for funds and men for this special work.¹

For Father Pat it was not to be. "The Lord had need of him" in Paradise. It seemed to many that the fine gold of his mind was become dim, and that there was a partial clouding of the intellect. He set off for England at the end of 1901. No one knows what befel, for he did not tell the tale. But it is surmised that he got out of the train some distance before reaching Montreal, resolving to walk on: or as is said in Dr Kingston's letter, "he resolved to go for a long country walk."

¹The opening of the new North Trans-Continental Railway will open up these parts and aid Church work.

In British Columbia, with its clear, light, milder climate, he had slept out of doors in all seasons, and loved to do so. But in Montreal, in mid-winter, this cannot be done. Heat and cold are far more intense in Eastern Canada. Had he been in full possession of his faculties, Father Pat would have known this ; but he seems to have lain down under the stars, half unconscious, and thus the bitter cold did its sad work.

We recall Father Mackonochie lying dead under the leafless trees of the Scotch Highlands, watched by the two faithful dogs of his friend Chinnery Haldane ; with the snow drawn over his face like a veil from an angel's hand. Truly there was a likeness in the end of these two heroes of our Church.

The details were given verbally by the Mother Superior of Notre Dame Hospital at Montreal to one who has kindly communicated them to us.

One morning early in January 1902, a farmer driving along the Sault au Recollet Road, a few miles from Montreal, saw a man walking with difficulty on the frozen ice. It seemed to him as if the man were pushing his feet on, rather than lifting them up. The farmer immediately ran to him and asked if he were ill, or if his feet were frozen. The pedestrian replied that he did not feel any pain, but a numbness in the legs. The farmer kindly took him in his sleigh and drove him to a physician living at the Sault. After examination, the doctor administered a cordial to the stranger, who refused to give his name, and told the farmer to drive him as quickly as possible to a hospital in Montreal, and the stranger begged that it might be that of Notre Dame, which is famous for its nursing.

When there, he refused to give any name but "William Henry," and the Sisters let it pass. His clothing had no clerical feature about it, and he took from the lining of his cap a package of letters and banknotes. The shoes had to be cut from his feet, so hardly were they frozen ; and the feet were soaked in a medical preparation to thaw them. Tears ran down the cheeks of the nursing Sisters, as they

knew the agony that was but beginning ; but Father Pat (for it was^d he)—joked with his nurses, and said their tears affected him more than the pain. His wit, his kindness, his elevated ideas and courteous manners convinced the doctors and nurses that their patient was a gentleman, and an uncommon one. For some days Father Pat felt scarcely any pain. Mortification had set in ; but he did not seem to realize his position. His appetite was good, his mind clear and admirable ; there seemed to be a magnetic current attracting to him all those who had access to his room. After the first day the Superioress went to him and said he had forgotten to give his full name when arriving, and that she was ready to register it if he would kindly tell what it was. With a lurking, wistful look Father Pat said that “women were never satisfied, and always curious beyond measure,” and changed the topic ; but the Sister reiterated her question, saying that she was morally sure that “William Henry” was not his name, at least not *all* his name. Then Father Pat said that she was right, and that he wanted to see the house doctor of the hospital, who was Sir William Kingston’s son. Dr Kingston used to have several daily pleasant chats with Father Pat, and came to his bedside in a moment. Their conference was long. Mr Irwin entrusted his letters, papers, and his name to Dr Kingston, on the condition that he would not divulge the addresses of the envelopes nor his name before his death. During the days when Father Pat was comparatively well he entertained those near him brightly, wittily and cleverly upon many topics, sometimes talking of the West, but he never pronounced the name of any place, nor would he give any clue to his name or calling.

After the third day the throat became affected ; there was difficulty in swallowing and in articulation, and now for the first time the sufferer seemed to realize his position. He asked the Sisters if it was the end, and on their answering that it was, he gave them a long, sad look.

The Reverend Canon Wood, Vicar of S. John’s, Montreal, had often visited Father Pat in the Hospital, the Sisters having sent for him as soon as they knew that their mysteri-

ous visitor belonged to the Church of England. He was now sent for, and for the next three days he was often with the sufferer, who seemed relieved and cheered by his presence. His sufferings were borne to the end with the utmost patience ; but, a few hours before death, he became delirious.

During Father Pat's stay at the Hospital two police officers had called to see him, to obtain his name, and to question him ; but this the Mother Superior firmly opposed, and the officials yielded to her decree that the dying man should be left in peace.

Quietly at last, as a child, the missionary yielded up his soul to God, keeping his secret to the end and wrapping his broken heart, his weary spirit, in the dignity of silence.

It was at one time reported that before his death Mr Irwin became a member of the Church of Rome ; but it was not so. The nursing Sisters indignantly denied it. They do not proselytize, but respect the religion of their patients.

His body was removed for burial by Cañon Wood, and the facts being now revealed by Dr Kingston, the remains were conveyed to Sapperton, New Westminster, to be laid beside those of his wife and child.

From a letter by Dr Kingston we extract the following :—

“ At all times he hid with a smile the sufferings he must have experienced, and his pluck and unselfishness were remarkable.” He would suffer agony rather than awake an attendant at night to get a glass of water or anything he needed.

