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FROM THE
ANNALS OF THE SISTERS
OF
MERCY

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LEAVES

FROM THE

Annals of the Sisters of Mercy.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME III.:

CONTAINING SKETCHES OF THE ORDER IN
NEWFOUNDLAND AND THE
UNITED STATES.

BY A MEMBER OF THE ORDER OF MERCY,

*Author of the "Life of Catherine McAuley," "Life of St. Alphonsus," "Life of Venerable
Clement M. Hofbauer," "Glimpses of Pleasant Homes," "Happy Hours
of Childhood," "Angel Dreams," "By the Seaside," etc., etc.*

"We place Catherine McAuley in the first rank among foundresses; unsurpassed by any of them in varied intelligence, in strong practical sense, in clear insight, and in what seems to us true heroic virtue."—BROWNSON.

"Established by God, the Gabriel of a new message, and the Raphael of new blessings to the world."—RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR O'BRIEN.

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TO THE REVERED AND BELOVED MEMORY OF

RIGHT REV. MICHAEL O'CONNOR, S.J.,

FOUNDER OF THE ORDER OF MERCY IN THE UNITED STATES,

AND TO

RIGHT REV. JAMES O'CONNOR,

ITS CONSTANT AND LOYAL FRIEND FROM EARLY DAYS,

THESE "AMERICAN LEAVES," GATHERED WITH PATIENT TOIL

AND LOVING CARE,

ARE

Reverently and Gratefully Dedicated.



PREFACE.

WITH a confidence born of the extraordinary success attendant on the first and second volumes of these LEAVES, the third of the series, and the first of the American Annals, is now given to the Order and the public. A fourth volume is in preparation and will conclude the work.

The preceding volumes have brought writer and readers into close sympathy to an unusual extent. From almost all parts of the world letters have come expressive of this feeling. It is, therefore, a pleasing duty for the author to thank the reviewers—in every instance personally unknown to her—the Clergy, the Religious of the Mercy Institute and other Orders, and the public in general, for the deep interest shown in the series and the high opinion they have almost unanimously expressed of its merits. The third volume has many a story to tell, sublime in its beauty and holiness, and will be found even more interesting than its cordially welcomed predecessors. Much of what is described has come under the observation of the writer, who in several instances made long and toilsome journeys to gather facts on the spot where they occurred, and verify every detail.

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LEAVES FROM THE ANNALS

OF THE

SISTERS OF MERCY.

America.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

CHAPTER I.

“THE VOICES OF THE IRISH.”

Mother McAuley wishes to aid America—God satisfied with her Desires—Newfoundland—The French and the English fail to effect a Settlement—Irish Catholics successful—Persecution for Conscience' Sake—The Home Government opposed to the Progress of the Island—Father O'Donnel, of Cloimel, Founder of the Church of Newfoundland, 1784—Bishop Fleming applies for Sisters of Mercy, 1837—Letters—Sends a Novice to the Dublin Convent—The Land of Fish—Fanciful Accounts—Mother McAuley prepares the Foundation another is to send.

THOUGH the voices of thousands spoke from beyond the seas to the saintly foundress of the Sisters of Mercy; though her heart and her prayers followed her country-people to the trackless woods of the New World, its lovely valleys, its rugged mountains, its teeming cities—in her day so prosperous, in ours seething with luxury, poverty, and sin—though she offered herself to God for America, and coveted the honor of being the first of her Institute to touch its soil, yet God, satisfied with her desires, willed that others should accomplish the great work she had planned for His glory in the Land of the West.

Outside of her own country her zeal was first attracted to Newfoundland, the oldest British possession in America. This island is covered with snow for over a third of the year. A Venetian mariner in the service of Henry VII. discovered its foggy banks in 1497. In the privy-purse expenses of this king is the item, "To the man in reward who found the isle, £10," which throws no light on the disputed question whether the discoverer was John or Sebastian Cabot (Gabota). For a while "the isle" fell to France. When it was restored to the British by the Treaty of Utrecht, 1713, the new masters persecuted the French settlers so severely that they left the country, without waiting to be thrust out like their Acadian neighbors.

Sir George Calvert sought to make in "the isle" "a city of refuge" for his persecuted fellow-Catholics. Raised to the peerage under the Irish title Lord Baltimore, he spent £30,000 in establishing a Catholic plantation on its eastern shore, but, after heavy pecuniary loss and many disappointments, the Catholic colony abandoned "the isle" for the more genial region now known as Maryland.

Irish Catholics were the next settlers. Brave indeed were the men who turned for a home to Newfoundland, then scarcely more to the European world than a geographical expression. Persecution met them at every turn. The time is within the memory of man when the industrious settlers on the "Wild Plantation" had not "the liberty of the birds of the air to build or repair their nests." British policy in Newfoundland was stupid, repressing, and crushing to an incredible extent. The Home Government would make an island of 40,000 square miles a fishing-station, and its capital a mere wharf. So vigorously was this perverse policy pursued that, even at this late date (1888), the fertile lands of the interior are neglected, and there are few human habitations five miles from the sea. The victims of this intolerance "had," says Bishop Mullock, "behind them the

forest or the rocky soil, which, without license difficultly obtained, they were not allowed to reclaim or till. Their only resource was the stormy ocean." True, considering the immense coast-line of the island, fishing and navigation might be expected to supply means of living to many of the hardy islanders. Besides, about one-fourth of the surface is covered with lakes, rivers, and streams.

In 1784 Father James O'Donnel, a Franciscan friar from the banks of the Suir, laid the foundation of the Newfoundland Church. He became vicar-apostolic in 1796. Having been so fortunate as to prevent bloodshed on one occasion when a mutiny had broken out among the troops, he was "tolerated" by the government, and labored in comparative peace till his seventieth year. Broken down by toil and suffering, he resigned the mitre and withdrew to his native land in 1807. He died April 15, 1811, and his remains repose near the place of his birth, at St. Mary's, Clonmel. Traditions of the holy Apostle of Newfoundland still linger in that historic town. More than once has the writer heard its older inhabitants speak of his bent form, snow-white locks, and benign countenance; and tell how crowds followed him whenever he appeared abroad, how his withered hands rested in benediction on their heads, and how his feeble voice spoke only words of gentleness and love.

Short-lived indeed was the gratitude of the government to Bishop O'Donnel. Persecution in small matters and in great was the chronic state of his co-religionists. Even the Emancipation Act failed to bring relief, on the plea that it did not extend to Newfoundland. Dr. Fleming, who became its fourth prelate in 1829, gives a painful picture of the state of religion. Persecution had broken the spirit of the weak; laxity was universal. Catholics, to show their liberality, would go to Mass in the morning and to some conventicle in the evening. Poor people were elated at being noticed by Protestants, the rulers always taking care to

keep Protestantism before the multitude as "the genteel religion." Bishop Fleming was a warm friend of Mother McAuley, and thought of her as one who could give him efficient aid by herself or through her daughters. "As no schools," he writes, "had ever been established in Newfoundland where respectable Catholics could receive a good and religious education, I determined, as the best means to accomplish this, to introduce a community of nuns of the Order of Mercy, whose Rules [interpreted by customs established by the foundress] permit them to keep a pension school. I sent to their parent establishment in Baggot Street, under the care of the sainted foundress, a lady who had resided several years in Newfoundland, and was intimately acquainted with the circumstances of the country and the wants I particularly needed to supply, to pass there her novitiate, in order that she should return to me, with such ladies as might be inspired to accompany her, to found a Convent of Mercy at St. John's, and open a school for such as could pay for their education, where children could be taught the elegant and fashionable accomplishments of the day, and at the same time have their minds properly imbued with the principles of religion."

Readers of the *Life of Catherine McAuley* will remember the profound interest that great woman took in the progress of religion and education in America. When there was question of a foundation in Nova Scotia, in 1837, she at once offered herself for "the rough work" of the projected establishment. With Bishop Fleming's scheme she was in hearty sympathy. His sadly eloquent description of the spiritual destitution of his flock touched her to the quick. And had she but her own ardent zeal to consult, no vessel leaving her native shores could bear her thither as quickly as her love for souls desired.

Little was then known in Europe of "the other world" in general, and less, in particular, of the first American land which the Atlantic laves. In Ireland daisies have been

gathered on Christmas day, yet it is parallel with Labrador, a land locked up in almost perennial frost. Newfoundland, though in the latitude of the finest grape regions of France, is intensely cold for many months of the year, owing to the chill waters that envelop it, and other causes. It was "the land of fish" of our less remote Celtic ancestors—an isle of leaden fogs and fierce dogs, on whose bleak shores, indented with numberless bays, many a brave captain, according to the old ballads, "lost his limbs with frost." Exaggerated notions of the climate and inhabitants of the vast continental and insular regions known under the broadly generic term America were everywhere prevalent. One must choose between the equator and the poles: the temperate zones belonged only to the Old World. There were Cherokees, Mic-Macs, Caribs, Negroes, among whom lived a few white men, armed to the teeth, walking arsenals. But the holy mother, thinking only of the souls, in the wild region which the fancy of the day had painted, was eager to sally forth to win them to Christ.

It was not, however, in the designs of Providence that she should be the first Sister of Mercy to gaze upon the wondrous land so often visited by her in spirit. Like David, who amassed materials for the Temple of God, she could but prepare the stones of which the divine Hand would fashion a tabernacle wherein He might abide for ever. Like Moses, she led her faithful Israelites to the verge of the Promised Land, and then lay down to die, bequeathing to her holy successor the great work of translating them to the western isle.

CHAPTER II.

MOTHER M. DI PAZZI DELANY.

Her early Days—The Girl-Apostle—The Twelfth Companion of the Holy Foundress—Labor, Mortification, and Prayer—She creates in her Friend a strong personal Love for the Sick and Suffering—"The Saint's Corner"—Beautiful Needlework—Letters—Devoted Love for the Holy Foundress.—Faithful unto Death—Declines Re election—Faults—First to offer herself for Newfoundland—Happy early Days—"Religious of the present Day"—"Once I lived in a Convent, now in a Hotel"—Last Hours—Mother Delany prepares her Grave beside the Foundress—Her Sister—Letters.

THE day before the death of the holy foundress was the thirty-ninth birthday of her assistant and successor, Mary Delany, who was born in Cashel, at the house of her grandfather, Mr. Scully, November 10, 1802. Her father, the wealthy proprietor of large flour-mills at Castle Durrow, procured her a thoroughly Catholic education in the first schools of the day. From childhood she was very devout, and most exact in fulfilling her duties, especially such as referred directly to God. Prayer, fasting, and works of benevolence were her delight. She observed Lent and the other fasts of the Church in their primitive rigor—a practice by which, having no guide but her extraordinary fervor, she undermined her fine constitution. To her youthful austerities physicians ascribed the distressing attacks to which Mother Delany became subject in the latter half of her life. During the period which intervened between her return from school and her entrance into religion Miss Delany remained with her family at Castle Durrow, devoting herself to works of piety and charity. By her were her brothers and sisters prepared for the sacraments; the care

of their religious instruction was entirely confided to her, and she spared no pains to correct their faults and plant in their young hearts the germs of every virtue. Her example became the guide of their lives, and, whether they settled in the world or chose the cloister, they remained to the end faithful to the lessons of their devoted sister. One of her brothers, raised to a high office, exercised his magisterial authority in such a manner as to deserve to be styled "the protector of the unprotected"—a capacity in which his holy sister, who was wont to appeal to him in many an emergency, found him plenty of occupation. While in her beautiful home, Castle Durrow, her tenderness and compassion for the afflicted made her sympathize in all their miseries. And she denied herself many a comfort or luxury which her station seemed to demand, that she might bestow on them more abundant alms.

When Miss Delany joined the Mercy Institute, July 12, 1829, she offered herself a perfect holocaust to God and her dear poor. Including her, the Sisters numbered twelve. Their schools were overflowing. The sick on all sides were eager for their ministrations. Frequently during every week they visited three large hospitals to impart instruction and consolation to the suffering inmates. Miss Delany's education was of the first order. Her devotion to duty was remarked by all her young associates. To alleviate the sorrows of the poor, to enlighten their darkness, to remove their ignorance, to assuage their pains, seemed her sole ambition. Labor incessant, and mortification unstinted, were joyous things to her; she despised as nothing the sacrifice she had made of all that was hers for love of Him who possessed her whole heart. And so she went on to the end. For years before her happy death a trying infirmity of an epileptic nature hindered her daily visits to the sick poor. But she was ever earnest in urging her younger companions to give themselves as much as obedience allowed to a task so delightful to herself. Her

wealthy relatives were pressed into the service. By her eloquent words and letters she implanted in them a real, personal love for the sick and sorrowing.

Often and often was her facile pen employed to plead their cause. And more than once her friends gave generous alms rather out of compassion for her over-compassionate heart than in pity for those for whom she pleaded. Never was the memory of her pious and charitable home-life effaced from the minds of those who had witnessed it. The same may be said of her conventual career. Her devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus, her reverence for everything pertaining to the divine worship, her ardent love of the Blessed Sacrament—even her manner of genuflecting—excited devotion in others to the end of her days.

The life of this incomparable woman was one of unvarying exactitude in the observance of rule. When free from other duties she might be seen in a retired corner of the choir, her hands raised in ecstatic prayer. She loved to kneel on the spot on which, as one of “the first seven,” January 24, 1833, she had made the vows she kept so faithfully. The chaplain, observing her constantly in prayer, used to call the place where she knelt “the saint’s corner.” Though pain was her constant companion, she practised the common life to the end, going to the refectory for the little she ate, to spare the infirmarian; and present at every exercise when a less fervent soul, with half her ailments, would not have left the infirmary.

That this holy soul might live in the actual presence of the Blessed Sacrament, the mother-superior had a window made in a small tribune near the tabernacle, and here the aged religious spent her days; sometimes gazing in rapturous contemplation at the resting-place of her hidden Lord, and at intervals working for the altar or the poor. For her life was a perfect exemplification of the ancient monastic precept: *Pray and labor*. Her beautifully executed needlework was the admiration of all who saw it, espe-

cially the sacristans. Usefully and piously she filled up her days in suffering, prayer, and labor—a sweet, affectionate soul, who outlived all her early contemporaries, and during her whole life kept her heart where her treasure was—in heaven.

Mother Delany was a most ardent admirer of the holy foundress, and to the last loved to expatiate on her sanctity, and keep alive in the young religious the tradition of her sublime virtue. Her heart overflowed with gratitude and love for the heroic woman who had guided her early steps, and under whom she had made the vows which bound her indissolubly to God. Her zeal for the welfare of the Institute was boundless. She delighted to record its progress. “I was gratified last week,” she writes, “on seeing a number of our school-children dressed in the neat, modest uniform selected for their First Communion and Confirmation by our venerated foundress. Meeting them in the hall, I could not but stop and describe to them her love for children, and how she used herself make their dresses for these occasions.” Sometimes she regrets that the views of the holy foundress are not more strictly carried out by some of her own children.

Speaking of a *Life of Mother McAuley*, by Mother M. Vincent Hartnett, she says: “I know I could not do it better myself, but I am not easily pleased in what concerns our venerated mother, who was taken from us too soon. I regret there is not more said about her instructions.” Often she remarked that we should most carefully keep the enclosure of religious, and never depart from it, save to promote the good of religion. She would dwell on the joy of our beloved foundress on beholding the numerous offerings of her children, especially at the renovation of vows. On January 1, 1870, she mentions that fifty-seven Sisters had renewed their vows at the parent-house that morning. Everything that had ever been used by the foundress she treasured as relics—her work-basket, her

thimble, her little brass candlestick, the meditations copied by her when a novice at George's Hill, of which she writes :

"The mistress of novices directed our mother to alter her handwriting—a most difficult task to any one over forty. The beginning of the manuscript is a wonderful proof of her obedience and humility, showing the extraordinary efforts she made to imitate what was given her to copy. But the mother-superior, perceiving the difficulty and her great docility, desired her to desist, and write as she had been accustomed to write."

With Mother Clare Moore, of Bermondsey, Mother Delany kept up a most affectionate correspondence. United to her by a holy friendship, she sometimes forwarded to her precious souvenirs—a lock of the fine, soft hair of the foundress, a photograph of her grave and the marble *Mater Misericordiæ* over it, fresh ivy-leaves from that sacred spot. December 11, 1871, she writes :

"Here, thank God, the good work continues to progress. Our dear reverend mother is busy providing and regulating for the Night Refuge to be placed under the charge of our Sisters, who will reside there. It will be opened December 12, to perpetuate the memory of our Foundation Day."

It was to Miss Delany that the holy foundress confided the little establishment in Baggot Street while she served her novitiate in the Presentation convent. Nor was her judgment at fault in her choice of this devoted woman, who was ever her faithful and loving child.

During her long religious life, 1829–1872, Mother di Pazzi Delany held all the offices of the community. In 1835 she was appointed mistress of novices. In 1837 she became assistant. In 1841, a few days after the precious death of the holy foundress, she was elected superior. To this office she was re-elected, but could never again be induced to resume it, though more than once the votes of the Sisters were united in her favor. Her failing health she

alleged as an obstacle too great to be overcome. And, indeed, it is singular she should ever have been selected for the office; a mysterious ailment resembling epilepsy might well be considered a perpetual disqualification. But in the eyes of the Sisters the inconvenience was trifling compared with the advantage of being under the guidance of so holy and upright a soul. To please them she accepted the office of assistant. At length she became unequal to its active duties, and the community, out of respect for her humility and sensitiveness of conscience, released her from all offices of authority, which she had always regarded as heavy burdens. She continued to aid the Institute she loved so well by prayer, manual work, and the duties she was still able to perform, such as preparing children and adults for the sacraments.

This saintly religious was not wholly faultless. A certain austerity of manner sometimes repelled those who did not see beyond the surface; and a dislike to responsibility led her to shirk it whenever she could. This was a cross to the sweet and gracious foundress, whom she loved better than life, and from whose letters we learn the pain, if not impatience, with which she bore the holy mother's frequent absence. No sooner was a new house opened by the foundress than she was "persecuted" to return. Finally their mutual friend, Father O'Hanlon, Provincial of the Carmelite Order, was obliged, in his quality of director, to "put an end to that business," promising that if the holy foundress were really needed he would write for her himself. The assistant never felt happy in the absence of her beloved superior, and it was with difficulty she could practise a detachment in keeping with her other rare virtues.

It was well known that Mother di Pazzi "did not love foundations"; she was the only one of the early members who had but little of the missionary spirit. It was, therefore, a joy and a surprise to the foundress when she offered herself for the American mission. Before that important

migration was accomplished, however, the greatest cross of her life came—the holy foundress was translated from the miseries of her exile to the glories of her true home. She survived her thirty-one years, perhaps in punishment of her too natural affection, or to sanctify and glorify whatever was wholly terrestrial in her love. This cross was the crown of her sanctity ; henceforth she lived more in heaven than on earth.

While connected with the government of the community this dear mother advocated a very strict training of the young members. Like many elderly nuns, she looked lovingly back to early times, and sometimes spoke as though “the religious of the present day” were unworthy to be placed in the same category with the ancients. She was a stickler for the refined manners upon which the foundress laid so much stress. If the juniors forgot to stand aside on the stairs or passages to let the seniors pass, or omitted in their regard any of the “small, sweet courtesies” which make social life so charming, she was not the one to overlook such breaches of discipline. Once when a pair of novices, sent in haste on an errand, were rushing past her on a landing, without the usual courtesy and salutation, she administered a scathing rebuke : drawing herself up to her utmost height, she said, looking at the poor delinquents : “Once I lived in a convent ; but now I reside in a hotel !” When released from office, however, she never interfered with the administration. Her last superior described her as “a model of kindness, courtesy, and regular observance.” Towards the end her virtues grew in vigor and intensity, “increasing unto perfect day.” It was when making an effort to attend Mass that death summoned her. Mother M. Evangelist Forde, superior of the parent-house, wrote to Mother M. Clare Moore at Bermondsey, January 8, 1872 :

“You will be sorry to hear we are losing our dear old saint, Sister di Pazzi. She made her retreat and renewed

her vows with us all this day week. On Thursday she had one of her old attacks. As the usual remedies had no effect, I sent for the doctor, who found she had a stroke of paralysis. Yesterday she received the last sacraments with great signs of devotion. She cannot speak, but has full consciousness, and seems pleased that her long-wished-for summons has come.

“ I scarcely think our darling will pass another day with us. I cannot tell you how lonely I feel at the thought of losing her—such an example to all, such a real religious, so devoted to the Institute, and so sweetly charitable to the Sisters. It will be well for herself, for surely she is going to heaven, even, I think, without delay in purgatory, she has had such sufferings of mind and body for many years.”

At her last renewal of vows the holy mother was so long getting from her place to the communion-rail as to inconvenience the priest, who afterwards expressed a hope that he would not be delayed that way again. When he heard of her illness he was greatly alarmed and bitterly upbraided himself; but his fears were calmed when he was told of her great age and long delicacy. Her death, which occurred January 11, 1872, corresponded to her life. The superior kindly sent Mother M. Clare, of Bermondsey, a valued memento of her early friend, the *Imitation of Christ*, which the dear deceased had used during her whole religious life. The value of this precious tome was enhanced by the autograph of the foundress: “ To Sister M. di Pazzi from her affectionate mother in Christ.” Mother M. Juliana Delany forwarded to Bermondsey from the Convent of Mercy, Belfast, another memorial of the deceased: “ Foundations of the Spiritual Life,” transcribed by Mother M. di Pazzi.

Faithful unto death, Mother Delany, like Abraham, prepared her place of sepulture. When Mother Cecilia Marmion was laid beside the foundress in 1849, the space on the other side was reserved by Mother Delany for herself. A

few days before her death, happening to meet the gardener in the hall, she asked him to prepare her grave in the spot she had selected twenty-three years before. Her wishes were religiously fulfilled. Almost the last subject Mother McAuley received was the sister and godchild of Mother M. di Pazzi, eighteen years her junior, who still (1888) lives, to recall by her virtues the saintliness of the holy woman who first sent Sisters of Mercy to America.

CHAPTER III.

ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

Tea without Milk—The old House at Home—Delay—The Newfoundland Colony sets out May 11, 1842, exactly six Months after the happy Departure of the Foundress—Arrives on the Feast of the Sacred Heart—St. John's *en fête*—Delight of Bishop and People—Letters—Extravagant Praises—The Bishop's Invitation unheeded—Greatness of the Harvest, Fewness of the Laborers—A forlorn Hope—The Mercy Convent receives the Presentation Nuns after the great Fire.

BY writing and in person Bishop Fleming continued to press for his promised colony. In a pleasant letter to Limerick, Mother McAuley writes: "We expect St. John's will come about May or June (1841). We announced that whoever could take tea without milk should go as superior, it being difficult to procure milk there. Mother di Pazzi commenced this morning [taking tea without milk], and has declared herself, so far, an efficient candidate." The writer bewails the constant depopulating of "the poor old mother-house." "If four go to Newfoundland," she says, "and nine to Birmingham, thirteen vacant cells would be a curiosity here."

From one cause or another the colony destined for St. John's did not set out this year, and another had the honor of sending it, though the foundress would gladly have been the first Sister of Mercy to set foot on American soil. Her arrangements, however, were made. She led her disciples to the borders of what was to be to them the Promised Land, but she could watch their progress only from the great beyond.

In May, 1842, Bishop Fleming's request was granted. Sisters M. Ursula Frayne, Frances Creedon, and Rose Lynch

left the parent-house for the far West, the first Sisters of Mercy that breasted the billows of the Atlantic. Five priests and three candidates for the Presentation Order were among their fellow-travellers, and after the first qualms of sea-sickness their journey was interesting and very pleasant. It was on a bright day in leafy June, 1842, that the small band of Mercy Sisters steered into the Narrows. Staid men and mild women flocked to the wharves to kiss their hands and bid them welcome. The more nimble of the stout fishermen and their spirited boys climbed the masts to gaze on them. There were graceful ships and clumsy luggers, and brigs, barks, and schooners from many lands, their rigging alive with sailors in holiday garb, in honor of this auspicious arrival; it was, besides, the Feast of the Sacred Heart, seven months after the holy death of the venerated foundress, who would have chosen that day above all others for the inauguration of her Institute in America. Their vessel, the *Sir Walter Scott*, was sighted early in the morning, and the bishop went out four miles in a pilot-boat to meet them. He was greatly gratified to find his new children in excellent health and spirits after a voyage of thirty days. As it was doubtful whether the *Sir Walter* could get to St. John's that day, the bishop invited the Sisters aboard his boat—an embarrassing undertaking because of the heaving of the sea and the great height of the vessel. With surprise and delight they viewed their new surroundings as they were rowed to the picturesque old wooden town. They were received by Hon. Mrs. Tobin, at whose house they remained until the bishop brought a carriage to convey them to the recently established Presentation convent. Here began the pleasant relations between the Presentation Nuns and the Sisters of Mercy which for nearly half a century have never suffered the most transient interruption.

The bishop next drove them to the church to thank God for past mercies and invoke His blessing on their mission. As their convent was unfinished, he resigned to them his own

house, and for six months they were his guests. The older inhabitants will never forget that first home on Nunnery Hill—the place still retains the appellation—and the holy women whose prayers and labors sanctified it and have given it undying interest. May those who follow them in these happier days never cease to remember their virtues!

The Sisters began their labors without waiting, as Bishop Fleming remarks, for a day's rest or recreation to recruit their strength after so tedious a voyage. Their chief duties were the visitation of the sick and the instruction of the ignorant. He speaks with enthusiasm of their ministrations to the stricken, and the efficacy of their instructions, rendered still more efficacious by the suavity of their manners, and says they were looked up to with the greatest reverence by all classes of the community.

"Meanwhile," continues the zealous prelate, "I proceeded actively with the convent, and in a few months, with an expenditure of over two thousand pounds, I was enabled to conduct them to a commodious and comfortable edifice adjoining the cathedral, in a commanding position, presenting from the town and the harbor an extremely interesting object." The bishop, who wrote this account in 1844, adds: "They opened their schools May 1, 1843, and in a brief space had a considerable number of pupils, whose progress even now, from the exceedingly judicious system pursued, gives great satisfaction."

Like all the early prelates who founded Convents of Mercy, Dr. Fleming laments the fewness of the laborers where the harvest is so great. "Would to God," he writes, "that the Holy Spirit might inspire three or four daughters of the Island of Saints, gifted with the education and accomplishments suited to the varied and important duties of such an Institute, to embark on a mission which promises so rich a harvest!" The burning zeal of the writer makes him oblivious of the confusion of metaphor here, but there can

be no mistake as to his eager desire to push on the good work. "How happy should I feel at receiving on our shores a treasure so valuable! How gratified to be able to add to these pious Sisters a sufficient number to render the performance of the school duties facile, and save the poor sick from the privation to which, since May, they have been to a great extent necessarily subjected! Seldom has a more interesting, useful, or attractive field for the charitable exertions of the Sisters of Mercy been presented to view as that exhibited in Newfoundland, a country all whose institutions are in their infancy, without a single charitable asylum from one end to the other of an island larger than Ireland, possessing a rapidly increasing population, among whom honesty and sobriety prevail."

The bishop says that in many settlements the use of a lock is unknown. He praises the intelligence, docility, and thirst for education of the islanders, their deep veneration for their spiritual superiors, their fidelity to the faith of their fathers, and says "their zeal for everything connected with the glory of God and the extension of religion is without parallel in the Christian world." * The census of 1836, which credits St. John's with a population of 14,946, of whom 11,551 are returned as Catholics, he thinks incorrect: "what with the errors of the census, the steady increase of Catholics, and the conversion of several hundred Protestants," St. John's must have in 1844 at least 15,000 Catholics, including farmers, mechanics, shopkeepers, but the great bulk connected with the fisheries. "Among such a people," proceeds the bishop, "the Convent of Mercy is destined to work the greatest advantages. In other parts of the island there are populous localities where, in course of time, branches of that institution may be advantageously estab-

* Anspach, writing in 1815, says that the *Age of Reason* and *Rights of Man* had more authority among the inhabitants of St. John's than the Sacred Scriptures. This was not the case towards the end of his life, as he had provided Catholics, rich and poor, with means of receiving Catholic education.

lished to assist us and promote the works of religious instruction and charity in general." He notices that Newfoundland is the colony nearest the Irish shore, and that the climate, though exceedingly cold in winter, is remarkably salubrious. "Thus the difficulties to be surmounted by ladies going to St. John's are by no means so great or so many as must be encountered in any other clime; while the good to be accomplished, the souls of thousands of fellow-beings whom Jesus died to save lifting up their aspirations for succor at the hands of the children of Erin—all, all inviting, soliciting, praying, beseeching the truly religious to extend to their neglected brethren of Newfoundland that dearest of all blessings, a knowledge of the true faith—afford a motive the highest, the purest, and a reward the happiest and most glorious, because eternal, to those whom the spirit of God, and a devotion to the cross of Christ and the meek and glorious charity of the Blessed Virgin, should inspire to offer themselves to the service of religion in Newfoundland."

Strange to say, these glowing descriptions of the foggy isle and its people failed to attract laborers to the Mercy convent. The dull, cold ears which heard them from the lips of Archdeacon O'Connell, to whom they were addressed, were deaf to their import. Only one postulant joined the band, and in a year and a half Mother M. Ursula and Sister M. Rose returned to Ireland, leaving the infant mission in charge of Mother M. Frances Creedon and Sister M. Joseph Nugent. To the best of their ability these brave women led a forlorn hope, carrying out as far as possible all the objects of the Institute, till death separated them in 1847. Mother M. Frances would then have been entirely alone but for her charity in receiving the Presentation nuns when their convent was destroyed by the terrible conflagration which laid the town in ashes, June 9, 1846. A portion of the Mercy convent was partitioned off for them, and they remained guests of Mother Creedon for five years. They always spoke of their sojourn with grateful affection, and their

Annals record that "in that holy house they received all possible kindness and attention." In 1847 Miss Agnes Nugent joined Mother M. Frances ; another followed, who did not persevere. On September 18, 1850, Miss Mary C. Bernard arrived from Limerick. To her zeal and energy the Newfoundland convent owes much of its present prosperity—a prosperity achieved in the face of trials and difficulties of no ordinary magnitude.

CHAPTER IV.

BEFORE SUNRISE.

Frances Creedon as a Novice—Her Career in Newfoundland - Left almost alone—Quite alone—Her early Friends beseech her to leave the Island—Regarding herself as called by God, she will not desert her Post—Trials and Difficulties incessant—Her faithful Companion, Mother M. Joseph Nugent—Extraordinary Literary Endowments—Published Works—Twice a Novice—“Here will I dwell, for I have chosen it”—Great Success of the Schcols—Quality if not Quantity—Terrible Epidemic of Typhus—A Martyr of Charity—Mother Joseph gives her Life for a Sinner—Remarks from the local Journal—A welcome Accession—The Waterford Nugents.

MOTHER M. FRANCES CREEDON made her novitiate under the holy foundress. Being a native of Newfoundland and intimately acquainted with its wants and resources, she was sent to Dublin for that purpose by Bishop Fleming. “When I entered the novitiate in 1841,” writes the late superior of the Belfast convent, “I found there Sister M. Frances Creedon, who had been sent there some years before to prepare for the Newfoundland mission. She was a most exemplary religious, a great lover of poverty, full of zeal and piety, which made me very glad to be appointed to visit the sick and perform other duties with her.”

Great things were prophesied of Sister M. Frances, and the prophecies were verified in a far higher sense than that in which they were uttered. She was gifted with rare greatness of soul. Her tender piety, her large-hearted friendship, which was a blessing and a support to those who enjoyed it, her beautiful simplicity and thorough unselfishness, caused her to be loved and revered. Equally distinguished for the amiable courtesy of her manners and her mental

culture, she was the mother, the teacher, the friend of her pupils, and devoted all her energy to their advancement in piety and knowledge; they, in return, giving her the affection and gratitude of loving children. Few could realize the depths of her charity for the suffering poor, whom she relieved to the extent of her power. And many of the rich were taught by her how blessed it is to give when Jesus accepts for Himself what we do for the least of His brethren.

The vexations which beset the Newfoundland house in its early days would have broken the heart and spirit of an ordinary woman, but Mother Creedon had the indomitable courage of her mother in Christ and her steadfast spirit of religion. Again and again did her dear Sisters of the parent-house invite her to return and wait till the fog-draped isle was ripe for the experiment. But she loved the glory of God and the perishing souls about her far better than such ease and comfort as the beloved house of her novitiate could give. Selected and commissioned by the mother-foundress to establish the first American house, she felt herself an instrument in the hands of God, and, in spite of present partial failure, she believed that a glorious success would one day crown her humble efforts. Deeply loved by the distinguished women who had been her novitiate companions, and to whom she was tenderly attached—Mother Gibson of Liverpool, Mother Vigne of Dundalk, Mother O'Connor of New York, and many others—not one of them could prevail on her to abandon "the isle." The last was particularly pressing, urging that her friend could do more for God in New York than at St. John's. But Mother Creedon regarded her first mission as that portion of the vineyard in which the divine Husbandman had called her to labor. For four years she had but one disciple, and on these two devolved all the works of the Institute. It seems strange that those who felt so keenly their lonely, overworked situation should have sent them no help, and that Bishop Fleming's eloquent appeals to his countrywomen should have

evoked no response. True, extremes of climate and difficulties of another nature—which, however, are not of public interest—were great, and rumor more than trebled them. But, as Sisters of Mercy had bravely faced similar contrarieties elsewhere, we may conclude that all was permitted by an all-wise Providence that the first American house should, in a very special manner, be founded and grounded on the cross.

The companion of Mother Creedon deserves more than a passing mention. Born in Waterford, a city that had important commercial relations with Newfoundland early in the present century, Miss Maria Nugent received a most elaborate education. Greek and Latin classics, and French and Italian literature, were thoroughly familiar to her; and that she wrote her mother-tongue with vigor and elegance may be seen by her contributions to contemporary literature. Among her works are *The Virtuous Scholar*, from the French; *The Sacred Heart of Jesus*, from the Italian; a volume of sermons adapted from the most eminent Italian preachers, and *The Week Sanctified*. Her musical education was of a high order.

From childhood this erudite maiden felt a strong call to the religious life. She joined the Ursulines in her native city, but, prostrated by a severe attack of sciatica, she was obliged to leave just as her family were preparing to emigrate. Fearing that her complaint would not admit of her again entering a convent, she yielded to the entreaties of her aged mother, who besought her on bended knees not to leave her any more. The poor lady did not long enjoy the companionship she had so passionately craved. She died in 1833, just two weeks after her arrival in her far-away home. Immediately Maria, whose health had been improved by the long sea-voyage, sought admission to the Presentation convent. Here her illness returned. Though unanimously admitted to the habit, and later to profession, she could not bring herself to make her vows. So persuaded were the

nuns of her sanctity that they said they could not see her go. "And," say their Annals, "in consideration of her many inestimable qualities, the superioress, at the desire of the community, allowed her to try a second novitiate." But, much as she loved the nuns and their holy duties, she felt she was not called to their Institute. Returning to her brother's house in 1836, she led the life of a recluse, occupying herself for the next six years with the education of her nieces. On the arrival of the Mercy nuns, 1842, she felt that it was her destiny to join them. Their humble home was to her the house of God and the gate of heaven. Once inside its walls, she felt, in an indescribable way, that this was the place to which God had called her, and in an ecstasy of gratitude and love she exclaimed: "Here will I dwell, for I have chosen it."

Although the Mercy Institute does not, as a rule, admit to its membership ladies who have been in other orders, yet here was certainly a case for exception. It was a strong, powerful vocation, such as may be observed in all the representative women of an Institute. How many of the great religious of the Mercy Institute have been wont to thank God for having founded it in a special manner for *them* ! Which of us has not heard: "I could not be in religion if this Order had not been founded; much as I revere and admire all other orders, I could not profess in any but this"? Mary Nugent was ready to make her profession the day she entered; no fear, doubt, or misgiving ever again assailed her. Her thorough piety and superior education peculiarly adapted her for the duties of a Sister of Mercy. It was chiefly to conduct a high-school for young ladies that Bishop Fleming had introduced the Mercy Institute, as the Presentation nuns had already provided for the humbler classes. And the seemingly extravagant praises the bishop bestowed on the school did not seem exaggerated to those who knew that Miss Nugent was among the teachers.

In favor of this lady an exemption was made which is

the only instance of the kind recorded in our annals. The bishop having received from Rome the necessary authority, and the community consenting, Maria, now Sister Mary Joseph, was allowed to make her profession in a few months, the novitiate made in the Presentation convent being deemed sufficient. The case of Mother McAuley herself, though so dissimilar, was considered a sort of precedent. On the beautiful Feast of the Annunciation, March 25, 1843, Miss Nugent made her vows, being the first Sister of Mercy professed in America. Short but full was her religious career. She died June 24, 1847, of malignant typhus, contracted in her ministrations to the stricken in St. John's Hospital. On the Feast of Corpus Christi, having given spiritual and corporal aid to thirty-six patients, she felt the fever fires in her own veins, and, despite the most devoted care, she speedily succumbed. For two whole hours she had bent over a patient, alternately easing his pain and beseeching him to forgive the captain who had brought the scourge into port, and whom he called his murderer. A youth but lately full of health and strength, with bright prospects to dazzle him, he had sworn to the priest that he would never forgive that captain. At the price of her own precious life she saved his soul. "Well, madam," said he at last, "for your sake I'll forgive him." The priest, whom he had driven from his bedside, returned. The penitent now forgave for Christ's sake. He died soothed to the last by the devoted woman who was giving her life for him. Her death, which quickly followed his, was bewailed as a public calamity, the greatest that had yet befallen the colony.

Certainly the Newfoundland house could boast of quality if not of quantity.

The two holy women, who had borne their burdens with such fortitude and resignation, were now severed by death, and Mother Creedon, after five years' incessant toil, found herself alone in her convent. "Ever and anon," says the

journal that records the precious death of Sister Nugent, "might be seen these two pious Sisters, before or after the toils of the day at school, treading through our snow and pelted by our sleet to smooth the pillow of the death-bed of the afflicted, pouring into the ear of the infected words of promise and hope, in the wretched hovels of the poor or the hospital; and sometimes to those who, blessed with worldly prosperity, were solicitous in that dread hour to awaken God's mercy."

In a few months God sent Agnes Nugent, niece to the devoted Mother Joseph, to console poor Mother Creedon for the loss of her sweet companionship. Born in Waterford, 1830, Agnes had left that city with her family in 1833. Her father, John Vincent Nugent, Esq., High Sheriff, became identified with the political and material prosperity of the island, and his name is indelibly inscribed on its history. The Waterford Nugents had a local celebrity for rare intellectual endowments, and our young candidate was as highly educated as her gifted aunt, being a thorough classical scholar and perfect mistress of several modern languages. Though only eighteen, she had for years been anxious to dedicate herself to God as a Sister of Mercy. On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1848, she received the white veil from Bishop Fleming, this being the last ceremony at which he presided. Indeed, he arose from his sick-bed to pay this honor to a member of a family to whom religion in Newfoundland owed so much, and whom he so deeply respected. Two years later she was professed by Bishop Mullock, Dr. Fleming having died the death of a saint, May 28, 1850. He bequeathed all his property to the Sisters of Mercy for the erection and support of an orphanage, which, in memory of the patron of their founder and liberal benefactor, they called St. Michael's.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER MANY DAYS.

Valuable Accessions—Terrible Epidemic—The Orphanage—Generosity of Bishops Fleming and Mullock to the Orphans—Holy Death of Mother Creedon—New Houses—Monsignor Howley describes the Schools—"Kept busy"—Mother M. Xavier Bernard—Funeral through Walls of Snow—The People worship her Memory—Her God-like Charity.

ON the day of Miss Nugent's profession Mary C. Bernard, a young lady of twenty-three, received the white veil. She had come to Newfoundland to join the Sisterhood, and had, like those who preceded her, extraordinary piety, high intellectual culture, and a very pronounced vocation. Many others followed, and on the outbreak of the cholera, 1854 and 1867, they were able to devote themselves to the sick and dying with unabated zeal and fervor. The terrible parts enacted during the Newfoundland epidemics cannot easily be forgotten by those who shared them. Frequently, indeed, the Sisters, after nursing the dying, had to coffin the dead. Such was the insane dread of contagion on the part of officials, and even near relatives, that they would deposit the coffins at the doors of the houses over which the destroying angel had passed, and then run, as though the disease were some evil spirit which would assuredly seize them if they loitered.

In 1857 the old wooden convent erected by Bishop Fleming (1842) was replaced by an elegant stone structure built by Bishop Mullock. The Orphanage built in 1854 became a boarding-school in 1859, when the orphans were transferred to the monastery of Belvidere, the late residence of the ecclesiastical students. From seventy to one

hundred orphans are educated here, the institution being maintained by the revenue of a burial ground, by bequest, and by the offerings of the generous islanders. The inmates receive a plain education, and are trained to domestic work to fit them for earning their support. Adjoining the Orphanage is the House of Mercy. Bishop Mullock was fully as kind and generous as his worthy predecessor. Both belonged to the Seraphic Order. Bishop Mullock's first contribution to the fine convent the Sisters now occupy was £1,200. Among many benefactors, the late John Fox, Esq., deserves special mention, not only for his large private gifts, but also for having raised a fund for furnishing and decorating the new convent. But it would take more space than we can afford to mention all the benefactors of the Newfoundland convent.

July 15, 1855, Mother Creedon was called to her reward. Since her heroic labors among the cholera patients her health had been completely shattered. The works of the mission, the rigors of the climate, and the afflictions that had rained on her, so to say, during the thirteen years of her religious life on the island, had exhausted her strength. She had planted the good seed and watered it with her tears, but did not live to see it fructify. Having borne the burden of the day and the heat, she died, like a good soldier, at her post, and her mantle fell with blessings on her young, energetic successor, Mother M. Xavier Bernard, to whose zeal and holy perseverance, under extraordinary difficulties, her children attribute the prosperity they now enjoy. During the fifteen years of her administration she professed forty religious, fifteen of whom were natives of Newfoundland.

A third house was founded at Bright, 1861, and a fourth at St. John's, 1863, for the education of the children of the East End of that city. Another at Burin, 1863, and in 1866 still another at Petit Harbor, where the Sisters had the courage to reside for four years, teaching the children, in-

structing adults, and visiting the sick. As no resident priest could be procured and the Sisters were deprived of almost every spiritual consolation, they were recalled to the mother-house, 1869. A house was opened at Conception Harbor, and another near Burin, 1871. In all these the Sisters are occupied with the works of mercy, especially instructing the ignorant, relieving and consoling the sick, and visiting prisons, poor-houses, and hospitals. Numerous conversions are made, some most remarkable, but to record them might not be agreeable to living persons, whose feelings deserve consideration. One lady, who received the light of faith through their instrumentality, has recently made her profession among them.

The schools conducted by the Sisters of Mercy in Newfoundland "have always," writes Monsignor Howley, "worthily upheld the character of the Order, having sent forth young ladies highly accomplished, particularly in music, in which they have achieved a marked success." In the infant schools the object-lessons in vogue in Ireland and England for over fifty years have been found highly interesting to the little ones, as combining entertainment with instruction. A boarding-school has been opened at Littledale, conducted by a fine staff of vigorous, zealous religious. Heretofore it was considered rather a slur on the island that young girls had to go elsewhere in search of boarding-schools. But now St. Bride's College, Littledale, is spacious enough for all the islanders who prefer boarding to day schools, and many have been already attracted by the superior instruction given within its walls. The rougher work of foundation is long since over, and the sun of prosperity now beams on the Newfoundland convents. In early days two brave women waited five years for a companion; now bands of young, ardent subjects are received every year. "We are kept extremely busy," writes the successor of the early mothers, "between schools, visitation of the sick, prisons, and hospitals. We are tolerably well and very

happy. It seems to me a great blessing to be full of work, as there is then no time for the indulgence of any foolish feelings. God helps us on with bright hearts and great courage."

The death of Mother M. Xavier Bernard at the comparatively early age of fifty-five was a great blow to the Sisterhood. This dear mother was born in Limerick the year Mother McAuley opened her first house, 1827. Her father, Christopher Bernard, Esq., and her mother, Miss French, of Galway, died before she was ten, and she was placed at Laurel Hill Convent. While a mere girl she won the love and reverence of the nuns and her companions. One of the latter describes her as "an eminently holy, gentle, good girl." When she came to Newfoundland the mission was in a miserable condition for want of subjects. But after her arrival they came in crowds, and, far from being unable to sustain one house, she established seven. It is certainly owing to the courage and constancy of Mothers Creedon, Nugent, and Bernard that the Sisters are found on the island to-day. Their lives were a *sursum corda*. Their souls vibrated only to the holy and true. The will of God, as a guiding cloud and a pillar of fire, led them safely through the wilderness of peril. And what was lovingly accomplished by the travail of the few is making its practical results felt to-day throughout Newfoundland.

The long illness of Mother Bernard was a painful affliction to her loving children. While at confession, in May, 1879, she was stricken with paralysis of the brain, and the rest of her days were passed in a sort of mental twilight. She never fully recovered consciousness, but remained quite helpless mentally and physically. To loving hearts nothing is more painful than to see those they love "die atop." "Loving her as I do," wrote her worthy successor and life-long friend and co-worker, "her deplorable condition is a great trial to my poor heart—the beloved mother who for so long a time guided us so happily." Mother M. Bernard had

been for nearly thirty years as a ministering angel in Newfoundland. Her sweet presence, radiant with benignity, was familiar to all. Hundreds of matrons had been educated by her, and fondly remembered her as a zealous yet indulgent instructress, who won their hearts for God while she cultivated their minds. But it was chiefly to the poor and wretched that her whole heart went out in loving tenderness. Her strength was freely spent in seeking them out in their poor homes, nor would she desist from these labors of love when declining health warned her to be less prodigal of her efforts in their behalf. Her death, February 26, 1882, caused the deepest regret throughout the island. Protestants as well as Catholics grieved that so much genuine worth was taken from them, though it was only translated to its fitting home in heaven. The poor thronged around her bier, and with them many, now in comfortable circumstances, who recalled bitter days of hardship when she stayed their hunger and clad them in the fierce winters, often from her own scanty wardrobe. Snow-storms had blocked up the road leading to the cemetery, and the immense funeral cortége could not pass through the innumerable hillocks of snow. But the humble objects of her bounty turned out *en masse* with shovels, and a brown path quickly appeared between white walls. As the coffin reached the cemetery the cool, wintry sun shone out, but as it was being lowered "the quivering snowflakes fell upon it gently, as the tears of angels, weaving a funeral pall." And those who wept on seeing her precious remains disappear beneath a mantle of snow promised to deck her resting-place with the green shamrock and the crimson-tinted daisy of her early home on the Shannon, and to guard her virginal remains with hearts as warm and true as those that would have surrounded her had she slept in some emerald vale near her own beloved river.

It is with regret that we leave this beautiful character. Her inward and outward struggles are over. Her aims and

achievements have borne fruit by the self-abnegation that inspired and glorified them. Her whole life, illumined by the radiant glory of a supernatural faith, lives and works for God in the souls of all who knew her. Miss Bernard brought to her task a heart burning with zeal for her high mission, a mind stored with knowledge and adorned with elegant accomplishments. Traditions of her large-hearted charity to the typhus and cholera patients are yet rife among the poor. They love to recall her bright young face in these early days, and her pretty, winning ways to soothe their suffering and lighten their misery. No cloister could confine charity like hers, or prevent its making itself felt throughout the whole community. "We were twenty-five years working together," writes her successor, "in the most loving and sisterly harmony and deep affection. We had met at school ; she was ten years my senior, which made me all the more look up to her with reverence."

CHAPTER VI.

MEMORIALS OF THE BLESSED.

The Orphanage, the favorite Institution of all the Newfoundland Bishops—Mother M. Clare Tarrahan, the Mother of the Orphans—She sacrifices her Life for them—Sketch of Mother M. Vincent Nugent—To suffer or to die—Her intense Sufferings—All to All to gain All to Christ—Beautiful Death—Works of the Sisterhood—Their heroic Self-devotion—Before the White Throne—The Nineteenth Century peculiarly the Era of Women—No grander Women than the religious Pioneers of Terra Nova.

THE splendid stone Orphanage of St. John's, capable of accommodating 200 children, is an appropriate monument to Bishop Fleming, a man who gave his own house for the shelter of the orphans. The favorite institution of every bishop, it has had its heroines as well as the old wooden convent. Among them was Mother M. Clare Tarrahan, who, when an epidemic of typhus broke out, showed night and day her untiring love for her dear orphans. When scarcely able to walk, she used to care for them as few others could, till incessant fatigue undermined her delicate constitution. Sisters and children hoped against hope that this gentle mother would be spared them, but her divine Spouse wanted her home. Though suffering from malignant typhus, she never lost consciousness, and was able to love God and welcome His blessed will to the latest moment of her life. Rigid and austere to herself, she was most indulgent to others, as such characters frequently are. It was chiefly owing to her motherly care that, out of sixty orphans attacked, only four died. On November 11, 1871, the thirtieth anniversary of the happy departure of the holy foundress, whom she had so faithfully

imitated, Mother M. Clare answered the Bridegroom's summons.

On the 4th of March, 1885, died Mother M. Vincent Nugent, of whom it was said that there was not a cove or harbor on the vast coast-line of Newfoundland in which her name was not a synonym for kindness and charity for thirty-five years. The greater part of her religious life was spent as mother of the orphans collected at St. Michael's Convent, Belvidere, where, on the site of Dr. Fleming's old house, the new Orphanage has arisen, a great ornament to this pretty suburb. For years her sufferings were most excruciating. A painful neuralgic affection allowed her scarcely an hour's respite, yet no murmur or complaint ever escaped her lips. Like St. Teresa, her motto was: To suffer or to die. "To her," says the local journal, which records her death as a national calamity, "all classes came for consolation, advice, assistance—the stalwart fisherman with his festering wounds to be dressed; the broken-hearted wife with complaints against her drunken husband, pleading that her little ones might be received into the Orphans' Home; the young man repenting of his waywardness, to receive correction and encouragement. There was no species of affliction that she did not yearn to mitigate. Her own intense suffering, borne with noble patience for years, instead of souring her temper elevated her to the heroism of a martyr."