“ His papers were given to me in a sealed envelope (continues Dr Kingston), addressed to a friend in Ireland. We ignored his address or the fact that he was the well known Father Pat. Probably his reason for so doing was to prevent me cabling to his family, or from informing his numerous friends in Montreal of his condition.

After a severe operation on the throat, to prevent suffocation, when the power of speech had passed away, he signed for pencil and paper, and wrote: "That was what was needed, but it was hard." During the night (says Dr Kingston) I was twice called to see him; the second time, as I reached the door, he beckoned me to come back, and when I returned shook hands with me. His breathing became easier; and towards morning he lost consciousness, and towards midday, January 13th, he died without having regained his senses.

"For my own part, I have never seen so much strength and so much gentleness combined."

(Signed)

"D. A. KINGSTON."

When in Montreal I was admitted to the presence of the Rev. Canon Wood, so well known as "Father Wood," Vicar of S. John's Church, Montreal. He is one of the best known and most highly revered Anglican clergy in the whole Dominion, beloved by all without distinction of sect; and in his life, simple and ascetic as Henry Irwin himself. In the dim, half-lighted church, where the choir were practising in his presence, and where the great Rood over the screen seemed to spread a hallowing shadow,—there we found the venerable priest, who took us to the vestry and told us how he had ministered to Henry Irwin on his deathbed; how his loving Christian character had shone through the veils of physical pain and mental beclouding. "And certainly," said Father Wood, "he died as he had lived, in the faith of the English Church, though others have made statements to the contrary. Were it otherwise, would not the Roman Church have claimed the right to interment?"

We left the place with a profound thankfulness that on his deathbed the noble missionary was not alone. Though with the instinct of hiding his innermost feelings from men; which seems to have been always his characteristic, yet he was not alone in the passing hour. "Not alone" truly, for his Lord was with him; and also there were the loving

tender ministrations of the large-hearted Sisters, and beside his bed stood a faithful priest. Of Henry Irwin we may say that in life and death he was such as Jesus owns for His true disciple and a pastor of His flock, one who could point the way through suffering to glory.

“Christe’s lore and His Apostles’ twelve
He preached ; but first he followed it himselfe.”

CHAPTER XIII

MEMORIALS

No sooner did the news that Father Pat was no more reach British Columbia, than the wish arose in the whole community that he should be buried among them. The coffin was placed in the Cathedral Church of New Westminster, where crowds of people came to pay the last sad tribute of respect. On a lovely afternoon, among many friends, he was laid at rest in the pretty cemetery on the hillside, by the wife he loved so fondly.

“It will be many a long day before his name is forgotten, and his unselfish devotion shall cease to live as an influence for good in the grateful memory of many a miner and railwayman in British Columbia.”¹

A subscription list was at once opened for a memorial to Father Pat. “The miners vied with one another in their desire to honour the best friend and benefactor they ever had. An ambulance was purchased for the use of miners in and around Rossland, and so, though being dead, he yet speaketh in the cure of sickness and the relief of suffering.”

A monument was also erected to his memory. It stands in the main street of Rossland. It combines the uses of a lamp and a drinking fountain, and speaks to the people mutely of the Light that their friend humbly followed, and of the Water of Life from which he strove to give them to drink.

The inscriptions on the monument are as follows:—
On the face of it are these words:—

¹ “The New Era.”

“ Rich he was of holy thought and work.”

In loving memory of
 REV. HENRY IRWIN, M.A. (OXON),
 First Rector of S. George's Church, Rossland.
 Affectionately known as Father Pat.
 Obiit, January 13th, 1902,

Whose life was unselfishly devoted to the welfare of his
 fellowmen irrespective of creed or class.

“ His home was known to all the vagrant train ;
 He chid their wanderings, and relieved their pain.”

And on each side of the same stone fountain are these
 shorter inscriptions :—

On the East :

“ I was thirsty, and ye gave Me to drink.”

On the West :

“ I was an hungered, and ye gave Me to eat.”

On the North :

“ In Memoriam, Father Pat.”

“ He who would write an Epitaph for thee,
 And do it well, must first begin to be
 Such as thou wert. For none can truly know
 Thy life, thy worth, but he that liveth so.”

On the South :

“ A man he was to all the country dear.”

These inscriptions, chosen with such tender care, show
 that this memorial was no mere show, but one that was
 meant to express the love in the hearts of the donors.

Close by is another memorial, perhaps as eloquent and
 even more touching: A cairn or pyramid erected to
 Father's Pat's memory by the miners themselves, consisting
 of specimens of all the rich and valued ores produced by
 the mines of Rossland, each in its own division and labelled
 with the name of the mine.

How can we sum up this record of a sensitive spirit, re-
 served to excess as to its inmost treasures ; true to the core ;
 tender, unselfish and self-forgetting ? Unconventional, yes,

to a high degree; one not to be measured by the common standards of men but with "the measure of an angel," and to be fitly appraised only by those beings who surround us invisible and regard us "With larger other eyes than ours."

REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

NOTE.—The English Association for the Dioceses of New Westminster and Kootenay works under the Rev. Canon Rhodes Bristow, 12 Eliot Park, Lewisham, Commissary to the Bishop. The Secretray is the Rev. Jocelyn Perkins, 4 Dean's Yard, Westminster.

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