During typhus and cholera epidemics this good mother was one of the band that lived among the stricken, lighting their fires, preparing their food, cleaning their houses, and rendering them with willing love the most menial services. She was the oldest Sister of Mercy on the island, and never did a warmer heart beat on cold *Terra Nova*. Her end was singularly beautiful. No murmur escaped her, even when her pains amounted to agony. "Thy will be done" was her favorite aspiration, and this she repeated at intervals till speech failed. When the bishop called she recog-

nized and spoke to him, but so absorbed was she in God that she had little to say to any one. Joining in all the prayers said for her, she frequently pressed the crucifix to her lips, and as the last absolution was uttered over her she resigned her life to Him whom she had so faithfully loved and served from childhood. By profession she was the oldest member of the community, having received the black veil from Bishop Mullock in 1852. She had left Waterford in 1833, a beautiful, bright-eyed babe of three, and in 1883 she left the island-home, where she had fulfilled her life-mission of elevating mankind, for the resplendent shores of the Promised Land.

With a broad interpretation of the *Works of Mercy*, the Sisters of *Terra Nova* have provided bounteously for the instruction of the ignorant of every class, the comfort and relief of the sick, and the enlightenment and consolation of the unfortunate inmates of prisons and poor-houses, who have so few to care for them, and whose unhappy experience it sometimes is that even a mother can fail to have pity on an erring child. Seeing Jesus in His suffering members, it was, as it were, a necessity with these holy women to do good to them for His sake. Hence they have been apostles and evangelists, bringing men to Christ by word, and painting Christ to men by example. They have studded the chief outposts of the country with convents, every one of which is, in its humble way, a great religious and intellectual centre to the surrounding inhabitants. The Sisters teach the chief schools for young ladies at St. John's, infant schools for boys and girls of the wealthier class, and schools of every grade for children in the humbler walks of life. The self-devotion of this Sisterhood has always been remarkable. Over twenty years ago, returning thanks for a letter of condolence sent by the writer on the death of one of their number, a member of this community quite deprecates the idea that Sisters of Mercy should mind having damp, cold feet, not to speak of wet

garments and similar inconveniences. "I heartily wish," she writes, "that we were found worthy to suffer something for Christ's dear sake." Such is the spirit in which these holy women labor, and this explains their success. Speaking of the struggles of early times, a Sister of to-day writes: "The dawn of better days gilds the horizon with roseate hue." Better religious than the hardy pioneers the island may not hope to see. Steadfast in faith, hope, and charity, these valiant, adventurous women wove into their own lives the lofty virtues of the saints. They knew how to live, yea, and how to die, for their brethren. Their lives spoke a language and wore an insignia that brought God near to the weakest as well as the strongest intellects, and left a benediction in every memory. They taught no religion of mere ethics; this would be the old mockery of a stone in lieu of bread. Like their divine Master, they *did* before they *taught*. The Indians of the isle spoke of them as the turbaned Turk spoke of their Sisters in other lands: to their uncultured imagination they were "angels without wings." The chrism of Pentecost and the glory of Thabor set upon them the signet of everlasting rest, and now, before the glorious white Throne, they will not, like the friends of Joseph, forget those with whom they spent the days of their exile.

In this nineteenth century, which woman has made so peculiarly her own, there are few women worthy to mate even intellectually with these gentle soldiers of the cross in Newfoundland. And we find none to exceed them in energy, labor, devotion to duty—in that personal holiness which is, to a life of toil for the elevation of our race, what the golden nimbus is to the sun. May the coming race of Newfoundland religious be ever worthy of their holy prototypes!

CHAPTER VII.

STORY OF THE ISLE.

The History of the Mercy Institute almost coeval with the History of the Church in the Island—Neither the French Lily nor the British Lion thrive on its Soil—Huntsmen of the Deep—Naval Despotism—Persecution for Conscience' Sake—The real Colonizers—Governor Milbank's Policy—The Easter Duty—The Islanders of To day—We will leave Legend to its own Realm—Stranger than Fiction or Fairy Tale—How much the Island owes to Bishop Fleming—Refused all Help by the Home Government—Letter to Earl Grey—The Phoenix City—Bishop Fleming's extraordinary Zeal for Catholic Education—Bishop Mullock—"Kill the Dogs"—Hawthorn Hedges—Painted Fish—Neglect of Agriculture—Languages—Æsthetic Tastes—High Morality of the Women—Then and Now.

THE history of the Order of Mercy in Newfoundland is almost coeval with the history of the Church, which had but small development previous to its arrival. In 1713 the whole island came under the dominion of England; but little or nothing was done to colonize it. Neither the French lily nor the British lion thrived on the soil. Its prosperity is due chiefly to the hardy Irish settlers, huntsmen of the sea, who chase the seal from its ocean fastnesses, and gather the cod and the ling to supply a relish for the meals of rich and poor in many lands.

For some time the country was at the mercy of a naval despotism, and persecution raged unchecked. Priests were banished, houses in which Mass was said were burned to the ground; to hoist the Irish flag and to receive the sacraments from a priest were equally heinous offences, to be punished at least by fine and banishment. Previous to the arrival of Bishop O'Donnel, the founder of the Church in the island, there were no regular religious ministrations,

no facilities for education. Money made in the island was spent elsewhere, as is the case to-day with British "Crown" colonies. No country in the world owes more, even materially, to its bishops, clergy, and religious; they were the real colonizers, road-makers, bridge-builders, teachers of every handicraft. Had not Bishop O'Donnel come, the Irish settlers would have followed the example of those who, having made fortunes, left the country they had drained of its wealth. Indeed, Governor Milbank accused him of encouraging them to stay, "though Mr. O'Donnel must be aware that it is not the interest of Great Britain to encourage people to winter in Newfoundland." Moreover, his excellency finds fault with the bishop for giving people absolution, for otherwise "they would go home for it at least once in two or three years"; which shows how particular Irishmen were, in the age of persecution, about receiving the sacraments.

When the French governor left, after the Peace of Utrecht, some English parsons seized the church, and the very tombstones of the dead were used as doorsteps by these marauders. The fisheries, however, needed strong arms and stout hearts, and Irish immigration, of a periodic nature, was officially encouraged. But the fishermen had come to stay. The vigorous efforts of the government to retard the progress of the colony have long since ceased. The islanders of to-day have scarcely a grievance for which the remedy is not in their own hands. Newfoundland is no longer a *Terra Incognita*. Its mineral wealth is appreciated, its *fauna* and its *flora*; its natural history and its aborigines have been abundantly explored and discussed, and floods of light have been thrown on its dark places by the researches of later years. A century ago its population was estimated at 7,500 souls, exclusive of some 6,000 who were mere birds of passage, returning every winter to distant homes.

The population is now over 200,000, mostly descendants

of Irish fishermen. At its discovery it was peopled by a fierce race, who fought to keep the pale-faces from their salmon fisheries, and the Mic-Macs from their hunting-grounds. About these prehistoric times many stories are afloat among the sturdy men that delve the waves, and their wives and little ones in the huts that fringe the shore. But we will leave legend to its own beautiful realm, for the true story of the isle is stranger than fiction or fairy-tale.

It is, perhaps, to Bishop Fleming more than any other individual that Newfoundland owes even its material prosperity. In 1847 he describes himself as weakened and broken beyond cure, after thirty years' labor on the island. The terrible losses by fire preyed upon his mind. Knowing that fifteen thousand pounds were given to the Protestant bishop out of the immense sums collected for religious purposes through Queen Victoria, he hoped some aid might be given to his own bereaved flock. Writing to Earl Grey, Secretary of State, he says: "Surely, my lord, it is not unreasonable if I, with the deepest respect and in all the humility of sad suffering, pray your lordship to extend here a helping hand, to enable me to reopen schools to which no fewer than 3,000 children look for instruction." Strange that so modest and touching an appeal should be denied! Yet the Anglican church, to which such vast sums were devoted, was still unfinished when the beautiful Catholic cathedral, surrounded by groups of fine convents, colleges, and schools, crowned the Phoenix City.

Bishop Fleming's zeal for Catholic education never abated. He left nothing undone to establish and foster schools. He spared no expense on them. And when a carriage and pair were presented to him he sold them to supply a school with necessary furniture. The purchaser, Dr. Carter, created amusement by driving about the town in a vehicle with gilded mitres on its panels. The cathedral is a fine monument of the architectural taste of this cultured prelate.

Though the Catholic bishops fully realized the value of the priceless treasures disporting themselves in the submarine ridges, yet they sought to create a taste for agriculture and a laudable ambition in every workingman to raise his own vegetables, flax, and hemp, and make home-spun his ordinary wear. To facilitate this last, spinning and weaving were introduced in the convent schools. Bishop Mullock showed that millions of sheep could be raised on the wild pastures. This useful animal might supply abundance of fresh meat, and, what is scarcely less important in a cold country, warm clothing. But for this he insists on the extermination of the dog, which, indeed, has almost exterminated the sheep. The celebrated orator, Father Burke, refused to believe all the fine stories told about dogs, and any one who sees a case of hydrophobia will lose his love for the canine. But in Newfoundland the dog is a nuisance of the worst species. "Kill the dog," says Bishop Mullock, "introduce settlers, encourage domestic manufactures, and Newfoundland will be the paradise of the industrious man."

As a fish-producing country the island is unique. Seal and cod fisheries, preparing cods' sounds (gelatine) and cod-liver oil, have caused people to neglect its agricultural resources. Cereals, berries, the fruits and vegetables of the temperate zone, flourish wherever hands can be spared to raise them. The bishop mentions hawthorn hedges as fine as those of Ireland in proof of the comparative mildness of the climate; for this beautiful blossom of poet and peasant is a hot-house plant in Russia as far south as Moscow. So highly do the people value their own fish that the fish of the torrid zone, partly, perhaps, because of its brighter tints, is spoken of as painted fish in comparison. Yet the writer has tasted fish of excellent flavor between the tropics.

Like all countries depending largely on one special industry, Newfoundland has occasional seasons of depression

from partial or total failure of the "staple." It would, therefore, be well for the island if the advice of the early clergy and religious were more generally followed.

Gaelic, French, and Mic-Mac are spoken, but the chief language is English. The denominational system gives to each denomination the right to educate its own children, thus removing a grievance which disturbs other regions, and insuring to every child a moral training no other system can confer. The government contributes to the support of the orphans. From its position Newfoundland is likely to be always a maritime country; but there are those who believe that the trident of Neptune is to be the sceptre of the world.

Bishop Mullock did much to cultivate the æsthetic tastes of his people. He adorned the sanctuary with the choicest productions of brush and chisel, for he loved to offer the works of genius to Him who gave it. He gratefully records the kindness shown him in all parts of the island, Protestant fishermen being always ready to join Catholics in manning a boat for him. He notices that there were rarely more than eight or ten prisoners in jail; that grievous crimes are rare and capital offences almost unheard of; immorality is quite uncommon. The exceptionally correct lives of the women may be attributed to the high moral culture given them by the religious. A prominent citizen said to the late John Francis Maguire: "The educational labors of the Sisters are doing much to preserve the virtue of female youth, and nowhere are these holy women more valued than here."

As yet the iron horse is little known; * many of the Sisters have never seen a railway. But the delicious dip of the oar is heard on the beautiful lakes and streams of the romantic isle, and heretofore the people seemed satisfied with their fine water-routes. But, writes a native, "the

* The line from St. John's to Harbor Grace, the second city, is the only railway on the island (1888).

poetic has given way to the substantial." Till recently the interior was unexplored, and the Newfoundlanders had to depend on other countries for their food. But on these points there is a gradual improvement.

What a change from the days, not so distant, when a powerful nation planned to keep Newfoundland a huge fishing-station! Proud may be the race that peopled this island of its millions of Catholics in the United States and far-off Australia. "The English language and the Irish race are flooding the earth," says a great English writer. But nowhere has that race done a grander work by its clergy, religious, and lay people than on the bleak shores of Terra Nova.

THE UNITED STATES.

CHAPTER VIII.

CALL TO THE UNITED STATES.

The Bishop of Pittsburgh in Carlow—Not unexpected—Obsequies of Dr. Fitzgerald—The Bishop asks for Sisters—He explains his Views—The First Seven—Obstacles—Power of Prayer—Bishop Haly and Mother Warde—The Bishop and Clergy conduct the Pittsburgh Volunteers outside Carlow—Intense Grief of the Towns-people—Followed by the Poor, the Blind, and the Maimed—Blessings and good Wishes.

LATE in September, 1843, the appearance of a clerical stranger of magnificent physique in the streets of Carlow created unusual comment in that quiet provincial town. It was Right Rev. Michael O'Connor, first Bishop of Pittsburgh, who was consecrated in Rome, August 15. He was already busy providing for the spiritual wants of his vast diocese, which had just been detached from Philadelphia.

There were those in Carlow to whom his presence was not wholly unexpected. Dr. Cullen had informed his nephew, Father Maher, the previous June, that Dr. O'Connor* was coming to Rome to ask leave to become a Jesuit, and gave it as certain that he would, instead, be made Bishop of Pittsburgh, in which case he would go to Carlow

* As pastor of St. Paul's, Pittsburgh, Dr. O'Connor had been named Bishop of Pittsburgh. He went to Rome "to beg off," but the Pope obliged him to accept the mitre.

Bishop O'Connor's first knowledge of the Order of Mercy was when, in 1835, he was asked to translate some chapters of the Rule of the Sisters of Mercy into Italian, there being at the time question of approving said Rule.

for Sisters of Mercy. When Father Maher read to the Sisters his uncle's letter, they were somewhat excited at the thought that some of their number might be chosen for that far-away mission. But they paid little attention to it. Bishop England, Bishop Clancy of Demerara, and other prelates, had visited Carlow for Sisters, and nothing had come of it. Besides, Dr. Fitzgerald, President of Carlow College, who had been the friend of the convent from its foundation, was dying. His illness was the usual topic of conversation, and for the time interested them more than anything else. They visited him daily, doing for his comfort everything that affectionate gratitude could suggest. He died October 2. It was on the occasion of his obsequies that they first saw Bishop O'Connor, who chanted the eighth lesson of the Office for the Dead.

In the evening, October 4, the bishop called at the convent. Father Maher, who accompanied him, had been directed by Dr. Cullen to use his influence with the Sisters in forwarding the bishop's views. The community received him with great respect, but it was only when he begged a few nuns for his distant mission that his visit assumed a serious aspect. Next morning he said Mass in the convent chapel. He preached a simple but strong sermon on the wants of the church to which he had just been espoused, and the nature of the assistance he hoped to receive in Carlow. Prayer, fasting, and consultation followed. Many of his auditors felt the germs of a vocation to the foreign mission stirring within them, and were not only willing but eager to share the proposed good work. But a painful feeling of anxiety crept over some, perhaps all. Were they indeed to part? At an interview with the mothers, in which the project was earnestly discussed, the bishop requested permission to lay his views more particularly before the community, which was readily granted. In clear, eloquent language he set forth the advantages he hoped would accrue from the labors of the Sisters in his

diocese, where the need for them was so great ; that, therefore, however valuable their works were at home, they would be infinitely more so abroad. He dwelt particularly on the immense good to be done by teaching the young in a rapidly growing country, where it was all-important to establish Catholic schools. The instruction of adults he made a chief point, and he spoke of founding a hospital, Pittsburgh having no institution for the sick. He gave a graphic sketch of the Smoky City and its resources, and lauded the willingness of the people to co operate with his efforts for the good of religion.* He would not urge any one to embark in the cause who felt not a strong desire to promote God's glory and the salvation of souls. But he begged the prayers of all for this grand object, and requested that the result of their communings with God, their superiors, and their spiritual advisers might be reported to him at the earliest moment possible.

As will be readily supposed, the burning words of the ardent young prelate* were not spoken in vain. All felt a longing desire to follow him to the Keystone State, but no one uttered a word to that effect ; fearing their own will, and anxious only for the accomplishment of the Divine will, they waited to be specially called upon. It was agreed, however, that if the foundation were accepted Mother Warde would be a suitable leader. Her enterprise, zeal, and experience qualified her † for the difficult position. As she had been recently relieved of the superiorship of the Carlow establishment, it looked as though Providence had

* Bishop O'Connor was then only thirty-three years old.

† Madam Warde was in Westport, helping Mother M. Paula Cullen with the foundation there, when the American mission was first mentioned in letters from Dr. Cullen (then head of the Irish College, Rome, afterwards Cardinal) to Father Maher. Dr. Cullen advised Bishop O'Connor to apply for Sisters to the Carlow house, in which he had seven relatives. All this was spoken of in letters between Carlow and Westport, though the foundation was regarded as a thing that would never take place. Drs. Cullen and Kirby were frequent visitors at the Carlow house. The latter is still (1888) living. Dr. Wiseman (afterwards Cardinal) had three first cousins in the Carlow convent, and the "American project" was also mentioned in his letters to them, Dr. Wiseman being a particular friend of Bishop O'Connor.

directed things so as to secure her services to the contemplated house.

While matters were in this uncertain stage Father Maher took the liveliest interest in the proposed foundation, and urged Mother M. Cecilia—whom we have described in connection with New Zealand—to confer on the subject with the twenty-three Sisters who formed her community. From first to last every one was willing to sacrifice to God her love of country and community, and embark for the distant West. Having prayed and taken counsel again and again, Mother Cecilia decided to send the mission, and selected the following from her community of volunteers :

1. Mother M. Frances Warde, who at once acquiesced, though with a pang of keenest sorrow at the prospect of parting from so many of her first children. She generously overcame every obstacle, within and without, and began preparations with an energy truly edifying.

2. Sister M. Josephine Cullen, a gentle, holy soul, full of zeal and charity, and suited in every way to promote God's glory in the New World.

3. Sister M. Elizabeth Strange, the only one of that fervent band now (1888) living.

4. Sister M. Aloysius Strange, who kept up in her community recollections of the saint whose name she bore.

5. Sister M. Philomena Reid, a novice of great sweetness and unusual promise.

6. Sister Veronica McDarby, a lay Sister, so named by the holy foundress to keep alive among her companions the remembrance of another Veronica, whom she had loved so tenderly that she took her early death (1837) as one of her greatest crosses.

7. Sister Margaret O'Brien, a soul singularly gifted with piety and humility, and of whom the writer heard the late Bishop O'Connor say that he never met man or woman who possessed a higher degree of common sense and sound judgment. It was her desire to serve God as a

lay Sister, but, though she entered as such, her wishes were set aside, and she was obliged, greatly against her will, to enter the rank of choir religious.

It would not be easy to find included in the mystic number *seven* a band of religious more suited in every respect for the work to which they offered to dedicate themselves, and accordingly the devil raised obstacles in unexpected sources to the fulfilment of their pious designs. Objections were made on all sides. It was said that the community would suffer on losing seven of its best members; the schools and other institutions could not give up so many without serious loss. Relatives strenuously opposed a proceeding which must deprive them of those they held dear, who, though no longer inmates of their happy Christian homes, had always been at hand to cheer, console, and advise them. The missionaries used the most persuasive arguments with their friends, beseeching them to put no hindrance to the work of God.

It was with extraordinary difficulty that a reluctant consent was wrung from them, and no sooner did they give it than they withdrew it. They declared positively that those who were novices should not go, and raised immense difficulties regarding the professed. To Mother M. Frances Warde fell the task of consoling and reconciling all. Relations were urged to come see for themselves. When the seven volunteers told them they really wished to engage in the glorious but arduous work of transplanting their Order to American soil for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, they soon became imbued with their contagious enthusiasm, invoked God's benison on the good work, and aided it by every means in their power. There was but one exception—the widowed mother of Sister M. Philomena Reid, who declared she would never consent to separate from a daughter she passionately loved. Pained, indeed, but nothing daunted, Sister M. Philomena began a novena to her patron saint, and at its close Mrs. Reid

called, quite unexpectedly, and gave her consent and blessing to her beloved child, who received the good news with grateful joy.

Bishop Haly was a warm friend to the mission,* and approved of the arrangements made by the mothers. He desired, however, that Mother Frances and Sister M. Aloysius Strange should come back in two years, and declared that all should be at liberty to return whenever they pleased to their first religious home—a privilege of which not one availed herself. It was singular that he stipulated for the return of Mother Warde, for it was well known that he did not like her. He had been an intimate friend and frequent guest of her family, and always addressed her by her Christian name, Frances. She often told the writer how pained she was at the attitude he assumed towards her, and could never understand it. He was, however, enthusiastically devoted to her saintly cousin and successor, Mother M. Cecilia Maher.

Bishop O'Connor, who was bent on compressing the business of months into days, left Carlow when his proposals were accepted, and transacted the rest of the business by letter. The Sisters were to meet him in Dublin, November 3, and embark for Liverpool the night of that day. On All Souls' Day they bade adieu for ever to their sweet convent home, and proceeded in carriages to Naas. They were all young, ardent, and affectionate, and, keenly alive to the sorrow of parting from their dear friends, they wept profusely. But never did they waver for a moment. Sustained by zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of the immortal souls His Son died to save, they were ready to make every sacrifice for His sake. The day of their departure was a day of unfeigned grief for the whole town. Crowds came to say good-by: the poor, the blind, the

* To make things easier for Bishop O'Connor and the Pittsburgh foundresses, the Carlow community, with the sanction of Bishop Haly, transferred their dowries to the Pittsburgh house.

mained swelled the cortége. The cries and wailings which rent the air made the doleful pageant resemble a funeral procession of the olden time. The bishop and priests came processionally to conduct them outside the town and shower blessings and good wishes upon them. And so, on a bright November morning, when the leaves were red and yellow, though the air was still balmy, the little band of pilgrims—a grain of mustard-seed, indeed—wound their way out of the chapel in which they had consecrated themselves to God, in which they had hoped their remains would lie for the last offices of the Church, and looked their last on the pretty town in which they had, when little more than children, consecrated their pure hearts to God for ever.

CHAPTER IX.

"THE HOLY SOURCE."

Early Days—Mother McAuley seems to lose Courage—Confidence Rewarded—Benefactors—A holy Dancing-Master—Bishop Nolan—Retreats—Furnished Lodgings—Liberality of Father Maher—Love of the Holy Foundress for Carlow—Grotesque Costumes of the early Candidates—A "Mosaic of Odors"—Hard Work on Recreation Days—"Pay as you go"—Christmas, 1839—"Forget thy People and thy Father's House"—High Postage—First Plum-pudding—Special Novice—Mistress—No Council or Chapter—A poor Scholar—Gratitude to God.

MOTHER MCAULEY came to Carlow April 10, 1837, with five zealous companions. The interest of seven thousand pounds was given in perpetuity by a worthy, industrious Carlow man for disbursement among the poor, but no provision was made for the Sisters. Such was their poverty that the holy mother became depressed, and, as she could not remain to share it, shrank from subjecting them to its privations. "Let us," said she, "return to Dublin." The Sisters, however, begged her to allow them to remain and brave all difficulties, which, as they were so willing, she gladly did. This was the only time Mother McAuley ever seemed to lose courage—the devil, no doubt, magnifying the obstacles to prevent or delay a work destined to promote in a remarkable degree the salvation of souls.

Very soon their confidence in God was munificently rewarded. John Nolan gave them two thousand pounds to build a convent. The generosity of other friends made their progress easy. The Nolan family, of humble rank, but pious, laborious, and self-sacrificing, were their chief benefactors. Long since they have all passed away, but they will never be forgotten in the convent so deeply indebted to them. Twice a week at least they are specially

remembered by the Sisters, who are at once their beneficiaries and their almoners, for Mass and Communion are offered in the convent chapel for the repose of their souls two days every week.

Dr. Fitzgerald furnished the chapel; Mr. Wall, "a very holy man," who had taught dancing to three generations of Carlow people, gave a ciborium; presents of all kinds were sent by the clergy. The presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament consoled the Sisters in their labors and privations. Their first retreat was conducted by Bishop Nolan, a saintly, mortified prelate, whose instructions were directed to awaken in them the highest esteem and love of their vocation, and an ever-increasing gratitude to the heavenly Giver. They were his dying words. Death unexpectedly robbed them of this gentle, holy father a little later. He became their advocate in heaven. Their progress attracted universal attention. His brother preached their retreat in 1838, and so zealous was he in inculcating devotion to the Sacred Heart that the Sisters added an act of consecration to that divine Object to their morning prayers, and a petition for grace to make a holy Communion at the hour of death to their evening devotions—additions observed to this day in the houses that have sprung from Carlow.

The community increased so rapidly that the sleeping apartments, including two garrets, were insufficient, and Mrs. Nolan, who lived next-door to the temporary convent, lent them her upper rooms. The five novices accommodated in this way were amused at being sent "to furnished lodgings." In 1838 a lady possessing every qualification for admission save dowry was sent to the convent by Father Maher, who placed four hundred pounds in the funds to her credit, empowering the superior to draw the interest from the stock-holders. This priest *

* Later, when the chapel of the new house was found too small for their numbers Father Maher gave three thousand pounds to enlarge it.

bestowed numberless gifts on the Sisters, but would hardly allow them to thank him. December 10, 1838, many ladies received the habit in the cathedral, the mother-foundress being present. Carlow was always redolent of the spirit and practice of poverty. The bridal dresses of the novices-elect were of thick white muslin, the veils home-made lace, the flowers of the simplest quality. The expense of supplying a *déjeuner* to the guests did not exceed five pounds. But it was only in the material part that poverty prevailed, for she wished the music to be of the finest description, and would engage the best sacred orator within reach for the sermon. It was always a joy and a gratification to her to abide with her Carlow children, who had imbibed so much of her sweet, holy spirit. Perhaps the importance of this house, as destined to spread her Institute to the American Continent and the isles of Oceanica, was made known by Heaven to her.

Our trim candidates of to-day will learn with interest how their predecessors were robed during the first six months. The dress was of coarse, black stuff, plaited from the throat to the waist, so that a little alteration could change it to a habit. A cape partly concealed the figure. The head-dress was grotesque: a large net caul lined with black calico; a high horn comb, and a brown paper bag inverted, were used to give the crown of the cap the required altitude. Over the whole was thrown a heavily-worked black lace veil. The cap itself was burdensome enough to a young girl, but the paper and calico lining made it trebly penitential. Tall ladies looked almost seven feet high, and the smallest little short of six.

The chapel was twelve feet by ten, a smothering place to pray in; another room served as kitchen, refectory, coal-cellar, and laundry, and gave out "a mosaic of odors." Band after band of blithe young creatures came, to glory in the spirit and practice of such poverty. At first incessant labor seemed strange to them. One new-comer was directed

by a blooming novice to ask for recreation. The favor was graciously accorded. But, unaware of the small amount of relaxation implied thereby, and seeing the duties go on as usual, she thought reverend mother had forgotten the promised treat, and begged some one to remind her. As no one did so, she exclaimed: "Oh! if they work this way on a recreation day, what will they do on other days? I can never stand it."

When they entered the fine new house, July 2, 1839, they still had ample opportunity to practise poverty. The community had then no funded property; it was by the most rigid economy that the pensions of the Sisters could be made to cover expenses. To go in debt was never thought of in these early days: "Pay as you go" was the rule. The food was plain, simply served, and sparing in quantity. Plates of thick slices of bread, thinly buttered, stood between every four or five, and there were but three knives and forks for the use of all. The cells were ill-furnished, and the supply of candle-sticks, sweeping-brushes, and dust-pans was painfully scanty. By ten A.M. the whole house was swept and garnished.

These busy young people dreaded the silence of a long retreat, yet when it came enjoyed it. It was given (1839) by Father Keogh, who warned them, no one knew why, against the subtle vice of ambition. He spoke beautifully of the Blessed Sacrament, and recommended frequent Communion as a most effectual means of sanctification.

On Christmas Eve, 1839, all repaired to the chapel about 11 P.M. Reverend mother recited the Litany of the Infant Jesus, the *Angelus*, and the *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*. They sang the *Adeste*, made a visit to the crib, and retired to rest till the Christmas hymns at five A.M. aroused them from their peaceful slumbers. The contrast between Christmas at home and Christmas in the convent became a subject of conversation between the seven postulants, and when reverend mother inquired during the day how they liked their first

Christmas in a convent, some confessed to a shade of loneliness. With maternal tenderness she encouraged them, repeating the beautiful words of the sacred text : Harken, O daughter, see, and incline thy ear ; forget thy people and the house of thy father, and the King will be enamored of thy beauty. "My dear children," said she, "is not the separation from friends and relatives at this festive season a nice penance to offer to God ? You may now send your greetings to the loved ones at home." This boon was thankfully accepted. For, except in family afflictions or on matters of business, letters were not written, partly owing to the high rate of postage, but chiefly on account of their incessant occupations. The only addition to their fare was a plum-pudding sent by a friend—the first pudding of any kind seen in the convent.

"I entered the community," writes one of the above band, "on December 21, 1839, fearing a Christmas meeting, and consequent put-off for some weeks, perhaps longer." The term of postulanship was not then fixed, and the first seven professed in every convent made but one year's novitiate. Mother Warde governed the community without the aid of the officials the Constitutions provide as heads of departments, and who form collectively the council of the superior. The Rules were not yet confirmed. While Mother Warde united in her own person all the offices, the young Sisters were left a good deal to themselves ; yet they suffered no loss. For the senior novice, Sister M. Cecilia Maher, was such a winning model of every virtue that all followed her beautiful example. Her work, illuminating a community register, confined her to the novitiate, and being forty years old and regarded as a saint, she was a mother to the young members. Yet observations made on this state of things reached the superior's ears with good effect. After the August retreat, 1841, given by the saintly Dr. Furlong, afterwards Bishop of Ferns, she assembled her flock, gave a brief exhortation, adding that the many cares

devolving on her did not allow her to give the young members the attention they required. She then presented Sister M. Cecilia as their mistress. Some tears were shed, but, as a change had become necessary, all were delighted to have the most perfect of their number placed over them. The new official entered on her duties with loving zeal, and devoted all her energies to the forming of her novices. In 1841 there were but three professed members canonically out of their novitiate, the elders having been sent on foundations. *Now*, when a vacancy occurs in a chapter, the senior professed of the novitiate is called to fill it ; then it was not so.* And, no injustice being intended, the existence of a chapter was ignored at St. Leo's for the first six years. In May, 1843, Bishop Haly, and Father Walsh who succeeded him as bishop, held in Carlow convent the first election in the Mercy Order, and Mother M. Cecilia exchanged places with Mother Warde. The new superior, in her usual conciliatory spirit, tried to make things as easy as possible to all—and succeeded.

The gentle soul who recorded so many edifying incidents of these happy early days did so in the humble hope of fostering gratitude to God for His ineffable goodness to His children of predilection. "Grateful remembrance of benefits," she writes, "characterizes every truly noble religious mind. Of this our venerated foundress gave us a bright example." She would also invite her Sisters to a more cordial love and esteem for their holy Institute and high vocation : "If thou didst but know the gift of God!" she exclaims in loving thankfulness. She calls herself a "Poor Scholar," but adds that were her talents of the highest order they would be lovingly devoted to the weal of her Sisterhood in humble gratitude to God for His manifold blessings.

It was in this holy, humble house, in a small provincial town, far from the great intellectual centres, that God placed the cradle of the Mercy Institute in the United States.

* This point of the Rule has never been definitely settled.

CHAPTER X.

TO THE LAND OF THE WEST.

The American Missioners pray beside the Grave of the Mother Foundress—The last Benediction—Tearful Parting—Kindness of Liverpool Friends—St. Ethelburga's—Stay of the Sisters at the Gothic Convent—*The Queen* sails—"Every Hind"—The Nuns in secular Garb—Valuable Assistance from Messrs. Cullen and Verdun—The last Glimpse—No Greyhounds of the Ocean—Passengers—Tempest—Bishop O'Connor invited to conduct Religious Exercises—The Sisters devote Themselves to the Steerage Passengers—Wretched Accommodations—"God was always good to me"—Non-Catholic Ministers beg Bishop O'Connor to preach—His wonderful Eloquence.

THE missioners were most cordially received by their Sisters in Naas. Next morning they set out for Dublin under the escort of Father McCarthy. Here they received the affectionate greeting of Mother Delany and the community, and fulfilled their dearest wish by praying near the sacred remains of the holy foundress. Mother Delany, who had the name of being rather austere, surprised the party by the extreme cordiality of her welcome. She gave them every facility for becoming acquainted with all the improvements introduced in every department of the parent-house. One of the missioners wrote forty-five years later: "I remember Mother di Pazzi as a kind, motherly religious, medium size, rather full, and of pleasing countenance. Her expression was very benevolent." There was so much to be seen—so many inventions, so much educational progress—that the Sisters would have been the gainers could they have remained a few days, but the bishop hurried them off. They had barely time to say "Good-by" to their friends, lay and clerical. At eight P.M. they assembled in the exquisite chapel, in which one of their number had,

ten years before, made the vows that bound her for ever to God. Benediction was given, and they arose to leave a spot endeared by so many tender and holy associations. There was then (1843) but one railway in Ireland. It connected Dublin with its port, Kingstown. But as scarcely any of the party had ever travelled by steam, this mode of conveyance was deemed perilous, especially at night and getting in and out of the cars. To the disappointment of those who desired a taste of railroad travelling, they proceeded to Kingstown in carriages. Next morning, after a rough passage, they reached Liverpool. Though deeply grateful to God for choosing them, there was not a dry eye among the Sisters as they steamed out of Dublin Bay in silence and darkness, leaving for ever the land they loved and the precious associations of their sweet convent home.

Nothing could exceed the kindness and delicate, fatherly attentions of the bishop. Every want was anticipated, every wish gratified, if possible. The party proceeded to the recently founded convent on Mount Vernon, where they found old friends. The bishop, to his great disappointment, learned that *The Queen of the West* would not sail for some days, and, as she was the last passenger-ship to leave Liverpool that year, he had to wait patiently. Every attention was paid the party by Messrs. Cullen and Verdun, uncles of Sister M. Josephine Cullen, and nephews of their good Carlow friend, Father Maher. They awaited them as they landed, and showed every possible mark of respect and solicitude, providing them with all the modern comforts for a tedious sea voyage.

Their visit was regarded as a blessing by the overworked Sisters of St. Ethelburga's. After the usual interchange of courtesies they helped at every duty, instructing the ignorant, visiting the sick, aiding in household work. Mother Warde was greatly interested in the Liverpool house. Once she had been named for it. She had the special facility for instructing which so eminently distinguished the early

members ; and her time was fully occupied with adults, who came in such crowds to be prepared for the sacraments that it was necessary to have policemen near the gate to preserve order. It was the only convent in Liverpool. So eager were all to see and hear the Sisters that crowds of fashionable people were content to stand for hours crushed in among the poor, so as to be near the entrance when the gate opened. St. Ethelburga's, built by Pugin, was the first Gothic convent the visiting Sisters had seen.

Greatly to the relief of the bishop, whose anxiety to set off bordered on impatience, the passengers, stores, and favorable wind for which *The Queen* had been waiting arrived, and early on November 10 he hastened to the convent with the glad tidings that she would sail that day. An immense crowd had assembled to see the departure of the "Great Three-Master," for she was perhaps the largest vessel crossing the Atlantic. The bishop's party, consisting of Rev. Dr. Wilson, six students, and seven Sisters, made a sensation. Dr. O'Connor's majestic physique, towering like Saul over the heads of his brethren, easily distinguished him as the leader. The concourse, swollen to an inconvenient size, had all the rough elements of an English mob—and English writers have told us in terrible language what the masses in England are, God help them ! But, strange to say, every man—every *hind*, as their own writers would say—seemed to regard the majestic bishop and his party with reverential admiration. Every one was struck with his kind, intelligent exertions for the comfort of all with whom he came in contact.

By the bishop's special desire the nuns travelled in secular garb—black cashmere dresses, white tulle caps with a little trimming of white gauze ribbon. The mother-superior, whose erect person it was considered meet to distinguish, wore a black lace cap trimmed with lilac. In their hurried preparations they had been obliged to invoke the

aid of a milliner, who gave their head-dresses a more fashionable appearance than was originally intended. Their hair, which had been allowed to grow, was folded back in bands from the forehead. In their earlier travels in the United States it was sometimes expedient to resume this costume; but Mother Warde lived into happier days when such disguise was not only unnecessary, but the wearing of the religious dress would win for its member, when obliged to travel, more respect than any other attire.

About noon the vessel weighed anchor. Messrs. Cullen and Verdun remained with the party till the last moment. The nuns stood on deck, gazing upon the receding land with mingled feelings, "the strongest of which was," writes the only survivor of that heroic band (1888), "gratitude to God, who was thus making us His humble instruments for extending His Church on the great American Continent," whither, for weal or woe, their faces now turned.

They were ready for a long and dangerous voyage. There were then no "greyhounds of the ocean," and passengers who reached America in four or five weeks were deemed fortunate. There being no other ladies aboard, the ladies' cabin was placed at their sole disposal. The gentlemen were Irish, American, English, and Scotch, and among them were Church-of-England clergymen and dissenting preachers. For three days the storms were fearful, and it was believed that the royal vessel would find a grave in the angry ocean. Once the captain himself ceased to hope. But God, who takes care of His own, in the twinkling of an eye calmed the fury of the tempest and bade the waves be still. At the height of the peril the master, though not a Catholic, besought the bishop to conduct religious exercises, which, at the urgent request of all on board, he continued to do during the whole voyage.

As a sacred orator Dr. O'Connor had no superior on the American Continent, but there were times—and such occurred during the progress of *The Queen of the West*—

when the very genius of oratory seized him. His sermons, at once persuasive and convincing, were impassioned orations, transparently sincere, through which the light of his convictions shone with a beautiful, soul-subduing lustre. The non-Catholic clergy regarded him with wonder and reverence. There was nothing in the least aggressive about him. And his sweet, simple, almost childlike manners attracted them more, if possible, than his brilliant intellectual endowments.

The Sisters devoted themselves to the care of the steerage and second-cabin passengers, many of whom, owing perhaps to the wretched accommodations which even so fine a vessel possessed for her poorer patrons, were ailing during the whole voyage. The second cabin was separated from the steerage only by a partition of meat-barrels, which, during the first night, a dreadful lurch of the ship upset, to the great annoyance and inconvenience of the occupants, who, having so poor a modicum of comfort, could ill-afford to lose any. A journal kept by the Sisters says: "Our poor people suffered much in the late storm. Yet they are so resigned to suffer, even to go down, if God pleases, that we are greatly edified by them."

There were fifty in all, well-to-do emigrants, invited out by friends and relatives already well established in the country. The great exodus had not yet begun. The Sisters spent their time much as they would have spent it in their Carlow home, instructing the ignorant and comforting the sick, who reciprocally instructed and comforted them. For, at the height of danger, privation, and suffering, the liturgy of praise was perpetually on their lips. Out of the abundance of their grateful, loving hearts they would exclaim with fervid devotion: "God is good! Glory be to His holy name for ever! He was always good to us."

Although, during the hurricane which nearly swept away *The Queen*, Bishop O'Connor had received a general in-

invitation to preach, yet, not knowing whether the passengers would be of the same mind in a calm, he quietly conducted religious exercises for his own flock early on Sunday morning, not wishing to interfere with his non-Catholic friends, who, very much against their liking, "sat under a preacher" in the gentlemen's saloon later in the day. But all, even the ministers, urged the bishop "to give service"; it was not in his nature to refuse to oblige, nor would he, under any circumstances, decline an invitation which might aid his Master's cause. It would not be easy to find, on land or sea, a more mixed congregation than that which hung upon his words. For nearly an hour he spoke on prayer, simply but beautifully explaining the advantages of that holy exercise, and our obligation to practise it; with occasional bursts of eloquence that electrified his audience. Before and after the sermon he offered a prayer with uplifted eyes and hands. The sky was bright above and the waters rolled placidly below; the rest of the Sabbath seemed to have fallen upon the scene, which remained for ever riveted in the memory of preacher and people. Several times the whole assembly sobbed audibly, and men who had never knelt before sank on their knees in devout communings with the Invisible.

CHAPTER XI.

“THE LITERARY ASSOCIATION OF THE GOOD SHIP ‘QUEEN OF THE WEST.’”

The Gentlemen organize a Society—Ladies admitted as honorary Members—The Bishop unanimously chosen President—Debates—The Sisters contribute Essays—Refinement of Manner and Love of Literature characteristic of the early Members—Landing—Kindness of Bishop Quarter and Bishop Hughes—TWELFTH OF DECEMBER—In Philadelphia—Bishop Kenrick—Miss Harper.

THE captain was all kindness and attention to the bishop and his party. In the second week of sea-life, the horrors of sea-sickness being over, the gentlemen organized a society which they styled “The Atlantic Social and Literary Association of the good ship *Queen of the West*.” Dr. O’Connor was unanimously chosen president. A by-law admitted ladies as honorary members, and the Sisters were officially notified of their admission and invited to attend the meetings. They would have declined, but the bishop urged them to join the good work; at his desire they wrote several essays, some in verse, which, being well suited to the occasion and splendidly read by the bishop, were received with loud applause. At one meeting a member read an interesting paper on “The Mariner’s Compass.” At another a poem on the present state of Greece was read by its author, a Scotchman, whose home was in Savannah. Much time was consumed in interesting discussions on historical and scientific subjects. The Sisters were all very thoroughly educated. Three of them, at least, had a facility for composition which caused their essays to be regarded as great acquisitions to these charming reunions, the subjects being well

chosen, and treated in an interesting style. Love of literature and exquisite refinement of manners were eminently characteristic of the early members. A celebrated literary personage writes to the author: "I have always admired two things especially in the Institute of Mercy—the cultivation of delicacy of feeling and refinement of manner, and the love of letters. I have known many good people in religion who seemed to think politeness savored of the flesh-pots of Egypt, and that text-books, especially mathematical, should afford sufficient mental nourishment and distraction."

The last contribution to this "feast of reason" was written in sight of land by a young Sister, and the members of the literary union about to be dissolved thought so highly of its merits that they published it in the New York papers. Bishop O'Connor was the life and soul of these entertainments. There was no subject brought forward for debate on which he could not throw some new light or illustration from the stores of his capacious mind. The captain said that this was the most delightful and instructive voyage he had ever made—an opinion to which the travelled portion of the passengers unanimously subscribed.

In four weeks and two days, December 10, *The Queen* hove in sight of land. In the evening Dr. O'Connor and several other gentlemen went ashore, but the nuns remained aboard till the next day, when the bishop and Father Quarter, Bishop-elect of Chicago, came for them. The latter cordially welcomed Mother Warde, of whom he had heard, and when the introductions were over he turned pleasantly to her and said: "As I have been the first to welcome you to the shores of the New World, I trust you will grant my first request, and promise to establish in the new diocese of Chicago a house of your excellent Institute." The bishops brought the nuns to see Bishop Hughes who gave them a hearty welcome, and joined the other prelates to escort them to the Sacred Heart Convent, just

established on Houston Street. He requested Madame Hardy and her little community to take the greatest care of them, and make them rest a few days after the fatigues of the voyage—a behest that good lady and her associates affectionately obeyed.

Next morning, while they were at breakfast, the bishop called again to see for himself that they were comfortable, and to felicitate them on the anniversary of their foundation. For, by a happy coincidence, the first day they spent in America, the first Mass they heard, the first holy Communion they received, were all dated the TWELFTH OF DECEMBER. Everything was done by Bishop Hughes and their hostesses to make their stay pleasant.

On the 14th they set out by rail for Philadelphia, where they put up at a fine hotel. Bishop Kenrick, on hearing of their arrival, called on them directly and escorted them to the Orphan Asylum, where they remained four days, the Sisters of Charity in charge treating them with the greatest kindness. They had the pleasure of hearing Bishop Kenrick preach, and his tone and style reminded Mother Warde so forcibly of O'Connell, whom she knew very well, that she had to look steadily at him to convince herself that he was not the great Tribune. Many of the clergy and laity called to pay their respects to the first Sisters of Mercy in the United States, among them Dr. Moriarty and Miss Emily Harper, of Baltimore, a granddaughter of the celebrated Charles Carroll, lately deceased. Between Mother Warde and Miss Harper a warm friendship began, which we trust did not end with the death of the former, forty-two years later. To Mother Warde and several of her New England convents Miss Harper has proved a generous benefactress.

CHAPTER XII.

OVER THE MOUNTAIN AND AT HOME.

Stage Travelling—Prince Gallitzin's Domain—Loretto—Harrisburg—A young Disciple—Pittsburgh—Thanksgiving Day, 1843—Sojourn at the Asylum—First Convent—First Christmas—Dr. O'Connor introduces himself to his Flock as Bishop of Pittsburgh—Works of Mercy—First Retreat—Renewal of Vows—Instructing Children—Mother Warde instructs Adults.

AFTER Mass and Communion, December 18, the Feast of the Expectation of the Blessed Virgin, the travellers set out for Pittsburgh. Most of the journey was made by stage, a slow, uncomfortable mode of travelling; sometimes they got out and walked over the mountain tracks. The bishop showed them the house—to-day a ruin—once occupied by Prince Gallitzin, and the scene of his holy labors, and spoke of having a convent in Loretto in the near future. At Harrisburg the weary pilgrims rested some hours with the pastor, whose niece, a lovely girl of sixteen, was so attracted to them that she soon after joined them, and became one of the successors of Mother Warde. December 21 they reached their destination. Father McElroy, a venerable Jesuit, was giving a mission at the time. They repaired to the cathedral, where they heard the Bishop's Mass and received holy Communion, after which they went to the Orphan Asylum, where Sister Isidore Fisher and her four companions received them very graciously. December 21 was Thanksgiving Day in Pennsylvania that year, and, it being a legal holiday, many visited the Asylum to become acquainted with the new nuns. Some ladies invited them to spend a few days at their homes—"a kindness which gratified and amused us," writes one of the band, "for our ideas of

conventual life did not include that style of recreation." The mother-superior expressed gratitude on part of all for the favors intended, but declined these well-meant courtesies, explaining that, as a rule, we never leave our convent save to teach, visit the sick, or perform some other work of mercy. This satisfied the ladies, who nevertheless expressed regret that they could not entertain the religious in their homes. Next day they parted from the Sisters of Charity with mutual regret, for they were anxious to get to their own home and arrange their household affairs before Christmas.

On the 22d of December, 1843, the Sisters of Mercy took possession of their first convent home on the American Continent, a four-story brick structure on Penn Street, sufficiently spacious for present needs. It contained a large, well-finished basement, used by former tenants as a school, and devoted to the same purpose by the Sisters. The house was in excellent order, but only partially furnished, as the bishop wished them to use their own taste in all the arrangements. Mother Warde ordered everything necessary for chapel, community room, cells, and novitiate. The parlor had been neatly furnished before their arrival. For the next few days they were very busy. As a substitute for beds, mattresses were laid on boards raised on supporters, a style which the bishop said was usual in colleges and public institutions in Italy—"a precedent," writes one of the occupants, "that we fancied lessened considerably the hardness of the beds." Otherwise, every want was carefully provided for. Even the kitchen, that important department of every institution, was a marvel of neatness, brilliant with shining utensils.

On Christmas Day all heard early Mass, "feeling very fervent," says our informant, "on the great festival of the birth of our Lord, an appropriate time for the birth of the new Order in America." True, they could scarcely avoid feeling a *little* homesick; their hearts and thoughts *would*

turn to their sweet Carlow home. Often they were in spirit with their Sisters and their poor on a day which the foundress desired should be made so happy, within the convent and outside of it, to all whom their influence could reach. The two dear lay Sisters, who had come merely in obedience, not having much of the enthusiasm which made sacrifice a joyous thing to the rest, looked tearfully towards their home beyond the wave. But all were so closely united to the Divine Will that the sentiments that agitated the inferior part of the soul were not a rapine in the holocaust. Many years later one of them said: "Our sense of loneliness was keen, but we did not allow our feelings to get the better of us. To feel that we were doing God's will was our great consolation."

The new Sisters were present at the late Mass. This was then customary in Ireland for such as were disengaged from duty at the time, and when the church was close to the convent. They were all musical, and they noted with pleasure that the choir and organist were very good. The altar was profusely decorated with evergreens, "to us a new style of church adornment." The church was crowded to excess. The bishop, after the Gospel, introduced himself as such to the congregation in most touching and eloquent words, which affected his hearers to tears. He explained the nature and awful obligations of the episcopate, assuring his people that, with God's help, he would fulfil them in their regard and in his order. "How well he kept his promise," said one who heard him and watched his holy and brilliant career, "his admirable government of his diocese for seventeen years most fully proved."

The Sisters now began the visitation of the sick. They were also busy getting their little chapel arranged for the three days' retreat preceding New Year's Day. The holy bishop conducted their first retreat in America. He gave them a course of practical instructions and beautiful meditations, "all calculated to fit them for the career of use-

fulness they were beginning in the New World." At his suggestion the novices joined with the professed in the retreat—a precedent which has often since been followed. What he inculcated most strongly was that the success of their mission depended not merely in a great measure, but entirely, on their efforts to attain the perfection to which as religious they were bound to aspire.

On New Year's Day, 1844, the ceremony of renewal of vows took place for the first time among the Sisters of Mercy in the United States. The chapel was elegantly decorated. A few friends were present, among them Miss Eliza Jane Tiernan, who had surprised the sacristan most agreeably with a present of Sèvres vases and a quantity of the finest artificial flowers. Miss Tiernan had called on the Sisters immediately on their arrival, and testified in many ways her respect and affection for them, and the sincere pleasure their advent had given her. The bishop received the renewal of vows. Just before Communion he addressed to his dear Sisters some feeling words intended rather for their friends present than for themselves. He gave a clear, concise explanation of the Act of Renewal and the nature of religious vows. After Mass the guests withdrew, leaving the nuns to make their thanksgiving, which they did with uncommon fervor, renewed in spirit by these holy exercises. The bishop breakfasted in the convent parlor, where they assembled to receive his New Year's blessing; "his fine, open countenance radiated happiness as he looked at his children and observed their evident though quiet joy." Those who knew Dr. O'Connor only towards the end of his too short life, when sorrows and infirmities rather than time had broken his fine constitution, could form but a poor idea of the beautiful countenance and superb physique which distinguished him in the earlier years of his episcopacy. His smile was peculiarly bright and winning.

Thus auspiciously opened the year of grace 1844 for the humble Sisterhood at Pittsburgh. They at once took charge

of the Cathedral Sunday-school of over five hundred girls. Zealous secular ladies aided them, to the great advantage of the constantly increasing juvenile congregation. The boys were taught by the bishop's students in the top story of a large school which he had just erected. The girls occupied the second floor. On the first Mother Warde, "who had wonderful power of language and of touching the heart, instructed adults in a solid, practical manner." She illustrated her themes by striking examples, which made a deep impression on her hearers. Many were induced by her to approach the sacraments every month. And as her auditors always included non-Catholics introduced by Catholic friends, she gave them very graciously whatever information they asked on controverted points. Many ultimately became Catholics. During her whole religious life this good mother had a singular zeal for those outside the fold, and was wonderfully successful in winning them to the truth.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FIRST ACCESSION.

Vocation of Miss Tiernan—The *Tablet*—Obstacles generously overcome—
Like St. Teresa—"Cannot warm to the Wise Virgins"—Classification—
Incident—Description of the First Postulant—Thy Altars, O Lord of
Hosts!

IN the summer of 1843, before Dr. O'Connor went to Rome, Miss Tiernan asked his advice about going to Dublin to make her novitiate in the parent-house, there being no Sisters of Mercy in the United States. She was strongly attracted to their Institute, and desirous of seeing it introduced into her native city. The daughter of a wealthy banker, it was said that she was more admired and loved than any other lady in Western Pennsylvania. The religious news, of the *Tablet* greatly interested her, for it used to chronicle the departure of gentlewomen from England to make their novitiate in Ireland, and the arrival of Sisters from the Isle of Saints to establish, as in ancient times, convents in England. When she laid her views before Dr. O'Connor he was greatly delighted, but he tried her vocation by giving her very little encouragement. Assuming a careless air, he said: "Oh! don't be in too great a hurry; we may have Sisters of Mercy here yet." During his absence she sought by every means within her reach to learn the will of God in her regard. But whenever she deliberated on the choice of a state in life she could not imagine herself anything but a Sister of Mercy. She continued to pray for light to know the Divine Will and grace to do it, imploring in a special manner the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and St. Francis Xavier. On

the 3d of December she finished a novena to the latter, and during her thanksgiving after Communion resolved to become a Sister of Mercy, though she knew not how this could be accomplished. On the same day her father, when he came to dinner, handed her a *Tablet*, remarking that it contained news interesting to her. Reception and professions of Sisters of Mercy were always duly recorded, and she was so strongly impressed by such news, and still more by divine grace, that the life of a Sister of Mercy was the highest object of her ambition.

But this time the paper chronicled something more : the departure from Liverpool for Pittsburgh of Bishop O'Connor and seven Sisters of Mercy. Now she perceived why her director had counselled slowness, though his design to become a Jesuit, which was well known, prevented him from making any explanation. Had he carried out that design he would nevertheless have endeavored to plant a branch of the Mercy Institute in the dark soil of Pittsburgh. But in that case his efforts would have been less powerful and his success rather uncertain. In the *Tablet* notice, which was copied next day in the Philadelphia papers, Miss Tiernan recognized an answer to her fervent prayers. And all had occurred on the Feast of St. Francis Xavier, the very day her novena had terminated. When the Sisters came Miss Tiernan was not slow to make their acquaintance, and Mother Warde left nothing undone to foster and encourage her pious design. The delay in Liverpool, and the travelling of the parties by a sailing vessel, caused the news of their starting to be a few weeks in advance of their arrival. Speaking of this lady's application for admission, one of her friends says : " Miss Tiernan had the highest social grade in Western Pennsylvania, great personal attractions, and an excellent education. Her temporal possessions were very considerable, so that in every way our first applicant was a treasure."

As soon as her family suspected her intentions a storm

of opposition arose—father, mother, brothers, and an only sister * just married disliked the idea of losing her under any circumstances, but would not hear of her becoming a nun. The young girl, not wishing to cause any unnecessary excitement at home or abroad, rarely visited the convent, but her vocation gained strength every hour. She determined to enter as soon as possible, yet was strongly tempted to wait. When she called to make final arrangements her heart died, as it were, within her at the prospect of leaving her happy home for ever. To our first American postulant might be applied every word of the powerful description St. Teresa gives of herself under similar circumstances. But, sustained by prayer and the certainty that God called her to make the sacrifice, she triumphed over all obstacles. Resolutely bidding farewell to all she held dear, she entered the convent February 2, 1844.

Miss Tiernan was then in her twenty-fifth year, beautiful in mind and person, and educated and accomplished to a rare degree. Full of ardor and holy enthusiasm, she joyfully offered to God and His poor whatever remained to her of life. The number of those in the United States at that time who were materially poor was small, but the spiritually poor were legion. And at all times this lady placed the spiritual before the material, and regarded her own perfection as her great and primary object. From the moment of her entrance her vocation was evident; she fell into rank, and was as much at home as if she had been with the Sisters all her life. Ever anxious to aid wherever assistance was needed, she never lost sight of the great end to be achieved in entering religion: she told them that Bishop O'Connor had always instructed her to keep the idea of her individual sanctification uppermost in her mind. Not that hers was a selfish, ill-directed piety: she was most unselfish and therefore generous.

* A most amiable woman, who in after-years gave her willing consent to her eldest daughter's becoming a Sister of Mercy immediately after she left school.

One of the early members used to say : "I can never warm to the wise virgins." It seemed to her that selfishness was apparent under the guise of their devotion to duty. Sister Eliza, she thought, would not have heard the prayer, "Give us of your oil," without making an effort to grant it. "But," she would add, "if my remarks be wrong or unscriptural I withdraw them." The Sisters playfully classified the objects of their zeal thus : mother-superior's is for every one, postulants in particular ; Sister M. Josephine's is for men ; Sister M. Elizabeth's is for the colored race ; Sister Aloysius' for little boys ; Sister Philomena's for women. Sister Veronica gave consolation to hundreds at the door. Appointed portress by the foundress in Carlow, no superior ever changed her office ; portress she remained till her death, over forty years later.

Mass was celebrated daily at the convent except Sunday, when the Sisters divided themselves between St. Patrick's and the cathedral, not wishing to call attention to their number on the street, for they had increased rapidly. Any of the priests would gladly have said a second Mass for their accommodation, but the bishop thought there was not sufficient reason to duplicate in case of uncloistered religious. He soon changed his opinion, owing to the following circumstance :

One Sunday Sister M. Josephine became so ill at Mass that she was obliged to ask her companion to return to the convent with her. Whispering the others not to be uneasy, both left the church and hastened home through the unthawing snow. They had not gone half-way when Sister M. Josephine fell from sheer weakness. Sister M. Elizabeth raised her up and they set out again, unnoticed by any one, as it was very early and quite dark. The efforts the sick Sister made to get home were followed by extreme exhaustion. She was put to bed and the necessary restoratives applied, but her recovery was slow. The bishop, on hearing of the matter, said, "Such things must

not happen again," and declared that an early Mass should be said at the convent on days of obligation as well as other days—an arrangement which has been faithfully adhered to ever since.

One of the greatest consolations of the community in these happy early days was the saintliness of their first American subject, Sister Eliza Tiernan. It was evident to all that her heart had found its resting-place: "Thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God!"



CHAPTER XIV.

IN THE MORNING.

Occupations—Extensive Visitation of the Sick—Anecdotes—Characteristics of the Inhabitants—The Harvest great, the Laborers few—A floating Population—"He runs the River"—Dropping Disguises—"Are they all Widows?"—First Reception on Washington's Birthday—First Public Ceremony—A beautiful Religious Pageant—Eloquent Sermon of the Bishop—Emotion calmed by Music—A blessed Life, here and hereafter.

THOUGH the nuns did not open school for eight months after their arrival, they were fully occupied from the first. The visitation of the sick was very extensive, and instruction classes of adults and children succeeded each other at the convent almost without intermission. The sick of Pittsburgh and its sister city, Allegheny, and the suburbs of both, were visited. Most of these localities are now attended from the Mercy Hospital, the branch houses at Allegheny, St. Patrick's, and the Orphan Asylum. The Sisters were everywhere, for everywhere there was sickness, sorrow, or ignorance. Spiritual assistance was all that was needed in these prosperous times. Occasionally they brought the sick some little delicacy, but corporal relief, which in Ireland and England formed so large a part of the visitation duty, was rarely needed. And when it was, the offering had to be made with great caution and delicacy to avoid giving pain. Sufficient aid was sent for all by the Sisters' circle of friends, which was ever enlarging.

In those days the houses were not numbered, even in the principal streets, and the Sisters were often amused at the manner of their reception when they had to inquire the way to the patients to whom they had been sent. A look of surprise at their singular costume—then, as if a light sud-

denly broke on the mind, an exclamation of pleasure : "Oh ! you are the bishop's nuns. See, here are the strange Sisters. Please come in and take an air of the fire. We're delighted to see you." Sometimes the invitation was accepted ; no one knowing where the object of their search lived, a member of the family would go to find out. While waiting the Sisters were as gracious as possible. "Could we be otherwise?" asks one of them, "when we were received with such evident cordiality?" They would speak mildly to the children, drop a word of advice to the elders, which was easily done. For it was surprising how they poured all their shortcomings as well as their troubles into the ears of their new friends, who consoled them in their family afflictions and miseries. These confiding, hospitable people were invited to the convent for advice and instruction, an invitation gladly accepted. Giving instruction at home became a steady duty. Many adults were prepared for the sacraments. They were instructed individually, for most of them had been long absent from their spiritual duties. The clergy sent many of this kind and many sick-calls. There were then so few priests that it was impossible for them to devote the necessary time to instruct negligent Catholics and converts in private. For an immense fixed and floating Catholic population there were but four priests, including the bishop and Dr. Wilson, who had come from Rome with him. Father Gibbs, the convent chaplain, went every Friday on country missions, returning Monday or Tuesday. Much of the population was literally floating—no railroad came within a hundred and fifty miles of the city ; boats and steamers were the means of locomotion chiefly used by the travelling public. The Allegheny and Monongahela rivers, on which Pittsburgh is built, and which unite to form the Ohio—itself a tributary of the Mississippi—afforded immense facilities for water-travelling. Moving up and down the river was far more general than at present, when most settlers of twenty or thirty

years' standing own their houses, and perhaps others besides. Catholics who came up the river would generally manage to go to confession before returning home, or going down the river, as the phrase was. They used to call at the convent to be instructed and prepared for the sacraments, and the Sisters gladly gave them all possible help. In and around the city there was a considerable Catholic population, mostly Irish by birth or descent. To the question, "How does such a man make a living?" the ordinary reply was, "He runs the river."

The religious were addressed as Mother or Sister. In Ireland they had since the days of persecution been addressed as Mrs. or Madam to conceal the religious character. Only on festival days and inside the convent walls could they venture to wear the religious garb. The foundress of the Sisters of Mercy was obliged to dress her daughters for the street like elderly gentlewomen in mourning. This disguise has been dropped in many places, and, as prejudice against the religious habit has died away, the Sisters can go abroad on their missions of mercy with the addition of a face-veil to their house costume. At first they were called Mrs. Warde, Mrs. Strange, Mrs. Cullen, but this style of address completely mystified the people. "What!" exclaimed a patient whom they were attending, "are these young creatures all widows?" At present the Sisters are addressed by their religious names—a fashion introduced by St. Teresa, who would not have her daughters styled Doña Señora, Señorita, or Madama, but plain *Sister*.

A beautiful spirit of charity prevailed among the early members, which has not diminished in their successors. "There never was," writes one, "a more united community." Always ready to help, serve, and oblige one another, it might be said of them, as of the first Christians, that they had but one heart and soul. The first ceremony took place in Penn Street chapel, the bishop officiating, February

22, 1844; Miss Margaret O'Brien, future superior of Chicago, received the white veil. Fathers Gibbs, Garland, and Wilson, the only priests in Pittsburgh, several students, the Sisters of Charity, and a few lay friends, were the only guests—quite enough, with the eight Sisters of Mercy, to fill the little chapel. It was remarked as a pleasant coincidence that the first clothing took place on a day of such joyful import to America. Those who selected it did not know it was Washington's birthday, but, when they heard it, took it as a good omen of their success in America.

The first public ceremony was the profession of Sister M. Aloysius Strange and the reception of Miss Tiernan. The bishop, desirous that his people should have a clear understanding as to what the life of a Sister of Mercy involved, offered to preach on the occasion. The profession had been four months deferred, and the reception four months anticipated, to bring them together, April 11, a gala day in St. Paul's Cathedral, which was crowded to excess. As Miss Tiernan's family was extensively known throughout Western Pennsylvania, the Catholics and non-Catholics of that region were largely represented.

The ceremonies opened at ten o'clock. The Sisters of Mercy had places within the spacious sanctuary at the left of the altar, the clergy being on the right. The centre was free for those engaged in the ceremonies. Immediately outside the sanctuary were ranged the students of the bishop's seminary. The choir performed the music of the occasion, which was quite new to the audience. The postulant was attired in a gracefully fashioned robe of heavy white corded silk, her dark hair being held back by white lilies. An ample veil of the finest lace enveloped her whole person like a mist. Those who saw her that day spoke of her as a vision of earthly beauty, but what attracted them most was the heavenly expression that irradiated every feature and impressed the beholders with a sense of her personal holiness. The procession formed in the left

sacristy : bridesmaids in picturesque garb, troops of little girls arrayed as angels, each wearing a garland of flowers, led by a tall girl, elegantly dressed, who acted as cross-bearer. The bevy of fair children, the white surpliced acolytes, the clergy in glittering robes, made a series of exquisite tableaux. Mother Warde and Mother Cullen walked on either side of the postulant, who, when all had taken their appointed places, knelt on the altar-steps in front of the tabernacle. To make the reception as impressive as possible, Mother Warde had arranged that the blessing of the candle and its reception by the novice-elect should take place before High Mass.

After the Gospel the bishop explained the religious state in general and the Mercy Order in particular. He dwelt especially on the probation through which candidates must pass previous to making vows, and their perfect freedom of choice during that stage of the religious life ; compulsory seclusion, which many believe the Church authorizes, being quite contrary to her spirit. His auditors would see at the ceremonies of to-day that the free will of the contracting parties was necessary to the validity of the contract. He sketched the duties of a Sister of Mercy to the poor, sick, and ignorant, showing the great advantage of such a society to the community, and the blessings it must bring wherever it is established. He grew enthusiastic as he proceeded, and concluded with a burst of eloquence which proved him to be one of the greatest orators that ever imbued a congregation with his own enthusiasm. His countenance was aglow with the burning thoughts of his soul. The people were as soft wax in his hands. His own spirit was transfused into them, and his fervid eloquence made them weep or smile as he chose. For the moment Protestant and Jew were on his side. It seemed to them that, like the divine Master to whom were consecrated his marvellous gifts, "he spake as man never spake before."

The Mass went on, the people's emotion being calmed

by the solemn, affecting music. At the Communion the professed-elect read and signed her vows, the audience listening and looking on with the deepest interest, understanding that this was the final consecration. The *Te Deum* was chanted in Gregorian style by the clergy and students with fine effect. But when Miss Tiernan, the grand centre of attraction, came forward to be interrogated according to the ceremonial, the interest was intense. As she retired to change her dress the strongest emotion was observed, which, when she returned in the habit of a Sister of Mercy, found vent in tears of joy, sorrow, or sympathy. The close came at last. The *Ecce quam Bonum* was sung in choral style; all seemed to feel the truth of the words, though few knew their meaning. The cross-bearer moved before the angels, the newly-made Sisters and their associates following. Among these consecrated souls joy, not sorrow, was the prevailing sentiment. All in that vast assemblage knew—some for the first time, some better than they had known before—what it is to be a Sister of Mercy, and many said: “It is a blessed life, here and hereafter.”

On their return to the convent Mother Warde, assisted by her willing daughters, did the honors of their humble home to a large number of guests. Sister M. Xavier was “the cynosure of all eyes,” and the joy that lit up her countenance eloquently testified that she already felt how good and pleasant it is to dwell in the house of the Lord. Her evident happiness dissipated the grief of her parents, brothers, and sister, who were now convinced that the cloister was to be her home.

CHAPTER XV.

“THE FIRST-FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT.”

Accessions—Miss Wynne—Miss McCaffrey—“Bessie marked out for a Nun”
—Dr. McCaffrey—His four Daughters—First August Retreat—Father
Neumann, C.S.S.R.—First School opened—System—Uniform—A ruffled
Mother—Bright, happy Children—Advantages—A good Housekeeper—
The Poor-house—The Penitentiary—Rare Bigotry—“I was in Prison
and you came to me.”

MISS TIERNAN was not the only candidate that entered during the Sisters' first year in America. Miss Bessie McCaffrey came from Cleveland to join them; October 22; Miss Eliza Wynne, daughter of Major Wynne, of Pittsburgh, November 2; several efficient lay Sisters followed. Miss McCaffrey and her three sisters had been educated in the pension-school of the Sisters of Mercy, Carlow. One day when the holy foundress entered the school-room she was particularly attracted to the bright, handsome little girls, and placing her hands on their heads, which she fondly drew together, she prophesied that they would yet be of her flock. “It is from schools such as this,” she added, “that many of our best subjects will come.” Some of the Pittsburgh foundresses had been actually their teachers. Their dying mother had besought Mother Warde to be a mother to them. In 1842 their father, Dr. McCaffrey (still living, 1888), brought his family to Cleveland, Ohio. When the girls heard of the establishment of the Sisters of Mercy in Pittsburgh, they wrote to welcome and greet them. Mother Warde, who had always “marked Bessie out for a nun,” opened a correspondence with her which resulted in that young lady's

receiving leave to enter the convent. That his children might continue under the influence of their early friends, the doctor removed to Pittsburgh. Three daughters became Sisters of Mercy. A fourth who intended to enter, dying unexpectedly, was laid to rest in the convent cemetery among the friends and teachers of her childhood.

The first August retreat of the Sisters of Mercy in Pittsburgh was conducted by Father Neumann, their confessor, a Bohemian Redemptorist. "Despite his very imperfect knowledge of English," writes one who heard him, "his instructions were calculated to ground us in the interior life." This was what Bishop O'Connor had aimed at by his burning words of eloquence in their previous retreat. And that success attended the efforts of both, all who have had intimate relations with the Pittsburgh community will readily acknowledge.

In September, 1844, the Sisters of Mercy opened their first school in the United States. The provisional convent was poorly adapted for educational purposes. The classes were taught in a long basement, with large windows at each end, arranged as a school, or, as the vernacular said, "fixed up." Bad as the accommodations were, it was soon filled with bright, happy children from five to sixteen years old, to whom the Sisters gave unremitting attention. Music was taught in the parlor, where Sister Xavier assisted Sister Philomena in giving lessons. Their system of teaching the Sisters had brought from Ireland, but the hours were changed to suit the new country. School began at nine instead of ten. Recess was given for two hours instead of half an hour, to allow of going home for dinner. Classes were resumed at two P.M., and dismissed at four instead of three. This regulation gave them half an hour more teaching than they had "at home"—thus for many years did they style their old convent in Carlow. At the same time, not being able to reach upon all, their rest was diminished by half an hour, and they omitted the small luncheon

allowed heretofore—changes the prudence of which was afterward questioned.

Arithmetic was taught daily from nine to ten. And the thrifty, common-sense women who had charge of the schools would not allow the girls under their care to be ignorant of so important a branch as needlework. They were taught to make and mend their own clothing every afternoon from three to four. In Carlow, to prevent the rivalry common among girls, or rather among their parents, regarding dress, the Sisters required the children attending their select school to wear a neat uniform: blue gingham dress, with white collar and apron, in summer; brown merino and black apron in winter; the hair plain and confined by a band of narrow black velvet ribbon. But in the Pittsburgh atmosphere, ever laden with smoke and soot from the chimneys of its innumerable iron-works, light colors could not be worn without great inconvenience. The Sisters, therefore, never enforced the blue uniform. They allowed the pupils to wear any simple dress, requiring the addition of a neat black apron and a plain white collar for the grown girls, and a frill or tucker at the throat of the dresses of the smaller ones. These fashions were much admired. The articles were cheerfully provided, except in case of one good lady, who reproached the Sisters for introducing ruffles, which she considered great vanity. As the mistress of the school observed, "she added in a temper, evidently ruffled," with indignant emphasis: "I am one of the most particular women in the city in bringing up my children, and they have never worn ruffles and never will. I shall dress them neatly and carefully, but no ruffles will they ever get from me."

The Sister who treated with this good lady was much amused, but prudently avoided defending the fashion of circling little necks with frills. A compromise was effected by which "the plaintiff" promised to put a narrow border of white linen around the necks of her little ones' dresses,

to brighten the effect. She was greatly elated at having gained her point without withdrawing her children from the new school, the advantages of which she was sensible enough to appreciate highly, notwithstanding her peculiarities. From the outset the school gave general satisfaction to parents and children. The humble basement, with its bright, studious scholars, was perhaps as happy a spot as could be found in the Smoky City. Some of the best religious of to-day in various orders, and many respected matrons in Pittsburgh and elsewhere, remember with delight their first school-days in Penn Street convent. Many of these first pupils of the Mercy Institute in America have passed, let us hope, to a brighter world, where they are intercessors before the Throne of Mercy in behalf of their early friends still toiling through their weary pilgrimage.

The happy children of that remote period had just what they needed. They learned to read, write, and speak well—accomplishments not over-common to-day. They could “cast accounts,” and had a fair knowledge of history, geography, and poetry. Their taste for reading was directed and cultivated, and the love of good books instilled into their tender minds. Catechism was well studied, and they were thoroughly instructed in their duties to God, their neighbor, and themselves. To parents and superiors they were taught to be obedient, loving, and respectful, to spare them trouble, and be as self-helpful as possible. They were shown how to take part in the darning, mending, and general sewing of their families; and polite, orderly habits were inculcated by word, and still more by example. They were taught by noble women, and visited frequently by a bishop “to know whom was a liberal education.” The school had a common-sense aspect—an air of avoiding fooleries and tenderly preparing little people for the stern duties likely to devolve on them in after-life: invaluable qualifications, conspicuous only by their absence in many a showy school of to-day.

The new members were of great assistance to the over-worked little band. Sister Eliza Wynne's experience of American life proved very serviceable. Her family had emigrated from Ireland in her early childhood, and, losing her mother, she was obliged when quite young to take charge of her father's household. Thus she acquired a thorough knowledge of domestic life, in theory and practice. She was an excellent housekeeper—an accomplishment not at all despised among the high-bred, holy, intellectual women who established the Mercy Order in America. In religion Miss Wynne became Sister Mary Catherine, and, having served the community as bursar for some time, was in 1855 sent as superior to Baltimore.

The ever-increasing number of the pupils compelled the Sisters to change their back parlor into a class-room for the third division, the first and second classes quite filling the basement. After two years and a half in Penn Street they removed to a more commodious dwelling, April, 1846.

Every week the Sisters visited the poor-house in Allegheny, about a half-hour's walk from the convent. It was poor in every sense of the word—an old wooden rookery, large, but not sufficiently so for its twenty or thirty occupants, men, women, and children. Cleanliness was almost unknown in this ill-ventilated, miserable home; the inmates had a woe-begone expression most distressing to see. The visits of the Sisters cheered them, and they looked forward to them with evident delight. They tried to console them in their privations, lessen as much as possible their sufferings, and induce them to take a right view of their situation. The poor creatures eagerly listened to their words of comfort and advice. When a Catholic inmate was ill the priest came to the institution, which was entirely under non-Catholic control, all the officials being Protestants. Some miles from the city a new poor-house was in course of erection, and the authori-

ties suffered the old one to fall into decay. In 1846 the inmates removed to their new quarters on the City Farm. The Sisters still visit the institution, though, owing to the distance, not so frequently as in early days.

They also visited the Penitentiary, a fine stone structure, then in the country, but the city has long since stretched to where it stands. The gentleman who superintended it, Major Beckham, and his wife and daughters, were most friendly to the Sisters. Yet later, when it became known that some non-Catholic inmates were anxious to become Catholics, the manager suspected the existence of a by-law forbidding the visits of gentlewomen who came for religious purposes. The clergy who occasionally looked in upon the convicts, and a functionary, called the "Moral Instructor," who distributed tracts in their cells, were deemed sufficient for their spiritual regeneration and religious consolation. That they could no longer visit the prisoners as before caused great regret to the Sisters, especially to Mother Warde, who had always gone herself to the prison, to the great comfort of its inmates. She was deeply interested in their welfare, and they regarded her and her companions with affectionate veneration. All her life she had great zeal for converts, and a special grace for drawing them to the Church. True, she could keep her zeal within bounds, and was not wont to interfere with any one uninvited. But she knew, too, that she ruptured no law of her adopted country by giving, in her own wonderfully eloquent style, to every one that asked her, a reason for the faith that was in her. Still the managers were alarmed on seeing that almost all their charges wanted to become Catholics, though what harm such a course was likely to do the poor creatures was never explained. Would it not rather have been a blessing had the Sisters succeeded, when so many had failed, in teaching the wretched convicts the theory and practice of the immortal ethics involved in the Ten Commandments?

And such was really the only doctrine these fervent souls had taught them.

Rarely has bigotry of this species been encountered by the Sisters of Mercy. Prison officials are happy to see the prisoners converted or in any way influenced for good. Often have they affirmed that so conducive to good discipline are the visits of the Sisters that wherever they visit the labors of the keepers are perceptibly lightened. As to the good done the prisoners in their forlorn, desolate condition by the visits of friends who come, in the Name of the Lord, to sympathize with them, console and encourage them, lead them sweetly to better things, one must have been a prisoner, abandoned by friends and almost by hope, to appreciate it fully.

CHAPTER XVI.

SUFFERING AND PROGRESS.

The Baptism of Suffering—Mr. Kuhn—Father Gallagher—A House of Prayer in the Woods—Boarding-school needed in Pittsburgh—Discussion—"Once Boots, twice Clogs"—The Bishop's Way with his Religious—Cardinal Barnabo sanctions the Bishop's Project—Receptions and Professions—The Daughters of Dr. McGirr—Sister Vincent—Cassie brings her Doll—Many Pennsylvania Girls follow Miss Tiernan's Example.

ONLY one mark of the divine complacency seemed wanting to the Pittsburgh community in its early days, and that one of its members called the Baptism of Suffering. It soon came. Symptoms of delicacy began to appear in Sister M. Philomena, one of the devoted young foundresses. Though her rosy cheeks and animated countenance indicated health, and her energetic habits a vigorous constitution, yet her lungs had never been strong, and the increasing labor, from which she never shrank, proved too much. When she was called out of class to be examined by the physician, her lungs were found to be so weak that she was forbidden to teach till her strength should return—which it never did. As had been the case in Carlow, the Sisters were so attached to each other that seculars remarked it, and a pious priest was so edified by this strong, sweet union that he used playfully to call them "the first Christians." The impending cross cast a heavy shadow over these brave young hearts.

Meanwhile events were in progress which would extend their labors far beyond the "American Workshop," and enable them, while attending to duty as usual, to preserve the health which was becoming more or less impaired in

every one of them. Mr. Kuhn, an old resident of Westmoreland County, in 1844 gave Bishop O'Connor for a teaching institution one hundred and ten acres of land, which the bishop at once turned over to the Sisters. In April, 1845, Mother Warde and Sister M. Josephine Cullen accompanied the bishop to Youngstown to make arrangements for the proposed establishment. Mr. Kuhn heartily welcomed the party, delighted that his cherished project was about to be realized. Within a month, Mother Josephine and Sister M. Aloysia Strange, with two others, took possession of Father Stillinger's house, which they occupied for two years. Hard by was an old log-cabin, the first church in that part of Pennsylvania. It had recently been replaced by a fine structure.

Father Michael Gallagher, to facilitate the establishment of the Sisters, had insisted on their occupying Father Stillinger's house till a convent could be built for them on their own farm, two miles distant. It was a good, two-story house, containing twelve rooms. The generous Father Gallagher, who had, for the Sisters' convenience, exchanged places with Father Stillinger, added a kitchen, dining-room, and two class-rooms. Father Gallagher had long desired to join a religious order. But not thinking it right to leave his post until replaced, he made no effort to carry out his design till Bishop O'Connor visited Blairsville, in 1844. By the bishop's advice, instead of retiring to a monastery, he collected about him some pious men, whom he instructed in the secrets of the monastic life. They lived in prayer and labor in a poor log-cabin near the convent, and their superior issued from this humble dwelling only to say Mass for the Sisters in the neighboring church.

Most of the holy men thus trained in the wilderness to prayer, study, and agricultural toil afterwards entered established orders. When the Benedictines settled close by, in 1847, Father Gallagher joined them, but as he knew

no German and they spoke no other tongue, he went to the Augustinians in Philadelphia, "among whom he lived many years, laboring as a zealous priest in his Master's vineyard, and died a saintly death." Mr. Kuhn's property had been ceded to the Sisters for the purpose of founding a boarding-school. Although such schools do not seem to have been originally contemplated by the holy foundress, yet in her closing years she mentioned this mode of instructing the ignorant to Mother Warde as desirable in certain circumstances, and advocated the opening of one in Carlow. As a means of training and educating subjects, the boarding-school is now in many places a recognized necessity. Indeed, we find orders strictly forbidden to teach, as the Redemptorists and Trappists, opening boarding-schools in which they educate boys of tender age in the hope of getting among them a few educated and otherwise eligible subjects.

But outside of such necessity, which exists in a higher degree in America and Australia than elsewhere, the need of such an institution in the Pittsburgh diocese made its establishment, in the bishop's opinion, as important as any other work of mercy. In the whole State of Pennsylvania there was then no such school for Catholics. The chief, if not the only Catholic schools, were Georgetown, Emmitsburg, a small school of the Sacred Heart Sisters in New York, and the convents of New Orleans and Mobile, too distant from Northern centres to be of use to Northern children. The inconvenience and expense attendant on travelling in those days, which already seem centuries ago, the slow stages and tedious canal-boating, made it more difficult and dangerous to travel a hundred miles then than it is now to travel five thousand. Comparatively few could avail themselves of the advantages offered by distant schools, however excellent. Only the wealthy could do so. And were it otherwise, it was feared that placing children in moderate circumstances among the richest might prove a dangerous

experiment. They might become "stuck up," or imbibe ideas beyond their position. For then as now society was formed of many grades, and, practically, equality, the proud boast of the day, existed chiefly on paper.

Bishop O'Connor wished that fashion should as much as possible be excluded from the system of the new school, and that simplicity should rule all its details. A neat, inexpensive uniform was selected for the coming pupils. The fullest culture of mind and manner was to be given according to individual capacity, but all were to be trained to domestic work and habits of order and economy. The mother-superior and her staff entered fully into the bishop's views. American girls, usually so much left to themselves after leaving school, need a very careful bringing-up; besides, reverses have always been so common that it is not amiss to prepare the wealthiest to wait on themselves, and learn the routine of simple housekeeping. "Once boots, twice clogs" is not unfrequently exemplified here.* The wealthy of a few years ago are now straitened and *vice versa*. As a rule, there is scarcely any wealthy class, or any poor class; wealth seldom reaches the third or fourth generation, and poverty, if accompanied by industry, sobriety, and thrift, will not long remain poverty. All this apart from sudden access of wealth, or sudden falling into penury, with which *luck* is thought to have something to do as well as energy, or the want of it.

Circumstances reconciled the community to a work of mercy new to them. For, though Mother McAuley had

* In a letter from Mother Isidore Fisher to Dr. James O'Connor, then (July, 1865) president of the Ecclesiastical Seminary, Philadelphia, we find this passage: "Mary ——— told me she had been speaking to you lately, and of the extreme kindness of the bishop (O'Connor) to them. Poor children! how deeply they regret the education which has totally unfitted them for the positions they will henceforth fill in the world! The oldest particularly seems to deplore it, for nine years living like ladies, in a fine house, refined society, with many of the luxuries of life. Now they are in a poor house, with good but totally uneducated parents, whose language even sounds harsh to their ears. Nor are they able in any way to make their position more tolerable. Blind, blind!"

employed her children in teaching the upper or middle class in day-schools, the opening of the first boarding-school did not take place till three years after her holy death. She was anxious, however, to establish one for the training of girls who desired to become religious, saying, what has since been verified: "It is from these schools that many of our best Sisters will come." When the bishop proposed a boarding-school, some feared that such an institution was not fully in accordance with the spirit of their Institute. He assembled all and asked the opinion of each, which was unhesitatingly given, and, to his surprise, proved different from his own. All, save the mother-superior, feared it would take too much of their time from the humbler classes to whom they were chiefly consecrated.

The bishop was not the least displeased that they differed from him. He even thanked them for their candor in speaking as they felt. Still, he urged his own views and the circumstances of the place, and argued his point with such force that all soon agreed with him. The school was to be in a country-house which would shelter the declining years of the aged and infirm, and afford change of air and occasional repose to the over-worked city communities. Above all, it was to be a nursery in which vocations could be cultivated, and "intending candidates," as the new English would say, receive a first-class education, which they could afterwards impart to the working-classes. In this view a boarding-school was more a work of mercy than any other institution. Nevertheless, to quiet all consciences, Bishop O'Connor laid the whole matter before Rome, and Cardinal Barnabo gave his willing sanction to the project, it being a work of mercy to instruct the ignorant, rich and poor, and there being little hope otherwise of obtaining educated subjects in America.

This was the bishop's way with the religious under his paternal care. He would state his views, the works he desired of them for the divine honor, entreating and

explaining when a less holy and skilful guide would have commanded. He gave them the fullest liberty of expressing their opinions. Far from showing displeasure when their views were at variance with his, he was gratified by their candor. His exquisite courtesy, and the fact that his opinions were mostly found to be correct, sweetly and gently brought all to coincide with him, nor could he have asked anything of the Sisters of Mercy they would not gladly have done for him. He showed them, one and all, a respect and affection born of the paternal, yea, even the maternal, feelings which Dr. Cullen told them they would ever find in him. "He will be not only a father but a mother to you," said he.

Before the end of April, 1845, St. Xavier's Academy opened with fifteen boarders. Sister M. Josephine Cullen was placed over the new establishment, with five Sisters to aid her. Sisters Eliza Wynne and Bessie McCaffrey had received the white veil on the 4th of February, with the names Catherine and Agnes. Sisters M. Philomena Reid and Xavier Tiernan were professed April 13. The weather was very cold, the snow falling heavily, but friends sent carriages for them. Indeed, Mrs. Tiernan's carriage was always at their disposal. Poor Sister Philomena bore admirably the fatigue of the long ceremony, her fervor sustaining her. Though evidently sinking into consumption, she made herself useful in many ways. At this time Miss Mary Anne McGirr, daughter of Dr. McGirr, of Youngstown, entered the convent, to which she proved a valuable acquisition. Her younger sister, Catherine (Cassie), was received as a boarder. "It would seem," writes the only survivor (1888) of the first seven,* "as if our Lord sent

* As early as 1859 there was but one of the first seven left in Pittsburgh. We find her alluded to, in a letter from Sister M. Scholastica Geoghegan to Father O'Connor, as "the last of that generous band who sacrificed all that was dear in the world and in religion to establish the Sisters of Mercy in Pittsburgh . . . a real good religious, who shuts out the world, and, as far as she can, frowns down worldliness of manner, and worldly conversations if broached in her presence."

this amiable young postulant to supply the place of the young professed we were about to lose. Her musical education was most useful in a teaching community, and her joyous spirit most valuable in a small circle of Sisters, the opening of a new house lessening the number in the mother-house very considerably."

Until the Sisters removed to their new convent, where they had a good-sized chapel, receptions and professions were held in the cathedral, and the bishop always officiated. On June 29 Miss Catherine McGirr followed her sister to the novitiate. Young in years, and still younger in manners, among the household gods she brought to the convent were her dolls! The noble example of Miss Tiernan's sacrifice excited a spirit of emulation among the ladies of Pittsburgh and the adjacent country; even children were eager to devote themselves to God as Sisters of Mercy, having caught not a little of the contagious enthusiasm of the early members.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ALMA MATER.

St. Xavier's—How the Pupils love It—Mr. Kuhn's little Severities—His Views on Agrarian Industry—Letter from Bishop O'Connor—Progress—Cases of Conscience—Efforts to gain Recruits—Frances Brown and Mary Fennessy—The City Sisters spend Vacation in the Country—Grand Reception at Youngstown—Magdalen Reinbolt and Teresa Staub—Retreat—Kindness and Courtesy of Bishop O'Connor—Beautiful Letter of his Brother—His intense Affection for the Sisters.

ST. XAVIER'S ACADEMY* justly ranks among the foremost schools of the country. The situation is perfectly healthy. From the windows and galleries the pupils can gaze on a panorama of surpassing picturesqueness and beauty, partly formed by the great Chestnut Ridge, covered with giant trees, which traverses this part of Pennsylvania. Velvet lawns, lovely walks, trees once the glory of the forest, landscape gardens artistically laid out, complete solitude, scarcely a house being visible from its verandas, add to the charms of this enchanting spot. In spring and fall the place seems a fairyland of beauty. The chapel, class-rooms, and dormitories are all that can be desired, and the aspect of the academy is at once noble and beautiful. From the first the institution was eminently successful. Parents were eager to place their daughters in a home combining so many advantages, within easy reach of the city yet far from its distractions. It is the *Alma Mater* of hundreds of ladies who have nobly adorned

* A free school for the children of the neighborhood was opened, simultaneously with St. Xavier's Academy, in a frame building put up for the purpose by Father M. Gallagher. This has been replaced by a comfortable brick structure on the road between the academy and the cemetery. An early letter mentions one hundred boarders at the academy, "of whom sixteen are Protestants who came to us in fear and trembling and are now among the happiest of our children."

Christian society, and filled in religion the places made vacant when their teachers were called to the better land. There never was a school about which the hearts and tenderest memories of teachers and pupils clustered more warmly. In April, 1868, while the Pittsburgh communities were undergoing great changes and trials, Sister M. Scholastica Geoghegan, who had been at St. Xavier's as pupil and teacher from childhood, wrote to a dear reverend friend: "Next week I leave St. Xavier's in all probability for ever. I need not tell you how I feel in looking my last on this place, of all others on earth the dearest to me. But God's holy will be done. He does all things for the best, and though my heart bleeds on leaving the spot where the best and happiest years of my life have been spent, yet when God demands the sacrifice I cheerfully make it."

Hundred of passages to the same effect might be quoted from the letters of the early teachers and pupils.

A neat house was built near the academy for the chaplain and guests, with special quarters for Mr. Kuhn, who gladly accepted the hospitality of his beneficiaries. At times he was testy and difficult to please, and a great trial to his friends. He considered it a matter of conscience to watch the children. In revenge for the complaints he lodged against them, they would now and then make sad havoc in his favorite turnip-field. He never met them about the grounds without exclaiming vehemently: "I reckon ye have come from my turnip-patch." His great happiness was to visit the chapel, especially when the Sisters were reciting the office. At Mass he knelt near the door. Should any of the boarders be late for Mass, they managed to kneel about him, much to his distraction. He recommended the Sisters to make the young ladies work on the farm and milk the cows. He thought they should learn every branch of agrarian industry. His eccentricities were very amusing to the early family at St. Xavier's. Except in matters of cooking, he became thoroughly Americanized; "Eur-ó-peans,"

he would say with a strong accent on the second syllable, "don't know nothing"; "and Americans," he would add with disgust, "don't know enough even to make sauce for a man." He was, nevertheless, deeply attached to the Sisters and everything at St. Xavier's, where he passed in peace, not wholly unruffled, the evening of his harmless life.

In a letter from Bishop O'Connor to his brother, dated *The Great Western*, August 10, 1845, the writer asks for a Madonna and a St. Xavier; of the latter he says: "Let it be a good one, as large as life. We saw one in New York representing the saint with his eyes raised to heaven, the cross in his hand, etc. You may remember it in Bishop Hughes's parlor. Something approaching this would answer very well. I want it for the new convent we are building near Youngstown, to be called St. Xavier's.* The Sisters have commenced an academy there in the house hitherto occupied by Mr. Stillinger, and have succeeded very well in their boarding-school. I am bringing two of them with me to Ireland to recruit for more subjects, as we are thrown entirely on them now. If we can only get three or four good ones we shall have as fine an institution in town and country as we want. I gave the veil to three new ones the day before I left, making six who received the veil since they came over, besides four postulants yet in the house who promise well."

The bishop asks his brother, then at the Propaganda, to see for him a cardinal "about certain cases of conscience I proposed to him when in Rome. . . . Make inquiry about them, as they are of practical importance to me. They regard usury and secret societies."

The good bishop was anxious that schools should be opened in other parts of his diocese. But this project could not be considered with present numbers. Mother

* The picture was procured. When St. Xavier's was burned in 1868 the Sisters took particular care to save it and the likeness of Father O'Connor, S.J., or, as they called it, "the bishop's picture."

Warde had already opened a correspondence with the few convents then in Ireland, asking the superiors to give or get her subjects. All promised to do for the Order in the New World whatever lay in their power. But the bishop thought that if the Sisters were on the spot they would be more likely to obtain the promised help. Those alluded to in his letter were Mother Warde and Sister M. Xavier, who visited Ireland to get a supply of experienced members, that the community might be able to meet the increasing demand for their services.

On the 28th of June Miss Frances Brown,* of Washington County, entered, and on July 15 Miss Mary Fennessy, niece of Rev. Father Maher, of Harrisburg. The pupils continued to increase till the close of the schools in the second week of July. The whole community then went to St. Xavier's, the bishop chartering a stage. The old stages had seats for nine; on the present occasion the number of occupants was ten. All enjoyed the drive, being young and full of health and spirits. They were delighted, too, at the prospect of meeting their beloved Sisters, from whom they had been separated since April. Travelling from Pittsburgh, east or west, was commonly styled "over the mountains" or "down the river." Stages and boats were the public conveyances. The journey of about forty-two miles occupied seven hours, though the stage stopped only to change horses. The Sisters of both houses were delighted to meet again. The dear invalid, Sister Philomena, seemed to revive in the joy it afforded her. She had failed greatly, but was still bright, cheerful, and energetic. She had taken an active part in the new school, saying pleasantly that she would cheerfully labor as long as God gave her strength for her duties.

* Some applicants could not be received. With regard to a young widow with one son, the bishop writes to his brother: "I do not see how Mrs. B—— can in conscience abandon her son. In the absence of any specific arrangements, the possibility of which I cannot conceive, I would pronounce her entering the convent out of the question."

July 26, 1845, Sisters Mary Anne McGirr and Catherine McGuire were received in St. Vincent's Church, Youngstown, which was crowded to its utmost capacity, people coming from far and near to see "the taking of the veil." Sister Mary Anne's family belonging to Youngstown, and herself being well known in the neighborhood, made the ceremony all the more interesting. The young ladies were elegantly attired in bridal costume. The music was unusually fine. The bishop officiated and preached an eloquent sermon on the nature and duties of the religious life.

The Sisters greatly enjoyed their vacation, spent in preparing for new labors. The foundresses were together again for the last time. Two German girls had joined them as lay Sisters—Magdalen Reinbolt and Teresa Staub—"pious, laborious persons, who proved very useful members." Rev. Joseph O'Meally, of Cincinnati, gave the young community a very profitable retreat, and they resumed their labors renewed in spirit and ready to make any sacrifice for God.

From the beginning they were treated by Bishop O'Connor as his immediate family. Their interest was his, and they experienced from him, collectively and individually, kindness which they would have gone any length to reciprocate. Of his sentiments for them his brother writes :

"He was, indeed, a devoted friend to the Sisters of Mercy. For those of his diocese he entertained a regard that cannot be expressed in words. It had in it all that is tender in the affection of a father according to nature, and all that is sacred in that of the pastor of souls. And how could it be otherwise? The foundresses of the Pittsburgh community had been the first to volunteer their services in the work of building up his new diocese. At his invitation they had left home and friends, and the country they loved, to go with him, a stranger, to a distant land,

there to labor and there to die. He had no comforts and but slender accommodations to offer them on their arrival in Pittsburgh. They did not complain. They entered on the various duties of their vocation with a good will and with light hearts. Very soon their influence for good began to be felt and seen. Through their Hospital, Orphan Asylum, and House of Industry they made a most favorable impression on all classes of the community. Protestants as well as Catholics admired their heroic devotion to the service of the sick. In their schools they succeeded in giving their pupils not only a good education in letters, but also in imparting to them in a very remarkable degree their own spirit of faith and unaffected piety. Their children were distinguished among all others of their age for the singular modesty of their deportment. This was especially true of the pupils of St. Xavier's. The Sisters had thus a most important part in the formation of the new diocese. My brother understood and fully appreciated the actual and prospective value of their labors. His personal relations to the community had always been of the very pleasantest kind. It had not only never caused him the slightest trouble ; it had always been his greatest consolation. No wonder, then, that he loved it, that he felt a deep interest in all that concerned it, and that this interest did not diminish up to the moment of his death."

The Right Reverend writer of the above beautiful letter (April 8, 1874) adds : " The Pittsburgh Sisters are, so far as I can see, in a most prosperous condition. Though their number has nearly doubled since I left, they find it difficult to supply the various institutions under their charge. The good spirit that animated them in former years has been strengthened with time. Troubles, indeed, they have had, and still have, of the most serious kind. But these, happily, have been from without, and have only served to teach them to rely on God alone, and to develop in them all the virtues of their state."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BISHOP AND HIS FAMILY.

Bishop O'Connor's Love for St. Xavier's—His Views regarding It—It fully responded to his Anticipations—School-girl Life at St. Xavier's—"The Bishop is here!"—Anecdotes—Descriptions—Reminiscences—Scriptural Charity—"I'll do it in spite of him"—More Pluck than Piety—Charming Simplicity of the Bishop—Testimony of Bishop Mullen—Pittsburgh Priests—Father McCullagh—A Glance at the History of Pittsburgh—Bishop O'Connor's chief Reliance was on Catholic Schools—Mr. Bakewell—Not appreciated by all—Letters.

THE early years of St. Xavier's were fostered by a gifted body of ecclesiastics, including among others the bishop,* his brother, Father McCullagh, and Dr. Keogh. The bishop was the life and soul of the institution. He watched over it with intense interest; it was as the apple of his eye. He intended that his views should reach the remotest corners of his extensive diocese through the women trained within its walls. And he often asserted that it fully responded to his highest anticipations. He was beloved by teachers and pupils to an extent of which we have not known another instance. School-girl life at St. Xavier's was full of charming incidents, with most of which he was connected. A thousand instances might be given, trifling in themselves, yet embellishing a great life and bringing out the strong points of a most lovable character. "The bishop is here!" was an announcement that gave joy to every heart. An old pupil writes:

"His grand presence was inspiring and lent a charm

* The bishop frequently examined the pupils and brought other prelates, and almost all the eminent persons who came to Pittsburgh, to visit the Sisters and their institutions. He was peculiarly happy as an examiner. His stores of information were immense. He understood the dead languages, and spoke Irish, Spanish, French, German, and Italian. In his use of English he might be styled a purist. In many things he was fifty years ahead of his epoch, and was withal as simple, humble, and approachable as a little child.

that was stimulating to higher purposes. One morning, when he preceded his saintly young brother at the altar, the query after Mass was : 'Where did he come from?' Later they learned that he had come in the night, made his way to an unoccupied room in the cottage in which mattresses were stored, made himself a bed on the floor, and all after walking two miles and a half from the train, rather than awake his brother or disturb any one.

"Another time he made the girls an unexpected visit at Christmastide. They were getting up a play. Just then the youngest daughter of a family starring through the United States was a pupil, and, though never on the stage, had a pronounced aptitude for such doings. She got up a little drama. The stage was of the most primitive description, the benches close together covered with shawls, the lights a few dips, and the folding-doors served for a curtain. Great were the surprise and delight of the children to see in the audience the grand bishop. The piece was funny and the star equal to her part. He laughed heartily. I can see him now, his beautiful eyes sparkling with the merriment of a boy. But he afterwards said : 'It was very well done, amusing, harmless. But I would not encourage such plays. They are dangerous. They may develop a taste for theatre-going, if not for the stage itself.' Would that all pastors were equally foreseeing for the little ones of their flocks !

"In after-life, when the drama had changed to the stern reality of the religious state for the great bishop and the child to whom he had imparted the Holy Spirit and the First Communion, the kindness received from him was something to be appreciated and remembered. He preached, at my reception, a sermon that would have electrified an audience at Notre Dame with its learning and eloquence."

Another old pupil writes : "The character of our sainted bishop was a wonderful combination of powerful intel-

lect and exquisite tenderness. I have the most touching memories of his wise counsel and fatherly affection in my joys and sorrows. As an illustration of his humility and delicate consideration for others, I recall that Mr. — and I, with our little ones, drove out Fourth Street road one Fourth of July. In front of us was the bishop's modest turnout, which had room only for himself and the driver. Presently he spied his cook, Mary Moran, trudging along in the heat and dust, carrying a heavy basket. Suddenly his lordship orders a halt, steps down, makes Mary take his place, saying he prefers walking !”

His charities were proverbial. “When I took leave of him,” writes another old pupil, “he slipped into my hand, with the embarrassed air of one fearing to have it noticed, a ten-dollar bill for Ellen C——, whom you remember as very poor and very holy. He was literally afraid of letting his left hand know what his right hand did.”

The bishop enjoyed the stories the Sisters gathered among the poor. One dear old woman, not remarkable for piety, was exhorted to lead a better life, and the strong point of the Sister's argument was the fear of hell. “Ah!” said the old sinner, “Father Maguire always preached—and *he* knew how to preach—that one tear of sorrow for sin shed at the moment of death was sufficient to save the greatest sinner.” “Yes,” said the exhorter, “but how do you know that you'll have grace or strength to shed such a tear? The devil is so on the alert for dying souls, his power over you may be such as to prevent your making that act of contrition—” “I'll do it in spite of him!” interrupted the old woman, “who,” said the narrator, “had certainly more pluck than piety.”

The most charming trait of the bishop was his child-like simplicity. It endeared him to his whole flock, but in a special manner to the young. “Everything belonging to God is simplicity itself, and the more simple one is the nearer to God. All the great men and women whose

names stud the calendar of the Church owed their greatness to their simplicity," said a friend, speaking of Bishop O'Connor.

The first regular chaplain of St. Xavier's was Rev. Thos. McCullagh, a holy and zealous priest, of whom Bishop Mullen wrote: "The saintly and self-denying inmates of St. Xavier's will long revere the memory of him who shared with them all the difficulties and anxieties incidental to such a large and important foundation, and many of its former pupils now prominent among the ladies of Pittsburgh and elsewhere will revert with pleasing recollections to the period when they enjoyed the benefit of his moral instruction and edifying example."

Bishop Mullen speaks of the administration of Bishop O'Connor as "perhaps the most brilliant and successful in the history of the American Church"; and of himself as a "prelate zealous, experienced, endowed with creative genius and a rich fertility of resource under difficulties. Sublime in his conceptions and prompt in his movements, he excited the admiration of all, no less by the grandeur of his plans than the rapidity of their execution. . . . He engaged in enterprises from which common men would have recoiled, and each bold move, as it culminated in success, inspired additional confidence in his indomitable energy. . . . Year after year arose splendid monuments attesting his industry and energy. Abroad, when questions of vast import to the interests of religion came up for discussion, so great was his reputation as writer, lecturer, and theologian that all turned instinctively to Pittsburgh for the light of that brilliant intellect that so long adorned its see." His priests were "singularly unselfish, and proud to emulate the zeal of their great bishop. . . . In many instances they devoted to the cause of religion the offerings intended for their own support."

Father McCullagh, one of these devoted priests, was appointed chaplain to St. Xavier's, and his interest in that

avored institution never flagged. Other chaplains not less zealous followed. But as the Benedictines, invited by Bishop O'Connor in 1846, settled in the neighborhood, and soon included in their numbers priests who spoke other languages than German, they in course of time began to supply chaplains for St. Xavier's, which they still do.*

But the early chaplains *never forgot St. Xavier's or were forgotten there*. Here is a note, April 6, 1866, which shows one of them as a temporal as well as a spiritual helper :

"DEAR FATHER: Mother-superior received your letter and the box of valuable jellies and mosses. As she is unable to use her pen, she requested me to offer her heartfelt thanks for your great kindness, and the anxiety and sympathy you manifested during her illness. None offered were more highly appreciated."

Many similar passages could be quoted.

A glance at the history of religion in Pittsburgh may fitly conclude this chapter. Towards the close of the last century Irish Catholics began to settle in Western Pennsylvania, and Fathers Whelan and O'Brien ministered to their spiritual wants. The latter became first resident pastor of Pittsburgh (1807), where he built St. Patrick's Church in 1808. He afterwards joined the Lazarists and died in St. Louis, 1862. In 1820 he was succeeded by Father Maguire, whose gifts as a preacher are traditional in the city. Having a thorough knowledge of German, Low Dutch, and other languages, he was a useful missionary among other nationalities besides his own, and was the father of the German congregations. He died in 1830, after doing wonders for the Church. He built St. Paul's Cathedral long before

* Father Wimmer was the only priest in the band of Benedictines that came in 1846. The Sisters resigned to them St. Vincent's pastoral house and betook themselves to the new St. Xavier's. The abbot was a true father to the community, and the monks have been their friends in many ways. For years they tuned the musical instruments, gave drawing lessons, and often sent Brothers to attend to the plumbing of the academy when facilities for getting good workmen were not what they are now. The fine St. Francis Xavier in the convent chapel was a present from Abbot Wimmer, who had it painted in Munich for the Sisters.

Pittsburgh was mentioned as likely to become an episcopal see. This magnificent church, in which the early receptions and professions of the Sisters of Mercy took place, was burned in 1851. It was replaced by what was for years the most spacious church in the country, a superb edifice, capable of accommodating eight thousand people. Father John O'Reilly, who succeeded Father Charles Maguire, built many churches, and administered with great zeal and success till the arrival of Dr. O'Connor. Father Stillinger, as pastor of Blairsville, did much for his flock there and in the surrounding country. Fathers Hayden of Bedford, and Gallitzin of Loretto, are names that will not die. The diocese contained on Bishop O'Connor's arrival only fourteen priests. Ten years later the number was eighty. The population of Pittsburgh in 1834 was about 20,000, of which one-fourth was Catholic. In the city and vicinity in 1843 there were 12,500 Catholics. Bishop O'Connor relied chiefly on the schools for the spread of religion in his diocese, and he left nothing undone to perfect them. Well informed as the Sisters were, he wished them to have lessons from an American professor, to see if there were anything in his system worthy of being grafted on their own. He taught a class in the school before them. In a letter to his brother, March, 1852, the bishop says: "The Sisters are very much pleased. This will necessarily give the schools a name, and I hope be of advantage to the Sisters permanently. He will commence here in Pittsburgh by way of experiment." For his services the professor, Mr. Bakewell, was paid six hundred dollars a year. All the Sisters did not appreciate the professor. Years later, when Sister M—— was asked to keep a journal, she wrote, June, 1858: "Had I given the time to composition which I spent with Mr. B—— at Latin, or with Mr. S—— at the harp, I might now be able to compose a work, or, what is still more difficult, keep a journal."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SIMPLICITY OF THE DOVE, THE WISDOM OF THE SERPENT.

Characteristics of the Bishop—His Zeal for Religious Perfection—Powerful Letter to a wavering Subject—Letter to his Brother—"The Glory of them all: a grand Man!"—Anecdotes—Driving a Nail through a fine Watch—Temperance Societies established by the Bishop—He founds the *Pittsburgh Catholic*—Extraordinary Progress.

KINDNESS and gentleness were the prevailing characteristics of Bishop O'Connor, but with these precious qualities he combined strictness and firmness. Of religious he exacted the virtues of their holy state, and ever taught them that the more closely they were united to God the more fully could they carry out His designs on their souls. Once an ailing Sister said in his hearing: "While my foot aches I cannot visit the sick." "Don't put it that way, my child," he returned, "but simply tell mother-superior how you feel. Say you are willing to go if she sends you, though such obedience might cost you pain. It is for her to judge whether the pain be sufficient to dispense you from duty or not."

A member who grew dissatisfied with her duties said: "I might as well have remained in the world and become a teacher as to be always teaching here. If I could only carry out such and such projects—" The bishop told her she must simply do as desired. Nothing else was required of her, and nothing else would satisfy those over her. He allowed her, however, to visit other convents, and while she was absent sent her the following:

"DEAR SISTER: I sincerely hope that your trip has hitherto been favorable both to your bodily health and

your peace of mind. I trust you have come to some resolution that will at the same time be satisfactory and permanent. It has occurred to me that the whole fruit which you might otherwise derive from your journey may be dissipated by a very probable contingency. Projects of one kind or another may be suggested to you, and you may return home with the intention of proposing them. And the consequence may be that, if they are not adopted, 'the last error may be worse than the first.'

"Now, to obviate this, let me say to you that, in case you make no arrangement for stopping in the East, and that you decide on returning to Pittsburgh, it will be necessary that you do so with a full resolution to employ yourself in whatever post may be assigned you *here*, and nothing else. No Sisters can be given to take a share in any undertaking that can be suggested for the present, or within any period of time that would warrant any calculation whatever to be made on such being done hereafter. Other things may be undertaken as our means will enable us; but the state of things now existing is what I dread. Beyond allowing you to make such arrangements for yourself as you think best before God, nothing can be done to forward any project suggested. I sincerely trust that you will come to a final decision of a character that will bring peace to your mind—peace of that solid nature that will secure its stability. I feel the more confident of your doing this on account of the character of those with whom you are likely to advise.

"With sincere prayers for your welfare here and hereafter,

"I remain, dear Sister,

"Yours faithfully in Christ,

"✠ M. O'CONNOR,

"*Bishop of Pittsburgh.*

"Pittsburgh, March 15, 1851."

Rather than yield ever so little to the private views of this individual, the bishop aided her to sever her connection with the Order. She seems to have made some overtures to return, for he wrote to his brother :

"If she should talk of returning, I think, under present

circumstances, she may be received ; no promise must be made to her, or hopes held out. And being admitted, she must join the novitiate as if she had never been in the community before. She might make a very useful member, and it would certainly be the best thing she could do for herself. Treat her kindly, without seeming over-anxious about her."

Dr. O'Connor desired to be a religious, and was a bishop only by constraint. He cultivated in his soul all the virtues that should adorn conventual life, and was therefore a most accomplished guide for the religious under his care. When he exchanged the mitre for the Jesuit habit his confrères found him exact at all times, but particularly so in his latter days when ill health was upon him and nature required rest and solace. He made superhuman efforts to be present at the common exercises. "It was painful," writes a friend, "to see him making his way through the corridors to the place of assembly. It is now his exceeding joy to have suffered for our Lord, but it was hard for those that loved him to see the merit hidden therein. It brings tears to my eyes to hear of the physical cost of his fidelity to the least point of rule." This and his great humility often impressed seculars. Once Dr. McManus forbade him to preach, prescribing at the same time a certain regimen. The doctor thought a verbal message to the superior sufficient, but the bishop insisted on his writing it out in due form as if he were a novice.

"Experience convinces me," writes a disciple of his, "that never was prelate loved as was Bishop O'Connor. Said a worldly scion of a wealthy family : 'I never knew but one bishop, and that was Dr. Michael O'Connor. Like the Church he represented, he was broad and universal.' Lately I said to a Jesuit in Georgetown : 'I never knew but one Jesuit, and that was Bishop O'Connor.' 'Ah! then,' he replied, 'you knew the glory of them all. He was a grand man ; he did or said nothing like any one else. If

it were only the words "Almighty God," he uttered them with a reverence and majesty that thrilled one.' "

Bishop O'Connor, always most kind to religious, would take any trouble to aid them. When the Little Sisters of the Poor came to Baltimore he encouraged them in their good work, tried to influence his friends in their behalf, and had some printing done for them. A Baltimore Visitation nun one day asked the bishop at the *grille* what he thought of devotion to Our Lady of La Salette. "Well," said he, "it is not hard to have devotion to Our Lady under any title, even Our Lady of Coal Lane." This locality, which has since widened into an avenue, was not, to say the least, an aristocratic quarter; but as most of its denizens were from the Emerald Isle, the Blessed Mother was duly honored there.

It is no exaggeration to say that every one in Pittsburgh was impressed with the superior worth of the bishop. Once when he attended the funeral of a distinguished man, at which the judges of the Supreme Court and the *élite* of the State were in line, the son of the deceased said that the crowning honor paid to his father was the presence of the Catholic bishop.

A lady who spent fifty years in Pittsburgh, and was heart and soul devoted to him, writes :

"You know how handsome the bishop was, and what beautiful hands he had, yet how little attention he gave his toilet. During a Lenten season he delivered a course of lectures on doctrinal subjects. His reputation as the closest reasoner and deepest thinker of the day brought all the professional and literary men, irrespective of creed; long before the appointed time every available spot in the cathedral was occupied.

"I met him unexpectedly. He had just come in and was by no means 'fixed up.' 'O bishop,' I said, 'the church is crowded. You'll hardly have time to wash your hands.' 'Oh! I have fifteen minutes,' he said, as I fixed

my eyes on his hands, too white not to show Pittsburgh soot. At the appointed time out he came, every inch a lord, and ascended the pulpit, his face radiant with intelligence. I almost fancied there was a twinkle in his eye saying, as I looked up: 'Haven't I made a hasty toilet?' And when he clasped his hands, as he was wont to do in the pulpit, they looked like snow-white lilies."

"I was one of a company," writes another, "in which a certain religious was being extolled for her beauty, talent, and accomplishments. The bishop rather abruptly, though smilingly, said: 'I think, since these good ladies have chosen seclusion, we should allow them to enjoy it.'"

Speaking of worldlings mixing in religious communities, he said: "It is like driving a nail through a well-regulated watch."

The stories of the bishop's friends about his holiness, kindness, and charity would fill volumes.

He was a great advocate of temperance. In the first year of his episcopate the temperance societies attached to the cathedral and St. Patrick's numbered thirty-five hundred souls. Early letters speak of himself, Bishop Young, and other bishops examining the children, which he frequently did. In February, 1844, he published the *Pittsburgh Catholic*,* still a welcome weekly visitor in Pittsburgh homes. Before he was three months in the diocese he had organized St. Michael's Ecclesiastical Seminary under Rev. Dr. Wilson. Mr. Mullen, now Bishop of Erie, taught a large school for boys.

* Bishop O'Connor gave close attention to the *Pittsburgh Catholic*. In a letter to his brother he says: "I have always kept the *Catholic* from meddling in the woman's-rights controversy." He worked hard to circulate the paper.

CHAPTER XX.

PROGRESS THROUGH THE CROSS.

Incident—Delicacy of Sister M. Philomena.—Her heroic Resignation—Nearing the End—A bright and beautiful Death—The Grave in the Forest—The recruiting Sisters return from Ireland—New Accessions—Jane O'Gorman—A Surprise Party—Novice-Mistress—The Concert Hall—The Sisters of Charity withdrawn from Pittsburgh—Their Superior, Isidore Fisher, joins the Mercy Sisterhood—New Labors—Ceremonies—The Sisters take Charge of the Orphans—The Benedictines—The Bishop's Dilemma—Fresh Projects.

ON their return to Pittsburgh after the pleasant and profitable vacation of 1845 the Sisters reopened their day and Sunday-schools, with a great increase of pupils. A visit from two Sisters of the Good Shepherd was an unusual incident in their quiet lives. They had come from Angers to reinforce their house in St. Louis, and were as greatly pleased with their hostesses as their hostesses were with them. Despite its many inconveniences, all at the country-house continued well, save Sister M. Philomena. Father O'Meally told her that if she prayed for recovery she would certainly obtain it. She replied that even if she were certain of success, she would never offer a prayer for that end, preferring to leave herself entirely in the hands of God. This greatly struck the good priest, and he often related it.

Great peace of mind resulted from this conformity; the Sisters were astonished and edified at the calmness with which she received the last sacraments, for heretofore she had been rather scrupulous. The children, who had the privilege of visiting her as she sat under a tree or on the piazza, were much impressed by her sweet and holy resignation.

The last hour came, October 2, the Feast of the Holy Angels, "into whose blessed company we fondly hope she found admittance." The obsequies were celebrated with all the solemnity possible in those days. Her dear remains, beautiful in death, were laid out in the church and devoutly visited by such friends as were near enough to pay her that mark of respect. Crowds of the scattered inhabitants of the surrounding country attended the funeral, and many priests, some from Pittsburgh, were present. Keenly was this great loss felt by all. The remains were laid in St. Vincent's cemetery, under the shade of some venerable trees. Sisters and children often assembled on this hallowed spot to recall the virtues of the dear deceased and breathe a prayer for her happy repose. Father Gallagher had a neat rustic paling made around the grave. "And though no miracle was spoken of, we often felt we were assisted by her loving intercession in the happy regions of eternal light." Her remains were afterwards removed to the beautiful cemetery of St. Xavier's. This death, so sad for the survivors, was commemorated by Sister M. Aloysia Strange in some sweet lines published in the *Pittsburgh Catholic*: "To the Memory of Sister M. Philomena Reid, who slept in Christ, October 2, 1845, aged twenty-five years."

In December, 1845, Mother Warde returned from Ireland with Sister M. Xavier Tiernan, and Sister M. Anastasia McGawley, who had been mother-assistant in Cork; Sister M. Gertrude Blake, late superior of the Birr convent; Sister M. Augustine Goold, and two postulants, Miss O'Gorman and Miss Kelly, the former the daughter of a particular friend of Bishop O'Connor's. All willingly offered themselves for the American mission, the wonderful good to be effected in that part of our Lord's vineyard having been described in burning words and glowing colors by the eloquent Mother Warde. Miss Goold and Miss O'Gorman had been for many years pupils of the Ursuline Convent, Cork, and it was expected that the latter would have become an

Ursuline. To her widowed mother it was a great trial that her vocation called her so far away at the early age of nineteen; but she and her only son gave their willing though sad consent. Mrs. O'Gorman stipulated that her daughter's profession should not take place till she could come to America to judge for herself if "her Jane" were perfectly happy. (She came with her son, fully intent on taking her daughter home if she were not content. They were so satisfied that they left a younger sister, who with four other young ladies accompanied them to Pittsburgh. All were professed in 1850.)

None of the party had written of their arrival in America. Father Deane, of the cathedral, happened to see the news in the papers, and hastened to tell the Sisters that "Mrs. Warde, Mrs. Tiernan, Mrs. McGawley, Mrs. Blake, Miss Goold, Miss O'Gorman, and Miss Kelly" had reached New York. Great was the excitement caused by this announcement. Preparations were made at the country-house, at which it was supposed they would stop *en route* for Pittsburgh. But, contrary to expectation, after many days of slow travel and delay they reported at Pittsburgh on a Saturday morning just before Christmas. Most of the little community were taking advantage of *the no school* to attend their more distant sick-calls and the Poor-House. The rest were sweeping and dusting, the usual Saturday's occupation, when the seven—eight, for the bishop accompanied them—knocked at the door. The greetings, welcomes, introductions, inquiries for friends at home, may be imagined. It was ten o'clock, and it took an hour to prepare breakfast for the fasting party, as the kitchen fires had gone out. After a cheerful meal they retired to rest for a few hours, and reappeared in the afternoon to delight the little community with the good news from home and the details of the voyage. Among the changes consequent on the increase of numbers was the appointment of a special mistress of novices. This important office de-

volved on Sister M. Xavier Tiernan, "whose piety and maturity of judgment were considered sufficient to supply for want of years. Few indeed could more fully possess the religious spirit."

The community requiring more space, the bishop leased a large, commodious building, lately a hotel, and commonly known as "The Concert Hall," on Penn Street, then, as now, one of the chief avenues for private residences. To this the Sisters and their pupils removed in April, 1846.

The community which had preceded them in Pittsburgh had been suddenly withdrawn in July, 1845. The cause of this removal was never explained by their superiors. The bishop gives it in a confidential letter to his brother. It was a painful surprise to him. "I suppose you know the Sisters of Charity have left us. . . . Nothing had been omitted which was ever done before for them, or which they had a right to expect." The superior, who had received the Sisters of Mercy so kindly, December 21, 1843, Sister M. Isidore Fisher, feeling a strong vocation for the Mercy Sisterhood, withdrew from her own, as she was bound by annual vows only, and entered the Convent of Mercy April 9, 1846. She received the white veil May 4, was professed in due time, and lived over forty years in the Order.

As no notice had been given to the bishop of the withdrawal of the Sisters, he was unable to make such arrangements as he desired for the asylum and its thirty orphans, and the parish school. The orphans he put in charge of a widow and her two daughters, and the school had to be closed for six months, when the Sisters of Mercy were sufficiently numerous to undertake it, March, 1846. The building was too small for the numbers that crowded it, but it had to serve for the next few years.

The bishop brought Presentation Brothers to Pittsburgh for the boys. They were joined by the Brothers in desire who had been trained by Father Michael Gallagher. The

bishop, as pastor of St. Paul's, had built a fine school for boys, which is in use to this day (1888) as the parochial school of the cathedral, and is taught by the Sisters of Mercy. To take charge of this school in 1846 the Sisters were obliged to suspend their select school, but were soon able to resume it. The spacious apartment which gave name to the building was now changed into a school-room, and all the classes, with their divisions and subdivisions, were fully accommodated in the concert-hall or ball-room.

In May, 1846, the Sisters took charge of the orphans. On the 5th of the same month Sisters Catherine McGirr and Jane O'Gorman received the habit in the cathedral, and Sisters Agatha O'Brien and Augustine Goold were professed. The ceremony was very grand. The bishop preached one of his most eloquent sermons. There were now three Convents of Mercy in Pittsburgh diocese. The Sisters taught two academies and five free schools, including one recently opened at the country-house for the scattered children of the neighborhood.

In October, 1846, Rev. Boniface Wimmer founded the ancient Benedictine Order on this continent, at the invitation of the bishop, near the Sisters' academy in Westmoreland County, where the monks have a fine abbey.

Preparations had been quietly going on for the opening of a hospital, a project the bishop had very much at heart. No city in the Union was more in need of one, though neither public authority nor private benevolence had made any effort in that direction. River accidents were of frequent occurrence, and the bishop was most anxious that such cases should receive speedy attention, and that the city should possess a thoroughly-equipped hospital under Catholic influence. He had mentioned this in Carlow as a work for which the services of the Sisters would soon be needed. While crossing the ocean he often renewed the subject in conversation with them, but always with the understanding that it was not to be mentioned outside of

themselves, knowing that non-Catholic enterprise would forestall him were his design made public. The secret was kept till all was ready. The mother-superior and her children entered warmly into the plan. The ball-room was to be turned into an infirmary, and the academy transferred for the present to the class-rooms of the Asylum. The first hospital in Western Pennsylvania was opened New Year's day, 1847, under the patronage of the Mother of Mercy. A new building for the sick was immediately begun.

The Sisters and patients removed to the present hospital May 11, 1848. Spacious additions have since been made, with fine porches and balconies for the convalescing patients. The average number accommodated is about one hundred and fifty.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE MERCY HOSPITAL.

The First in Western Pennsylvania—The Mexican Soldiers and the Victims of Ship-Fever—The first Patient—Letter of Sister M. Isidore—Coghill—In the Country again—Sister M. Aloysia Strange—Her holy Death—The Epoch of the Famine—Pestilence—Change of Air—Father McCullagh—Holy Death of Sister Xavier Tiernan—New Convent—New Hospital.

THE Mercy Hospital became most popular. It was soon full, though only male patients were at first received, space being limited and their need being the greater. Several small apartments off the ball-room were used for special cases. The medical staff, Drs. McMeal, Gazzin, Bruce, and Addison, were the foremost physicians in the city. Only the first was a Catholic, but all were equally kind and attentive, and determined to make the hospital a success. Outside of it there was no shelter for the sick poor of the city but an abandoned coal-shed. And it was opened just in time to meet the exigencies of two extraordinary epochs—the Mexican war and the ship-fever. Many patients were from the seat of war, whence they were returning broken down by climate and exposure. It argues well for the treatment that only two soldiers died; rest and proper nursing restored the others, but none returned to Mexico.

It was deemed remarkable that the very first patient admitted was John Coghill, one of the Philadelphia rioters. Sister M. Isidore Fisher, writing January, 1872, to the bishop's brother, who had just been made doctor by the Holy See, alludes to the recollections the title "Doctor O'Connor" awakened in her :

“Years have passed since last my pen indited that venerable title, and my heart reverts to the gifted being who bore it, all unconscious though he was of the lovely mind and body given him by our good God. Well do I remember when the days were dark in Pittsburgh—Philadelphia on fire ! St. Michael must have smiled on the young doctor : ‘Stir neither hand nor foot ; but if they attempt to fire your asylum or your church, defend them, and I will head you.’ I believe, under God, he saved both. The above was spoken in St. Paul’s Church at ten o’clock Mass. Years after, when he was bishop and opened a hospital, the first patient received was Coghill, a Philadelphia rioter.”

Coghill recovered and did better in the future than he had done in the past. The next patient was an eminent physician who, many years before, had left the Church, and by speaking and writing had done his best to injure religion ; his three pious sisters all the while weeping and praying for his conversion. He was now attacked with mortal illness ; the deadly fibres of cancer were spreading over his face. The ministrations of the Sisters in his loathsome condition so touched him that he begged their prayers for his wretched soul. He was thoroughly converted, and spent the many weeks he lingered in prayer and penance. His retraction was published in the daily papers.

May 14, 1847, the Sisters removed to the new St. Xavier’s. The boarders, as they knelt for the last time in the chapel of the old house, shed tears of sorrow. They visited the grave of Sister M. Philomena, where the grief of parting was increased. It required many words of consolation and the exhilarating influence of the bright May day to restore their wonted cheerfulness. The city pension-school had been recently removed from the asylum to a house near the convent rented for school purposes. Mother Warde was in constant treaty with the Irish and English houses for subjects, and she received many efficient ones.

Postulants were also entering from the diocese and beyond it, most of whom persevered. All were kept busy with the schools and visitation of the sick.

Death appeared a second time among this fervent community. The health of Sister M. Aloysia Strange, never robust, had suffered greatly from change of climate and increased labor. She was at St. Vincent's when the school was removed to St. Xavier's, and engaged in all the labor incident to the change. Preparations for the closing exercises devolved on herself and Sister M. Gonzaga O'Gorman. Intensely Irish as she was, though a great admirer of the free institutions of America, she felt so sensibly the sufferings of her country-people that the Sisters avoided speaking on the subject in her hearing, or very considerably softened the details of the awful calamity desolating Ireland at that time. It was supposed that the dampness of the new St. Xavier's aggravated her malady. As none of the Sisters who knew Sister M. Aloysia was with her, and as she never complained but worked bravely on, she was not considered seriously indisposed till the bishop happened to call. So shocked was he at the change in her appearance that he at once brought her to the city for medical treatment. It was too late. She sank rapidly, delighted at the prospect of soon reaching her heavenly home. At seven A.M., July 6, after a few moments' agony, she died as she had lived, sweetly and peaceably, to the intense sorrow of the bishop and the community.*

This year, 1847, was the sad epoch of the famine. Many were "coming over" in consequence. Friends and relatives were sending for their people by hundreds. Though

* To this day the sweet and holy memory of Sister M. Aloysia Strange is cherished in Pittsburgh. Thirty-four years after her death, on the death of her sister, Mother M. Rose Strange, of Carlow, one of the oldest members writes to the surviving sister, M. Elizabeth: "Let us hope that ere this her happy soul has been greeted not only by her beloved father, mother, and the holy cardinal (Wiseman), prince of the Church, but, oh! how lovingly by the dear, gentle Sister M. Aloysia. They are now rejoicing in their eternal reunion, and look forward to the happy day when the last of their loved ones shall wing her flight to God."

the great exodus was not at its height till the following year, the Catholic population throughout the country increased largely. Most of the immigrants, by patient industry, soon rose above want and brought out more. The school attendance was doubled. The hardships of the steerage brought many a patient to the hospital and extended the visitation of the sick. Ship-fever, unknown in 1847, became epidemic in 1848. The immense increase of work had so broken the constitutions of several of the Sisters that the bishop, at the closing of school, sent all his students to their friends for vacation, and placed St. Michael's Seminary at the disposal of the Sisters for two months. It was on the other side of the Monongahela, on a large estate quite in the country, for which the bishop had paid sixteen thousand dollars.* The place was called Birmingham, on account of its iron and glass factories, which now give employment to thousands. The change from the hot, dusty city to the cool, quiet country was very beneficial to the Sisters. A sufficient number remained at the hospital and convent to attend the sick. But these were frequently changed, so that all had a sojourn in the country. The bishop gave the August retreat, using the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius as a basis. And well he knew the thoughts, instructions, and illustrations best fitted to form the spiritual edifice in the religious soul. It was a delightful treat to the listeners, always strengthened and renewed in spirit by the instructions of their beloved bishop. Refreshed mentally and physically, they returned to the city well prepared for new labors.

As the community increased, St. Xavier's, now not quite two hours from the city, became of less use as a country-house. Staging, besides being very expensive, inconve-

* A most successful speculation. After taking from it one hundred thousand dollars' worth of building lots, the remainder was assessed at one hundred and sixty-two thousand dollars. St. Michael's Church, the Passionist monastery, and the Franciscan convent now stand on part of it.

nient, and fatiguing, was most uncertain for way travellers : the nine places were always at the service of " through passengers " from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia, and *vice versa*. Persons going only part of the distance had often to wait weeks for a vacant place, and the chance of two or three vacancies in one coach was something too rare to be counted on ; many made the journey from Philadelphia by canal. No railroad yet communicated with Pittsburgh.

Father McCullagh,* the first priest ordained in Pittsburgh, became chaplain to St. Xaxier's in 1847. The bishop thought that country air and out-door life would prove beneficial to his failing health ; nor was he mistaken. The good priest was indefatigable in his efforts to promote the prosperity of the institution. He looked after the farm and the new building, and all quarters were benefited by his presence. The workmen became more diligent ; the grounds were laid out. Young trees were put down here and there, and an orchard planted. Every week he gave a lecture to the pupils on some literary or scientific subject, and on Sundays a religious instruction. The students profited by these advantages. Many became religious, and those who remained in the world gave evidence of the superior training they had received by their piety and culture, and the intelligent care they bestowed on their children, whom they were always anxious to place, even for a short time, at St. Xavier's.

The deadly type of typhus known as ship-fever appeared early in 1848, and continued to rage through spring and summer. Night and day the Sisters hung over the unfortunate sufferers, and five choir Sisters and three lay Sisters died martyrs of charity. It was deemed a special blessing that Mother M. Xavier Tiernan, whose whole energies were devoted to the stricken, escaped its ravages. Night after night she sat watching with patient attention to gain the dying to God, and wonderful success blessed her heroic de-

* This estimable priest died in the Mercy Hospital, Pittsburgh, in June, 1859.

votion and that of her Sisters. Frequently the effects of the recitation of the Rosary were visibly manifested in the conversion of Lutherans and hardened sinners.

But Mother M. Xavier's incessant attendance in a close ward on the poor victims, whom she nursed, cheered, and consoled with heavenly words, quite exhausted her rather delicate constitution. She was attacked by a virulent erysipelas, from which she had not strength to rally. Mother Warde, being seriously ill, was denied the sad consolation of assisting her dying child, who several times asked: "Where is reverend mother? Why is she absent?" And hearing she was ill, "Do not disturb her," said she, "but get her prayer-book and read the last prayers for me." Calm, beautiful, and holy was the death of this lovely and beloved Sister, March 9, 1847. Her virtues and personal services were the treasure of the community which they edified and adorned, and the loss it sustained in losing her could not be put in words. Her father* died before her profession, thus enabling her to bestow at once and with his full concurrence her large fortune on the convent. Her funeral was the first really Catholic one in the city. Bishop, priests, and students walked processionally to the new cemetery where she was laid to rest. Later, all that remained of her earthly tenement was removed to St. Xavier's.

The loss of so many of her children, and the anguish and fatigue of this awful period, completely shattered Mother Warde's health. Dr. Addison declared she would die if not removed immediately from the house of death. Indeed, serious fears were entertained for the rest of the community. The bishop took them all to his own house near the cathedral, himself and the cathedral clergy receiving hospitality meanwhile among the members of the congregation. They remained there two years, till December, 1850, when they removed to their spacious convent, Web-

* The Tiernan and Ihmsen families were the chief benefactors of the Mercy Sisterhood in Pittsburgh in early days.

ster Avenue, just completed at a cost of twenty-five thousand dollars. This was paid by the community from money brought to it by its members when obtaining membership. Here the Mother Superior and her Council reside and the young candidates for future membership are trained. Free schools and an academy have been added, and the house has been enlarged and improved in many ways. Near it have been built a handsome chapel and a fine home for working-women.

In 1848 a large hospital was built on Stevenson Street, which has since been considerably enlarged, and is one of the best conducted in the country. Its medical staff has always included the first physicians in the city, who have never spared themselves where its interests were concerned. To their zeal and skill is due much of its prosperity. The sick owe them a debt of gratitude, as they have always given their services gratuitously.

CHAPTER XXII.

OUR LADY'S VILLAGE ON THE MOUNTAIN.

Bishop O'Connor founds a Convent at Loretto—He thereby realizes a darling Project of Prince Gallitzin—"A Voice crying out in the Wilderness"—Reminiscences of the holy Russian—Bonnetts not allowed in Church—Vandals in his Congregation—The old Mountain Church—To-day—The Tomb—His Hovel on the craggy Summit—The Nuncio Bedini visits his Haunts—Visit of the Writer to Loretto—St. Paul's Orphan Asylum—Fine Appearance of the Children—Their pretty Voices—The Hawthorn Hedge—Statistics—Branches—The Sisters open a Shelter for penitent Women—Death of Mother M. Josephine—Grief of the Bishop—Cardinals Wiseman and Cullen—Letters from Bishop O'Connor—He attends the Consecration of the Sisters' Confessor, Father Neumann, C SS.R.

DESPITE the indescribable charm that lingers around the beginnings of a religious family in a new country, the space at our command warns us to be less diffuse as we proceed with the story of the Mercy Institute in Western Pennsylvania. In 1846 Pittsburgh sent out its first foundation, Chicago ; in 1850, its second, Providence ; and in 1855, its third, Baltimore ; all of which, besides several less important ones, will be treated in their respective places. The second branch outside Pittsburgh was Loretto, established in May, 1848, in fulfilment of a promise made by Bishop O'Connor on the summit of the Alleghanies when conducting the pioneer Sisters from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, in December, 1843. In founding this house, the bishop realized a project dear to the heart of Father Gallitzin, who laid out that Catholic village in 1803, and died there, 1840, having been, in the intervening years, "as the voice of one crying out in the wilderness." Sister M. Catherine Wynne was named superior of the new branch-house, and, with the

zealous Sisters under her charge, labored indefatigably among the simple mountain children.

By an air-line Loretto is only seventy-two miles from Pittsburgh. It is now reached from Cresson (a pretty summer resort, one hundred and two miles from Pittsburgh) by a beautiful mountain road ; but in 1848, and for many years after, the whole journey was made by stage. A few acres of land left by Father Gallitzin were made over to the Sisters, and a small house was built for them in the village. It was Father Hugh Gallagher who received them in their bleak mountain home. Recollections of the zealous Russian were still rife among the mountaineers. Things were much as he had left them eight years before. Great simplicity of manners and dress prevailed. The church had neither pews nor benches ; worshippers knelt bolt upright, men on one side, women on the other. Women old and young appeared in church with their heads wrapped in sombre-colored handkerchiefs, which had the purpose, but not the grace, of Spanish mantillas. It was said that Father Gallitzin's rules were as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. " His look of fire, his voice of thunder, his will of iron " were the terror of his followers, who would not dare to disobey him, and whom it took a long time to convince that he was really dead. The well-to-do would not dare dress better than their poorer neighbors, and bonnets and like vanities came into church only with a generation who had never known him.*

By the printed rules still to be seen hanging up in his chapel, it is evident that there were some Vandals on the rugged mountain tops. But the chapel and the room in which the princely convert composed his controversial works, and the frame church in which the first Sisters worshipped forty years ago, are now ruins into which it would

* Father Heyden, in his memoir of the Rev. Prince Gallitzin, says that " all the old families and prominent first settlers of his parish were still living " in 1849, " and the traditions of his missionary life were fresh in the memories of all."

not be safe to venture. Floors covered with the dust of years have fallen in here and there, and it is astonishing that the mountain storms which soon blew away the steeple of solid masonry reared above the adjacent brick church, should have left any vestige of such crazy structures. Pilgrims coming to inquire about the holy missionary at this date will find him all but forgotten. And sure-footed as a Spanish mule should a person be to explore his haunts, for there is no pathway through the churchyard to his house; the graves are many and the vegetation rank.

The present convent,* a fine edifice in the midst of spacious grounds set out with evergreens, is flanked by memorials of the stern Apostle of the Alleghanies; the cemetery and ruins being on one side, the brick church and his monument on the other. The coffin, enclosed in zinc, rests on the floor of the vault under the effigies, and the whole, though imposing, would not add to the fame of the sculptor who designed it. The inscription, by Archbishop F. P. Kenrick, declares that Demetrius Augustin Gallitzin "was distinguished for faith, zeal, and charity."

Where to-day reposes his recumbent statue,† "like a warrior taking his rest," was once the centre of a wild, uncultivated region, a trackless forest. He found twelve Catholics in the wilderness; he left thousands. From his lone cabin on the mountain summit he issued forth to attend "stations," most of which have since become flourishing churches. Loretto itself has not kept pace in material growth with its younger neighbors. The Indian paths and the canal, that gave importance to the stations, have disappeared before the railroad. Families cluster about the mountain gorges; coal-miners and railway "hands" are

* The convent stands on part of the four hundred acres of land given by Captain McGuire, the first white man that settled in what is now Cambria County, to Bishop Carroll for church purposes, towards the close of the last century.

† The wooden coffin that surmounts his tomb is said by some to contain his effigy.

near their work, where hill is linked to hill by solid causeway for the iron horse; flourishing towns are perched on the spurs of the Alleghanies; and villages dependent on the old turnpike roads, over which the early Sisters rumbled in clumsy stages, have lost their prestige. Agriculture is the occupation of the Lorettes; no manufactures have been attempted, and the youths leave for more stirring quarters. Prince Gallitzin's hope that his dear Loretto might become a city in the European sense, seems farther from realization than it was when he expressed it fifty-five years ago. It is said to be busy inside doors, but it has all the appearance of a deserted village.

In 1853 the Nuncio, Monsignor Bedini,* visited the region sanctified by the apostolate of the holy Russian. Five hundred men and women on horseback and fifty carriages defiled through the lofty mountain passes to meet him. He was charmed with the faith and simplicity of the hardy mountaineers, and their patriarchal manners. He showed special interest in the convent and schools, to the great gratification of the Mercy Sisterhood. And he gathered with evident pleasure traditions of the princely hermit whose prayers and labors had made Cambria County so Catholic. Loretto had changed but little from the cool May evening when the dying prince had looked his last upon it.

At present the Sisters of Mercy have a flourishing establishment, including an academy for boarders and a free school for about two hundred pupils. The public schools

* Mgr. Bedini visited all the houses of the Mercy Institute in the Pittsburgh diocese. He professed sisters M. Josephine McCaffrey, Augustine Shuck, and Magdalen Phelan December 13, 1853. Although he did not speak English, he visited all the schools more than once, and showed great interest in them. Addresses were read to him in each class and at the orphanage, to which he replied in French or Italian, the bishop translating his words for the children. The penmanship, printing, and etching of the addresses were very beautiful—"three of us were at work on them," writes the only survivor of the "three." The Nuncio preserved them carefully, and on his return to Rome often showed them to the students of the different colleges, with evident pleasure.

have always been taught by the Sisters, as there are no non-Catholics in the place. The soil is not surpassingly fertile; the summer is short and the winter long. The climate, though healthy, is piercingly cold. The writer visited this region late in September, when the bleak mountain breezes were already announcing the early winter, and passed through it in a snow-storm in October. The Gallitzin ruins in the moonlight, and the great, sugar-loaf-shaped monuments in the shadow of the old church in the populous graveyard below the town, seen from the convent formed a weird, even ghastly spectacle never to be forgotten. The sufferings of the early Sisters in such a climate and in a poor dilapidated house can scarcely be imagined. They have now been longer on the mountain than Gallitzin himself, who was really their founder. It was he who instructed Dr. O'Connor to bring Sisters to Loretto for his dear children, and it is on ground given by him, from McGuire's donation, that they worship God and teach his little ones to-day. Their patience and perseverance have been liberally rewarded by Him who never suffers himself to be outdone in generosity, and their mountain convent is now one of the finest educational establishments in the country. It is surrounded by beautiful grounds, scarcely a dwelling being visible from its windows or terraces.

It was at Loretto that the bishop introduced Father James O'Connor to the Sisters, on the return of the latter from Rome, in the summer of 1848. The bishop was exceedingly proud of his young brother. During the remaining twelve years of his episcopate, Father James was his chief helper and the loving sharer of all his joys and crosses. Both—*par nobile fratrum*—were equally devoted to the Mercy Sisterhood. In 1885, twenty-five years after the bishop's resignation, when he had been cold in death for thirteen years, and his brother, the bishop of Omaha, nearly a quarter of a century absent from Pittsburgh, a member of the community who published a valuable col-

lection of poems and dramas entitled "Wild Flowers from the Mountain Side," dedicates the work

TO OUR
VENERATED FATHER,
RIGHT REV. MICHAEL O'CONNOR, S.J.,
AND OUR
BELOVED FRIEND,
RIGHT REV. JAMES O'CONNOR, D.D.,
ONE DEAD, ONE LIVING,
THESE
WILD FLOWERS FROM THE "MOUNTAIN SIDE,"
WHERE
BOTH SPENT MANY HAPPY HOURS OF THE PAST,
ARE
REVERENTLY AND GRATEFULLY
DEDICATED.

The Catholic Orphan Asylum of Pittsburgh has been under the care of the Sisters of Mercy for forty-two years, during which time the number of inmates has swollen from twenty to two hundred and eighty. The writer visited the immense building twice, and found everything in excellent order. On the second visit, of a bright afternoon, all the children were in the chapel, and sang the benediction service very sweetly and harmoniously. They looked healthy and spirited. The asylum is two hundred feet long; a wing ninety feet by thirty-five extends back from the centre and effects a complete separation between the boys and the girls, who never meet save in the chapel. The dining-rooms, playgrounds, and dormitories are well adapted to their respective purposes. The immense edifice is erected on a miniature table-land, fifteen feet higher than the street on which it fronts, supported by a massive stone wall; in-

side of which the writer was delighted to find a thick hedge of fragrant hawthorn. The children receive a plain education, and are taught to be useful and self-helpful.

Despite deaths and foundations, the Pittsburgh community increased rapidly. In 1855 there were eighty-four Sisters in the diocese, and to-day (1888) there are over two hundred and fifty.

Besides the Mother-House, the Mercy Hospital, Loretto, St. Paul's Asylum, and St. Xavier's Academy, the Sisters have flourishing establishments at St. Patrick's, Allegheny, Braddock, Dunbar, Manchester, Lawrenceville, McKeesport, Tyrone, and Latrobe, to all of which, except the hospital, schools are attached.*

The Sisters of Mercy teach about six thousand pupils. In their academy, which fronts on Chatham Street, girls receive a finished education in the higher departments of study. In elocution and vocal music the writer has never known a school of its grade to surpass it.

As has been the case elsewhere, the Pittsburgh Sisters protected penitent women and girls till the Good Shepherd nuns relieved them of this task, in 1872.

April 21, 1852, the community suffered an almost irreparable loss in the death of Mother Josephine Cullen,† who had succeeded Mother Xavier Warde two years previous. This devoted lady and Sister M. Aloysia Strange were particularly dear to Bishop O'Connor; their relatives, Cardinals Wiseman and Cullen, were perhaps his best friends.

* During the Civil War the Sisters had charge of the Stanton and Douglas Military Hospitals. Thousands of the sick and wounded of both sides were under their care.

† Mother M. Josephine Cullen went with the Sisters who established the Mercy Institute in Providence, R. I., March, 1851. Her health was failing, and Mother Warde did not wish her to go, fearing the fatigue and anxiety of founding a new house would prove too much for her. But the invalid hoped that good would result from the change and was anxious to know with certainty the prospects of the mission. She returned in six weeks, not improved by the journey, and was never after well.

He used often say, with pardonable pride, that "both primates of the United Kingdom had contributed in their families to found the Order of Mercy among us." And it was to him a grief that cannot be expressed, that his diocese was so soon deprived of the example and services of these accomplished, saintly, and devoted women. Mother M. Josephine lingered many weary weeks in consumption. The bishop visited her frequently, and his letters at this period are full of allusions to the fluctuations of her illness. To his brother he writes March 22, 1852: "Mother Josephine cannot live longer than to-morrow," and he desires that Mothers Gertrude Blake and Elizabeth Strange be sent to Pittsburgh from St. Xavier's immediately. "They can hardly find her alive. If they should, it would be a consolation to all parties. If not, as will most probably be the case, the arrangements consequent on her death may be made at once, and all go to their work without further delay." On the 23d he says: "Mother Josephine is no worse, and may live for days yet. I am a good deal puzzled to know what to do about going to Baltimore for Sunday"—to attend the consecration of Father Neumann, who had been the friend and confessor of the Sisters, and was, through Bishop O'Connor's influence, nominated for the see of Philadelphia. He could not bring himself to leave the dying religious till the physicians assured him she would linger some time yet. March 26 he writes: "I will go to Baltimore to-night, and return by Monday. Mother Josephine has rallied a little. I think I shall overtake her alive." The bishop was happily able to gratify the new "Angel of the Church of Philadelphia" without depriving himself of the mournful consolation of watching over the closing hours of his beloved friend and spiritual daughter. He returned to Pittsburgh immediately after the consecration. Mother Josephine lingered nearly a month, dying like a saint April 21, to the intense grief of the bishop, clergy, sisters, and, indeed, all Pittsburgh, for this sweet and gentle soul was

loved and revered in no common degree. The following circular was forwarded to each of the clergy of the diocese :

“ST. MARY’S, PITTSBURGH, April 21, 1852.

“DEAR REV. FATHER : We know you will participate with us in the regret we feel for the loss of our late beloved Mother-Superior. She expired this evening at half-past five o’clock. We most earnestly solicit your prayers for the repose of her soul.

“Sincerely yours in Christ,

“SISTER M. GERTRUDE (BLAKE).”

CHAPTER XXIII.

IN THE EVENING.

A Bishop first, then a Jesuit—*Pax vobis*—Letter—Troubles—Letter—Too early to particularize—Gold in the Crucible—Destruction of St Xavier's by Fire—Life with its blighted Hopes and pathetic Failures—Letter of a Priest—Sisters' Letters—Graphic Description of the awful Scene—The smouldering Ruins—Grief in Westmoreland County—Kindness of the Benedictines—Generosity of Friends—Successful Efforts to retrieve the Loss—A new Academy on the Ashes of the Old—Death of Rev. Michael O'Connor, S.J.—Intense Grief of the Sisters—Letters of Condolence—Their undying Love and Reverence for their first and best Father—No Monument erected to his Memory—His Glory requires None.

ON a bright day in June, 1843, Dr. O'Connor knelt before Pope Gregory XVI. for the leave requisite for him as a student of the Propaganda to become a Jesuit. "You shall be bishop first and Jesuit after," said the Holy Father. Bishop O'Connor never forgot the second part of this prophecy. After an administration of unusual brilliancy and success, the holy prelate, to the infinite regret of his flock, resigned the mitre in 1860, and entered the Society of Jesus. Only the superior of the Novitiate knew that "Father Michael" had been a bishop till one morning while saying Mass, he, to his own great humiliation and confusion, saluted the community after the *Gloria* with the *Pax vobis* of bishops.

Here is a letter to his brother (July 7, 1862) which shows his prudence and delicacy of conscience :

"I send by this mail five hundred dollars to the Sisters of Mercy, which tell them to keep till called for by you, unless they be willing to fulfil the obligation which you will point out to them when it is required. This is the money I directed you to send to Father Barbelin last fall.

I intended it as a provision for Mrs. —, whose condition may become exceedingly wretched. As I gave her some encouragement to go to America with the hope or promise of being my housekeeper, she may consider she has some claim on me, and this, together with her helpless condition, made me think her a deserving object for the appropriation of this amount. I thought every purpose would be accomplished by founding a place for her in the Widows' Asylum, Philadelphia, which she could avail herself of or not, as she pleased. This refuge as a last resource would be sufficient to save her from extreme want, and this I considered sufficient under the circumstances. As she does not appear to be in want at present, I have thought it well to let the Sisters have the use of the money. Should Mrs. — have no other means of support, they might give her employment in some of their institutions in the diocese of Pittsburgh, or procure her employment elsewhere. In that case, they could keep the money. I would consider it essential, however, that *she* should not know they do this through any obligation. Otherwise it may be hard to please her, whereas she would be grateful for what appears mere charity on their part, and take whatever she would get. For this reason, as well as to rid myself of any future demands, I have made no communication to her of this provision. If the Sisters of Mercy can neither give nor get anything for her, then the money could be called for, and the place obtained in the Philadelphia Asylum, for which I understand this amount is sufficient. Will you take charge of this affair so that I may have no more to think of on this subject? . . . You must keep me out of it altogether. . . . Let me know whether I may consider this affair settled as far as I am concerned."

Shortly after the withdrawal of Bishop O'Connor trials of no ordinary magnitude began to afflict the best beloved portion of his former flock. To his brother, then president of St. Charles' College, Philadelphia, he writes from Baltimore, January 18, 1864 :

"I hope God will watch over the Pittsburgh affairs with special mercy. I had a letter from Sister M. Isidore, in which she tells me she had an interview with —, the particulars of which lead me to fear that a storm is brewing

for the Sisters. She was a little alarmed, but I fear did not appreciate the full import of the affair. . . . They are in the hands of God."

It is still too early to particularize these troubles.

When all was finally laid before the Holy See, Rome, after the usual delay, decided in favor of the Sisters. All traces of these unhappy experiences have long since passed away. Suffice it to say that the religious were as gold in the crucible, during the years of anguish, distress, and agitation that followed the removal of their best friend.

In the midst of these difficulties the community suffered a terrible loss in the destruction of St. Xavier's by fire, February 1, 1868. The bishop and his brother, though at a distance, hastened to offer their sympathy, prayers, and whatever aid they could procure to the stricken community. A friendly priest wrote as follows to Dr. James O'Connor, February 4:

"You are already acquainted with the particulars of the sad calamity which has befallen St. Xavier's, which will be felt by no one more deeply than yourself. It seems, indeed, an inscrutable providence which would permit such an institution, the child of so many prayers and labors for the glory of God, to perish when it seemed best fitted to realize the pious designs of its founders. I have not visited the scene, but it is quite enough to see the woe-begone faces of the Sisters to know how great is their loss. Mother-Superior returned this morning, looking the picture of distress. They have determined to rebuild at once, and meanwhile keep their pupils at Loretto, or the guest-house.

"But where are they to get means to rebuild and furnish the academy? They have lost everything, for the insurance of twenty thousand dollars will hardly cover their indebtedness. They make an appeal this week in the *Catholic* for assistance. . . . I know of no more urgent and deserving [claim] on the charity of those whom God has blessed with abundant means. . . . You must remember that if I have

any special predilection for St. Xavier's, I first acquired it from you."

The Sisters' letters to the bishop and his brother give details of this awful calamity: "The fire was first seen by one of the pupils, who told Sister Dominica. She went with Sister Scholastica to the attic of the middle building, near the cupola. It spread with dreadful rapidity. The organ commenced playing, or rather sounding above all the noise, until the roof fell in. Sister Liguori was in the children's dormitory when a blazing pine fell on the bed next to her. She threw the mattress out of the window. This was the first she knew of the fire. Soon the roof of this part came down into the old chapel. Had the fire broken out at night many lives would have been lost. . . . Pray that God may punish us only in his mercy."

As usual on such occasions, the frightful disaster was not without its ludicrous element. Every possible help was given by the Benedictines of the neighboring abbey. Some children were accommodated in the guest-house, some sent to Loretto, and a few to Pittsburgh. The railway officials were exceedingly kind. They sent telegrams in every direction free of expense. But when, towards two next morning, four of the tallest and most stately members of the teaching staff of St. Xavier's appeared at the station and took the cars for Pittsburgh, even they themselves, chilled and benumbed as they were after coming two miles in the snow, could not keep back the smiles. For, instead of their ordinary garb, their figures were draped with piano-covers and bed-spreads.

"It seems as if the heavens opened and all the rain in them poured out," wrote Mother Isidore. "I have been sitting up all night, and am perfectly wretched in mind and body," wrote the Mother-Superior. "There is too much excitement yet to know what will be done. Father Abbot and all from the monastery were over; they saved all that was saved." "We went next day to see the ruins," wrote

another, "and truly you could hardly imagine the scene of desolation.* Three small fires in different parts of the chapel; now and then the wind would bring down a brick or two, and the sound of our feet on the snow, the whistling of the wind, the peopling of the place with the loved and blest (I will not say *lost* even in this world, for I think they watch and pray for us), made one feel sober enough. Yet from the depths of my heart I thank God that another sorrow is over. How many more are in reserve for me before I die?

"In the cars and at the station all were offering their sympathy. I remained at Loretto a week, during the most piercingly cold weather I ever experienced. Thirty-one children are with us at the guest-house. We suffer many inconveniences, of which no one complains, for we are united and happy, made more dear to each other by our common sorrow."

The Mother-Superior wrote to the bishop's brother, February 9: "Permit me, though late, to express my gratitude for your very kind and prompt note. The burning of the convent was a heavy cross, yet I feel there is much to be grateful for; the poor inmates were saved without the slightest injury—a cause for never-ceasing thanks to God. All the Sisters are well, except Sister C——, who is suffering from the effects of over-exertion and exposure. We are, indeed, surprised that the others should have escaped illness after enduring such great excitement," etc.

The sympathy and interest shown by the people were intense. The railroad company sent a thousand-dollar bond; a relative of one of the Sisters sent the same amount in cash; other relatives and friends smaller amounts; several convents helped; collections were made in the churches; the clergy, at home and abroad, did their

* A picture should have been taken of the smouldering academy. It was a weird sight next morning. The smoking ruins were guarded by the leafless monarchs of the forest; the snow, which fell gently at intervals, was turned into warm water by contact with the hot iron and burning masonry.

part. A senior Sister fell heir to her share of the paternal estate, and was glad to help the Mother-Superior at this dark hour with fifty-seven thousand dollars, which the good God had sent thus opportunely. In a few days men were at work on the new St. Xavier's, and it speedily rose from the ashes more beautiful, symmetrical, and extensive than its lamented predecessor.

As is usual in case of fires, much was destroyed at St. Xavier's that can never be replaced. The kind Benedictines saved many beds and pianos; the Sisters risked their lives to secure every memento of Bishop O'Connor. The treasures of their fine art gallery could not be easily replaced. On June 10, 1868, a Sister writes to Dr. O'Connor:

"Our fine collection of drawing models was almost entirely destroyed at the time of the fire. We need some outline flowers and shaded ones for beginners. In landscape we have nothing whatever, so we will be obliged if you procure us some models. . . . I know you were always interested in the drawing-class here." Up to this the Benedictines had kindly supplied the convent classes from their studio, but the Superioress thought it time to begin a collection of their own.

A still sadder calamity came upon the Sisters, October 18, 1872, when Father O'Connor, S.J.,* died at Woodstock, Maryland. Although for twelve years he had ceased to be their bishop and assumed new duties, yet his tongue, his pen, his influence, immense in certain quarters, were always used in their favor, and to his latest breath he loved and cherished them. Their letters at this time are full of the subject: "The last two weeks," writes one to his bereaved brother, "so saddened by your great loss,

* Bishop O'Connor came to Pittsburgh several times as Father O'Connor, S.J. He always called on the Sisters, and was, if possible, more kind and fatherly than ever, never losing a particle of his interest in the community.

should have brought you a note of sympathy from your old child, but I did not know where to write. I cannot speak to you as I wish, as my heart feels, about our venerated and beloved bishop. He was my second father, and as such I loved him. Dear, thoughtful Father — sent me a crucifix that had been his ; a glance at it will comfort me when the way is rough and the cross heavy.

“Father D—— beautifully and touchingly described the last hours of your brother’s life, so lately ended. Its simplicity, its grandeur and holiness, have made the Jesuits jubilant over another glorious addition to their list of saints.” Three years later the following occurs in a letter to the younger Bishop O’Connor : “The portrait of our beloved bishop received. You cannot believe how startled some of our Sisters were on seeing such a good likeness of their best father and friend. All are grateful to you for it, and consider it very good. Though our prayers are not needed for our departed father, we can never cease praying for him ; he is watching over us, and will see that we get out of all our troubles.” And other letters faithfully record the anniversary Masses celebrated for the founder of the Sisters of Mercy in the United States, in their beautiful chapels.

No memorial has yet been raised in Pittsburgh to the great man whose genius and sanctity shed such lustre over that city. In his own grand cathedral not even a tablet recalls his noble lineaments. But he wisely built his own monuments—churches, schools, hospitals, orphanages, religious orders—gratitude and reverential affection in the hearts of those over whom he was placed to rule. His glory requires no more. His name is written in indelible characters on the Church of Western Pennsylvania.

More could be said of the early days of this interesting foundation, of the controlling power exercised by Mother Warde during her six years of office ; of the beautiful

deaths, from Sister M. Philomena in 1845 to Mother M. Liguori McCaffrey in 1888, which afflicted, while they consoled, the community ; of the devotedness of the grand bishop and the clergy whom he moulded by word and example ; of the charming retreat at St. Xavier's, hemmed in by mountain ridges ; of the cemetery, the loveliest in the land, where reposes all that is mortal of "the community in heaven" ; of conversions hardly short of miraculous, and heroism not less than sublime. Much of this it is still too early to dilate upon ; but it may be done in the future, and by abler but not more loving hands.

CHAPTER XXIV.

NEW YORK.

Bishop Hughes visits the Parent-House in quest of Sisters—Hands and Feet plentiful, Heads all gone—The Sister in London—Bishop Hughes speaks for himself—Mutual Admiration—Bishop Griffiths consents—Mother Agnes returns to Ireland—Sketch of her early Days—Vocation—Her Meeting with the holy Foundress—As a Novice—Incidents—In London—Named for America—Opposition—Letter of the Trappist Abbot—Reminiscences—In New York—Early Labors—First Candidate, Catherine Josephine Seton, Daughter of the Foundress of the Sisters of Charity—Her Zeal for the Works of Mercy—Mother Seton's Grand-daughter follows her Aunt—Great Interest taken by Bishop Hughes in the Institution—The House of Mercy.

TOWARDS the close of 1845 Right Rev. John Hughes applied in person to the parent-house of the Institute, Dublin, for some Sisters of Mercy for his episcopal city. The Superior expressed her willingness to accede to his request, but could not spare a single experienced member to take charge of the foundation. So many establishments had been made by an Order not yet fourteen years old that Mother M. Cecilia Marmion might say, as did the holy foundress some years previous, not that "hands and feet are plentiful enough," for she needed more of these useful members, but that "the heads were all gone." The bishop, determined not to leave without what he had come for, pressed the question. "Well, my lord," said Mother M. Cecilia, "there is a Sister of ours in London; if she will undertake the business, we will see what can be done."

Dr. Hughes determined to speak for himself, and posted to London. He found Bishop Griffiths more ready to take Sisters than to give them. Nothing daunted, he waited on Mother M. Agnes. It was a case of mutual admiration.

He felt he was in the presence of the woman who could carry out his views, and she saw that her life-work lay on the other side of the Atlantic. A letter from Dublin proposed to her to take charge of the Sisters getting ready for New York. She replied: "Here I am; send me." Leaving herself entirely in the hands of her superiors, she awaited their decision. By order of Mother Cecilia, she left London for the parent-house, January 27, 1846. She had been lent for a year, but at the instance of Bishop Griffiths and the community prolonged her stay. At first Mother M. Cecilia merely inquired if she were willing to go to America, but once she understood her wish in the matter, nothing could move her gentle yet firm spirit. While Bishop Hughes was saying Mass in the convent chapel she offered herself to God for the distant mission. And when the community assembled in the dingy parlor of the Queen's Square Convent to discuss the matter with the two bishops, all parties found her resolved to obey the mere wish of Mother Cecilia.

Yet Mother M. Agnes was devoted to the London Sisters, and to the close of her life loved to recall their virtues. Some of them were of the highest worldly rank, yet they devoted themselves not only to the works of the Order, but even to those little domestic duties that are often more trying as they are less interesting. She used to relate that they seemed to rejoice in being appointed to polish the grates, clean the candlesticks, sweep the stairs, and perform the most menial duties. It was a trial to her affectionate heart when obedience summoned her to separate from these chosen souls whose zeal and fervor made them so dear to her.

Mother M. Agnes, the youngest of ten children of Patrick and Mary O'Connor, was born in Kilkenny, January 6, 1815. When nine years old, Father Fielding advised Mrs. O'Connor to attend particularly to her education, "for," said he, "when we are mouldering in our graves

she will be doing good service for the church in this and in other countries." Another priest of her parish, Rev. John Walsh, told her mother she was ignorant of the treasure she possessed in Mary, and knew but little of the beauty of her soul. It is remarkable that our holy foundress uttered words of similar import before Mary's profession.

Yet as she grew up she showed herself full of spirit, vivacious and fond of society. The best education the times afforded was given her, and she developed into a remarkably handsome young lady and a brilliant scholar. A good deal of her attention was devoted to dress, and she arrayed herself with such faultless taste that when a ball or party was on the *tapis*, and the subject of dress engrossed the attention of the young people, they would say: "Oh! let us find out what Mary O'Connor is going to wear." Though she seemed absorbed in the mild gayeties of her native town, she did many good works in secret. She loved to visit the sick and the poor, and would deny herself many a pleasure that she might be able to help them. Every Sunday she devoted a considerable time to the instruction of the ignorant, and her heart never felt happier than when she was employed in some work of mercy, such as making clothing for some destitute protégée. She doated on children and made pets of all the little ones in her neighborhood. Many an hour she spent dressing dolls for her small friends, who loved her dearly in return. In fact she was a general favorite. All esteemed the brilliant, dashing girl who won hearts at will, yet without assuming any airs of superiority, or dreaming that she was better dowered than her friends. Between her nineteenth year and her twenty-second, when she finally renounced the world, several proposals of marriage were made to her, but she rejected them all. Once when, at a wedding party, the amusements were prolonged into the small hours, she grew weary of the "nonsense," and retired to an apartment at some distance from the scene of enjoyment, where she

threw herself down to rest. The bell of a neighboring convent pealed out on the morning air. "Ah!" she exclaimed, "the nuns are about to commence the round of their daily labors with renewed energy, and here I am wearied after a night spent in empty and worthless pleasures."

"This little incident," writes one who knew her well, "reveals the tone of her mind, and the moral she drew from the gayeties of the world, which to many, at her age, prove only too great an attraction."

The same pen describes her at the time of her entrance into the convent :

"Mary O'Connor was of medium height ; her carriage was so graceful and majestic that she appeared taller than she really was ; her countenance was oval ; forehead broad and high ; eyes of the deepest brown, beautifully set, and varying in expression with every dominant feeling ; nose, mouth, and chin were all indicative of strong yet kindly character. Her clear complexion was tinged with sufficient color to relieve it from paleness. Her hands were small and exquisitely formed. Unfortunately, no correct likeness exists to give force to this attempt at pen portrayal."

Several of these attractions remained with Mother M. Agnes to the end, but, as the writer remembers her, all the grace and symmetry of her figure had vanished in what seemed to be obesity, but was really incipient dropsy, as the event proved.

At the age of twenty-two she had fully made up her mind to become a nun. When an elder sister asked the reason, she said : "because none but the pure of heart shall see God, and it is easier in the seclusion of the religious life to keep one's self unspotted from the world." Bishop Kinsella decided that it was her vocation to be a religious, and gave her letters to several convents in Dublin, telling her to visit them all and join the order to which she felt most attracted. Accompanied by a relative, she followed

this advice. The Sisters of Mercy were entirely unknown to her, and the bishop, though a particular friend of Mother McAuley, refrained from mentioning her Institute to the young candidate. They visited several convents; Mary told the object of her quest, but found nothing to suit her.

Next morning she continued her search, and at a certain convent she was told that the nuns were all engaged. A young novice was sent to receive her, to whom she told her business. "Oh!" said the novice, "you ought to join our community. You will find it very nice. But let me give you one piece of advice: Don't go near the Convent of Mercy." "Why not?" asked the astonished Mary. "Oh! because, if you do, you may meet Mother McAuley, and if you once speak with her, you will never go to any one else." As will be readily guessed, Miss O'Connor lost no time in presenting herself at Baggot Street, and the prophecy of the novice was verified. She entered the Mercy Convent, April 27, 1838, being then twenty-two years old. She had the happiness of being instructed for reception and profession by the holy foundress herself, who bestowed on her the name of her recently deceased niece, Sister Mary Agnes.

During the early years of her conventual life the young novice had constantly before her the holy example of the venerated foundress, and imbibed from her, as from its source, the true spirit of the Order of Mercy, especially her peculiar devotion to the protection of young girls. Still in the bloom of youthful beauty, full of innocent fun, and most amiable in disposition, she was much beloved by Mother McAuley, and had the privilege of receiving her last blessing and advice, and hearing from her hallowed lips that God would enable her to do great things for His honor and glory. She labored zealously among the poor, sick, and ignorant at the parent-house, and was frequently employed in the branch-houses at Kingstown and Bootstown.

On the 31st of July, 1844, Mother Agnes was sent to establish at Queen's Square, London, the fifth house of the Mercy Institute in England, with the understanding that as soon as it was fully established she should return. She came home, however, only to prepare for a new departure, and to add to her difficulties, urgent business obliged Bishop Hughes to embark for New York a fortnight before the Sisters could get ready to leave. His secretary, Father Harty, was commissioned to escort them in his place to their American home. Mother M. Agnes had naturally a great dislike to go on a foreign mission. Her affectionate heart shrank from the separation such a course involves. The parent-house filled in her soul the place of the happy home she had left. But she could refuse nothing to Him who asked the sacrifice.

On reaching Ireland new trials awaited her. The death of her eldest sister was expected every moment, and her mother, already bending under this threatened affliction, was overpowered by the intelligence that she was to be separated for ever from her youngest and best-loved child. The afflicted woman wrote to Archbishop Murray entreating him to use his influence to detain her daughter. The community, pitying Mother M. Agnes, began a novena to beseech Almighty God to spare the life of the eldest sister. In a few days she recovered unexpectedly, and was soon restored to perfect health. This favor, the persuasions of pious friends, and a letter Mrs. O'Connor received from the abbot of the Trappist Monastery, Melleray, partially reconciled the mother. We give some passages from the letter :

"My object, madame, is to sympathize with you, and offer you a little consolation under your maternal affliction for the removal of your holy and distinguished daughter to a more distant sphere of action, for the glory of God. Now, I claim the privilege of speaking on this matter with all the feeling of an affectionate son. Dear mother, did not your

Father in heaven favor you most highly in giving you such a child—a child of grace, a foreordained spouse of the Lamb? He sent to claim His betrothed at your hands, and you surrendered her, with a maternal pang, perhaps, but yet with a ready will. Now, allow me to tell you that from the moment your blessed child crossed the threshold of the temple she ceased to be yours, and became His, who had purchased her with a great price, and loved her with a singular love. O happy mother of a child so favored! And will you repine at her glorious lot? Will you not cheerfully suffer her divine Spouse to lead her whithersoever He will, to spread that fire upon earth with Him who is consuming her own dear heart in such sweet flames? Would you commit a rapine in the holocaust you once made of your beloved child? Surely not. Were she going to be crowned queen of America, would you oppose the choice? You and I should blush for our little faith, our sad attachment to self, and our indifference or blindness to what is spiritual. But I speak as if this were your case. Thank God, it is not. Nature is having a little sway in you on this trying occasion; but what wonder? Did not our Blessed Jesus Himself suffer agony in doing the will of His heavenly Father? But as it was in Him when that convulsion subsided, so it will shortly be in you. You will turn to Him and say what He was pleased to say for our instruction: ‘Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt!’”

Once Mother M. Cecilia Marmion commissioned Mother M. Agnes to go, there was no wavering; go she would whether friends were satisfied or not; but, with her natural amiability, she sought to make the cross as light as possible to them. The holy Mother Evangelista Fitzpatrick wrote many years later: “I remember perfectly when the New York foundation was getting ready. At recreation it was the topic of conversation, and I have seen Mother M. Agnes take a sheet of music and, fashioning it like a trumpet, call out through it: ‘Who’s for New York?’” The following

selection was made for the contemplated foundation : Sisters M. Angela Maher, Austin Horan, Monica O'Doherty, Camillus Byrne, Teresa Breen ; a novice, M. Vincent Haire, and a postulant, Miss Burns.*

On Easter Monday, April 13, 1846, the missionary band left their dear convent and their native land for Liverpool, where they enjoyed the hospitality of their dear Sisters at Mount Vernon. On the 16th they embarked in the sailing packet *Montezuma*, and, after a pleasant voyage of twenty-eight days, arrived in New York, to carry out their benign mission, May 14. They drove directly to the bishop's house, and were greatly disappointed to find that he was absent (at the Council of Baltimore). He had, however, made every arrangement for their comfort. Two Sisters of Charity came at once to his house for them, and conducted them to their residence, East Broadway. These good ladies bestowed the greatest kindness and attention on the strangers who had come from afar to labor for God in the Empire City..

May 26 found them in their temporary home on Washington Place. The bishop said Mass in their little chapel, and placed the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. He appointed Archdeacon McCarron their spiritual director. They found plenty of occupation in visiting the sick and instructing the multitudes (ignorant of the truths of religion) that flocked to them. They at once opened a circulating library which attracted many young girls. Some were found to be lamentably ignorant, and these besought the too-willing Sisters to instruct them. In this way, and by the diffusion of good books, the library became a means of doing

* "I remember Mother M. Agnes as she then was quite well, and dear Sister M. Austin, and poor old Sister M. Angela. And Sister M. Camillus Byrne, who electrified me by going on her knees at the top of the stairs leading to the choir, to beg my pardon for all the disedification she had ever given me—same nun having done nothing else but give me the tip-top of edification. Then there was the dear little novice, Sister Vincent Haire, who was near her profession," etc.—Mother M. Evangelista Fitzpatrick.

much good. The Commissioners of Charity invited the Sisters to visit the hospitals and prisons, an invitation they gladly accepted.

The first candidate for admission to the new community was Josephine Seton, youngest daughter of the celebrated Mrs. Eliza Anne Seton, foundress of the Sisters of Charity in the United States. Miss Seton had been carefully brought up at Emmittsburg, and had improved her mind by foreign travel under the protection of her friends of the Carroll family, at whose home near Baltimore she had spent much of her time. Though blest with a religious vocation, she felt no attraction to the congregation established by her pious mother. When she consulted Bishop Hughes as to her future course, he advised her to wait patiently a little longer. "I know of an order," said he, "that will satisfy all your aspirations, and I intend to introduce it into my diocese very soon." On her introduction to Mother M. Agnes all arrangements were made for her entrance. As to years, she was about as old as the century, but in disposition she was as young as the youngest member. On the 16th of April, 1847, she received the white veil from Bishop Hughes, who preached with his usual graceful but vigorous eloquence. Bishop McCloskey, his coadjutor, was present with a large number of the clergy; also many of Miss Seton's friends and relatives, mostly Protestants. From the first this lady devoted herself in a special manner to the relief and instruction of the sick poor, and the inmates of hospitals and prisons. This she continued till incapacitated by age. For many years every Catholic executed in New York was prepared by her, and she still (1888) takes a lively interest in all the works of the Institute. Mother Seton's granddaughter, Miss Helen Seton, followed the example of her aunt; she received the white veil from Cardinal McCloskey, who was a personal friend of her family. Both ladies assumed the name Mary Catherine; Catherine being the name of the venerated foundress, was a favorite name

with Mother M. Agnes. The New York Convent, like the parent-house in Dublin, is dedicated to St. Catherine. Mother M. Catherine Seton was professed April 17, 1849, on which occasion Bishop Hughes officiated and preached.

The object of the New York institution is to endeavor to relieve every phase of human misery which aid or sympathy can reach. The Sisters protect, and educate in the duties of their state, young girls of good character, but destitute and friendless. The consequences of the disastrous famine that desolated Ireland, 1846-47, had driven thousands of her children to these hospitable shores. The young girls among them attended daily at stated hours, until suitable situations were found for them. Food and pecuniary aid were given to those out of employment, and they were provided with decent lodgings. It soon appeared that the chief work of the New York Sisterhood during this crisis ought to be that branch of their institution known as the House of Mercy. In May, 1848, the Sisters removed to the spacious convent, corner of Houston and Mulberry streets, recently vacated by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Part of it was appropriated to the young women. And the Sisters had the unspeakable happiness of being able to protect, relieve, and instruct those who were the special objects of their Institute; for it will be remembered that it was to protect poor women of good character that the holy foundress got up "a smoke of her order." Bishop Hughes took the greatest interest in this project, and had collections taken up for it in all the churches of New York, Brooklyn, and Jersey City. Half of the jubilee alms collected at the jubilee given at the accession of Pius IX. (\$1,900) was devoted to the same, the other half being sent to Ireland to relieve the distress occasioned by the potato blight. A House of Mercy was immediately begun. It was incorporated by Act of the Legislature, April 12, 1848.

CHAPTER XXV.

DEATH OF MOTHER AGNES O'CONNOR.

First Profession—First Novice-Mistress—Sketch of Frances Horan—"Don't cut the Table-cloth"—Intense Love of Music—The Archbishop sends Mother Agnes to Ireland—First Death—Recollections—Sodalities—Monsignor Bedini—Statistics—Mother M. Agnes' last Work—Her failing Health—Details of her last Days—Her holy Death—Grief of the Archbishop—Of the Sisters—Her Lieutenant—Progress—Failing Health of Mother M. Austin—Her Soul passes away to the Music of the *Angelus* Bell.

THE first profession of a Sister of Mercy in New York was that of Sister M. Vincent Haire, afterwards the beloved superioress of the Brooklyn Convent of Mercy. It took place in the cathedral, which was crowded with persons of every religious denomination. Work now increased so rapidly that Mother M. Agnes was obliged to beg a reinforcement from Dublin, and five efficient members were the welcome result of her appeal. The community increased also by accessions from New York. Sister M. Austin Horan was made mistress of novices in 1847, and for many years superintended a large novitiate.

Mother M. Austin, one of the most remarkable of the early members, entered Baggot Street Convent a few months after Mother M. Agnes. Both were novices under Mother M. Cecilia Marmion, of whom the mother-foundress said that never was novice-mistress more beloved: "The novices call the noviceship Paradise, though the best discipline is kept up." These good mothers were devoted friends in life and death, but Mother M. Agnes' was the gentler nature:

Miss Horan was the daughter of a wealthy manufacturer of Dublin. Her Protestant mother, daughter of a Church-

of-England minister, ultimately became a pious Catholic.* Frances Horan was received by the venerated foundress, who prepared her for reception and profession. Her only sister had married a brother of Mother McAuley's celebrated friend, Father O'Hanlôn, Provincial of the Carmelites, and through this connection she became acquainted with the good works recently inaugurated in Baggot Street. Though only seventeen, by the advice of the zealous provincial she stole away from her Protestant mother's home in Upper Leeson Street, on a lovely summer morning, and came in her young enthusiasm to fling herself into the arms of Mother McAuley. Most affectionately was she received, and the foundress hastened to hide her profuse chestnut hair under a cap supposed to be an improvement on that already described. It was indeed a "high cauled cap," made of white muslin, with full borders around the face. The crown stood at least a foot high, and over the whole was thrown a black lace veil heavily embroidered. Mrs. Horan actually screamed when she saw the fair face of her blooming girl of seventeen thus caressed by thick white ruffles under Spanish lace. But the holy foundress was used to such transformations. She led her new child to the refectory to breakfast, and as she entered said, with assumed seriousness: "Now, my heart, eat a good breakfast, but be careful not to cut the table-cloth." The surrounding Sisters saw the point of the *mot*, for table-cloths are an unknown luxury in the refectories of Convents of Mercy.

In time Mrs. Horan became reconciled to her daughter's flight, which, strange to say, resulted in her conversion. Frances received the white veil with the name Mary Austin. Having what her companions described as very neat fingers, she got charge of preparing the coif fronts. These were made of clear thin muslin, and were taken out of the coifs and washed separately. The troublesome task of plaiting

* When Mrs. Horan became a Catholic her brothers never again spoke to her, or recognized her or her family. She was remarkable for her charity to the poor.

them to the size of the coifs fell to our young novice, and mother-foundress, seeing her bending over them at recreation, remarked that the child's place was no sinecure, and expressed a wish that something simpler could be devised. On hearing this, Miss Cassidy, daughter of a Monastery even celebrity, who had lately entered, suggested dimity, and produced a sample from her trunk. Sister M. Austin hailed the substitute with delight, and, as she was a fine needle-woman, she immediately made a dimity front and inserted it in a coif. The innovation met with general approbation, and was ere long universally adopted.

Sister Mary Austin spent seven years in the parent-house. She was a lovely, amiable woman, bright and cheerful in manner. As an organist* she had few superiors. Till ill health compelled her to relinquish it, a little before her death, she usually directed the convent choir. She was a devoted student of music; it was her chief recreation to practise many hours at a time on her favorite instrument, the organ. And as music and form may well dwell together, the young community had an artist in Sister M. Monica, who had studied the ancient art of illumination under Sister M. Clare Augustin Moore, of Baggot Street Convent—a noble woman, recently deceased, who had no superior in her art.

In 1852 Rev. Mother M. Agnes, whose sight had begun to fail, was sent to Ireland by Archbishop Hughes to consult the celebrated oculist, Sir William Wilde. Mother M. Austin, who accompanied her, had thus the gratification of seeing her aged mother. No lasting benefit was derived by the New York superioress from Dr. Wilde's treatment.

* As Fanny Horan, Mother M. Austin had cultivated music assiduously. When nine years old her father promised her a silk dress as soon as she could play "The Storm," a piece of twenty-six pages, without the music. She soon won the prize—a lavender silk dress. She was always fond of lavender, perhaps from this memory of her childhood. When at play with her companions, she would often steal away to her piano and practise hours at a time. "I cannot call to mind ever seeing a frown on her face or a pouting look," writes one of her school-day friends.

They visited several convents of the Order, and met many old friends, now, like themselves, among the seniors. In Loughrea they were joined by Sister M. Elizabeth Callahan, a novice who felt a strong vocation for the foreign mission. They returned after some months, and resumed their duties with renewed experience. In 1853 the community numbered thirty-five, and the works of mercy were fully established. The first death in Houston Street Convent was that of Sister M. Xavier Stewart, daughter of Dr. Stewart, of Baltimore, a zealous, exemplary religious only twenty years old. The cross was publicly carried in procession in New York for the first time at her funeral.

Nothing that Archbishop Hughes could do for the spiritual or temporal weal of the community was omitted. Father Bayley, nephew of Mother Seton, was appointed chaplain. When he became bishop, Father Preston succeeded him. Both took great interest in the progress of the community. Father Preston assumed charge of the erection of a new chapel, which was long the finest convent church in the country. He aided Mother M. Stanislaus Wiley* in establishing a Sodality of the Immaculate Conception, the first in America after the definition of the dogma, and obtained from Rome a rescript of approval. In 1859 he helped the Sisters to organize the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the first in New York at which public devotions were offered to the Heart of Our Lord. This was affiliated to the Archconfraternity in Rome. Incalculable was the good effected by these societies. Many of their members are now serving God in various religious orders. Father Hecker was for years extraordinary confessor to the com-

* Mother M. Evangelista Fitzpatrick wrote from Australia: "In one of Mother M. Agnes' visits to Ireland she kidnapped my dear, darling twin Sister in religion, Mother M. Stanislaus Wiley. She entered the same day I did, September 24, 1845, was received and professed with me, so she was truly my twin sister, and I did love her. She was such a pretty, innocent, perfect little creature. When I went to Buenos Ayres she wrote me a long letter, and died soon after. Ah! my dear mother, I must stop wandering over the past; it makes me too dreamy. What a joy to think we shall, through God's great mercy, all meet in heaven!"

munity, and took immense interest in its welfare, which he promoted by every means in his power. Monsignor Bedini, Apostolic Nuncio, frequently visited the institution, investigated its workings within and without, and brought back to Rome an interesting account of the labors of the Sisters among the poor, sick, and ignorant of New York.

In 1854 Archbishop Hughes stated in a Pastoral, in which he eloquently recommended to the charity of his flock the House of Mercy for poor women of good character, that up to that date the number of distressed families visited and relieved by the Sisters amounted to nearly 2,000; the poor but respectable girls placed in situations, 8,650; the number received and trained to work in the House of Mercy, 2,323. As these good works have gone on steadily ever since, the above figures have swelled to hundreds of thousands.

The last work undertaken by Mother M. Agnes was a boarding-school on a very splendid scale, to which ladies were invited who had finished their studies in other institutions. This would imply that she intended it as a sort of normal school to fit teachers for their profession, and a training academy for such as desired to join her Institute. Its success was not such as to justify the community in keeping up such an expensive establishment, and after a short trial it was discontinued.

The health of Mother M. Agnes was always delicate, but during the last five years of her life she passed no day without suffering. The amaurosis, which the best oculists could not relieve, increased, and reading and writing became extremely difficult; toward the end her large and beautiful eyes, often turned sadly on her loving children, were almost sightless. She submitted with uncomplaining sweetness to this privation, peculiarly trying to a person of her active temperament. Towards the end she suffered terribly from a peculiar species of dropsy, and during the intolerable agony her patience was heroic. She died De-

ember 20, 1859, leaving a large and flourishing community, who felt her loss so keenly that it has scarcely yet recovered its effects. She was not quite forty-four, and had governed the New York house thirteen years.

The sad particulars of the close of her life are given by one of her spiritual children :

“As winter approached our mother became unable to go up and down stairs. We fixed her comfortably in the small parlor which had formed part of the first chapel, and was at the door of the new one. Here she was in close proximity to the Blessed Sacrament, while being also in the midst of her children.

“Till December the physicians held out hopes of her recovery. On the morning of the 18th, feeling unusually depressed, she said : ‘I do not think it is possible for me to live longer in this state ; may God’s will be done.’ Drs. O’Reilly and Whiting agreed that the water was flowing into the lungs, and that if its progress were not arrested the consequences would be fatal. Every remedy prescribed failed to produce the desired effect, and the most sanguine saw that God was calling the beloved mother to Himself, and saw fit to leave their earnest supplications unanswered. Next day the archbishop remained with her a long time, and was affected to tears when obliged to leave her. Father Starrs administered the last sacraments. The Sisters were buried in grief, and when the priest was about to begin the anointing reverend mother gave them a very grave look, and then said to him, with great effort: ‘Excuse me, father ; I must ask you to delay a little.’ Then turning to us she said, rather sternly : ‘Sisters, have you forgotten your rules and customs ? Where are your lights and church-cloaks ?’ We were so overwhelmed with sorrow that no one had thought of them. When the tapers were lit and the church-cloaks on, reverend mother, with a heavenly smile, bowed to us and motioned the father to proceed. Every hour increased her suffering. About midnight Dr. O’Reilly took leave of her with deep feeling. She said a few words expressive of her gratitude to him. The sisters surrounded her bed, reciting the litanies with voices broken with tears, pressing the crucifix to her lips after she had become insensible to exterior things.

“God seemed to have accepted the excruciating anguish she endured during her long illness, and spared her the pangs that usually accompany the last passage. Hers was so gentle, so peaceful, that the anxious eyes of her devoted children, who watched every expression of her dear face and counted every breathing, could scarcely distinguish the moment when her soul took flight from its earthly tenement, about one A.M. Father Preston, who had assisted her at the last sad moment, closed the eyes of the first and best beloved superior and foundress of St. Catherine’s Convent of Mercy, New York.”

Never was mother in religion more beloved than this admirable woman. Whoever spoke of her mentioned some act of kindness she had done them. At recreation, full of innocent mirth, she readily joined in games and plays with her children, and with the members of any convent she happened to visit, being the chief promoter of the business of the hour, innocent fun. Ingenious to divert all manner of distinction from herself, she would try to get to the common exercises before the Sisters to spare them the trouble of rising on her entrance. As she was sometimes called to the parlor during recreation, she had a door made behind her place in the common room, through which on her return she would glide in, so that the Sisters would not know for some time of her presence, and consequently could not remain standing till she was seated. The friends and benefactors of the community felt as though a dear relative of theirs was gone when she died. Her unfailing mirth and good-humor were a source of joy to all. People said it did them good to speak to her. Archbishop Hughes, who was devotedly attached to her, presided at her obsequies, which were attended by Fathers Starrs, McCarron, McNierny, Hecker, Preston, Quinn, McKenna—in short, most of the city clergy and crowds of the laity. Her holy remains were interred in the vault of the Sisters of Mercy, under the old cathedral. Her best memorial is found in the work she left behind.

Though so gay and lively, and gifted with fine conversational powers, the real attraction of Mother M. Agnes was for silence and solitude. All the time that could be spared from the duties of her office was devoted to prayer and spiritual reading. Abandonment to the divine will was her chief characteristic. And He who attracted her heart so powerfully to this virtue failed not to furnish her with opportunities for its practice. She liked to take immigrant girls direct from the ship, train them to work in the ways of the country, and place them in good situations. Of these she saved tens of thousands.

Of her lieutenant and devoted friend, Mother M. Austin Horan, a few words may be added. During this good mother's term of office the community received from the corporation, through the influence of its old and valued friends, Aldermen Farley and Hayes, a grant of land for an industrial home. From the Legislature, too, she received several liberal donations, and many old and respected benefactors aided her for the same end. St. Joseph's Industrial Home was opened on the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, 1869, and has realized her dearest hopes by providing for multitudes of children and young girls. Its average number is about 700. A fine infirmary has been built on the same grounds, in which many sufferers have been restored to health and not a few prepared for a blessed eternity.

In 1865 St. Joseph's Society was begun by Mother M. Joseph Devereux, under the auspices of Mother M. Austin. Its generous members contributed largely to the building of St. Joseph's Industrial Home, giving as much as eight hundred dollars in one year. Its chief object is to impress on married women the nature and importance of their duties to their families, to induce them to frequent the sacraments and bring up their children well ; another leading object is to promote temperance and pray for the conversion of sinners. The family of Mother M. Joseph were pioneers of

the faith in the northern part of the State, about Utica, and aided her to effect much good.

Mother M. Austin's health had been failing for years, when death came to her relief June 14, 1874. This loss plunged the Sisters into the deepest affliction. Her suave, lovable, and truly motherly disposition won the affection of all her children from the oldest to the postulant of a day. Her deep piety appeared on every occasion. During a long season of most acute suffering her patience and humility were admirable. Her death, sweet, calm, and child-like, made an indelible impression on her children, to every one of whom she had, on the previous day, said some words of encouragement and touching farewell. She died in the fifty-third year of her age, and thirty-third of her profession. Her two nieces, whom it was her greatest ambition to see clothed in the habit of the Order she so passionately loved, have since become Sisters of Mercy. Her friends were consoled to think that she died during the ringing of the *Angelus*, it being a beautiful tradition in her native land that the souls that pass away to the music of the *Angelus* go straight to heaven.

CHAPTER XXVI.

TO THE WAR.

Application of the Secretary of War—Nine Sisters sent in Response—Lone Widows seeking the dead Bodies of their Husbands—Desolation—Chloe—Requisition answered—"De mightiest Tings dat bees"—Aunt Clarissy—Extravagance of the North Ladies—Wretched Quarters—Bob Sprawl in full Dress—House-cleaning—"Are you a Man or a Woman?"—Conversions—Gratitude of the Soldiers—Reinforcements—The Cook becomes Superior—Removal to Newbern—Terrible Condition of the Wounded after the Raid at Goldsborough—Jefferson Davis expresses his Appreciation of the Services of the Sisters—They busy themselves with the Widows and Orphans of the Soldiers.

IN 1862 the Secretary of War applied to the superior of the Houston Street convent for some Sisters to take charge of a military hospital for sick and wounded soldiers. Most willingly did they accept his invitation. They travelled under the protection of General Foster and a Jesuit father who was chaplain to the regiments under his command. Nine Sisters set sail, July 16, on the government ship *Cahaba*, for Beaufort, N. C., a village situated on Bogue Inlet, an arm of Pamlico Sound. The large hotel destined for the hospital had been a fashionable summer resort before the war, and was so near the shore that at high tide the waves rolled in and out under the timber props on which it was erected. It was a frame building, and contained five hundred rooms. The Sisters arrived July 19, during a heavy rain-storm. As they passed single file over the narrow, unsafe wharf, they formed such a doleful-looking procession that some patients who were watching from the windows concluded that they were nine "lone widows" coming to seek the dead bodies of their husbands. As the place had been recently sacked by Northern soldiers, it was

in a most desolate condition. No furniture but some miserable bedsteads, only a few utensils of any kind, and one broom, which being in the custody of Chloe, a saucy little negress, was seldom available. Along the shore lay the scattered remains of pianos, tables, chairs, glass, while the men who destroyed them were suffering for the commonest necessities of life. There were no candles or lamps of any description, and every one was obliged to retire before dark.

So many hardships had the Sisters here that two of them died, and several became dangerously ill. But they had the consolation of alleviating much suffering, helping to save many a soul, and dispel many a prejudice. General Foster had promised that whatever they asked for their patients should be supplied. And when, shortly after their arrival, in compliance with their requisition, a steamer laden with all the needed articles appeared at the wharf, the surprise of doctors, officers, and men was unbounded. The sick and well had all they needed, and from that moment the authority of the Sisters was established.

On their arrival, black Chloe and other officials got up for them a fine dinner, consisting of pork, beans, bread mouldy and salty from contact with sea-water, qualities it contracted in its transfer from Newbern to Beaufort. The coffee was of the worst description, and sweetened with molasses; sugar was an unknown luxury. On the so-called table were a large iron spoon, one knife and fork, a few dirty plates, and some cups and saucers. The Sisters, though famished after a sea-voyage of from three to four days, could not restrain their laughter. "If this is the best that can be done for strangers," said one, "the sick must be sadly off." Mother-superior asked for the cook. A nice little yellow woman appeared—Aunt Clarissy. When remonstrated with as to the condition of the pork and beans, "Why, 'm," she broke in, "dem's de mightiest tings dat bees—de boys eats plenty 'em." She was asked if eggs could be pro-

cured, and went in search of some, evidently astonished at the extravagance of the North ladies. Three was the result, and with these three a miracle like that of the loaves and fishes was necessary to make them available. Eight rooms, opening on a piazza that overlooked the sound, were allotted to the Sisters, with some filthy bedding. Little sleep visited their eyelids the first night. Next morning they began a cleaning process, and found the work extremely fatiguing on account of the great heat. A huge young negro, Bob Sprawl, installed himself as water-carrier to the Sisters, who, to reward his charity, presented him with a red flannel shirt. His delight was extravagant. He put it outside his Sunday coat, tied a string around his waist to set off his figure to the best advantage, and danced about with the wildest joy, proclaiming himself the best dressed man in North Carolina.

When supplies came a general house-cleaning took place. Lanterns were hung in dark passages, clean bed-linen given the sick, and comparative order established in every department. Nothing could surpass the respect with which all treated the Sisters when they saw their object was to serve them; but the steward afterward told them that he often remained up till one A.M. watching them. He fully expected to find them poisoning the patients, setting the offices on fire, and doing evil work generally, they being confessedly emissaries of the Pope, the man of sin. The dress of the Sisters at first scared the patients who had never before seen religious. "Great heavens!" shrieked one sufferer to the nurse that bent over him, "are you a man or a woman? But your hand is a woman's hand; its touch is soft, and your voice is gentle—what *are* you?" "Only a poor servant of the great Master come from afar to take care of you," said the Sister. "Sister," moaned another, "I'm dying—I want to be what you are—help me." Often when the priest came to baptize a dying soldier the only confession of faith he could extract was: "What the Sister be-

lieves I believe. Sister, tell me what to answer." The gratitude and affection of these poor fellows was most touching. When they were leaving the hospital they would offer keepsakes to their "own Sisters"—a button, a shred of blue or gray, a pebble, with a fervent "God bless you, Sister! I'll never forget you. Pray for me." The least kindness done them was magnified a hundred-fold by these brave fellows, and for years after they would go any distance "to have a look at their own Sisters." The Sisters nursed them, cheered them, wrote letters for them to the loved ones at home. The touching and beautiful incidents of the Crimean war repeated themselves indefinitely during the days of the secession.

Ere long several members had to return to New York through ill health, but their places were promptly supplied by other ardent volunteers. The second contingent brought from the House of Mercy five strong young women, whose intelligent services were of immense value. The mother-superior having arranged matters for the comfort of all parties, returned to New York. Mother M. Augustine McKenna succeeded her. When Dr. Upham heard of the change he asked: "Who is the new incumbent? Do I know her?" "Certainly you do—the tall, dark Sister who prepares food for the soldiers." "What! the cook? Is that the way you do business?" "Yes," replied his informant. "Every Sister is expected to be ready to undertake any duty assigned her, and to qualify herself for it." The doctor was greatly surprised. It so happened, however, that the cook in question was one of the most intellectual women in the Sisterhood.

The daily routine of duty was soon settled. It was varied only by the arrival of new patients or the death or dismissal of old ones. Many were Confederate soldiers, and these had a double claim on the Sisters, being not only sufferers but prisoners. The chaplain was most attentive to them, and made no secret of his sympathy for their

cause. In October, 1862, the sick and wounded were removed to Newbern, Beaufort being too much exposed to wintry storms. Here the residence of Governor Stanley was placed at the disposal of the Sisters, and was, for the time being, transformed into a handsome convent. The elegant parlor made a more elegant chapel. Roses climbed in through the windows, and mocking-birds serenaded the Sisters at their prayers.

After the raid at Goldsborough, towards the close of the year, the wards were crowded. The poor patients, suffering from ghastly wounds, were brought straight from the battle-field in the most pitiable condition, the clothing glued to the wounds with clotted blood, the hair matted, the limbs hanging by a thread, as it were, to the body—mangled victims of that fratricidal war whose horrors sent many a thrill through the bosom of Christendom. The soldiers were young and old, educated and ignorant, American, Irish, Creole, German—it was all the same to their kind nurses. Their hideous wounds were delicately touched and cleansed, and the soft sponge tenderly applied to the tortured flesh, and all that medical skill and the gentlest nursing could accomplish was done till the poor creatures, worn out with agony, excitement, and loss of blood, sank through sheer exhaustion on their pillows. The stricken had the best that could be procured of everything. If the steward had not what was needed, or the sutler refused to go to the necessary expense, the Sisters applied, and never in vain, to the higher powers, and abundance came in answer to their appeal. Times were terrible; despite all that benevolence and even heroism did for the sufferers, no words could describe their pangs. The Sisters were determined that nothing that they could procure should be wanting to their patients, and the local officers generally, but not always, seconded their zeal. It soon came to be well known that neither incompetence nor neglect would be tolerated by them, and their own sense of

duty, humanity, and religion they endeavored to instil into every official and subordinate with whom duty brought them into contact. Once when what seemed chance brought some Sisters into the presence of Jefferson Davis, "Will you allow me, ladies," said he, "to speak a moment with you? I am proud to see you once more. I can never forget your kindness to the sick and wounded during our darkest days. And I know not how to testify my gratitude and respect for every member of your noble Order." * The most distinguished men on both sides frequently expressed similar sentiments. On meeting the Sisters on the train or elsewhere they loved to speak of bygone days, and tell how at the approach of the Sisters the eye of the invalid would brighten and his cheek flush with delight, and how the worst and lowest of God's human creatures never spoke of their beloved nurses without a hearty "God bless 'em!" And yet so little could be done in proportion to the enormous amount of pain and anguish spread out daily and nightly before their pitying gaze, that the Sisters thought they had done nothing, certainly little in comparison with what they desired to do.

When their sad business came to an end, they were recalled to their convent home. And here the Sisters of the Army, aided by the rest of the community, busied themselves for many years in taking care of the widows and orphans of the brave fellows who fell on the battle-field or slept peacefully in God, soothed by their loving care in the crowded hospitals.

* A few days ago ex-President Davis, now in his eighty-first year, expressed the same sentiments to the writer in much stronger language, when speaking of the stirring times of the Confederacy.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FILIATIONS—MOTHER SETON.

Branch at Greenbush—Heels before Heads—In Penance—The Boss—The Clay Hills—Balmville—Curious Anecdote—"The short but simple Annals of the Poor"—The Evangelists invoked—"All's well that ends well"—The Tombs—Mother Seton and the Boy Burglar—"Till Seventy Times Seven Times"—John cannot live away from his Wife and Children—Mother Seton's Devotion to the Prisoners—Strange Bequests—Affecting Scenes—Story of Emma N.—Sad Experience—Wilfulness—Pride has a Fall—She will not Work—Worse and Worse—A true Penitent—A good Girl who spent most of her Life in Prison—A touching Story—Preserved through Trials—Finale—Hanna Flynn—Mamie—Terrible Fate of a Drunkard—The Orphan Babes—An awful Death-bed—Maria converted by Mrs. Mullen.

THE New York community established houses in St. Louis, Brooklyn, Worcester, Eureka, which will be treated of in their proper places, and sent branches to Greenbush, N. Y., and Balmville, N. Y. In 1863 the pastor of the former built a handsome convent and schools, which he presented to the community as a dower for his niece, Sister Vincent Sweetman. Schools were at once opened, and the country children flocked to the Sisters. Many great rough boys, who had driven several schoolmasters from the village, became tractable under their care and devoted to them. It must not, however, be concealed that on their first appearance in the schools as teachers the boys arose simultaneously, ran towards the open windows, and showed their heels before the Sisters could get acquainted with their heads. The first time the Sisters had Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in their little chapel, an old woman entered, and seeing two Sisters kneeling in

adoration wearing their white church cloaks, she thought they were in penance and had sheets wrapped around them. She begged to see the "Boss," as she styled the superior, and entreated her to forgive and release them. When it was explained to her that some Sisters knelt in adoration all day on such occasions, she exclaimed : " Oh ! God be praised that I lived to see the day that He has some one kneeling before Him on His own intention, among the clay hills of Greenbush ! " This branch soon became a foundation from which emanated several houses, among them St. Peter's Hospital, Albany.

Balmville, on the Hudson, came into the possession of the Sisters in a remarkable way. The lady whose property it was had become an Anglican nun in England. By reading Father Faber's works she became convinced that the truth she sought was not to be found in Protestantism. Having exposed her doubts and difficulties to her superior, she was advised to leave immediately. Being a stranger in London, she knew not whither to turn, but after some deliberation went to the Oratory. The father who answered her summons told her she was a Catholic already in heart, and introduced her to the nuns of the Assumption. She rented apartments in their convent, was instructed by them, and soon after received into the church. The priest advised her to return to America and take care of her father, then in his eightieth year. After his death she became a nun in the convent which had been her first refuge. To regulate her affairs previous to making her vows, she returned to New York, and received hospitality at the Convent of Mercy. On the eve of her departure she happened to mention her anxiety about the sale of her old home in Balmville, and the gratification it would afford her to see it converted into a convent, situated as it was in the midst of a Protestant neighborhood. The Sisters began to think of buying it, and after some discussion closed the sale. About three hundred boys, under twelve, are brought up by Sis-

ters on this beautiful spot. In their three houses they have over a thousand city children.

The visitation of the sick poor in New York has always been very extensive, and in no city on earth, even London itself, can more wretchedness and destitution be found in proportion to the population. The Mercy Convent being centrally located, was easy of access to the unfortunate of every creed, class, and nationality. Many interesting and even amusing incidents occur, and those who go much among them will never need to read fiction to enliven their minds; they will find truth much stranger. The service of the poor, sick, and ignorant brings them into contact with almost every form of human misery. Nothing can excite more vivid interest than the heart-broken mothers, the poor young girls, and the homeless children of the great metropolis; nay, even its wretched outcasts, and the roughs and tramps so often seen in our hospitals and prisons.

For a long time the Sisters visited an old man of seventy, who when first they met him had learned, in these days of enlightenment, only one prayer:

“ Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
Bless the bed that I lie on ! ”

The only child of a poor Irishwoman, educated at a public school where she became acquainted with fashionable girls, married a Methodist minister without her mother's knowledge, and disappeared with her husband. For some time she imagined herself happy, but when scarlet fever carried off her children and the minister died suddenly, sorrow and remorse almost broke her heart. It is always painful to see the young crushed by the weight of misfortune, and this beautiful widow had ample sympathy. Her husband's family lavished the kindest attentions on her. One morning the milkman learned the whole story from the servants, and hastened to the mother with the news.

She started at once to the given address, and, finding the door open, rushed to the room of the dying girl, guided by the minister's voice. The distracted mother heeded not the doctors or the family, but threw herself on her knees, made the sign of the cross aloud, and called upon the Mother of Christ, to whom the child had been dedicated in infancy, to save her. The patient revived and recognized her mother, who, taking her unresisting hand, made her "bless herself." The spectators grew indignant. The doctor proclaimed that this excitement would hasten impending death. But Mrs. M—— was a robust woman, and feeling that her darling's soul was at stake, carried her in her own stout arms to a carriage she had waiting, and, before the mystified family had time to oppose her, drove to her comfortless garret, where the Sisters awaited her. They took her to cheerful lodgings near the Redemptorists' church, Third Street, and by these fathers the invalid was reconciled to the church. She lingered several years, but never recovered her strength. The heroic mother became totally blind. Both, aided by kind friends, lived lives of prayer and penance till death released them.

The experience of the Sisters in the city prison, or Tombs, would fill volumes. Malefactors of every country and degree have there claimed their ministrations. Numbers have been converted, of whom some died true penitents, and others have become useful members of society. In reclaiming these, Mother M. Catherine Seton spent the greater part of her active life as a Sister of Mercy. She even took the trouble, at her somewhat mature age,* to keep up by study her knowledge of modern languages that she might be able to instruct or console the prisoners of all nations

* Catherine Josephine Seton, Mother M. Catherine, the fourth and only surviving child of Mrs. Eliza Anne Seton, foundress of the Sisters of Charity at Emmittsburg, was born June 28, 1800, and is, consequently, in her eighty-ninth year. This venerable woman was forty-six years old when she joined the Sisters of Mercy.

whom she encountered in this awful abode, which she did to the great comfort of many a poor foreigner.

Once Mother Seton found there a boy burglar whom we shall call John Thomas. Though a Catholic, he was ignorant of the truths of religion. She instructed him for his first Communion, which he made in prison, under the care of Father Duranquet, S.J. After two years at Sing Sing he was released. Unfortunately, through his former evil associates, he soon became again amenable to the law, and the good mother found him in the Tombs in broken health. Again did she succor him, soul and body. Penitentiary for five years was his next sentence, and during that period she frequently visited him in his dreadful prison. When he was free once more a situation was procured him, in which he conducted himself very well. He married a respectable girl, and became a model husband and father. The panic of 1870 threw him out of employment, and in an evil hour he met some old Sing Sing men, who induced him to attempt a robbery with them. They were fired on, and John was wounded and arrested. He had a broken leg, and was placed in the prison hospital, Brooklyn. There he got some one to telegraph Mother M. Catherine, who wrote the facts to the Brooklyn Sisters, to whom she enclosed five dollars to be expended for the relief of the sufferer, bespeaking their tenderest care for him. He recovered sooner than the doctor expected, and one night availed himself of a chance of escape, and got as far as Buffalo, whence he telegraphed his friend that he was safe so far, but had no money to go further. She sent what he called "the needful," and for years she heard no more of the runaway save through his devoted wife, whom she was helping to keep her little room and support her two children. One evening a man came to the convent and begged to see Mother M. Catherine. In the visitor she recognized her protégé. "O my child!" she exclaimed, "how can you be so rash? You are very near the police headquarters."

"I could not," he replied, "live any longer away from my wife and children, and I could not be in the city without seeing you, my more than mother." As he remained in New York, he could not escape his doom. He was re-arrested and spent another term in Sing Sing. He is now a steady, middle-aged man, devoted to his family, and he and his are still advised by their life-long friend, Mother Catherine Seton.

This good woman is loved and venerated by thousands, in the prisons and outside of them ; she is truly the prisoners' friend, and in that capacity has inherited strange bequests. Once a trunk, supposed to contain clothing for the poor, came to her by express from Philadelphia. Its contents were pistols, jimmies, and other burglars' tools, with one suit of clothing, the dying legacy of a noted burglar whom Mother Seton had made many efforts, not unsuccessfully, to reform. It was all he had, and he sent the trunk with a good heart to his only friend and benefactress, Mother Seton, "to remember him by."

Scenes of the most affecting and often dramatic character occur in the duties which engage the Sisters in the House of Mercy and the visitation of the sick. One afternoon the infirmarian, passing through the dormitory, noticed a girl in bed, and inquired if she were ill. A fair face bathed in tears was lifted from the pillow and hidden rapidly. With difficulty the Sister calmed the broken-hearted creature, and then heard from her the following tale :

Emma N—— was the youngest daughter of an Irish gentleman who died bankrupt. The elder children had received a good education, but she had to be content with the mere rudiments. Financial troubles becoming intolerable, she, with an elder sister, sailed for New York, where the latter was employed to teach French and music to some young ladies preparing to visit Europe. Emma was put in a second-class boarding-house, where she spent her time

reading novels and newspapers, and soon gave up going to the sacraments. She became acquainted with a prepossessing medical student, who took her to see the sights, and finally contracted with her a pretended marriage, which he induced her to conceal from her sister. They went to a fine hotel and lived stylishly. Dress and jewels were lavished on the so-called bride, who was most extravagant. After a year or so Emma noticed one evening that "George" took much pains in mixing a drink for her, which she attributed to his kindness. It was a narcotic, which caused her to remain in a heavy slumber till late next day. While dressing she found a note on the table, which she hastily tore open. It contained a hundred dollars, and the information that she was not his wife, and that the name by which she knew him was fictitious. He advised her to live as she had done previous to meeting him, and "make it all right" with her sister by any story she chose to invent. Her grief was so violent that the hotel people found out her trouble, and civilly informed her that her rooms were needed. She went to a cheaper place, and lived miserably so long as she had anything to live on; then she had to pawn her clothes.

The poor girl pawned an expensive dress for three dollars, her hostess having commanded her not to return without that sum. She was accosted from a carriage by a lady who had known her at the hotel, and invited to join in an excursion to Staten Island. She acquiesced, and foolishly spent her money buying trifles for the children. When, at seven o'clock, the lady asked her where she should drive her to, she named a house on Fifth Avenue. The coachman rang for her and she bade adieu to her friend. When the door was opened she asked for some imaginary person, and contrived to parley with the servant till her friends were out of sight. Then she went into the street, in wild desperation, not knowing where to find shelter.

She wandered aimlessly about till the clock struck eleven,

and then stood still, wringing her hands in despair. An unfortunate girl, foolishly dressed, approached her and said: "If you want a safe place for the night, I can get you one; you are new to this life." Emma was galled to the quick at this familiarity, but having no other alternative, accepted the offer. On they went till they came to an alley, the aspect of which scared poor Emma. "Where are you taking me?" she exclaimed.

"Ah!" said her companion, "you may trust me. I would go far to save you from a fate like my own."

Next moment they were on a creaking staircase. "Aunty," said she, "take care of this young lady. Give her supper and a good bed, and I will pay you well."

Poor Emma! Had it come to this, that she was glad to find shelter from a "nigger"? Alas! the wages of sin are often worse than death. She refused the refreshment, and threw herself on a sofa without undressing. At four A.M., while the poor negro family slept, she stole out, went to the docks, took the first boat for Williamsburgh, and, when half-way over, threw herself into the river. The boat-hands rescued the wretched creature and brought her back to New York, where they gave her over to the police. A notice put in next day's paper describing her brought her poor sister, who had lost all hopes of finding her. The meeting was agony to both. As her affairs had never become public, the Sisters received her in the House of Mercy. Extra meals and attention were given her, and extra instruction. It was all but impossible to please her. She was three months in the house before she could be induced to go to confession; and even then the Sister was obliged to tell the confessor the chief points of her story beforehand. She became calmer and more tractable, but could never be persuaded to learn any industry. The lightest kind of work was hateful to her. She soon insisted on leaving, and again her afflicted sister had to provide her a boarding-place. Finally, when visiting Belle-

vue Hospital, the Sisters found her as a patient. And as she could give no good account of herself, they coaxed her to the House of the Good Shepherd, where she died soon after, a true penitent.

One day in August, 1858, a young girl applied for admission to the House of Mercy. She had met with a severe accident on shipboard, and as she bore a letter of recommendation from a Sister of Mercy in Ireland, she was at once admitted to the infirmary. The letter vouched for the good character of the bearer, though, singularly enough, most of her short life had been spent in prison. She was most grateful to the Sisters for receiving her, and gave them the following particulars of her early life :

“It was the famine time. I was six years old. My father and my two little brothers died. There was not a bit or sup in our place, so mother took me into town—Macroom. She used to tell me it was a beautiful old place, but all I remember is the hunger and misery. For a while we were getting a bit one way or another, many a night sleeping under the trees. I used to be afraid. One day I was crying with hunger, she was weak with the same, and she stole a loaf in a baker’s shop. We were taken up by the peelers, and she was nearly crazy. They brought her and me, for I wouldn’t leave her, before the magistrate. God forgive *him*—he sent her to jail for seven years. And it’s well she wasn’t transported, for we knew two little boys that were transported for stealing some stirabout when they were starving.”

“But they didn’t send you to jail, poor child?”

“Ah! Sister, dear, sure they had to send me. Mother held me tight, and I screamed when they strove to take me from her, and the man had pity on us, and said: ‘Let the child go with her.’ Many’s the day we lived there, but she never did much good after she was put in; she fretted night and day. Sometimes she said her sole comfort was

to have me with her ; that her parents were decent people who little thought their child would ever see the inside of a prison. She died before her time was up, and she had a happy death—God rest her soul ! The Sisters took care of her while she was sick, and the priest told me she was happy. They promised to take me as soon as the sod was over her, and that was her comfort in her dying hour when she gave them the blessing of the widow and the orphan. Ah ! Sister, I'll never forget her. She used to tell me that all we suffered was the will of God ; that He would reward us in heaven. And she would put her hand on my head, and give me up to the Blessed Virgin, and bid me look on her as my mother.

“ The Sisters came twice a week to instruct and comfort the prisoners. They prepared me for my first Communion. And when *she* died, they put decent clothes on me and took me out. And they taught me to read and write and sew and wash. And when I was old enough, they saw I was steady and industrious, and they paid my passage, Sister, and gave me a letter to you.”

The listener—herself an Irishwoman—had lived “ at home ” through these famine years, and stories like poor Kate's were not new to her. With a full heart, she blessed God that he had brought this young creature untarnished through such bitter trials. No one who heard this little tale could look on the girl's sweet face, and not think of that desolate mother wasting away in a prison, grieving over her ruined family and the fate of her remaining child, yet bowing in humble submission to the will of God, and dying in the sweet hope of a merciful sentence from Him who will judge justices. Kate was an amiable, generous girl, easily wounded and easily consoled. She soon went out as laundress, got good wages, and, as she was not extravagant, was able to save a little. She made friends of her employers, who, though they knew not her sad story, took a kind interest in her. After some years she married well,

and has now a happy home in a quiet New England village.

Hanna Flynn, a woman of masculine strength and endurance, came from the South of Ireland, in 1859, with one aim—to earn money to help her parents and the children “to keep the roof over their heads.” Her face was plain, her English uncouth, for Irish was her mother-tongue. Her landlord’s broad acres had gone into the Encumbered Estates Court. In the distress occasioned by the added rent and the new master’s harsh mode of exacting it, she had volunteered to come to America to aid the family. She had been dairy-maid at the great house, could milk cows and feed calves, and drive them into pastures rich with clover blossoms and hedged with hawthorn ; her bare, red feet bedizened with white and gold, the petals of the daisies and buttercups. I know not whether she heeded the blackbird’s song, or the pæans of the lark in the upper air, or the dual note of the cuckoo—all which add to the poetry of bucolic life. In summer and harvest she made hay and bound the golden sheaves which the sturdy arms of “the boys” cut down with their sickles before the day of reaping-machines. The utmost limit of her travel was her crowded parish chapel. The alphabet was to her as the hieroglyphics of Egypt. And yet she was a heroine. She knew her prayers, she honored her parents, she loved God in her own simple, faithful way ; she was honest, upright, truthful, laborious, and capable of self-sacrifice.

Hanna crossed the ocean in a sailing-vessel, suffering tortures of mind and body as she sped over the fearful waters. In her coarse linsey-woolsey and heavy brogues, she presented herself at the convent gate. It was a pain to see that peasant endure the confinement of an immense house, dealing with the difficulties of a wash-board, and the more uncongenial labor of the ironing-room. Many a tear would fall into the “stationary tub,” which was such a

wonder to her, and many a sigh escaped from her poor heart, as she yearned for the cowslips, the meadows, and the corn-crakes. Great was her consternation one day when she met on the stairs the daughter of her former master—a refugee, like herself, learning to work in the House of Mercy. Hanna cried aloud, and the poor lady retired on plea of a headache, which was really a heart-ache.

With natural delicacy, Hanna mentioned to no one the cause of her sorrowful surprise, but told the Sister in charge “she’d like to wash for Miss M——, and make her bed, and do her any service she could ; she was never in a place like this, and she’s only a handful of a crature.” The Sister had some trouble in getting from her the young lady’s story. “I’d sooner die,” said she, “than let people know her father’s child could be brought to this.” As she had a religious vocation, admission to a religious community was easily procured for her, and Hanna’s mind set at rest with regard to her young mistress.

This poor woman was ready for any amount of labor, and would “put up with” any sort of treatment, if only she could earn money to pay her father’s rent. Not a cent would she spend on dress. An immense straw bonnet with red ribbon, a faded cotton umbrella, marred the effect of the neat, tidy dress in which she went to her first place—her awkwardness disgusting the smart girl sent to guide her through the crowded streets. In a month she returned to the convent with her wages to send her father. In vain the Sister who wrote her letter “home,” urged her to keep a little for some plain dresses and aprons. She declared she would make the clothes she had on last for many a long day, that every penny would go right home to her people—and the corner of her coarse apron was lifted to her eyes—so the Sister was forced to yield.

When Hanna learned that, despite her sacrifices, eviction came upon her loved ones at home, that they were thrown upon the highway, her grief and dismay were agonizing.

She labored on with a bleeding heart and crushed spirits, helping them to the last. Her father died. She brought out her sister, so that both could earn enough "to make a man of our brother Peter, poor fellow." The young sister speedily withdrew from the firm, leaving Hanna to work *sola*. Without even consulting her, she married a German, to Hanna's great horror; for a German was to her an incomprehensible being, and she was astounded that Catherine should have courage to marry one. She divided her earnings between her brother and sister, "slaving out" her life, as she expressed it, among strange people, in strange places, for those she loved so well, and who, unfortunately, were not ashamed to take the fruits of her distressing servitude.

Surely her Heavenly Father will one day receive her into that everlasting rest which her guileless life and her unselfish goodness will have merited.

In August, 1865, two Sisters visited a lovely young woman dying of cancer, whose children, John, James, and Mamie, were crying for bread. The last, a beautiful creature of three, was soon coaxed to the Sisters' side, and when the mother died became their child. James died; John was placed in the Protectory. On the 28th of August the baby girl was given to the mother-superior, Mother Augustine McKenna, as a feast-day gift. The child grew more lovely every day. A grown girl, Katie, devoted herself to her; whatever she earned was for Mamie. Always remarkable for her great modesty, the child was like an angel when she made her first Communion. Her brother John, when sixteen, left the Protectory for a situation, and every Sunday took her out. At last the day came when Mamie left the convent to earn a living. The overseer where she worked said she would warble all day the hymns she had learnt from the Sisters. He wished to adopt her as a companion for his daughter; but the good God called

her home in her innocence. She died suddenly—no expression of pain or anguish on that sweet face. The Sisters robed her dear form in pure white, decked her with her first Communion veil and wreath. The expense of her funeral was borne by the manager, and all the girls of the institution followed to the grave this lovely and beloved child of fourteen.

Duty one day called the Sisters to the topmost story of a tenement-house. They found a woman lying drunk, and caressed by two beautiful children—a boy of two, with intelligent blue eyes and golden locks, and a thoughtful girl of ten summers, with earnest hazel eyes and long tresses of shining hair—a real mother to the sweet boy. About eight P.M. the father came home. “O papa!” said Mollie, “mamma is sick again. I tried to make the fire, but could not leave Baby alone. Mamma was too sick to give us food and she has no money.” The heart-broken man bent over the child and said: “God bless you, Mollie!” He took up the baby; it laughed and crowed with delight. But a strange shadow came over his delicate, worn face. His wife lay unconscious; in vain did he call her. He flung himself on an old sofa and said: “Mollie, I’m ill; get me a cup of tea.” When the child came back she found her father dying. She called a neighbor. He was unable to speak, but placed his big, loving hand on the girl’s head. The priest came, and not too soon; in a few moments he was dead. The children were brought home by the Sisters. When the desolate wife arose from her drunken slumber she was a widow and childless. She staggered up to the corpse, which kind hands were arranging. “O my God!” she exclaimed, “what have I done? O my poor Charles!” She was completely sobered, but could not survive “the ruin she had made.” With an agonizing cry to heaven for mercy the wretched woman fell dead on the floor.

A person who read in the papers the sad case of two

children orphaned in one day, came to adopt the girl. "I was knocked about myself," said she, "and I know well what the poor and the orphan suffer. But I am well off now, and my husband agrees with me that Mollie is to be as our own child." But the girl would not stir without her little brother, and the good people were fain to adopt both. The poor children were most fortunate in their new guardians.

A priest once asked the Sisters to take charge of a tall, handsome American girl whom he had just baptized. When an infant she had been adopted by an aged couple on Long Island. Their son was kind to Maria, though he took pains to inform her that he was not her brother and that she had no right to call his parents hers. As these people had no religion, the girl grew up without any. When about seventeen, her father fell ill, and was so impatient and unmanageable that he became unbearable. He cursed the doctor because his remedies gave no relief; he screamed for breath, swore at his wife and son, and the poor girl, who was petrified with horror, at his side. Gradually he sank, but his last audible words were blasphemies.

Maria, stupefied with grief, could not banish from her mind that fearful death-scene. She prayed in words of her own choosing, for she knew no prayer, that she might never die as he did. A serious illness attacked her, and it was impossible to soothe her anxious dread of death. As her fever was contagious, she was placed in an attic, and a poor Irishwoman hired to nurse her. Neither Mrs. B—— nor her son ventured near her. In her delirium she would cry out: "Oh! do not let me die like father." One evening, when the crisis was passed, she seized her nurse's hand, and cried out: "If I am to die, oh! what shall I do?" "Why, my darling, you must be sorry for your sins, and be baptized, and you will go straight to heaven," answered Mrs. Mullen. "But what is it to be baptized? Who will

baptize me?" The nurse explained all in a few simple words, taught her the principal mysteries, and offered to bring a priest, who, being also a doctor, was admitted in the latter capacity. The girl assented, saying, "I must save my soul." While prescribing for the body the priest did what was necessary for the soul. When, after her recovery, her mother and brother learned this, they gave her three days to choose between their comfortable home and the Catholic religion. "Come what may," said she, as they thrust her out, "I must save my soul." The priest brought her to the convent, where she was fully instructed. She wrote a dutiful, affectionate letter to her mother, which was never answered, so she bravely determined to earn her own living. The Sisters found her a good situation as seamstress.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A BEAUTIFUL TEMPLE.

Archbishop Hughes says Mass at the Convent—Monsignor Bedini's Present to Mother Agnes—"Have I been a good Religious?"—Rome approves the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception—Its Objects—Death—"Mercy"—Sister M. Borgia Coleman—Retreat transferred—Consecration of the new Chapel—Description—Profession of Sister M. Joseph Devereux—The Archbishop addressed her—Her Father as a Boy—He makes a Thank offering—No Mistake—Mr. and Mrs. Devereux establish the Franciscan Fathers in New York—Oil Painting—Travelling abroad—Mary's Vocation.

ON March 31, 1855, after his return from Rome, Archbishop Hughes celebrated Mass at the convent. He brought to Mother Agnes, from Monsignor Bedini, a relic of Blessed Giovanni Grande, encased in a handsome silver reliquary, and accompanied by a friendly note, in which the ex-nuncio expresses the heartfelt wish "that the Saint may use his intercession in reverend mother's behalf, and restore her sight, if it be God's holy will, and obtain the cure of all her maladies."

On the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, 1855, a subscription list had been opened for the erection of a chapel and schools. On the 24th of April, 1856, the building was begun. More room was needed for the select school, and Mother M. Agnes was anxious to open a free school, there being at that period very few parochial schools in the city. While these and many other projects were maturing it pleased God to call to Himself one of the most useful and edifying members, Sister M. Ignatius Murray. Being very energetic, she had fought bravely against incipient consumption and attended to her duties till a few weeks before her

death, July 12, 1856. During the last days of her life she suffered many severe attacks. When supposed to be speechless she suddenly sat up erect and said : "Is this death?" Then turning to reverend mother, she asked : "Have I been a good religious? Did I keep my vows?" The good mother gave her a most consolatory answer, and she was silent till death claimed her.

Fortitude, the characteristic virtue of this favored soul, was evidenced by the manner in which she discharged her duties and bore the trials of the religious state. Her weak constitution afforded her ample opportunity for the practice of patience.

On July 30 a letter came from Rome, containing the confirmation of the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception, founded in 1853, by Mother M. Stanislaus Wiley, as a means of stimulating the children of the schools to a more solid devotion to the Mother of God, and a closer imitation of her virtues. The good effected exceeded her most sanguine expectations. Girls of the House of Mercy who showed themselves desirous of the distinction were also admitted, and the results were equally encouraging. The "Rules" were presented to His Holiness Pius IX., with a petition for approbation and indulgences, which was graciously accorded in a rescript dated June 22, 1856. This was the first sodality of the kind established in the United States, its objects being :

1. To honor the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin.
2. To implore the conversion of this nation to the true faith.
3. To lead to the sanctification of souls by a closer imitation of the virtues of Mary.

The rules, forms of admission, indulgences attached, etc., were now published, and members flocked in from all parts of the city. For twenty-five years this sodality flourished in a remarkable manner, being discontinued for externs

only when it had been thoroughly established in every parish in New York.

November 9 the community was saddened by the death, after two days' illness, of Sister M. Zita Mullen, as she was preparing for her holy profession. She was allowed to make her vows on her death-bed. Being asked what her motto was, she replied: "I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me." It seemed that our Lord delighted in recompensing the trusting confidence she reposed in Him, for He enabled her in a short space to do all He required of her, and then called her, bright with the unsullied purity of her second baptism, to receive her everlasting recompense. She died with the word *mercy* quivering on her lips.

Another dear Sister, M. Borgia Coleman, followed on Holy Innocents' Day, December 28. At first, when she became aware of the approach of death, her prayers consisted chiefly of petitions for patience in her sufferings and resignation to the Divine Will, but as she neared the goal light from the heavenly country seemed to break on her spirit, and she changed the tone of supplication for one of joyful confidence, and poured forth the affections of her heart in acts of thanksgiving and love. Just before death she rallied, and the infirmarian congratulated her on her apparent increase of strength. "I shall not live three minutes," was her comment; and before the end of that time she calmly breathed her last.

Sister M. Borgia was distinguished for rare humility and active, self-denying charity, with a great love of labor; ever desiring such employments as, being lowly and hidden, required not much talent for their exercise, that she might appear what she sincerely believed herself to be, incapable of higher or more difficult offices. This meek and lowly spirit left behind the sweet fragrance of her lowly example to refresh and invigorate those who were still toiling on, bearing their own burdens and the burdens of others up life's steep ascent to the same coveted home. In conse-

quence of this death the renovation of vows was deferred to the Feast of the Epiphany. The thought that one of their number had just appeared before the Sovereign Judge to render an account of the fidelity with which she had kept her sacred engagements, deepened in the hearts of the Sisters the feeling of awe which always renders this act of renewal so solemn and impressive.

The Feast of the Sacred Heart was rendered memorable in the annals of the community by the dedication of the beautiful chapel, under the title of the Immaculate Conception. The building of this exquisite temple was the first and last work of the architect, Mr. Edson, as a Catholic, for he died a holy death just as it was completed.

This chapel was a gem of Gothic beauty. The ceiling represented in fresco the pilgrimage of a Child of Mary and her safe arrival in heaven. The eight double windows were of richly stained glass, and represented the life of the Mother of Mercy: 1. The Immaculate Conception and Nativity; 2. The Presentation in the Temple and Espousals; 3. The Birth of Our Lord and the Purification; 4. The Adoration of the Magi and the Flight into Egypt; 5. The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple and the Miracle at Cana; 7. The Descent of the Holy Ghost and the Death of Our Lady; 8. Her Assumption and Coronation. The walls formed Gothic niches, painted light blue and buff; the three altars were stained so as to appear like dark-veined marble. The flooring was of diamond-shaped tiles, blue and buff. Richly carved stalls and a fine organ completed the appointments of this mediæval chapel. The "dim, religious light," beautified by gleams from the many-colored windows, and the holy repose of the sanctuary, impressed one the more deeply by contrast with the noisy, busy city just outside.

Immediately after the dedication Sister M. Joseph Deveureux made her vows and received the black veil from the hands of Archbishop Hughes, who officiated at both cere-

monies. Bishop Loughlin, of Brooklyn, and Bishop Timon, of Buffalo, old friends of the Devereux family, were present, with about thirty priests. Miss Devereux's parents and relatives were present, and the organ-gallery was filled with the friends of the institution. The archbishop preached from this text: "Whom He foreknew He also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of His Son." He spoke of the advantages of the holy vows, and then particularly addressed the candidate, saying: "Your vocation is no doubt a special and hereditary blessing for the faith your forefathers were so loyal to in bygone days. Beyond the reach of your memory, there were in this country many difficulties in acquiring and practising our holy religion. And in places where no priests were to be found to celebrate the holy mysteries, zealous laymen used to collect a little flock around the altar, and strive as far as they could to supply the place of the ministers of God. It was there that zeal shone conspicuous in your ancestors which merited the copious benediction that has descended on you this day."

Her father, Nicholas Devereux, of Utica, N. Y., had done no small share of the apostolic work to which the archbishop referred. He was born in Enniscorthy, Wexford, in 1791, and came to America in 1806. He reached New York on Saturday, and the next morning attended Mass at old St. Peter's, Barclay Street. When the plate was passed around he put in a guinea, one of the three which constituted his whole fortune; the sexton, thinking he had made a mistake, called his attention to it. But he assured him there had been no mistake, it being his thank-offering for his safe voyage across the Atlantic. He then continued his journey to Utica, where his brother John was a prosperous merchant. In 1817 he married a Protestant, who subsequently became a Catholic. They brought up a large family of devoted Catholics. Mary was born 1827, and was always remarkable for earnest piety and love of the

poor. On attaining her majority she wished to become a religious, and had a great attraction for the Carmelite Order. But her father wished her, before deciding, to see the religious institutions of Europe. Early in 1854 the Devereux family, accompanied by their chaplain, Rev. M. Clery, set out for Europe, where they remained many months. While in Rome Mr. Devereux invited the Franciscan Fathers to America, offering them land and money sufficient for their establishment. St. Bonaventure's College, Allegany, N. Y., is a monument of the zeal of Mr. Devereux.*

* A life-size portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Devereux offering themselves to St. Nicholas and receiving his blessing, is placed in the College Church, within the sanctuary, in a niche on the epistle side of the high altar.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MARY JOSEPH DEVEREUX.

A Welcome Applicant—The Holy Father's Advice—Mary will not go to Heaven alone—She makes her Decision in Ireland—Enters in New York—Reception and Profession—Made Bursar—The Archbishop's Gift—Her Devotion to St. Joseph—Her favorite Saint is a Gentleman—A great Dilemma—A touching Sight—Miraculous Intervention—Mistress of Novices—St. Joseph's Society—Celebrations—Which Preacher?—Remarkable Answers to Prayer—Incidents—"Here he's for you"—The Bit o' Writin'—The sick Prize-fighter--From Cold and Starvation—A sad Story—Another Angel in Heaven—The Rosary Society—The Sacred Heart Society—Affiliated to Rome—A Papal Dispensation—The dear Mother Agnes—Her Way with her Children—A Sorrowful Christmas—Archbishop Hughes a kind Father in the Hour of Bereavement—The Vacant Stall—A Quaker Convert—Mother M. Stanislaus Wiley—Mother Joseph dies a Martyr's Death.

MARY DEVEREUX applied to Mother Agnes for admission in October, 1854, and was welcomed by her and the community as a most promising subject, having a very remarkable vocation to the Order of Mercy. She had just returned from Rome. While there she was presented to the Holy Father, Pius IX., who, when told of her desire to become a Carmelite, said to her: "My child, be sure not to present yourself at the gate of heaven without a train of souls who will have profited by your example and your teachings." These words decided her to embrace an active order, but as yet she had no distinct choice. Providence led her to Ireland. She met Mother Agnes and Mother Austin in Dublin, where she became deeply enamoured of the Order of Mercy. She entered St. Catherine's in November, 1854, and from the first was remarkable for her wonderful spirit of prayer. On the 3d of May, 1855, she received the holy habit, with the name Joseph. The arch-

bishop officiated at her reception, and at her profession two years later. In June, 1859, she left the noviceship and was immediately elected to the office of bursar. The archbishop was so pleased at this event that he sent her five hundred dollars in gold* as an earnest of her future success, which surpassed his expectations.

Now more than ever did this devoted client of St. Joseph evince her dependence on him whom she always called her holy father. She entrusted to him all the financial affairs of the community, and he always came to her assistance, often in a miraculous manner. When wonder was expressed by the Sisters at his marvellous intervention, she would sometimes say smilingly: "St. Joseph is a gentleman, and cannot refuse anything to a lady." Being one day in what she called a great dilemma about the payment of a heavy note due in twenty-four hours, and not having half the required sum, she went to her cell and, having lighted her profession candle and put on her church cloak, knelt down before her poor little plaster statue of St. Joseph, and conjured him in the most solemn manner not to forsake her in that urgent need. Mother M. Augustine McKenna entered the cell unperceived, and, deeply touched, knelt beside the fervent applicant and joined in her supplication. That evening a gentleman called and gave her the exact amount she needed.

After several years Mother M. Joseph was chosen mistress of novices, which arduous position she held for six years, to the great spiritual advantage of those whom she trained in the religious life; for all her years of heavy labor in the "temporals" had but deepened her spirit of prayer and contemplation.

On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1864, St. Joseph's Society was founded, and its first meeting was held in the basement of the chapel. Its objects were: 1,

* This was only one of many liberal gifts given to the Sisters by Archbishop Hughes.

The instruction of married women. 2. The conversion of sinners, especially drunkards. 3. To obtain the grace of a contrite, humble heart for all the members. Archbishop McCloskey sanctioned this society, as Archbishop Hughes had sanctioned all those previously founded. It soon numbered thousands. The average attendance at each meeting was six hundred. Meetings took place every Wednesday at 7:30 P.M. A hymn to St. Joseph opened and closed every assembly, with the aspiration, "O holy father St. Joseph! for the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, obtain for me a contrite and humble heart." The Espousals of Our Lady, the 19th of March, and the third Sunday after Easter, were the feast days, and every one was celebrated with all the pomp Mother M. Joseph's rare ingenuity could devise. She gave a triduum of instructions before each festival, that all might know how to love and praise their holy patron. Sometimes she was able to secure the services of some good priest for these occasions, and then her joy was boundless. Yet many an old woman would whisper in her hearing: "Sure it's yourself I'd rather be listenin' to this blessed night, honey!" Though this society, like the others, is now (1888) given up as regards externs, as all are established in the parishes, yet the old members never forgot the days when they existed nowhere but at St. Catherine's, and the pleasant hours spent with their early directress in the dear old convent on Houston Street.

Among many remarkable answers to prayer is the following: A young woman had a very wicked brother who had often threatened to kill her. She asked to have special prayers for him. The next day, in a desperate mood, he seized a carving-knife to kill her, when she cried out, "O holy father St. Joseph, help me!" At that instant the aggressor's arm became paralyzed. He was thoroughly frightened, and henceforth led a better life. At the first retreat of the society Mother M. Joseph was engaged from early morning till late at night preparing persons to make confessions of ten,

twenty, or thirty years. One evening she gave a thrilling instruction on concealing sins in confession. Next morning, at an early hour, a poor woman came to her and said : "That was a powerful sermon you gave last evening. It kept a poor woman like me a-turnin' and a-twistin' all night, and not a wink of sleep did I get." "My dear," remarked Mother M. Joseph, "I'm sorry I worried you." "Ah! Sister, it is now eleven years since I cursed a priest, and every time I went to confession since it came just so far (putting her hand to her throat) and it wouldn't come up." "My poor child," said Mother M. Joseph, taking her hand, "what a pity you did not let it out to the priest as you have to me." "Sister," returned the woman, "I was decently brought up and I could not bring myself to be impolite to his reverence!" Mother M. Joseph gave her a note to the chaplain, asking him to hear her confession, and reassured the woman by saying : "He is not yet two years ordained, so when you come out with 'eleven years ago' he'll know you did not mean him." The poor creature at this clapped her hands with joy, exclaiming : "I knew you'd fix it." After an hour she came back, saying : "Though the praties are not down for the old man's dinner, I had to come tell you. Not a happier woman than myself walks the streets. I feel like a queen this blessed day. That was an elegant priest entirely you sent me to—God bless you both!"

Another time a woman brought her husband to Mother M. Joseph, saying : "Sister, here he is for you now. He hasn't bent his knees to a priest since we were married thirty years ago. I told him you would let him know all he had to say." Mother Joseph set about preparing him for confession. When they were leaving the wife caught her sleeve and said : "Sister, all you told the old man was very fine, but you didn't tell him his sins as he is to say them to his reverence." Mother M. Joseph wrote to a Redemptorist on Third Street, who understood English, asking him to

have the charity to hear the confession of a very ignorant, stupid man, who had been for years away from the sacraments and needed to be helped. In about two hours the couple came back. "Sister," said the man, who at last found voice to speak for himself, "that was a wonderful bit of paper you gave me ; why, a big book wouldn't hold all the father said to me ; and as for my sins, he had them all *pat*, and to think all that was in one little piece of paper." It was useless to explain the matter ; this penitent was in such a happy frame of mind that nothing could dispel his illusion with regard to "the bit o' writin'."

At the Rosary Society, established in 1860, also under Mother M. Joseph's direction, five hundred members assembled every Sunday afternoon. They had a yearly retreat, and used every means in their power to promote devotion to our Blessed Lady. Here, too, prayer obtained many a remarkable answer. One Sunday a member made a strong appeal to have special prayers to our Holy Mother in behalf of her only son, a prize-fighter, who was going to England to exhibit his skill. The Rosary was recited for the intentions of the half-frantic mother. That very night her son was seized with hemorrhage of the lungs. He could not speak a word, and his companions had to sail without him. He never recovered his boasted strength, but sank rapidly into consumption. At first he was furious, and would not allow the name of God to be mentioned. But his mother continued to implore mercy for him, and the society never forgot him. At last he received the rites of the Church and died a peaceful death. He was constantly visited by the Sisters in his illness.

Instances of favors granted, sacraments received after years of neglect, conversions obtained, might be multiplied indefinitely. All meetings were held in the basement of the chapel. Here Mother M. Agnes had succeeded in establishing a free school for girls, called St. Agnes' School. It was entirely distinct from the academy, which

was situated in the convent. Numbers of children flocked to St Agnes', and received a plain English education, being carefully prepared for the sacraments, which was her chief anxiety. Many children of both schools became religious in after life in various orders, not a few being Sisters of Mercy.

Mother M. Joseph had charge also of the visitation of the sick poor. One stormy day, when scarcely a man was to be seen in the streets, Mother M. Agnes would not appoint any Sister for out-door duty. Mother M. Joseph thought the best thing she could do was to say the beads for her sick, and ask our Lady to take care of them. In the midst of her *Aves*, a new call of great destitution came to her mind, and she told Mother M. Agnes, who said: "I will not appoint any Sister to go out this dreadful day, but whoever is willing to brave the storm has my consent." Mother M. Joseph easily found a companion. They wended their way to a poor tenement-house, and knocked several times without receiving an answer. At last they admitted themselves into an apartment almost destitute of furniture; but on the wall in a massive gilt frame was an elegant oil painting. As they approached the bed they heard a low sound, and saw a youth kneeling with his face buried in his hands. A girl lay sick—sick from cold and starvation. It was some time before the Sisters could attract the young man's attention. At last he turned to the sick girl and said: "Mary, did I not tell you our Blessed Mother would come to our aid?"

He was foot-sore looking for work, and could get none. All the previous night he had knelt at his sister's side saying the Litany of Our Lady, that help might come ere it was too late to benefit her. The Sisters sent him for fuel. In the next room they found a noble-hearted young Irish-woman, whose services they secured to make tea and toast for the sufferer. Fortunately, they had provided themselves with substantial relief when leaving home. The poor child cried when she got this little refreshment, and said: "Who would imagine that a cup of tea and a bit of toast

could be so delicious?" The father of these children had been very wealthy, but had lost all in an unfortunate speculation, and died suddenly of a broken heart. Change of fortune and her husband's death proved too great a shock for the mother, and she speedily followed him.

After the Sisters' visit the good woman in the next room became greatly interested in the orphans. Her husband obtained work for the young man in the machine-shop where he himself worked. This enabled him to take the best care of the sister to whom he was so devoted, but like a frail flower she drooped and faded, and the following spring he was left alone. The Sisters constantly repeated their visits, and were with poor Mary when her pure soul passed away. They closed her young, weary eyes, and comforted the bereaved brother as best they could. "There is another angel in heaven," said Mother Joseph.

On the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, 1858, the Sodality of the Sacred Heart was established to promote devotion to that divine object and stimulate the members to approach the sacraments regularly and discharge their duties with fidelity. This special sodality was devised and established by Mother M. Augustine McKenna, who never ceased to take an active interest in its affairs. It was affiliated to the Arch-Confraternity in Rome, and enjoyed all its privileges.

On the 19th of February, 1859, the Sisters were made happy by learning that a petition made to Pope Pius IX., on their behalf, by Archbishop Hughes, had been granted. Its purport was to obtain leave to elect Mother M. Agnes a third time consecutively. They were so overjoyed that they prevailed on their beloved mother to grant them a whole week of recreation. But the year that opened so brightly was her last on earth. At this time her sight had failed so that she could neither read nor write, and was therefore freed from many business transactions. Henceforth she almost lived before the Blessed Sacrament. If

she were wanted, she was sure to be found in her stall, telling her beads or rapt in such profound meditation that her children, who still cherish such tender memories of her, believed her to have reached the heights of contemplation, and regretted the necessity of disturbing her.

Her government was essentially motherly. Though she could, and often did, administer a sharp reproof where she detected the least neglect, the delinquent thus chided never went to bed with a sore heart. Before night she was sure to receive some little token of her mother's loving acceptance of her apologies, and forgiveness, and thus realize more than ever her zealous interest in all that concerned the service of the Lord. Once meeting a Sister coming from the chapel, still in tears after some rebuke, Mother Agnes dipped her hand in the holy-water font, and gave her such a plentiful shower that smiles succeeded sobs. "Go back now," said the zealous mother, "and tell *Him* you will be good and generous for evermore."

A young novice who had incurred her displeasure was greatly troubled in consequence, and was treated very much like a naughty child; when assured of her desire to amend, reverend mother said: "Put your hand in my sleeve and see what you will find, dear." The novice obeyed, and drew forth a mellow pear. "Now run off and be a good child," said Mother Agnes, laughing.

Hard, indeed, it is to lose such mothers: those who knowing the wounds and bruises, cares and sorrows of their children, are divinely gifted with the power of soothing and healing, as well as strengthening for future ordeals. In Mother Agnes and her lamented successors, Mothers Austin and Augustine, who worthily emulated their first great mother, the community suffered losses almost irreparable. The Christmas of 1859 was a sadly memorable one. Sorrow was depicted on every face, and the vacant stall of the dear deceased mother pathetically reminded the Sisters of their great bereavement. Those who had accompanied her

from Ireland were disconsolate, while those who had entered religion in New York, and on whose heads she herself had placed the veil, were not less so. The archbishop showed the kindest sympathy for the afflicted community, deeply grieved as he was at the loss of Mother Agnes, to whom he was devotedly attached. It was with heavy hearts that the Sisters entered on the silence of retreat, December 28, 1859.

We shall close this chapter with a glance at the life and death of one of Mother M. Agnes' most loyal subjects and faithful helpers, Mother M. Stanislaus Wiley. She was a native of Dublin, and was brought up in the opinions of her parents, who were Quakers, till her fifteenth year, when it pleased God, who had special designs on her soul, to lead her to a knowledge of the truth. Father St. Leger, S. J., received her into the church. Her relatives were so angry that she was obliged to leave her home and take refuge in the Presentation Convent. Her brothers, not being able to persuade her to return home, sent Rev. Thresham Gregg, a Protestant minister notorious for his violence against the Catholic faith, to force her from her refuge. He actually tried to remove her by force, but she clung to the altar-rail until rescued by a person who came to her assistance. As she had not entered religion, but merely gone to the convent for protection, she felt that she ought not to subject the nuns to such annoyances, so she went home quietly, trusting her future to God's providence. After two years of home persecution, a terrible trial to her affectionate heart, she entered Baggot Street convent in 1845, at the age of seventeen. In 1850 she was sent to help the New York mission. Her interior spirit and exact observance of rule edified every one. She performed her duties with great discretion and ability, and showed peculiar talent for the management of the schools. To the great dogma of the Immaculate Conception she had always felt a strong attraction, owing, perhaps, to her childlike innocence. In

1856, though only twenty-seven years old, she was elected to the second office, that of vice-superior or mother-assistant. But a consumptive tendency soon declared itself. In July she had failed so much that the last sacraments were administered, and, as often happens, she rallied wonderfully after the blessed anointing. But the improvement was of short duration—the rest of her days were full of intense suffering. Her cough was distressing, her limbs so swollen as to render her incapable of moving, while the extreme soreness of the flesh soon made every position so irksome as to be almost unbearable.

It pleased our Lord at the same time to afflict her soul by withdrawing all sensible consolation, and leaving her in a state of aridity, sustained only by faith, unaccompanied by light or unction. The faculties of her soul were so drenched in bitterness that every description of spiritual food was distasteful to her. Even the Divine Eucharist produced not its sweet and tranquillizing effect. But this last purifying trial ceased as the beautiful Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin drew nigh, and happy peace succeeded. On this day, so full of promise to the human race, she said to reverend mother: "I have asked our Lord that I may die to-day, His sweet Mother's birthday." She received Holy Communion with great fervor, and soon after fell into her agony. After some hours of intense suffering she said: "Oh! I am so happy, so very happy." This was the fulfilment of a hope which reverend mother had encouraged her to entertain during a long trial of desolation, by which this welcome ray of comfort had been preceded. About three P.M. symptoms of approaching death were evident, and at 3:45, without a struggle or a movement, her gentle spirit passed away.

Nothing consoled or encouraged Mother M. Joseph Devereux more than the beautiful deaths of which she was so often witness. Her own death, in July, 1887, was almost that of a martyr.

The following letter from a member of the New York community gives the pathetic and holy details of the sad but glorious death of Mother M. Joseph Devereux :

“Our recent heavy affliction in the loss of our beloved and saintly Mother Joseph is so heartrending that I have been unable until now to attempt to write you the harrowing details. And yet I want you to know everything, that you may do justice in the Annals to as holy a life as was ever led by any of the saints.

“Our dear mother was sixty years of age on the 3d of May last, yet was appointed many months ago to one of the humblest duties in Balmville (that of refectorian, which in the present instance involves a great deal of labor and the many inconveniences of a country house) ; she labored in the duty with the alacrity of sixteen and the hearty goodwill of a novice, and in the faithful discharge of her duty met a martyr's death.

“A boy was appointed to bring hot water to the refectory, after each meal, from the kitchen, which is a floor below. On the fatal day in question, July 6, Wednesday, St. Joseph's day, the poor child drew a pail of boiling water from the boiler at the kitchen range and, when half-way up-stairs, set down the pail and ran back for soap which he had forgotten. Meanwhile, dear Mother Joseph came holding with both her hands a large plate of butter to be put away in the ice-box, for which purpose she had to descend this same staircase. Always quick in her movements she plunged one foot straight into the cruel water, stumbled and fell, the butter making boiling oil of the water which poured over her, scalding her most fearfully, back, feet, and limbs.

“Imagine her after this (of course it happened in a few seconds, though it takes so long to tell) walking back up-stairs to the refectory where the two Sisters engaged in helping her were still at work. To the question, ‘Mother, dear, what happened you?’ she said, smiling sweetly : ‘I met with a little accident, children, and shall go to my cell and change my clothes while you finish here.’ She walked up two flights of stairs to her cell, and the two Sisters dropped everything and followed her, and alas ! as they removed her clothing the skin came off in flakes from all the wounded places, and her untold agony began. The

doctor said, the moment he saw her, that the accident was fatal, although he could not convince the Sisters that Mother Joseph would die. He said the worst sign was that she was so stunned from the shock as not to realize her condition, and that her going up-stairs as she did was a miracle. She was not all unconscious, however, and the moment the terrible torture began she insisted on getting out of bed, knelt down at the bed-side, and, with her arms outstretched in the form of a cross, said in a loud, clear, ringing voice, that thrilled through every heart: 'My good God, Thy will be done.' This was her incessant prayer until she expired on Friday evening at half-past six o'clock, saying: 'My Jesus, mercy.'

"When Father Henry, the confessor, went up on Thursday afternoon to anoint her, he said: 'Mother Joseph, I feel it my duty to tell you you are dying.' She simply replied: 'Welcome be the holy will of God'; and when he asked, 'Is there anything on your mind you would like to speak about?' she answered: 'Not a thing, father.' Before this, when he was announced, she said: 'Go and ask Sister M—— (mentioning a Sister who had scarcely left her for a moment from the first) if I can kneel going to confession; she knows how I am better than I do myself.' When Sister said she must not think of such a thing, Mother Joseph said: 'Well, bring up the father at once, then; there is nothing to wait for'; and there, lying on her poor hands and face, the only position possible for her, she made her last confession, was anointed, and received Holy Communion, but not for the last time. Our dear Lord came to her again on Friday morning to fill her heart with peace and courage. Her sister, Mrs. Cornelia Lawler, and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Thomas Devereux, who had been telegraphed for, arrived from Utica early Friday A.M., having travelled all night, but our saintly mother would not see them until she had received Holy Communion. 'Tell them I cannot be distracted,' was the answer she sent them; but when her thanksgiving was made, then indeed they were welcome, and had the blessed privilege of being with her for the few precious hours she remained on earth.

"The doctors, one Catholic, the other Protestant, were equally amazed and edified at her heroic endurance; the latter said: 'She has suffered a thousand years in one night,' yet never a murmur. Nothing but prayer and the most

touching aspiration ; yet her moaning through that terrible night was heard all through the house, and filled every heart with agony. The Sisters fixed a complete bed of raw cotton saturated with sweet-oil, and when she was placed on it she said : ' Oh ! my dears, this is heaven.'

On Friday the doctors said the fearful agony of pain was passed, for the stupor of death was slowly creeping over our beloved one. We, here in New York, knew nothing save by telegrams and messengers, but the poor Sisters who witnessed her cruel sufferings mention them as simply indescribable. Only two weeks previous she had spent a few happy days with us here, having come from Balmville to meet Mrs. Lawler, who returned to America on the 16th of June, after an absence of three years in Europe. Poor, dear sister of our darling mother ! she is crushed to the earth, but full of thanksgiving that she was not abroad, that she had the comforting visit so recently, and that our Lord permitted her to reach Balmville in time. She is a saintly woman, and her resignation was wonderful. Yet the whole family feel desperately, and how could they feel otherwise ?

" During that visit to New York Mother Joseph made a general confession of her whole life to Father Daly, O.P., who said he is morally certain that she went straight to heaven. She spoke much of death to every one, and with all her wonted gaiety—she had the sunniest, most cheerful kind of disposition—there was a strain of seriousness or sadness that comes back to our minds now with renewed force. It seems almost as if she had some forewarning of the release from earth for which her heart panted. How little she dreamed it was at hand ! I wish I could make you cognizant of the beauty of her soul.

" She was Mother Agnes' choice for bursar on the day on which her second year of profession was complete. No mistress of novices ever excelled her in the minute training of the spiritual life. With all her active spirit and ardent love of the poor, she was a true contemplative, ever united to God amid the most harassing cares and duties. God permitted that she should be misunderstood in a great measure by the new superiors of the past ten years, but her humility was so sincere that she really believed herself to be of no account and fit only for the most lowly duties. She used to say she regretted that the time allotted for sleep was so long, it kept her so many hours away from the

Blessed Sacrament, and during the day her visits were countless—brief when her time was limited.

“Long years ago she made a compact with herself ‘never to think of anything disagreeable,’ and the ‘disagreeables’ were crowded upon her in every possible way. What, then, were her words but echoes of the golden charity with which her heart was filled?”

The details of St. Joseph’s Society, save when they mention herself, were given by Mother Joseph. “My darling,” said she to the Sister who asked her for them, “here they are, but you’ll put them in the fire; you know I’m no writer.” She was sixty years old and thirty years professed, but as her parents lived to a great age, the community expected that she would live twenty or thirty years longer. A martyr’s crown has been set upon her life of heroic self-sacrifice and humiliation. One by one the community is bereft of all the old mothers, its pillars, “and,” writes a survivor, “the new will never be the same. Surely the hand of the Lord is heavy upon us. Death was a mercy to our dear Sisters M. Teresa and Philomena, just deceased, but he was a devouring fire to our beloved Mother M. Joseph. I wish I could say more of our precious mother’s exalted qualities.” Let us pray that she may watch over the house and Order in which she sanctified herself, and that all who have chosen the same road to heaven may imitate her virtues.

CHAPTER XXX.

MOTHER M. AUGUSTINE McKENNA.

Early Days—First Rhyme—The Susquehanna and the Liffey—Lines—Passionate Attachment to Home—The Vanities renounced in Baptism—Nimrod—The Dog and its Mistress weep together—The Arcadian Academy—Stories—Owen and his lovely Mistress—Anti-tithe Agitation—History and Poetry—A gracious Girlhood—The Famine—The Columban Penance—A dying Boy resuscitated—In America—Father Hecker introduces Ellen to Mother M. Agnes—In the Convent—As Infirmarian—In the House of Mercy—Home for poor Children—In the Form of a Vow—At the War—Letters—Mother Seton—Balmville—Failing Health—In the South—Mother M. Augustine's passionate Love for Ireland—The Orphan Boys—Mittens—The Silver Jubilee—Beautiful closing Hours—Character.

AMONG the noble women who labored to consolidate St. Catherine's Convent she whose name gives title to this chapter holds a conspicuous place.

Ellen McKenna was born on Christmas Eve, 1819, at Willville, Monaghan, Ireland. Through the tyranny of the agent of the Rossmore estates, her father was obliged to try his fortune elsewhere, and in 1825 rented a farm on the Grattan estate. Ellen received her first tincture of letters from an old pedagogue, probably the last of the hedge schoolmasters. She was passionately attached to her home, and not a little wilful and impulsive. When sent to her maternal grandmother with her sister Mary, to be put at the famous school of Miss Reynolds, in Dublin, Ellen could not brook the stiff school discipline and the frequent corrections of her two maiden aunts, who tried to keep her exuberant spirits under stern control. Mary resigned herself to separation from home, but Ellen vowed she "would go home if she had to run every step of the way." Her bachelor uncle took sides with the lonely child, and en-

couraged what his sisters condemned. He advised her to write to her mother before running away, and the following effusion duly reached "Sweet Home":

"My dear mamma, my heart and soul!
Pray take me from this dreadful hole,
Where neither days nor hours pass gaily,
Between the Stokeses and Miss Baily."

She was delivered from "the Stokeses," her aunts, and Miss Baily, the governess, by her "great big, good papa," who restored her to her mother's arms and her dear home by the green banks of the Liffey. The scenes of early days the ardent child never forgot. The soft grass she trod on, the flowers she gathered, the patriarchal apple-tree whose straggling boughs shielded her golden head from the gentle summer sun, were vivid in her memory to her latest hour. Forty years after a glimpse of the Susquehanna called forth a tribute to the river of her first love:

"Liffey dear, bright Irish river,
Why do all thy shining streams,
All thy sweet and silvery waters
Seem so lovely in my dreams?

"Why does thy soft, rippling music
Greet again my raptured ear?
Forty years have gone, dear Liffey,
Yet I hear it, low and clear.

"I awake. Not Liffey's water,
But the Susquehanna's, flows
Through the lovely Strucca valley,
Adding to its soft repose;

"Speaking to my heart of exile,
Separation, and distress.
O my God! thou God of mercy,
Sanctify this loneliness."

Her mother, to whose holiness many bore testimony, took great pains to mould this gifted child. When preparing her for first confession she spoke so strongly of the obligations imposed by baptism that the child exclaimed: "Mamma, no one had a right to make promises for me that I couldn't keep"; and it was with difficulty she could be reasoned with on the subject. She absolutely refused on her tenth birthday to accept a pair of ear-rings, an heirloom kept for that occasion, "because they are some of the vanities I renounced in baptism."

Ellen showed great love for dogs, birds, and all animals, and was often recognized by her pets after they had fallen into other hands. Her favorite greyhound, Nimrod, came bounding to her arms in New^{*} York, "and," said she, relating the circumstance, "he and I wept together." In 1834 she gathered the poor children of her district and taught them to read and write, and prepared them for the Sacraments. Her academy was held in a barn in winter, and in summer under the trees, where she

"Beneath the blossoming of the hawthorn borders
Her mimic school with mimic staidness kept."

The rewards for good lessons were fruits, a good meal, pictures, articles of clothing, and what the children loved best of all, a story. Fairy tales, the lives of the saints, read by her mother in the evening, and the Round Table tales of Ireland's heroes and martyrs told by her Celtic father were treasured in her memory. She used "to pay" her brothers for learning their lessons and "not robbing birds' nests" by telling them stories. Even in girlhood no one appealed to her in vain for mental or bodily sustenance. Her good nature was often imposed on and her quick temper often put to the test, but her friends assert that she was ever ready to forgive and forget. An old servant, Owen, was particularly attached to her, and styled her his

** a strange village in Ireland -*

"lovely mistress." Once when asked what she would like from Dublin: "A new suit for Owen," she said. Great was the delight of both when the clothes arrived. He retired to dress, but to her consternation he appeared with his new nether garments cut to the knees, having always worn knee-breeches. Her father, a man of ability and high spirit, was a warm friend of O'Connell, and for a time chairman of the Catholic Association. He was prominent in the anti-tithe agitation, and earned the animosity of the opposite side by refusing to pay tithes. When the family lived near Dublin Ellen went to school to the Misses Hughes (one of whom married Charles Gavan Duffy). She could not be induced to accompany her sister Mary to the far-famed boarding-school of Miss Quan (aunt to Thomas Francis Meagher) in Waterford, and often thanked God that her education had been conducted under home supervision. Remarkably bright and clever, she learned readily, history and poetry being her favorite studies. Tender piety she inherited from her saintly mother; her love of nature, literary taste, and poetical gifts were derived from her father, who spared no pains to cultivate the minds and hearts of his children. When going to school she used to pass a convent to which she was strongly attracted, yet so deeply was she attached to her family that she could not think of the religious life without tears:

"There was an ancient convent, poor and hidden,
Where but the poor were cared for and caressed;
Oh! what an impulse have I felt to seek there
The narrow way that leads to endless rest!"

In 1839 the family returned to Willville, and Ellen became the ruling spirit of that happy home. Her sweet, gracious mother was wholly unfitted to grapple with the world, but the daughter, robust in mind and body, learned quickly to strive against the ills of life. In 1843 her father

died a holy death. Even now, though engrossed with cares, she trained up many of the young in the knowledge and love of God, and induced her sisters to help her in this holy work. When the dreadful famine blighted the hopes of the family, Ellen, with her brother William and her sister Fanny, came to America, she offering to God on her knees, in her parish chapel, the "hard Columban penance" * of her enforced exile :

"Dear St. MacCartin, fearful was the sorrow
I offered at thy shrine as penance dread,
Upon this day, long, long ago, for Willville,
And home, and hope, to seek strange lands instead.
God, merciful and patient, oh ! accept it—
This hard Columban penance—thus away
From our sweet motherland, our native country,
To wear out life. Oh ! aid me still, I pray."

The family did not leave Willville till every means of aiding the surrounding sufferers was exhausted. One night, while imploring God's help, Mrs. McKenna heard a faint cry of distress. She awoke Ellen, and both dressed hastily and proceeded in the direction of the voice. They found a boy of twelve under a tree, dying of starvation. With extreme difficulty they saved his life.

Established in New York, 1849, the brother and sisters made strenuous efforts to relieve the loved ones at home. Mrs. McKenna soon died. Her youngest son, a priest, whose zeal led him to New York, relieved Ellen from the protectorship of the family, and she was now eager to devote herself wholly to God. For a while she conducted a school at Schenectady, where by her sterling worth she won

* Readers of the *Life of St. Columba* will remember the penance, so terrible to him, which his confessor imposed on him, namely, perpetual exile from Ireland. Miss McKenna left Ireland intending never to return. This sacrifice of what she loved best on earth she offered to God at the shrine of St. MacCartin. Her self-imposed exile she always called her "hard Columban penance."

universal respect and esteem. Her eldest brother, a physician, settled in Valparaiso. Dr. Donnelly, present Bishop of Clogher, said that Ellen had head and heart enough for a dozen women, but she needed it all. Father Hecker introduced her to Mother M. Agnes, and she entered the Convent of Mercy September 25, 1855, her sister Julia having entered a few weeks previous. They were not destined to serve God under the same roof. Julia was sent to Brooklyn, and was the first to receive the habit in the humble chapel in Jay Street.

On account of her robust health Ellen was made infirmarian. "Oh! my dear," said old Sister M. Angela, "I'm delighted you have come. You are so strong you can sit up all night with the sick." Most of the early members were nursed by her, and sweet and tender was her care of them. Never did she confess to fatigue. "Oh!" she would say laughingly to those who showed surprise at her endurance, "I am the daughter of an Irish giant." She received the habit from Archbishop Hughes May 15, 1856, with the name of the saint whom she loved "because he had a holy mother."

Sister M. Augustine was deputed to take notes of the lectures given twice a week in the novitiate on doctrinal and philosophical subjects by Rev. T. S. Preston, and of the retreats given by Father Hecker for several consecutive years. Always actively engaged in the schools, prison, hospital, visitation of the sick, her zeal never flagged. When appointed to the House of Mercy, to which poor emigrant girls were flocking at that time, her gratitude was boundless. To protect these exiles and save them from the perils of the great metropolis became her one absorbing aim, and God blessed her labors abundantly.

Of her life of sacrifice "earth knew a little; God the rest." From Father Starr, V.G., she obtained leave, with reverend mother's approbation, to found a home for poor children who came under the Sisters' notice on the visitation and elsewhere. She rented a small house and took in

all that could not otherwise be provided for, a share of the expense being borne by the Sodality of the Sacred Heart. The following in her handwriting was accidentally found by a Sister :

“In the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and under the protection of His Immaculate Mother, Mary ever Virgin, I, Sister Mary Augustine, for the love of His Sacred Heart, do resolve, but not vow, to suffer all the blame, shame, and humiliation, toil, trial, and trouble, that it may be God’s will to permit, in order to establish a home for homeless children. I protest that, in all that concerns it, I rely solely on the assistance of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, especially in what will be required by this resolution ; and further, that I will not do anything in relation to it except in obedience.”

This document, dated first Friday, November, 1860, was kept at the back of her vows, and was placed in her coffin the first Friday of August, 1873, and buried with her. Plenty of blame, shame, and humiliation recompensed her generosity. But on her death-bed she could thank God for her answered prayer. Over eleven hundred children were sheltered in her convents, and she had been the chief instrument in that great work.

Mother M. Augustine filled every office of the Order and was superior from 1868 to 1877. While at the war, a Sister wrote of her : “ Sister M. Augustine is performing great acts of charity every day. She washes wounds that smell most shockingly, and even pulls out the corruption where the ball went through. Several men are shot in the mouth, and she has often taken out the poor, loosened teeth with her fingers.” The venerable Mother M. Catherine Seton wrote to her :

“I suspect you will turn out a second St. Catherine of Genoa, and we shall have to beatify you at least. It must be delightful to make great sacrifices when God gives special graces for them. They say you have a heavy part

of these, and I amuse myself sometimes fancying you in a kitchen broiling over the fire in these dog-days. I suppose you will gain great lights in this department."

Her watchfulness for the comfort of the poor soldiers did not cease with her reign as cook. As hospital nurse she was indefatigable and almost ubiquitous. She contracted a painful disease which undermined her great strength, though it did not make her an invalid. God willed her to live and suffer.

On the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, 1875, Mother M. Augustine founded a house at Balmville, her last great work. Here, in quiet and seclusion that reminded her of her Irish home, she spent the last two years of her beautiful life, and gave up her purified soul to God. Her companions describe her as unselfish and charitable in a superhuman degree, bearing all things for Christ to her last hour. And this cost her the keenest battling with self, for by nature she was high-spirited and tenderly alive to much that others would pass unnoticed.

"O dear, long-suffering mother!" writes the Sister who supplies many of these details, "forgive our loosened tongues that tell even this much of the life you kept so hidden with Christ in God, and bless, help, and protect us from your heavenly home."

Attacked with acute bronchitis, she was sent for relief to a milder climate. She loved the South, and sympathized with numbers of its people whom the war had reduced to poverty and bereft of some of their noblest sons. From Macon she wrote to the community and to Cardinal McCloskey to assert her incapacity for the office of superior. The next winter she was obliged to go South again, sorely against her will, as she preferred to battle with sickness at home. She and her companions reached New Orleans by steamer on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1877. The mild climate of the Crescent City had a beneficial effect, and, after a stay of some months at the Convent of

Mercy, they left for Macon, visiting *en route* several branches of the New Orleans house—Biloxi, Pensacola, and Warrington. They arrived at Macon March 4, and, after a stay of two months, went by sea from Savannah to Baltimore, and reached New York May 20. The trip had been so beneficial to the invalid that great hopes were entertained of her ultimate recovery. She resumed her labors among her beloved children, whose condition excited her liveliest sympathy.

Next to Mother M. Augustine's love for God was her love for Ireland. Years of absence only strengthened this passionate attachment ; the sight of the least memento, a pressed leaf or a shamrock, often affected her to tears. In 1880 she almost died of pneumonia, but God restored her to the prayers of her children. In 1881 she went to Balmville, a confirmed invalid. Possessing amazing vitality and strength of will, she was rarely absent from Mass, even when she had spent the preceding night in torture. Loving children as she did, the Balmville boys were her delight. When she could no longer go among them she sent many a loving message from her sick-room, and busied herself knitting stockings for her little friends.

The Christmas after her death an orphan boy wrote : "This is the first Christmas Mother M. Augustine is away from us. But she is happy in heaven, where she sees all the boys that pray for her and don't forget her kindness to them. Last year she made mittens for the poor fellows who have no friends. They miss her now."

The most forlorn and friendless were always the recipients of her little gifts and warmest interest. The fine weather strengthened her, and she was able to stroll about the grounds and busy herself with the little boys weeding and gardening. The chapel was easy of access, and many a fervent hour she spent there, alone with her adorable Spouse. She used to say : "This heavenly Balmville !" Heavenly it was to her. The poor were cared for and the

chapel within reach. If it was in some measure her Calvary it was also her Thabor. May, 1883, brought her silver jubilee. Several Sisters came to spend it with her, and those who could not sent little souvenirs and marks of affection. Her brother celebrated the first Mass, at which all communicated. At the second Mass the boy-choir sang finely. Vespers and Benediction sanctified the evening. This holy celebration seemed to infuse new life into her worn frame, but her dropsical tendency increased and she sank never to rally. June 18 she was anointed. "This time," said she, "it is not for recovery but for death." Her brother often said Mass in her room, and she communicated daily. Even when her mouth and tongue were so sore that it was agony to swallow she was able to communicate to the last morning of her holy life.

The good mother enjoyed many consolations for which she was filled with gratitude to God, yet He spared not her sensitive heart whatever might try it to the utmost. She gave some little memento to each, and to the last would welcome every Sister with a smile. August 1 she asked about the Portiuncula indulgence and the Queen of Angels, and seemed to know that the day would bring her home to God. She asked to have the Passion read, and her favorite prayers, the Psalter, the Rosary, the Thirty Days' Prayer, she uniting aloud. At midnight her agony began. Her strong aspiration: "Jesus crucified, have mercy on me!" will never leave the hearts of those who heard it in that awful midnight silence, nor the touching way she kissed the five wounds on her indulgenced crucifix.

When gray dawn gave place to a flood of golden sunshine, and the matin song of the birds poured in through her open window, the Angel of Death came for her chastened soul. At five A.M. all was over. The Columban penance was past: she was now safe with her beloved Spouse.

Mother M. Augustine had naturally a noble character,

which religion perfected. Fine conversational powers and a retentive memory made her a delightful companion. The one book she published, *Poems and Plays*, shows no mean literary ability, and had a large circulation. Her distinguishing trait was charity. Many grateful prayers ascended to heaven for her from those whom she protected till they were able to protect themselves. Loving memories follow her to that blissful abode where we trust she dwells in the bosom of the Father.

CHAPTER XXXI.

LETTERS.

View all Things in the Light of Faith—Recollection—Generosity—Keeping hold of God's Hand—A Paradox—A Profession Letter—The Joyous Spirit of Mortification—A wonderful Parasite—Winter Beauties of the South—St. Patrick's "Awful Faith"—Ignorance—Deep Love of Ireland—Invoking the Irish Saints—"A little Prayer to my own Darling"—"Oh! won't I pray for Ireland!"—Sister M. Baptist O'Keeffe—Precious Death—At Home—"My Guardian Angel will get the next Baby"—An odd Combination—Letters to Mother Seton—Other Letters—Spiritual Communion—A merry Christmas—Condolence—Tormented into Sanctity—Letters on Mother M. Augustine's Death—Her "Farewell to Ireland"—Present State of the New York Community.

WE shall allow Mother M. Augustine to speak for herself by giving extracts from her letters, addressed for the most part to members of her Order :

"I have begun a novena of Communions for you (January 28, 1872), and am asking our Lord to grant you the special graces you need. Be heroic in corresponding with them. God did not call you here to withdraw His aid : there are some principles you must determine to act on ; the first is Faith. View all things in the light of faith. 'Not a hair of your head can fall to the ground without my Father's will.' If that is true, can things be said or done without His will to affect our souls? Take all as coming from Him. If you are blamed or misunderstood, be sure He knows it, and means it to do some work of purgation in your heart. God sees all, knows all, directs all.

"Second principle : Recollection—the habit of entertaining ourselves with God, making aspirations, keeping fast hold of God's hand, as it were. Then we are ready at any moment to fight with evil.

"Third principle: Generosity with God—courage in His service ; self-sacrifice. Make these the watchwords of your novitiate days. *Voluntarie sacrificabo tibi.* Paradise is

not for cowards. The easy way is the hard way, paradox though it seem. When we don't spare ourselves, when at any cost we do right, God helps us sensibly ; we revel in grace and, consequently, in spiritual happiness. Were I you, I would stop at no humiliation, would ask leave for extra acts of penance every time I failed. Pray ; for with God's grace you can do these things. You have lost time, and grace too. Go to work now and you will redeem the one and recover the other."

"I pray God that your heart and soul may be devoted to the poor, sick, and ignorant. And that serving the Lord in His poor, He may make you rich in graces and blessings, but above all in the spirit of prayer and self-sacrifice.

"The old live in the past, the young in the future. It is only in the present and future we can serve God, and to serve Him is to reign.

"On this wondrous eve of your holy profession (April 16, 1873) my heart will not rest unless it speaks some of its thoughts. . . . In God's name, let this one grand act of your life be complete. You have made that astounding meditation on the sacrifice of the soul. It has to be made piecemeal, though offered entire. Inch by inch this sacrifice is exacted by little trials, more galling than great ones. To say nothing when we would naturally say something sharp ; to do simply as we are told, without objection or remonstrance, for the sake of the sacrifice obedience involves ; to seem cheerful when the heart aches, to be kind in return for unkindness, to save others all the pain and trouble possible, to bear and forbear—these efforts will be sacrifices, endorse our vows, and combine into one glorious holocaust. Take up your cross and follow Me. Yes, take it up. Whatever is contrary to inclination or habits forms a real cross. Yet it is one thing to take it up and another to carry it after Jesus."

"Go on steadily day by day, bearing the cross each brings in addition to the great cross, the struggle with self. . . . Faber speaks of the joyous spirit of mortification, and well he may, for God's best graces impart that joy. In mortifying our inclinations for the sake of making others happier or better there is true joy when done for God's sake."

"New Orleans, January 18, 1878.—I send you a specimen of that wonderful parasite, Spanish moss, which hangs in festoons from the trees here. I pulled it from a live-oak. Live-oak is an evergreen, quite unlike the real oak. . . . We are in a half-tropical climate here—roses, violets, and other flowers in bloom and oranges hanging on the trees."

"I hope the mail (March 15, 1878) will be quick, that you may receive my poor congratulations on St. Patrick's Day. I trust our blessed patron will obtain for you many graces and blessings, especially his peculiar spirit of prayer, for if we pray we shall all do well. A French priest, whose English is not the best, said that the most remarkable thing about St. Patrick was 'his awful faith.' Thank God, he secured the same 'awful faith' to his children, and it will always be the most remarkable thing about them. . . . He must feel bound to help you by his powerful intercession, devoted as you are to the children of his poor exiles. It grieves me when the children we bring up know little about him, and about St. Brigid, the glory of Irishwomen; not little, but nothing, I might say, about Ireland itself; ignorant of the land to whose martyr courage they owe their faith. . . . Two hundred Irish girls landed together lately to work in the New-England factories."

Enough could never be said of Mother M. Augustine's loving, tender, deep devotion to Ireland. It pervaded her whole being and tinged every word and act; when Mother Seton prayed beside her dying bed, saying, "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph," etc., Mother M. Augustine would add: "And Patrick and Brigid, assist me in my last agony." One day Mother Seton said: "What are you saying, dear?" The dying nun replied, smiling: "A little prayer to my own darling." Being asked to pray for the community when she reached heaven, she said: "Of course I will, and for every one in it; but Ireland—oh! won't I pray for Ireland!"

Mother M. Augustine thus describes the death of Sister M. Baptist O'Keeffe:

“Our darling Sister had a great desire to go to our Lord on the Feast of His Holy Name, and he took her to Himself at 10 P.M. that day. You heard of her spirit of prayer, the beautiful aspirations she used: ‘May Thy just decrees be fulfilled.’ ‘O my lovely Jesus! take me, if it be Thy holy will.’ Though suffering agonies on Saturday, she hoped our Lord would not take her till the Feast. At 5 P.M. she said: ‘Can I not have my last Communion?’ And when the father brought it she said in a rapture of joyful love: ‘O my beautiful Jesus, my only love! take me.’

“The priest wept listening to her aspirations, and asked if he might speak to her a few moments. She said: ‘I want no talk,’ so he did not disturb her. When reverend mother asked if she would like to see the confessor: ‘I have nothing to say to him,’ said she, ‘but he may like to see me before I die.’ She was so cheerful that she comforted every one. Think of her coming out of her agony, asking like a child if the Sisters could not have some candy and oranges. She took pleasure in seeing them eat, tried to take a little herself, and said they had not half enough! For three hours before death she was in perfect rest. She said she had been at home with her mother and family, and with her dying lips asked God to bless her darling mamma. Fancy her saying: ‘I suppose my guardian angel will get the care of the next baby that is born.’ Her last words were: ‘My God and my all!’”

Mother Augustine literally doted on the orphan boys, whom she wished brought up in the country. She was often amused by their little letters, such as the following odd combination:

“We go to Benediction and we sing, and we have pigs in a pen.”

Here are some extracts from her letters to Mother C. Seton:

“Your delightful letter did my heart good and raised my spirits. I feel better, and this, under God, is to be attributed to the pure, sweet air. ‘God made the country.’

If you see M. Vincent, give her my love. I can never forget her care and kindness when my dear ones needed both. . . . You say perhaps God will call us both home at the fall of the leaf. But, please God, we shall meet again. You make me imagine the unimaginable joy of meeting all our loved ones at the feet of Jesus in the joy of the Lord. I dreamed I was safe in purgatory, and the feeling of assurance that my soul was saved (even by fire) was so great a happiness that I can never forget it.

"I was at Greenbush in August. Just remember that convent on the bare, treeless hill, and then think of it embosomed in trees and flowers. The walks that used to be so muddy are now clean and hard, and the improvements in the house on a par with those outside. A nice, sweet community of forty-four there. Our Lord must have sent them Himself, else how could they have been attracted to an obscure village? Tell M——one native of Greenbush shines conspicuously—her little, white-haired pet of long ago, now five years professed. There are sixty-four in the select school and many learn music. Poor Mr. D——, who was such a benefactor, died of softening of the brain. Pray for him; he must need prayers, stricken down so suddenly. No less than ten of the poor fellows who were boys in school in our time have been killed by the railroad, and accidents are constantly happening."

[Greenbush, N. Y., is noted for car-factories, and is the terminus of many railroad lines. Most of "the boys" are employed about the railroad.]

"Your affectionate letter cheered me ever so much. We had a heavenly retreat. The father seemed to have God so present to him that he hardly alluded to the faults of his poor, weak creatures. Your letter gave me a happy feeling I don't always have; there are not many hearts like yours. I always recur to it for comfort. Yet I have Mother M. Joseph Devereux—surely the next best. She can never satisfy herself speaking of our Lord. Yesterday she described the piercing of His divine hands as if she had been actually present. She made me thrill all over, and I thought how you would have joined in her enthusiasm. She seems to have gone from her old vocal prayer deep into mental. How happy she is! Nothing troubles her, for she sees the will of God everywhere."

“Next to the pleasure of being with you is that of reading your pious, affectionate letters, and thus feeling that your dear heart is always the same. . . . I am listening to the robin singing. The bluebirds have returned from the sunny South, so the spring is near, thank God! I never wanted to die in winter, though born in the midst of it. I wish you could see the letter M. M. wrote to me. It would rouse devotion in the most callous heart. I miss Sister M. very much ; she had such excellent influence over the boys and did so much to civilize and improve them. She got thirty-five of them adopted or hired in good places, and the letters of gratitude she was constantly receiving were most original.”

“May 25, 1883.—It seems ever so long, my dear Sister, since you left us, and every branch that blooms reminds us of you and your interest in everything here. . . . Try to gain a spirit of prayer and recollection. One so sweet, calm, and charitable as S. M. must make it pleasant for you, and you will find her a mother if you go to her when sad or troubled. You need a heart to lean on until cured of your old wounds and steeped in the peace of the sanctuary. You can place all confidence in S. M. I would be glad to be under her myself, old and withered as I am.”

“Your sweet letter is here, bringing tears too near the surface for my convenience. No, you must not be deprived of the sweet presence of our dearest Lord ; keep close to Him in prayer and He will restore you to health in His own good time. Make daily a spiritual communion. The saints derived the greatest comfort from that holy practice. It grieves me that you suffer from so many trials. . . . Our Rule speaks of the labors and fatigues of the Institute ; but they are little in comparison with yours. . . . The only thing worth doing is what tends to the salvation of souls. Every day we hear of some death, and so people will one day of ours.”

“I hope our Infant Saviour will make you rich in peace, and fill your heart with His holy consolations. . . . Do get up a merry Christmas ! Our Lord was away from home and exposed to every misery when He made the dreary winter day into the blessed Christmas it will be as long as

the world lasts. So cheer up and make all around you happy. You are a thousand times better off than the rich, extravagant people of the world. I hope O. and L. will be happy together, and make the boys feel that those who serve God can be gay."

"My poor, crushed child, only last night I learned that your greatest sorrow has come upon your poor heart. Dear, lovely Olivia, I trust she is adding to the beauty of the heavenly court, and prays lovingly for those she left behind. God must have some special design in sending you so many sorrows, and you must try to correspond to them, and become a saint under the pressure of the cross. . . . I am glad you made that visit to Calvary,* and that the spot she lies in looks so sweet and nice. After a while you will be giving me a call there too. . . . I know your heart is bleeding for the loss of your darling, and I sympathize with you from my heart. Yet let us be convinced that hers was the better part. God, who in his omniscience knows all things, alone knows how many sorrows He has saved her by taking her in her beautiful youth to Himself. To be sure, everything looked bright for her; she seemed sure of love and protection and all she could desire; but the things of earth are transitory; who can depend on their stability? Let us pray for her peacefully and hope one day to join her in the better land. I am struggling through the cold, but shall have to nurse myself till the warm season comes, if it ever comes for me. God knows whether I shall get over this winter, but His will is best."

"I prayed most earnestly for you this morning, and I feel that your great saint will torment you into sanctity—will obtain for you the lights and graces that almost force the soul to seek the fulfilment of God's merciful designs in its regard. 'Make us saints at any cost,' ought to be our souls' constant cry. If it were, we should find it easier to walk firmly in the path of perfection. . . . I do not think any one can wish you a happy feast, made so by the influx of

* In the winter of 1873 the remains of the Sisters buried in old St. Patrick's were removed to Calvary Cemetery. The thirtieth Sister interred in the new place is Mother M. Joseph Devereux, July 10, 1887. The remains of Mother M. Austin Horan were placed in the same grave with those of her beloved friend, Mother M. Agnes O'Connor.

divinest graces, more sincerely than myself. Surely you are just in the place to obtain them, for not only will the Mass be offered for you, but the children's prayers will besiege heaven for you, too. I think they have much to do with keeping me alive, whether for better or worse God alone knows.

"I fully intended to be in a condition to offer my prayers for you this May from some corner of purgatory. But our dear Lord has not seen fit to admit me to its safety yet. So once more I wish you God's best blessings and graces. This place is lovely now. All the bushes around the grass-plot are covered with white or pink flowers. We have two fine lilacs covered with blossoms, and the wisteria blooming as it never bloomed before. It looks as if the plants and trees felt they were secure, now that Balmville is our own."

When Mother M. Augustine died the New York community numbered sixty-one, and hers was the twenty-fifth death. Her remains were removed to New York, and rested in the "home of her heart" till Saturday, when Calvary Cemetery hid them till the resurrection.

Several letters of condolence were sent to the community on this sad occasion, from which we give some extracts :

"May God be merciful to Mother Augustine ! was the earnest prayer welling up from the deepest depths of my heart on receiving her death notice. I felt I should commend her the more fervently to Him on account of her being so very humble and loving—and *so* Irish. After her long years of suffering, of reverend mothership—and I have a notion of her cross-laden back then ; histories travel—after all the beautiful thoughts that fed her richly poetic mind, after the gentle saintliness of her unobtrusive life when disengaged from office, after her labors and merits, prayers and crosses, came the end. What end ? The end that begins her real life. The cloudy gate of death is passed, and the nun has gone home. To secure that home was her life's aim. God promised it to her when she renounced her own. . . . She bids us all persevere, fight the hard battles of life, heed not pain or toil, but press on and gain the prize supernal, for which America trains victors as

well as the old Thebaid. Sweet mother, you are at home with your God, and very near Him. Like the prophet of old, we pray Him to give us to inherit your virtues, and help us to go through the dark passage that leads to heaven as safely as you."

"If the reading of a holy life be so instructive, surely the record of a blessed death ought to be more so to all who are travelling the rough road of life, not knowing when, where, or how the gate of death is to be met.

"That 'Farewell to Ireland' is truly touching. What a vivid memory of the old land clings to those who leave it! If I could only show her letter and poem to all the young men in Ireland! Which of them ever served her as this holy, hidden saint? Mother C. Seton's lines are truly poetic. What a blissful meeting she and her illustrious mother will have in heaven! How strange you should have kidnapped her from her mother's order! Our Lady of Mercy was the rogue that got the deed done, and Mother McAuley's daughters did it. . . . Mother Augustine will be singing her first *Gloria in excelsis* in heaven on Christmas morning."

"Since I heard of her death, Mother Augustine always comes to my mind at the altar. I trust she is resting in the bosom of God, praying for us poor mortals whose struggles are not yet over. May the holy will of God be done in all things and at all times! It should be the food of our souls and the peace of our hearts."

"Words are powerless to tell you of my deep and loving sympathy. We must lift our eyes to the reward exceeding great with which Mother M. Augustine's life of loving toil, cheerful sacrifice, and bitter sufferings has been repaid. What must have been her joy when the last sigh broke the golden thread and ushered her into the presence of her Lord and Spouse! One blissful gaze and the Beauty ever ancient and ever new repaid her for her years of exile.

"Mother Augustine shares all our suffrages. She was much loved and esteemed in our community as a true and noble religious. Our Lord has certainly taken a jewel from among you. It is hard for those who love religion to see the sterling pillars of the religious life laid low. Our conso-

lation is that in heaven they will be able to accomplish more than on earth. Many hearts mourn her, and many tears greeted the transient return to St. Catherine's to bid a final adieu to the chapel she loved so well. But heaven, our beautiful home, has opened its golden portals to receive her, and from the feet of Jesus glorified she will bless her children."

"A Last Farewell to Ireland," written by Mother M. Augustine on her death-bed, was sent by her direction to the *Monaghan Advocate*, in which it appeared in October, 1883.

The dying religious seems to grieve that her last breath is to be drawn "beneath a stranger sky," and says that thirty-two years of exile have not shut out from her heart or dreams "green Erin of the streams." She thanks her country for the bright baptismal waters, her strong faith, the martyrs' blood in her veins. She loves Erin for her story, "so wondrous and so true," for her faithfulness to holy Church, for her chapels, poor and quaint,

"Where the people kept the mem'ry
Of many a hero-saint."

She speaks of the lone mass-gardens, "hid in some rocky dell," and the hunted priest whose consecrated hands

"The awful chalice raised."

And this passionate lover of her country goes on :

"O Ireland! I am dying,
And if, from cleansing flame,
My prayer can reach to heaven,
'Twill breathe thy long-loved name.

"I will ask that now and ever
The faith may reign in thee,
And that the love of Jesus
May set my people free.

“ I'll pray for thee, my country,
 My faithful, lovely isle;
 I'll ask our Blessed Lady
 Upon thee still to smile.

“ I'll beg of the dear angels
 To guard thee from thy foes,
 And ask them to bear healing
 To soothe thy many woes.”

Mother Augustine asks our Lord to pardon the cruel hearts that wring the life-blood from her country's bosom :

“ Does my own heart forgive them?
 Ah! yes; as we forgive,
 Dear Lord, thou wilt forgive us.”

And she concludes :

“ Then farewell, dearest Erin,
 Farewell, for evermore,
 May peace, and grace, and plenty
 For ever bless thy shore.”

Within the last few years the New York Sisters have their mother-house on Madison Avenue. Many reasons obliged them to leave their old homestead, corner of Houston and Mulberry Streets, to which they were deeply attached. The details of removing from a convent endeared by so many tender associations “are,” writes one of the Sisters, “too heartrending to be reproduced.” All that could be preserved of the real gem of that institution, the old chapel, has been utilized in the new chapel—windows, stalls, statues, organ, and the beautiful side altars, now in the children's chapel. The main altar was given to the late Rev. Dr. Kirner, for his Italian church. The handsome marble altar which replaces it was paid for chiefly by the proceeds of Mother M. Augustine's *Poems and Plays*.

The corporate title, “Institution of Mercy,” comprises :

1. St. Catherine's Convent, 1075 Madison Avenue.

2. St. Joseph's Industrial Home, attached to convent, 65 East Eighty-first Street.
3. House of Mercy, included in above Home.
4. Convent of Our Lady of Mercy, Balmville, Orange County, N. Y.—Branch Home for Boys.
5. St. Cecilia's Academy, 116 and 118 East One Hundred and Sixth Street, New York.

Situations are obtained for girls and women applying at St. Joseph's. Number of children, 600. Sisters, 42. Boys at Balmville, 300. Sisters, 16. Pupils in St. Cecilia's Academy, 50. Sisters, 6.

The visitation of the sick is largely carried on in every house. The city prison, "the Tombs," is visited by the Sisters about four times a week, and daily when any one is under sentence of death. The State prison at Sing Sing and the penitentiary on Blackwell's Island are visited once a month. The other public institutions on Ward's, Randall's, and Blackwell's Island, with the Bellevue Hospital, are visited every Saturday. The number of Sisters in the New York community is sixty-four.

Of the first seven who came to New York in 1846 Mother M. Monica O'Doherty and Sister Mary Byrne are still spared. Mother Monica is in her eightieth year. She is first in the chapel at five A.M. every day, and is never absent from an exercise. She does beautiful needlework and reads without glasses, but cannot work much at the painting and illumination which were always her *forte*. Sister Mary has charge of the knitting classes, and her pupils show beautiful work—altar laces, baby sacques, and other articles.

The first postulant who joined the Sisters of Mercy in New York, Josephine Seton, Mother Catherine, is in her eighty-ninth year. Though a little feeble, she has no organic disease, and her friends hope she may realize the century. She is always at daily Mass. Not being able to go up or down stairs, Mother Seton sleeps on the chapel

floor, and spends a great deal of time before the Blessed Sacrament. She and Mother Monica communicate daily, though the former is not able to attend the community exercises like the latter. Mother Seton reads without glasses, but, unlike the majority of the early members, she never was an expert at the needle. Long ago, when she thought people were too particular about their sewing, mending, or darning, she would say: "O my darlings, such a waste of time! Can you not coax seams together as I do?" And she would hold up as models some of her own lengthened stitches.

The Sisters' duties among the city children are ever on the increase; they now number eleven hundred. Many are sent to good situations or homes, but their places are not long vacant.

An unfailing source of recreation at Balmville is in the letters that are constantly coming from the little fellows that have gone to commence the battle of life among strangers. "So far," writes one of the Sisters, "all have done well, and write very hopeful accounts."

CHAPTER XXXII.

CHICAGO, 1846.

Bishop Quarter will not take *No* for an Answer—He is left alone in his Episcopal City—He cancels the Debt—The first Cathedral in Chicago—The glittering Cross reflected in Lake Michigan—The Bishop's first Care was for the Young—Abnormal Progress—Under the *Ægis* of Religion—Dr. McGirr's Testimony—The first Retreat—Regular Spiritual Conferences—Sketch of Dr. Quarter—Tender Piety of his Mother—Beautiful Home—Training—Zeal for Catholic Education—Perilous Journey of the Sisters from Pittsburgh to Chicago—No Room on the *Oregon*—Detroit, Cleveland, Kalamazoo—Mishaps—No one to Welcome them to the City of the Plain—Assigned the Bishop's Palace—The surrounding Prairie—Little wooden Chicago—The Bishop retires to a Hovel—Painful Reaction—Insomnia—Reassured by a merry Laugh—Extreme Poverty—"By that Lake whose gloomy Shore"—Reception and Profession.

THE first ecclesiastic to welcome the Sisters of Mercy to America, Right Rev. William Quarter, Bishop-elect of Chicago, was also the first to invite them outside of Pittsburgh. Indeed, he gave them this invitation as soon as their feet touched American soil. "As I am the first to welcome you," said he, "so I am the first to beg a foundation, and I will not take *no* for an answer." Bishop Quarter reached Chicago May 5, 1844, said Mass and preached to his new flock. The two priests then in the city were immediately recalled to Vincennes (to which diocese the greater part of Illinois belonged previous to the erection of the see of Chicago), their bishop suspending their functions till they obeyed. Thus the first prelate was left alone with a debt of five thousand dollars, some of which bore twelve per cent. interest, an unfinished church, a poor congregation, his see being a mere village. His first step was to wipe out the debt, which he did with his own private

fortune. The people were so encouraged by his energetic liberality that they contributed more than could be expected, and in a few months had the happiness of thanking God in their new church, on which was erected the first, and for many years the only, steeple in Chicago.* “Its glittering spire and cross,” wrote Dr. McGirr, “reflect the first rays of the morning sun as he rises out of the bosom of the broad and beautiful Lake Michigan.”

The bishop was not long alone; in June he ordained three priests, and he looked in every direction for more. But with all that pressed upon him his first care was for the young. He organized the children into pious associations and instructed them at stated intervals. He planned a university in which the highest literary and scientific knowledge was to be imparted under the *ægis* of religion. The result was the University of St. Mary's of the Lake, the germ of which was St. Mary's College, opened in the old church, June 3, 1844, with two professors and six pupils.

In April, 1845, he sought aid among his old friends in New York. They gave him a large sum, with which he commenced the college buildings. To finish them he appealed to his own people in a pastoral letter, with excellent effect. His clergy were deeply devoted to him. “It was enough for them to know his wish,” says Dr. McGirr, “to set about gratifying it. They gladly used their influence with their flocks to induce them to aid the holy and zealous bishop in his works of beneficence.” Meanwhile, he never forgot the promise he had exacted of Mother Warde at the wharf in New York. The population of “the City of the Plain” was increasing. A second church, St. Patrick's, was opened west of the Chicago River in 1846, and two churches were erected for the Germans. He gave a retreat to his flock in Lent, 1845, at which he preached twice daily, with such fruit that it was impossible to find con-

* The Catholic was the first religion established in Chicago. In 1833 not quite one hundred Catholic residents petitioned the Bishop of St. Louis for a pastor.

fessors enough to hear all that flocked to the sacred tribunal. This is the first instance of a retreat to seculars in the history of the United States. He was also the first bishop in the same region to introduce regular spiritual conferences among the clergy.

Again and again the bishop claimed the performance of Mother Warde's promise, but it was not till September, 1846, that Pittsburgh could spare him a colony. It seems as if he were the only early bishop who thought of his own sex first, for the boys were well cared for before the girls were provided with instructresses. Yet his first efforts, even before his consecration, were for the women and children of his flock.

William Quarter was born of a Levitical family in King's County, Ireland, in 1806. His father was a good, upright man, but his mother was regarded as a saint. Highly educated at a convent, it was she who educated her children in their early years. Three of her sons embraced the ministry. To the end of his life he loved to recall the virtues of his mother and her "tender piety," and he could scarcely speak of her without tears. To her, under God, he attributed anything that was good in himself. Prayers were said in common in her household morning and evening. The daily Rosary was never omitted. The boys were taught to serve Mass and hold it as a great honor to be permitted to do so. Their pocket-money found its way to the poor, and they learned to practise self-denial that they might have the more to bestow. Their chief amusement was to turn the playroom into a chapel, and play at church functions, William preaching while his delighted mother formed the audience. So thoroughly was he grounded in virtue by this blessed home-training, that when placed in college his example was enough to repress vice and encourage virtue ; and the boys loved to call him "the little bishop."

His thoughts were directed towards the American mis-

sion by Father McAuley, who, while visiting his brother, Count McAuley, became acquainted with the Quarter family. The father spoke so much of the spiritual destitution of America that William, who at his first Communion had resolved to become a priest, chose America as the theatre of his priestly labors. He left home with his parents' blessing and the consent of his bishop, the great Dr. Doyle. His mother, though passionately fond of her boy, would do nothing to detain him. "My son," said she, "I have given you to God; go wherever He calls you, and may His benediction and mine ever attend you." He was ordained under age by dispensation, 1829. His zeal for Catholic education at once appeared, and to him New York is indebted for the introduction of the Sisters of Charity. During the cholera, 1832, he was indefatigable in aiding the sick and gathering up the orphans of the dead. When he was promoted to the newly formed diocese of Chicago his schools contained six hundred pupils.

In the summer of 1846 he prepared to open schools for all the girls in his city, and urged the Sisters to make no farther delay. Accordingly, on Friday, the 18th of September, 1846, the following members, composing the Chicago contingent, set out on their perilous journey: Sisters M. Agatha O'Brien, Vincent McGirr, Gertrude McGuire, Josephine Corbett, and Eva Schmidt. Mother Warde accompanied her children, and Very Rev. Walter Quarter, the bishop's brother, was commissioned to conduct them to their future home. Travelling was not as easy in those days as at present, as the sequel will show. They went up the Ohio to Beaver, Pennsylvania, and there chartered a stage to Poland, Ohio, where they remained one night. Next morning they chartered a stage for Cleveland, which city they reached Saturday night, after a most wearisome journey. Sunday morning they heard Mass, and Sunday evening they boarded the *Oregon* on the bright bosom of Lake Erie. They steamed into Detroit in due time, but

though it had been arranged that they should go the rest of the way by water, they were obliged to disembark. Thus early in their missionary career they were destined to bear some resemblance to the holy travellers of Bethlehem: "there was no room for them" aboard the *Oregon*. Other passengers had purchased tickets previous to the arrangements made for the Sisters. Had this been known to them, they might have taken passage on some other vessel, but it was now too late. They were very kindly received in Detroit by Bishop Lefevre, who made their forced stay in his city as pleasant as possible. On Tuesday they started for Kalamazoo, which they reached, after incredible fatigue and discomfort, Wednesday morning. Here they took the stage for St. Joseph, a little town in Michigan. Luckily they arrived in time to catch the small steamer *Sam Ward*, which was starting for Chicago. After a stormy night and a bright, cool day on Lake Michigan, they reached Chicago at 4 P.M., September 24, the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy. Their sufferings on the way had shaken them almost to pieces. Crossing Lake Erie from Cleveland to Detroit a terrible storm had nearly engulfed the frail *Oregon*, and the voyagers thought they should never more see land. At St. Joseph all the inmates of the hotel were ill of fever and ague, and there was not a vacant room to receive them, hungry and worn out as they were from seasickness, though on fresh water. When they landed in front of the bishop's poor cottage no one awaited them. As it was intended that they should make the whole journey by way of the lakes,* which would have taken much longer, they were not expected so soon, and no preparations had yet been made for them. They at once wended their way to the episcopal cottage, a one-story frame building, corner of Madison and Michigan Avenues, without a single modern

* From Detroit north through Lake Huron, through the Strait of Mackinaw, south through Lake Michigan to the little lake port of Chicago. This would have been a much longer journey, and, in September, a cold and stormy one. But most travellers of that day preferred water routes with all their dangers to staging.

improvement. The bishop welcomed them most cordially, and led them to the church to thank God for their safe arrival. Miserable as his "palace" was, it was grand compared to the hovel to which he withdrew when he vacated it in their favor. This he shared with Rev. Father McElhearn, pastor of St. Mary's Cathedral. The evening was raw and cool. The bishop showed them the surroundings, which, if poor, were picturesque. The ecclesiastical buildings were surrounded by a wild, unmade patch of prairie, in which his prophetic eye discerned their future garden. Only yesterday, as it were, the painted savage had yelled his war-whoop in this place, the plain was dotted with wigwams, the smoke of the council fires ascended, and the Manitou was honored with human victims. On a spot of the boundless prairie, once the home of the buffalo and the red man,* now rose a little wooden city. It looked quite smart in the evening haze; its more stylish houses were of dead white with grass-green shutters. It seemed to the travellers as they gazed on the only beautiful object in view on this chill September evening—the waters of Lake Michigan, stretching away to meet the sky on the distant horizon—that they had left not only home but civilization behind them.

The joy of the bishop on seeing his long-expected children gave way to a painful reaction. He asked himself whether he ought to have lured them from the Iron City to a place which had scarcely the necessities of life to offer. On the night of the 24th of September he never undressed; doubt, fear, anxiety banished sleep from his eyelids. "Things should have been in better order, the place more advanced," thought he, "before I ventured on this step." Next morning he scanned the faces of the Sisters to see if he could discover a trace of dissatisfaction. But they, replete with fervor and grateful to God for selecting them to be the pioneer Sisters to make known His name in this

* Catholic Indians were often seen in St. Mary's Church during the early years of the Sisters' residence in Chicago.

Western region, were full of joy. Their home was described as a sieve in summer and a shell in winter.* But it was not so poor as Bethlehem; and, like Bethlehem, it contained Jesus. They asked no more. They put everything in order, and soon one would not know the old cottage. The bishop, who till his death used to say Mass for the Sisters every morning after five, was with them early. While conversing with Mother Warde he heard them laugh very heartily in their common room, which was separated by a plank partition from the parlor. Such a chorus of laughter, he thought, could come only from contented, joyous hearts. "Now, indeed, I am content," he said; "that laugh could not have come from the dissatisfied."

The poverty of the young community was extreme. For their daily supplies they often had to depend on the generosity of the early settlers of Chicago. They opened school in an old frame building in the rear of the cottage. "And," says Dr. McGirr,† "the Sisters dispensed here rich stores of the earthly acquirements they had gained in the world, and the unearthly riches amassed while clothed with the habiliments of their new vocation." All the children in the Chicago of that day sat at their feet. Two postulants were received in the cathedral. This, the first ceremony of the kind that took place west of the Ohio, created immense sensation among the hardy settlers, trappers, bordermen, and mariners who thronged the church to witness it.

* The old, unpainted frame building was the first place of worship erected in Chicago. It was removed from its original site, Lake and State Streets, to the southwest corner of Michigan Avenue and Madison Street, and again removed to Wabash Avenue and Madison. As late as 1864 the writer saw this building in the rear of the brick convent built for the Sisters by Bishop Quarter. It seemed to be kept as a relic. The fire swept it away.

† Dr. John E. McGirr, only son of Dr. Patrick McGirr, of Youngstown, Pa., and brother of Mothers M. Vincent and Xavier McGirr (who came from the Pittsburgh community to establish the Chicago house), was a sincere friend and a benefactor to the Sisters of Mercy, Chicago. He was one of the founders of the Mercy Hospital, to which, as well as to the community, he always gave his services gratuitously. He was known in the literary world by his *Life of Bishop Quarter*, which is the basis of all that has been written hitherto on that eminent prelate. Several of Dr. McGirr's children have consecrated themselves to God as Sisters of Mercy.

On the same day, November 21, Sister M. Gertrude McGuire made her holy profession. The bishop preached to the crowded audience, explaining in clear and elegant language the origin and scope of the religious life, now seen among them for the first time.

The second profession, that of Sister M. Vincent McGirr, took place December 8, 1847, in fearfully cold weather; the snow was several feet deep. It was a peculiarity of Bishop Quarter that when anything droll occurred, no matter where, he could not help laughing. So when his eyes fell on Father McLaughlin, who came in late, with woollen socks drawn over his shoes, and when attempting to genuflect he slipped and fell, the bishop laughed out loud. Father Kinsella, the preacher on that occasion, not seeing the fall or the figure his brother priest presented, thought the bishop was laughing at him, and was not undeceived till later in the day. In point of fact there was no sermon. For Father Kinsella, not being prepared to preach, read from a spiritual book an explanation of the three states—the episcopacy, the religious state, and the married state; “and made,” says my informant, “comments on each that were not less amusing than instructive.”

Only the incessant occupations of the Sisterhood kept them from imagining themselves at the end of the earth. The poverty and self-denial of the bishop animated their zeal. They were proud to second, in their way, his anxious efforts in behalf of his flock. Mother Warde worked with them till winter, when she was obliged to leave them. The great distance between Pittsburgh and Chicago—it is now eight to ten hours—and her desire to see everything settled previous to her departure, induced her to defer that event as long as possible. On the 27th of November she bade adieu to her poor children by the lake, whom she was never more to see on earth.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

PERILS BY LAND AND SEA.

Mid-winter Journey from Chicago to Pittsburgh, 1846—The asthmatic Priest—Covered with feathery Expectorations—Sufferings of a Woman neat and refined almost to Fastidiousness—She carries a Muff—Across the Prairie—A boat-shaped Wagon—In the Mail-box—Hunger and Unrest—In an Ox cart—Black Bread, black Coffee, and bright Whiskey—At the Hostelry—“Look at the Woman!”—“Oft in the stilly Night” the good Mother longs for Morning—The Hotel Girl at Toledo—“Saving a drowning Protestant”—The one Coach—Dropped between Snow-drifts and Sand bars—“More Consolation than I deserved”—Father de Goesbriand—Incidents—In the Forest Glades—Sarcasm—“Out of Humanity’s Reach”—A pleasant Companion—Mother Warde splendid in Conversation—Sandusky City in 1846—The Stage in a Rut—Lost in the Wilderness—The swearing Workman—Mother Warde rebukes him—The blind Man and his Dog—Extreme Unction—Texts—Mother Warde tells Stories to her Fellow-Travellers—Dangers—Brownsville—Mother Warde among the Rivermen—End of her terrible Journey—In the Jaws of Death.

MOTHER WARDE’S mid-winter journey from Chicago to Pittsburgh in 1846 was something terrible. Her escort was a sick priest going to Allegheny to visit a dying relative, whose feebleness made him more of a care than a protection. Moreover, he was asthmatic, and the poor mother, who at all times of her life was the pink of neatness and refinement, had her garments covered as with feathers from his frequent expectorations. The roads were mere wagon-trails; the prairie was like sponge. She left the cottage convent in a hail-storm. A kind woman who had come to see her off insisted on giving her a muff, remarking: “You will have many troubles before your journey through the prairies is over.” It proved a useful gift. In it she kept her books of devotion; she had nothing else. In her

anxiety to comfort the Sisters who were separating from her for the first time in their religious life, she had forgotten to ask for refreshments and they had forgotten to prepare any. Her only comfort was her prayer-book and the *Imitation of Christ*, which she read now and then to refresh her soul. The journey across the wilderness, made in a boat-shaped wagon filled with rough looking men, was an experience she never forgot. In this "ship of the desert" was a little corner set apart for the mail-bags. Into this she contrived to get, and there she sat for two days and two nights without tasting food or drink, or seeing a friendly face. The wagon was drawn by horses at a snail's pace, through mud often up to the hubs, the driver with stinging lash and choice expletives urging forward the jaded beasts. Part of the journey was made in an ox-cart, drawn by solemn-looking oxen, whose efforts to force the wheels from the tenacious mud were all but fruitless. The miserable vehicle jolted and bounced till every bone in the poor lady's body ached, and it seemed as though the last degree of human endurance was reached.

At the wayside taverns only the coarsest food could be had—black bread and black coffee, with whiskey—and even hunger could not compel her to descend from her nook among the mail-bags once she had glanced down on the wild and terrible faces of the men who surrounded the hostleries. Sometimes her companions dropped out, and new passengers entered. "Oh!" the latter would exclaim, "look at the woman!" And then the stage was surrounded, for a woman was a most unusual sight in those wilds.

Travelling through the prairies alone was a new and dreadful experience. Some twenty years later the writer went over much of the same ground—in hot weather a treeless, brown stretch of land, reaching out to the sky; on cold days a sea of snow, not a house in sight. In frosty weather one saw the golden-rod, the asters, and the scentless roses of the bleak savannah black and withered,

Overhead a sullen sky. All these natural features diversified the pilgrimage of Mother Warde. This was "the boundless West" of which she had dreamed; its solitude was mysterious, terrible. The animals jogged down the trail, not a sound to be heard but the snoring of the passengers and the screeching of the prairie chickens. Would she ever get out of this vast, awful desert? Oh! how she craved for a little human nearness, for just one sight of a woman! How she longed for nights less splendid but more secure than the still, frosty nights of the prairie!

On the morning of the third day there came a ray of hope. Toledo was in sight. It was then beginning to be a city—so the inhabitants said—but was really a wretched village of two thousand souls. It had a bank and some large houses, no regular streets, and a pretty fair hotel. The first of her sex the good mother saw since she left Chicago was the chambermaid of the hotel, a kind, good-natured Irish girl, who instantly recognized her as a religious, though she travelled in secular garb, this being necessary to her safety in those Know-nothing times. Poor Mary showed the liveliest joy at being able to render some service to an Irish lady, especially to a religious. She poured out all her troubles into reverend mother's willing ear, and from the window pointed out the spot in stormy Lake Erie where her young brother had lost his life saving a "drowning Protestant" three weeks before. She said that Catholics like herself had much to suffer from the prejudice of employers and the taunts of fellow-servants. Reverend mother inquired if there was a Catholic Church in Toledo. "Oh! yes," said Mary, "and two good priests. You can go there in the morning. There is only one coach in the place; we can hire it." The sickly priest went no one knew where; the poor mother saw him no more during her stay in Toledo. She arose very early next morning and ventured to the door. The wind was blowing a hurricane, and the sand-banks and drifting snow gave the place a most

dreary appearance. When a slight abatement allowed her, she summoned the one coach. The driver brought her some distance and then stopped suddenly. She asked if they had reached the church. He replied in the negative, but vowed he would go no farther—she must alight then and there and find what she sought as best she could. Neither bribes nor coaxing—and there never was a woman who could coax better than Mother Warde—could induce him to alter his determination. He refused even to return for her. Having no redress, she was obliged to descend. After struggling for some time through flying sand and drifting snow she came upon the church. Father Dé Goesbriand, the present Bishop of Burlington, harbored the harborless. She heard Mass and received holy Communion, “getting from the good God,” as she would say when telling the story, “more consolation than I deserved.”

The good priest showed her every kindness and saw her safe to the hotel in the evening. Next morning she left Toledo in a rickety stage-coach, a minister joining what was left of the Chicago party. After travelling ten miles east through Ohio the old conveyance broke down. The driver ordered the gentlemen to get out, but allowed the lady to remain, to their great discomfiture. She had adopted a precaution essential to one's comfort in staging—she had made friends with the driver. The minister, who was well, demurred about getting into the slough and mud, for the snow was melting; and the priest, who was sick, objected very strongly. But the autocrat of the box invited them both to turn out at once, referred to their “laziness” in unflattering terms, and roughly bade them go with him to the woods to get logs to raise the wheels, which had fallen to one side into a deep rut. He taunted them with their slowness, commanded them to hurry up, and sarcastically asked if they wanted the lady to help them.

The poor mother would, perhaps, rather have been with them than “out of humanity's reach,” alone in the crazy

vehicle at the mercy of the impatient beasts harnessed to it, and the wild animals of the prairie which she feared would devour her. It took the gentlemen two hours to procure the logs and two more to extricate the wheels. The sick man worked well and was none the worse for it. The minister was mud from head to foot. When he was fairly seated, reverend mother, despite her misery, could not avoid smiling. "Oh! sir," said she, "the next place we come to the people will think we threw you overboard." He laughed at his ridiculous plight, and they whiled away the weary hours by pleasant conversation. He gave her a full account of himself, and was most kind and entertaining during the rest of the way, so that she was quite sorry when he bade her good-by at Sandusky City, and the feeling was mutual. For, as he was forced to admit, he had not often met a lady of her intelligence and refinement in the drawing-room, but such a treat on the prairies was phenomenal. He asked leave to call on her at Pittsburgh, a request she graciously granted. Certainly, Mother Warde possessed what the prophet calls "a learned tongue." The writer never knew any man or woman to exceed her in conversational powers. Crowds entered the coach at Sandusky—there was always room for one more in the old stage. The wild bordermen soon found out that there was something superior in "the woman," and treated her accordingly.

Sandusky City was not Palmyra or the Tadmor of the desert. A more bleak, desolate spot she had not yet encountered. The bay which mirrors it in summer was a sheet of ice, and the houses looked like pasteboard shanties—a wretched, straggling hamlet in which one could see no trace of the handsome Sandusky of to-day. A huge swinging sign showed the American Hotel, but fearing to venture into that rambling structure, she made a hurried ablution of her face and hands in a basin for general use that hung behind the watering-trough in which the beasts refreshed

themselves. Her halt here was anything but pleasant, and she gladly tucked her books into the muff when it was time to set off again. Several farmers and tradesmen entered, escorted by a Methodist minister who took bitter views of everything in this world and the next. About 10 P.M. the stage fell into a rut and the horses refused to stir. All the passengers had to get out. The men went to a farm-house at some distance to borrow two yoke of oxen to draw the coach out of the hole. The farmer pointed out the wreck of a wagon that had fallen on one side the day before, and no one knew what had become of the passengers. The young man who brought the oxen was very angry at being forced from his warm bed to the cold trail, and cursed all the time he worked at the wreck. When the vehicle was set up, he looked inside and to his great surprise saw a woman. He saluted her very courteously, and said: "Lady, were you not afraid of being killed when your carriage fell?" "No, my dear," returned Madam Warde, "but I was afraid when you wickedly profaned the holy name of God. I feared something dreadful would happen to us all on account of your blasphemies." The youth bore this severe rebuke very humbly, asked her to excuse him, and went back to the farm-house hanging his head, the minister chuckling at his discomfiture. At the next halt a blind man, led by a little dog, entered. Hearing reverend mother reciting her prayers, he knew she was a Catholic. "O lady!" said he, "I have been trying to get back to Cincinnati; before leaving it I was very sick. I had the priest, made my peace with God, and received extreme unction." Reverend mother spoke very kindly to him and consoled him under his sad privation. The minister muttered something about victims of superstition, priestcraft, and priest-ridden people; the pure word, and salvation through Christ alone. Mother Warde, who was always ready to confess Christ before men, said with great solemnity: "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests

of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man ; and the Lord will raise him up. And if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." For this and more to the same effect she gave chapter and verse, to the great delight of the cargo of Hoosiers, who, having been somewhat annoyed by the aggressiveness of the minister, were glad to see him worsted. In very strong language they commended "the smart lady," though, rather unfairly, they refused to allow the preacher to say another word. With wonderful graciousness, though not without a shade of fear, she conciliated these great, rough men, employing for their entertainment her delightful talent as a *raconteuse*.

Towards morning they came to a hilly region. The men were obliged to get out and hold back the coach in descending hills, as there was danger of the horses tumbling head-foremost, and it and its freight with them, into the deep ravine below. The coachman said that, only the animals had been trained to go up and down hills almost perpendicular, they would be killed here. Yet he lashed them furiously, and to a humane passenger, who would make him desist, he said : "Don't interfere ; your life and mine depend upon getting safely down this hill."

Reverend mother's only comfort was in prayer. Once an iron bar from the roof of the wagon fell on her head. The blow stunned, and might have killed her, but the driver made no more of it than if a straw had struck her. When partially revived she began to soothe the sorrows of the blind man, whom she invited to come to her in Pittsburgh, promising to get him to his poor home in Cincinnati. The cavalcade soon reached Brownsville, a pretty place at the foot of a hill, where the travellers found a neat little hotel. Everything looked bright and clean, and an excellent supper was set before them, but reverend mother had been fasting so long that she could not taste anything.

Neither could she sleep, for the boat was announced to start at midnight, and she thought it best to embark at once. The night was dark and sleety, and there was only an unsteady plank to connect the steamer with the river-bank. This she crossed in safety, though fearing every moment to be plunged into a watery grave. Meanwhile, a cold rain came down in torrents. The poor lady sat patiently among a crowd of rough, wild rivermen until half-past three next morning, when the boat reached Pittsburgh. Not a soul awaited her at the wharf, nor could she find a conveyance to take her to the convent. The clergyman, who had never shown her the least friendly attention, hurried off to his sick relative.

Mother Warde, who was never very expert at finding places, was entirely unacquainted with the part of the city where the boat landed her. She inquired of the only person she met, an old man, the way to the convent. He told her to go to Penn Street and she might find it. Trusting in Providence, she essayed to make her way, and with great difficulty, and no small terror at finding herself alone in the dark, sooty streets some hours before daybreak, she reached the convent. When she succeeded in opening the outer gate, not an easy matter, she rang the door-bell. On that particular morning the Sisters seem to have slept as they never slept before ; it was fully half an hour before any one heard her. At last a Sister put her head out of a top window and asked : "Who is there?" Only she recognized the voice, there would have been no chance of getting inside of that regular house till daylight. "Oh ! it is reverend mother," she exclaimed, and, calling another Sister with the words "reverend mother is ringing the bell," both dressed hurriedly and unlocked the door to the poor traveller. In a few moments the Sisters were all around her, and finding her saturated with wet and mud, made her undress and get to bed quickly. So prostrated was she with hunger and fatigue that not even a drop of water

would rest on her stomach. The Sisters saw that medical attention was necessary, and summoned Dr. Addison, who arrived at half-past six A.M. He declared that if she attempted to sit up to take food of any kind she would fall back and expire. For ten days she hovered between life and death, but with care her naturally good constitution brought her safely through this dangerous period.*

This mission, which nearly cost Mother Warde her life, was singularly blessed by God, though, like so many other convents of the Order, from the very first it grew and throve under the blessed shadow of the cross. Its heaviest affliction was the loss of many holy, useful members. It used to be said that the grass is always green over a Sister's grave in Chicago. The administration of Bishop Quarter was singularly brilliant and successful. Within two years there were forty priests laboring in his diocese. The Sisters "grew up with the country." The foundation began with five, there were soon sixteen, with over two hundred pupils. The religious growth seems as abnormal as the growth of Chicago in other respects, and the convent rapidly attained the maturity of an old foundation.

* Bishop Quarter would have brought Mother Warde home had not the ailing priest expressed a desire to go. Mother M. Vincent McGirr, who remembers him, was astonished to hear that he showed no attention to his distinguished fellow-traveler. Mother Warde, who told the story to the writer, did not mention his name, and excused him on plea of illness. He died soon after.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MOTHER M. AGATHA.

A beloved Mother—Testimony—Personal Appearance—Early Life—Attracts the Notice of Bishop O'Connor—His Opinion—He selects her as Superior of the Chicago House—Struggles—Propagation of the Faith—Cold and Hunger—Fate of the first Member—Mother Agatha breaks down—Her Kindness and Generosity—Incident—Father Terry's Gratitude—Planks fall on the Bishop—A tall Man obliged to lie diagonally—Anecdotes of the first Mother—A new Home—The first Railroad—Galena—Letters.

THE Chicago house was peculiarly happy in its foundress and first superior, Mother M. Agatha O'Brien, who was eminently fitted by remarkable gifts of nature and grace to direct the difficult work of the young foundation. Exceedingly beloved and revered by her young community, though thirty-four years have elapsed since she was called to her reward her memory is fondly cherished by the few now living who knew her personally, and traditions of her holiness are rife among those who never saw her, but whom the superiors strive to mould on her beautiful example. Her worthy successor of to-day writes :

“ All my recollections of our beloved Reverend Mother Agatha are of the most pleasing kind. She was one of those favored souls whom no one can know without loving. The heavenly peace of her soul was reflected on her countenance. Her very look was an exhortation to piety. I used to love to sit by her and listen to her wise counsels. Often when near her I thought of the poor Indian who said to St. Francis Xavier : ‘ Father, if I go to heaven I want to be near you.’ Her religious life was short, but full of merit. She had many trials, but she bore them all in silence, like a saint.”

In appearance Mother Agatha was of medium height ; her complexion was dark olive and her beautiful brown eyes most expressive. Her manner was bright and animated, and she was considered lovely in mind and person. Her great piety and modesty gave her something of a supernatural aspect ; she had the tact of winning all with whom she came in contact. "She always avoided giving trouble," writes a spiritual daughter, "and was very kind and considerate about the spiritual welfare of us all."

Mother Agatha, in the world Margaret O'Brien, was born in Carlow in 1822, and was therefore only twenty-four years old when called to preside over the destinies of the Chicago house. She was educated by the Presentation nuns of her native town, but having little temporal means, and desiring in her humility to take the lowest place, she entered the Mercy Convent as a lay Sister early in 1843, being then in her twenty-first year. Sister Margaret was one of the first to volunteer for the American mission, and the voyage to the New World gave Bishop O'Connor ample opportunity of becoming thoroughly acquainted with her merits. Several years after her death the bishop said to the writer : "That woman was capable of ruling a nation, and why should the Order be deprived of the services she could render it as superior because her father happened to be a poor man in Ireland?"

The dear Sister was not, therefore, allowed to remain in the lowly but safe state which her humility coveted, but compelled to be professed as a choir-religious, and, almost immediately after, placed upon the candlestick by being appointed to the superiorship of the first foundation sent from Pittsburgh. An older sister of hers still living, a member of the Order of Mercy in Sligo, remembers only the sweetness and amiability of her "little sister." Bishop O'Connor saw in Mother Agatha excellent qualities which others had failed to notice till he pointed them out, and her future career fully justified his penetration. It was he

who selected her to be superior of the Chicago foundation, and he could not have made a better choice ; although it might be considered a risk to place so young a woman in a situation so perilous.

In the first struggles of the Sisters of Mercy in Chicago Bishop Quarter, harassed on all sides by debts and difficulties, was unable to give them much material aid. He advised Mother Agatha, who, though innocent of accomplishments, had an excellent education, to write to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, in Lyons, for some pecuniary assistance. She complied, and in reply to her petition this noble society gave her four thousand dollars, a favor for which the community will always feel deeply grateful.

Never was relief more sadly needed. "You may imagine," writes one who knows, "how the poor Sisters had to live, what privations they had to endure, when all who came from Pittsburgh, except Mother M. Vincent, died before Mother Agatha. They suffered from cold and exposure, and died of consumption contracted in the old house, where the snow and rain came through the roof, and their clothing was often saturated in the morning." Mother M. Vincent McGirr survives her early friends, but only as a martyr to facial neuralgia, which she contracted in the happy days of her spiritual childhood. The Sisters were all young : Mother Warde, who conducted them to Chicago, was thirty-six ; Mother Agatha, the superior, was twenty-four ; the other Sisters were under twenty-one. Mother Agatha, however, had a most robust constitution. Though most kind to the weakly, she often said she could not imagine what it was to be sick or feel weak, or be unable for duty. But towards the end she, too, began to fail, and she learned by experience what it was to be ill and weak. Yet she battled sturdily against the feeling. She would be up for Mass when she staggered with weakness on crossing the chapel to her place. She said the Matins of the day of her death.

Her kindness and generosity were soon known to all Chicago. The late Father Terry, of Ottawa, loved to speak of her goodness to him when he was, as he said, "a raw Irish student." "She watched over me like a mother," he would say, "and gave me the first red flannels I ever wore. 'My poor boy,' she said, 'you will have to take great care of yourself in this severe climate, or we shall be losing you.'" Mr. Terry, who was an inmate of the bishop's palace, was very tall. He slept on one side of a plank partition, his lordship on the other, in the two-roomed hovel. One night in stretching himself out he knocked down the planks on the bishop. He ran over to the convent next morning to tell her of this sad accident—her accommodations being no better than his own—and was advised to stretch diagonally in future.

The Sisters treasured up almost every word uttered by this good mother, and to this day things are done or omitted according as they believe she would approve or disapprove of them. Once hearing a Sister complain of not having sufficient time to get ready for confession, she said: "A Sister of Mercy should at all times be prepared for confession, as she makes examen of conscience twice daily. And, moreover, she should always be prepared to die, as she confesses weekly and receives Holy Communion so frequently."

In 1847 Bishop Quarter built a fine brick convent adjoining his cathedral, to which the Sisters removed in November of the same year. It was known as St. Xavier's Academy, 131 Wabash Avenue, corner Madison Street, was incorporated, and possessed a most ample charter. It stood in the most beautiful and healthy part of the rising city, within a short distance of the pebbly beach of Lake Michigan. In 1848 ground was broken for the first railroad out of Chicago, towards Galena. Here a convent was established shortly after, at the request of the bishop. As the fire swept away almost every memento of early days

which the Chicago community possessed, it is probable that the only letters of hers still in existence are the following and a few others from which we quote, later on, addressed to her friend, Mother M. Elizabeth Strange, of Pittsburgh. The bishop mentioned as having visited the Galena Sisters is their old father and founder, Bishop O'Connor. The letters are sweet and simple like the writer, and though not of much value as specimens of an intellectual epistolary style, give some insight into the wise and lovely character of the writer, her patience, her gentleness. The reader will note the confidence she reposes in the Sisters whom she placed in charges of responsibility, which, she says, they have never disappointed. But had it been otherwise her friend would never have heard it from her. Also, how light she makes of a painful accident that almost cost her life, and whose effects she felt to her last day.

“CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF MERCY,
“ST. MARY’S,
“GALENA, November 12, 1851.

“MY MOST DEAR SISTER: Yesterday your dear and welcome letter of the 1st was forwarded to me from Chicago, and as usual I was delighted to hear from you. You will perceive by the above that I am at Galena, and I have been here for ten days. I came on to prepare four dear Sisters for their holy profession, and as the ceremony is to come off to-morrow you can well imagine how little time I have to spare to-day, yet I cannot postpone my note, as I remember the feast of the dear St. Elizabeth comes on the 19th, and I intend to start for Chicago on the 14th, so that if I did not write to-day I could not write until I reached home, and then my little note would be too late. Now, as my dearest Sister thoroughly understands how I am situated, she will make all due allowance for the many mistakes which this little note will contain. The dear Sisters here are all well and very holy. They have a very nice convent, etc., and oh! but they do love your dear bishop. He was here twice, they tell me, and seemed pleased with everything.

He will have a great deal of Western news to tell you on his return.

"I am sorry, dear Sister, to hear of dear mother-superior's delicacy; may our Heavenly Father spare her if it be His adorable will! But I know He is too good to take her yet; she indeed would be an awful loss. I do wish sincerely that I could once more have the unspeakable pleasure of seeing you, and, as you remark, how many things would we not have to talk over! Nevertheless that is a satisfaction that I scarcely ever hope to enjoy in this world.

"You need not caution me regarding any little remarks which you might make, for *to no one living* would I reveal them. I, too, have many things which I would like to speak to you of, but yet it would not do to write about. Still, I must say, as regards the Sisters in general, I have no trouble. God has been the kindest of Fathers to me. He knew how incapable I was of guiding this community, so that He does all for me Himself. With the branch houses I have *no trouble*. I always place at the head *one* on whom I can rely. I never drive or torment her, but treat all kindly and give them to understand that I place confidence in them, and in no instance have I ever found them to betray me. I could and *would willingly* give you a full detail of how I act in everything regarding the government of this community, but time will not permit me to do so now. Continue to write often to me, dearest Sister, and say a little word of advice in each of your letters, for it does me good. Be kind enough to remember me affectionately to each of the dear Sisters.

"I need not say to you that every member of this community will offer their united prayers for you on the Feast of the dear St. Elizabeth; oh! may she obtain for you every good gift that Heaven can bestow is, and shall ever be, my constant prayer. I have not heard from Providence or Pittsburgh since I wrote you last, but I trust they are all well. On the 28th inst. we are to have four more professions at Chicago, so you see my hands are full. I am expecting the arrival of our bishop from Chicago for the ceremony. He promised to be here to-day.

"Good-by, my most dear Sister. Often say a little prayer for your devoted in our Lord,

"SISTER M. AGATHA."

“CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF MERCY,
“CHICAGO, ILL., November 19, 1851.

“MY EVER DEAR SISTER: On the 12th inst. I wrote you a little note from Galena which I trust you have received. I arrived home on the 15th, and in looking through my little pictures I found one of the dear St. Elizabeth which I must send, although late for the feast day, but, nevertheless, I know you will value it. I regret not having it to send in my former note instead of St. Louise, but I must be satisfied. The dear Sisters here are all well and would write to you, or rather would have written had I been home. They desire a thousand loves, and beg me to say for them that they all remembered you in their prayers. I had a note from dear mother-superior a day or so since conveying the melancholy news of our dear Sister Clare's death. Dear soul! it is happy for her to be done with this miserable world; the account of her death is most consoling. Dear Mother Josephine Cullen seems weakly—may our Lord strengthen her!—but I have so much confidence in His infinite mercy that I know He will spare her.

“Poor Sister Patricia, a lay Sister, too, I am informed is in miserable health, but this does not surprise me much, as she was always delicate; besides she is so holy that I am sure she will go straight to heaven.

“I must not forget to tell you that we had a delightful ceremony at Galena. Our bishop officiated and then returned with me to Chicago on the following day. He was greatly pleased. But, now, do you not wonder why we had the ceremony at Galena instead of bringing our novices here and having them professed here? Well, dear Sister, on account of the enormous expense we could not afford to do this, but soon, please God, we can have our ceremonies, retreats, etc., here, as there is a railroad going to be made between the two cities; there are at present sixty-eight miles of it finished, and that will be a blessing. I met with a little accident in going from here which I did not mention in my last—in fact I did not think it worth speaking of; but as I perceive it has got into our city papers, and perhaps it might into the *Catholic*, too, I will tell you. The stage upset just as we got into it, through the carelessness of the driver, so I got two of my ribs broken, and the other dear Sisters who were with me also got hurt, but not quite as badly as I did. However, I am now much better and in a few days

will be well again, please God. Our bishop did not start until a week after I did, and he, poor man, also got upset. He is not much hurt, but is badly bruised. This will give you an idea of Western roads and stage drivers. The Catholics feel dreadfully annoyed about these accidents, but, thank God, we are spared and that is all we care about.

“Hoping to hear from you soon I shall conclude, assuring you that in this morning’s devotions you were gratefully and affectionately remembered by your ever devoted in our Lord,

“SISTER MARY AGATHA.”

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE FIRST FATHER.

Chicago peculiarly blest in its first Parents—"We ne'er shall look upon their like again"—Bishop Quarter's Affection for the Sisters—Their Schools superior to most others—Aided by Dr. J. E. McGirr—He teaches Chemistry and Physiology—Sodalities—Pastoral—The Bishop's Appearance—Popularity—Capacity for work—Enthusiastic about Education—His intention to provide bountifully for the Sisters—Preaching the Lent—Awfully sudden Death—Events of a Night—"O God! have Mercy on my poor Soul!"—Extraordinary Progress—The Sisters the greatest Sufferers—The golden Days of the first Bishop—His holy remains visited by Thousands—De Lisle Smith—Protestant Sympathy—Catholics almost frantic—Body embalmed—Beautiful Cenotaph—Too Hot for Retreat—Episcopal Story of Chicago exceptionally sad—Mother M. Agatha's marvellous Prudence guides her Children through great Difficulties—Chicago's Six Bishops—Only one reposes in his See.

AS in the case of Mother Agatha, Chicago was peculiarly blessed in its first bishop. The early clergy of Chicago, and many lay people, too, were accustomed to bracket together this holy pair, and thank God for sending them such a father and such a mother. When they were suddenly called away, he at forty-two, she at thirty-two, the voice of clergy and people proclaimed: "We ne'er shall look upon their like again." And these were the sentiments to their dying day of every priest who lived under Bishop Quarter, and every Sister who lived under Mother Agatha. And while the early members were ready to show respect and docility to the prelates who followed in such quick succession after the first, yet Dr. Quarter was "the bishop," the entirely beloved father who had begotten them in Christ.

He shared all their early joys and sorrows and privations. When his pecuniary embarrassments were under control, his first work was to build a fine brick convent for them, while he himself lived—and died—in a shanty. His whole life was spent in originating or furthering works of benevolence and progress, but he ever looked upon the Sisters of Mercy as the dearest portion of his flock, and their convent as the gem of his diocese. Their academy and parochial schools were the delight and wonder of the city. They were, indeed, in advance of their epoch. Dr. J. E. McGirr, of the university, one of the finest scholars of his day, helped the Sisters to organize them, and devoted much of his time to teaching them chemistry, physiology, and other branches not then commonly taught in schools. And the bishop was at once the keenest and kindest of examiners. The pious sodalities established by the Sisters were fostered and encouraged in every way by the zealous prelate. He directed parents “to urge their children to join these religious societies, and soon they will discover the happy results in their obedience, gentleness, tractableness, and faithful attention to their Christian duties.” Finding his flock perpetually increasing by immigration, he originated “The Chicago Benevolent Emigrant Society,” to aid his countrymen and others who sought homes within the limits of the vast territory over which he held spiritual sway. Incalculable good resulted from this worthy organization.

The bishop was scarcely of medium height. His eyes were small but very dark and expressive, and his other features pleasing. His hair, which he wore rather long and combed straight back, was sprinkled with gray when the Sisters first met him “by that lake,” though he was then only forty. He was particularly affable with non-Catholics, and attracted many to the church, and the Sisters were always happy to relieve him of part of the burden of instructing them. He was very gentlemanly, and observed the forms

of social life. Accompanied by one of his priests, he always made his New Year's calls, left his cards, and appointed a time to receive visits in return. He was, if possible, more beloved by Protestants than by Catholics, and his forbearance with those outside the fold was remarkable. "Protestants do not hate Catholic doctrines," he would say; "they hate only the doctrines attributed to us by our enemies."

His capacity for work was striking. It seemed as if, like St. Alfonso, he had made a vow never to waste a moment. All the virtues one looks for in a high station he possessed in an eminent degree, with a sweetness, kindness, and gentleness that won all hearts. He was the fearless defender of the workingman and the poor, but his most conspicuous quality was intense devotion to Catholic education. To the advancement of this noble cause he contributed his private fortune, his best efforts, his most fervent prayers. The lambs of his flock were his treasures. He made himself one with them to draw them to God. When the schools were in successful operation, ground was set apart for an orphanage and a hospital. And the Sisters, perhaps more than any other religious body, shared the general prosperity. He secured the passage of the law under which the Catholic Bishop of Chicago was incorporated as a "corporation sole," with power to hold real estate and other property in trust for religious purposes. He had promised Bishop O'Connor that he would provide amply for the Sisters, and it was his intention to have the deeds of their house made out, and to dower them with lands now worth hundreds of thousands. But only a year and a half after their arrival his premature death deprived them of their best friend.

This awful calamity suspended all progress for the time. During Lent, 1848, the bishop had been delivering a course of lectures on the marks of the true church. On Passion Sunday, April 9, he preached with more than ordinary fire

and eloquence, but when he gave the blessing it was noticed that his voice had not its full strength and volume. He retired early, saying that he was not well and that a little rest would revive him. At two next morning Father McElhearne, who slept in the next room, was awakened by his moans. He complained of violent pain in the head. His devoted friend, Dr. J. E. McGirr, was speedily at his side. The priest had scarcely administered the last sacrament when the bishop spoke his last words, "O God! have mercy on my poor soul," and turned over as to sleep, but his slumber knew no waking. He died at three A.M., April 10, of cerebral congestion. The shock of his death was felt acutely in the remotest parts of his vast diocese. He had always enjoyed excellent health, and was not quite forty-two years old. His mother, to his great grief, had died recently; his father was still living. He was exceedingly beloved by every citizen of Chicago. He had thoroughly identified himself with its progress, no small share of which was due to him. The loss the city sustained by his premature death could not be put in words. But the Sisters of Mercy felt that they of all others had most cause to mourn their gentle, loving father.

He was not quite four years in Chicago. In that brief space he ordained twenty-nine priests. When he came there were six in his whole diocese; when he died there were fifty-three. In his university there were eleven professors, four tutors, one hundred and twenty-five students, and twenty young men preparing for the priesthood. Had he accomplished in twenty years what he did in four his success would be great. He left not a cent of debt on any of the great institutions he originated. And when he died his earthly possessions amounted to one dime.

His example was the chief factor in his regulation of the clergy, who loved and revered him to the latest moment of their lives. His episcopate was always referred to by his priests and the early Sisters as the golden era of the church

of Chicago. He had the singular good fortune to die in the zenith of his usefulness, while he was admired and beloved by all, and before he experienced any of the sad vicissitudes that time inevitably brings.

While his holy remains lay in state they were visited by every non-Catholic minister in Chicago. These gentlemen vied with their flocks in showing respect and affection for the memory of a man who, by common consent, was admitted to have done more for the religious, educational, and even material progress of the city than any other citizen. The foremost Protestant, De Lisle Smith, wrote in the *Chicago Journal* of the bishop's ruling passion—charity; of his simple tastes and habits; his diligence in promoting the interests of the church of which he was so bright an ornament; of the schools, colleges, and churches with which he beautified the rising city. "His kind and gentle spirit disarmed all opposers and converted them into warm friends. Such a man's departure to another sphere is a great calamity. Who can supply his place? Who can, in so short a sojourn in a land of strangers, make so many true and devoted friends?"

As for his people, they were all but frantic with grief. They kept him five days; it seemed as though they could not bring themselves to part with his blessed mortal coil. His body was embalmed for burial by his enthusiastic friend and spiritual son, Dr. J. E. McGirr, and enclosed in three coffins. According to his own desire, he was buried in a tomb beneath the sanctuary in the cathedral he had consecrated, on the 14th of April. On the 30th of the same month his devoted friend, Father Kinsella, was called to the chair at a meeting held to consider the necessity "of transmitting to posterity the memory and virtues of this distinguished man whose life has been so beneficial to society." One of the most exquisite white marble monuments ever devised was erected to his memory in his cathedral, by people of all creeds and nationalities in Chica-

go. This beautiful cenotaph—a perfect work of art—was nearly destroyed by the great fire. To save his holy remains from desecration, they were transferred to Calvary Cemetery after that awful night.

Mother Warde's journey will give some idea of what Bishop Quarter had to suffer in his yearly visitations. During his too short episcopate the little lake port of Chicago, with its plank pavements laid over a swamp, had swelled to respectable proportions. Days and nights of travel by stage, boat, or on horseback seemed to have no injurious effect on his iron constitution. His first visit on coming home was to the Sisters. He would describe his adventures for their entertainment—how he was for hours stuck fast in some yawning gulch, was threatened with death by some roaring river, was in the desert with beasts, like his divine Master, in whose business he was always engaged. If he felt the heat or cold very acutely, he thought of his children on Wabash Avenue, and wrote to urge them to ward off the evil effects of either inconvenience. While they were in retreat in August, 1847, he wrote to caution them not to do too much in such hot weather. "If I were at home," said he, "I should make you come off retreat."

It was difficult to provide an acceptable successor to a bishop so passionately beloved and so universally esteemed. Bishop Vandeveld came in 1849, and left by his own request in 1853. He was kind to the Sisters and insisted they should call him not bishop but father. The duties of the episcopacy were not congenial to his tastes, and his administration was troubled with dissensions among clergy and laity. Bishop O'Regan's management of affairs was scarcely more fortunate. He found it impossible to heal divisions and discord and soon resigned the Chicago mitre, but not before the leading priests of the diocese had transferred their allegiance from him to the Archbishop of New York. Thus the community lost its best friends among the clergy, and, being obliged to hear all sides, their position was most

painful and even dangerous. Mother Agatha's wonderful prudence preserved her daughters from taking any part in the deplorable dissensions that disturbed ecclesiastical Chicago. But they did her community much injury. And they had no longer a friend like Bishop Quarter on whom to lean. Nor did the troubles cease with her death ; rather they became worse. For a while it seemed as if Bishop Duggan, who took charge in 1859, would make a successful administrator, but the climax of dissatisfaction was reached in his time. For years he had been failing mentally, but towards Christmas, 1868, his condition was unmistakable. Friends took him from Chicago, April 19, 1869, and placed him in an institution in St. Louis. Such a sad ending of a career so brilliant at the outset touched friends and foes, and showed that certain actions of his which had given offence were the result of incipient mental derangement. Chicago has had six bishops ; but the first is the only one whose remains repose within her limits.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A NOBLE INSTITUTION.

The Hospital of the Lakes—Water Supply—The first Sewer—Site—Bishop Vandeveld's Views—Dr. Davis—He epitomizes the History of the Hospital—Corner-stone laid—Drs Patrick and J. E. McGirr—Scientific Research and Experiments—Inoculates for black Measles—Bishop O'Regan's Donation—Strange Patients—The Train-wrecker—Bishop Foley's last Visit—Death of Mother M. Xavier—Good Doctors—The Medical College—Present Staff—Services entirely Gratuitous—Characteristics of Dr. Davis—His Charity—Enthusiastic Devotion to the Mercy Hospital—An Aristocratic Patient—"Take two chairs, sir."—A rich Lady comes from Afar—Obliged to wait—Dr. Davis a Total Abstainer—He never Prescribes Alcoholic Stimulants—House Doctors—Details—"I was sick and Ye ministered unto Me."

IN the spring of 1851 the Mercy Hospital was organized. The leading medical men of Chicago had opened, 1850, in the best hotel in Chicago, the Lake House, a hospital which they styled The Illinois General Hospital of the Lakes. The city had then thirty thousand inhabitants. It was supplied with water by an engine and pump at the foot of Lake Street, and had heretofore neither sewer nor hospital. Both improvements were coeval. The city authorities were making a three-cornered plank sewer on Clark Street. To call attention to sanitary improvement, Dr. Davis, of whom we shall have more to say, gave six lectures, with the proceeds of which and some donations twelve beds were purchased. Finding it did not work well, the doctors asked the Sisters to take charge of it, which they did. They at once doubled the number of beds, and the hospital soon occupied half the Lake House. It passed entirely into their hands. For a short time it occupied Tippecanoe House, a poor building, from which it was removed to a house built by

them for an orphanage. After several years it was removed to a fine edifice erected for a young ladies' seminary. In 1869 the corner-stone of the present magnificent Mercy Hospital was laid July 25, corner of Twenty-sixth Street and Calumet Avenue. The site was bought in Mother Agatha's time, with the first money saved by Mother M. Vincent McGirr, when in charge of the old hospital. As Bishop Vandeveld had peculiar views about religious possessing property even in common, the purchase was made through the agency of a friend. It cost six hundred dollars; it is now worth two hundred thousand dollars.

In his address on the occasion of laying the corner-stone Dr. Davis epitomized its history. It was opened after the cholera of 1849 had scourged the citizens.

"Its growth has been steady and uniform, until it now lays the foundation of a magnificent structure which will remain for ages an ornament to the city, and a perpetual monument to the liberality and charity of its founders, and an asylum for the suffering and afflicted of many generations. During its past history, without the aid of public appropriations or private endowment, and constantly embarrassed by the temporary structure it has occupied, it has accommodated and kindly treated more than six thousand human beings suffering from serious diseases, at least one-fourth of whom were cared for gratuitously. Its doors have been open alike to every class and creed.

"It has received the professional services, always gratuitous, of the most eminent members of the medical profession, among whom have been Drs. Brainard, McGirr, Herick, Blaney, Boon, Johnson, Andrews, Byford, Nelson, and your speaker.

"In regard to the ability and faithfulness of the Sisters of Mercy in the management of the hospital I can speak in terms of the fullest commendation. Having visited it professionally from its incipient organization to the present hour, I must say that in cleanliness, good order, kindly attention, and Christian liberality I have not seen them equalled in any other public hospital in the country. . . .

When the self-sacrificing Sisters of Mercy shall have finished and furnished every room, from basement to attic, with themselves in readiness to care for the sick, and the board of physicians and surgeons to aid them, there will yet lack one thing to render its usefulness complete."

The doctor endeavors to excite the rich among his hearers to found at least twenty free beds for the poor. This number would accommodate on an average one hundred and fifty patients a year.

"To clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to help the sick, are among the highest and holiest injunctions of the Divine Author of Christianity. . . . There can be but one sentiment in regard to the universally binding character of these. They are broad in their scope as the brotherhood of man, and as binding as the divine impress can make them. . . . On the great day of judgment the questions will come: Did ye visit the prisoner? Did ye clothe the naked? Did ye feed the hungry? Did ye minister to the sick? Christianity demands not merely negative virtues but positive acts of human kindness."

The chief religious, civic, and military authorities of Chicago were present at this grand ceremony. When all was over they were invited to partake of a sumptuous collation in the old hospital, the chief medical and scientific men of the city acting as a committee of reception, while the Sisters promoted the comfort of their guests. The erection of this grand hospital was most providential. It was finished just before the great fire, and served as a refuge to hundreds.

Drs. Patrick and John E. McGirr were among the first to volunteer their services to the convent and the Mercy Hospital. They also attended the orphans. The father was a physician of the old school, educated in Dublin and Edinburgh. He often wished to retire to private life, but the clergy prevailed on him to practice until he was quite aged and feeble, on account of the number of souls he saved by

administering baptism to infants in danger of death, and preparing adults for the last sacraments. Unlike his father, who clung to the older methods, the son, a most learned man, was enterprising and progressive. Long before Pasteur or the physicians who inoculate for yellow fever, he tried inoculation for black measles. His views and experiments attracted much notice in the medical journals of the day.

When the elder physician was no longer able to practise, he and his pious wife made their home in the Mercy Hospital, that they might live under the same roof with the Blessed Sacrament, and spent their closing years in works of mercy and piety. He died the death of a saint, May 6, 1862. His remains were taken for interment to Ottawa, his two daughters being then in the convent of that town. Mother M. Vincent took her mother there, and on March 16, 1869, she died there in the odor of sanctity. No doubt the prayers of both drew many blessings on the hospital. They spent the greater part of many a night before the Blessed Sacrament.

When there was question of building the new Mercy Hospital, Bishop O'Regan put his name at the head of the subscription list for three thousand dollars. When he died in London, in 1866, he left that amount to the Sisters for the hospital, as he had not before paid the subscription.

In its primitive days the Mercy Hospital gave shelter, as it probably does still, to strange characters. Trappers and wild border-men from the Northwestern States, and highwaymen who often called out, "Hands up, gentlemen," in their ravings, came there to die peaceful and holy deaths. One of the early Sisters told the writer that she never saw a patient more humble, resigned, and penitent than a very agreeable man who told her he had more than once wrecked trains and caused the loss of several lives in the interest of insured parties. Through her to whom he had confided his terrible secrets he made all the restitution in his power, and, having made his peace with God, died a holy death.

Bishop Foley, who in some manner reminded the Sisters of their first father, was particularly interested in the Mercy Hospital. It was the last institution he ever visited in Chicago. Intending to return in a day or two, he told the Sisters that they might have recreation till they should see him again. Neither he nor they thought it was his last visit. A few days later he died of typhoid fever, to the great sorrow of his flock. Except Dr. Quarter, he is the only bishop who died in Chicago.

Mother M. Xavier McGirr—a most exemplary religious—died the death of the just in the Mercy Hospital, whither she had gone for medical treatment. Her sister, M. Vincent, was then superior of that institution, and thus had the melancholy consolation of closing her eyes, May 2, 1876, the saddest day of the bereaved mother's life.

The hospital has always been peculiarly happy in its physicians. The McGirr doctors, father and son, we have already mentioned. The founder of the institution, Dr. Davis, still lives, though he has passed by some years the three-score-and-ten allotted to man. He is also founder of the American Medical Association, and is Honorary President of the Medical Association of Canada. In connection with the Mercy Hospital, he founded, in 1859, the Chicago Medical College. The doctors built it. The Sisters gave them a lease of the ground for twenty years free. This, with the privilege of hospital clinics for their students, is all the remuneration the hospital staff receives. Dr. Davis's family tried to prevail on him to give up the hospital, as he is growing old. But he will never give it up while he has life and strength to attend it.

Dr. Andrews has been connected with the hospital as surgeon since 1855. He is as skilful in surgery as Dr. Davis in medicine, and as much interested in the hospital. He has performed wonderful operations, and people speak of his success as miraculous. His two sons, also surgeons, are considered equal to their father. They are all devoted

to their profession. The Sisters have always been blessed with upright, honorable men, who stand at the head of their profession, and have behaved as friends, or rather fathers and brothers to them.

During the trying winter of 1880-1881, when black measles and small-pox were raging, Dr. Hollister called daily to watch over all. He vaccinated every one in the convent, about a hundred boarders and as many Sisters. Besides professional services the community has always received from the physicians and surgeons in every emergency kind, encouraging advice and fatherly sympathy. The present hospital staff is : Medical Department—Drs. N. S. Davis, J. H. Hollister, and N. S. Davis, Jr. ; Consulting Physician—A. H. Johnson ; Surgical—Drs. E. Andrews and E. W. Andrews ; Obstetrical—Drs. Jaggard and Roller ; Gynæcological Department—Drs. Dudley and F. Andrews. The Eye and Ear Department is under Dr. Starkey.

The Chicago Sisters have not only never paid a doctor's fee, but over and above professional services have received all manner of courtesies and kindnesses from the hospital physicians. Although we rarely enlarge on the merits of the living, we cannot avoid saying a few words of the noble founder of the hospital, Dr. Davis. The Sisters who have worked with him for years say that the highest and noblest things that can be said of a man can be truthfully said of him, and they feel that much of the success their hospital has attained is due to him. The Sisters, who frequently meet him in their missions of mercy, know that his charity is boundless. Frequently he has handed back the well-earned fee to the relatives of his patients and told them to use it to procure better nourishment for the sick. He has less regard for the rich than for the poor, and does not know what human respect is. His office is always crowded. A lady receives the patients and gives them tickets numbered according as they enter. Thus they go into the doctor's private office in turn.

One morning one of the first gentlemen in Chicago wanted to see him, but did not wish to await his turn. As soon as he saw the old gentleman he went to him and told him who he was, thinking so exalted a personage would be attended at once. The doctor gives a very stiff bow and has a slow, measured way of speaking. The patient repeated: "I am—" "Very well; take a chair, sir." "But I am—" "Oh! well, then, you may take two chairs, sir," and he passed into his office as usual, and saw every poor man and woman as they happened to come. And the "I am—" had to wait his turn as though he were a poor man. It must be candidly admitted that the ladies form no exception in the doctor's practice. A woman of great wealth, who chartered a palace-car to come to the Mercy Hospital from the Pacific Coast, arrived just as he had made his regular rounds and was going to lecture at the college. One of the staff announced the arrival, adding that the patient wished to see him at once. Having ascertained that she was not suffering acute pain and could bear a short delay, he left her to the Sisters, saying he could not defer his regular lecture, as that would cause disorder in the college. Dr. Davis is a great temperance man. He never prescribes a drop of alcoholic stimulant of any kind, yet no one has more success in general practice, especially in typhoid fever and pneumonia, in which many physicians give it freely.

The Mercy Hospital has three house doctors. They are always graduates of the Chicago Medical College, which is on the hospital grounds. The position is held for a year, changing in sections, like the United States Congress, that all new ones may not come in at once. House doctors have never been paid; the young men vie with each other for the position, as it gives them splendid experience. The first physicians and specialists in Chicago have been house doctors—as Johnson, specialist of lung, throat, and chest troubles; Jewel, Steele, fine surgeons; Haines, professor of chemistry and toxicology in the Rush Medical College;

Quin, Starkey, Waxham, Larkin, O'Dougherty, Milnamow, and many others. The Sisters always take great pleasure in seeing their house doctors rise in their profession, "just as we do in seeing our pupils do well," writes one, the better part of whose life has been spent in the wards of the Mercy Hospital.

We have entered into these details, because in describing one hospital under the control of the Sisters of Mercy we give in a great measure the general outlines of all, and it is probable that we shall not have space to describe another. Both in hospitals and convents, and in asylums and other charitable institutions under the care of the Sisters of Mercy, the first physicians, whether Catholic or non-Catholic, seem to regard it as a privilege to attend the inmates, and it would fill a volume, or rather many a volume, to record all the deeds of kindness the Mercy Order has received from those to whom we humbly trust our Lord on the great accounting day will say : "I was sick and ye ministered unto Me."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

PROGRESS AND DEATH.

Mother M. Agatha opens a House at Galena—Death of its first Superior—The Sisters take Charge of the Children orphaned by Cholera—Last great Undertaking of Mother Agatha—The Red House on the Prairie—Property acquired by Mother Agatha—Troubles in the Diocese—Her Prudence—Financial Difficulties—Ruin deemed Inevitable—Saved by a good Mother and devoted Children—Ravages of the Cholera—The good Mother attacked—Four buried at Once—Appalling Scene—Simultaneous Deaths—Indescribable Grief—The new Superior and her Council—Deaths—Convent at Ottawa—The McGirr Family—New Schools—Mental Affliction of Bishop Duggan—The Sisters soothe Him—Careful not to excite Him—Insomnia—His pathetic Condition—A Home for fallen Women—Night-Schools—New Hospital.

ON May 29, 1848, Mother Agatha, in compliance with the wishes of the deceased Bishop Quarter, and at the request of the pastor and the chief people of the town, opened a branch house in Galena, on the confines of Wisconsin and Iowa. The journey across the Prairie State by stage we shall not pause to describe, for the pain, weariness, privation, not to speak of many a break-down, are simply indescribable. They were most cordially received. Donations of provisions and furniture aided them materially to establish the house, and their schools opened with bright prospects. Sickness soon cast a gloom on the little community. The truly good and humble Sister M. Gertrude McGuire, who was appointed local superior, was the light and life of the house. She belonged to a family remarkable for piety. The dignity of her manner and her personal beauty struck the most casual observer. Rapid consumption carried her off August 15, 1848; her death was sweet and holy like her life.

In August, 1849, the Sisters opened an orphanage for boys and girls in a rented house on the North Side. As cholera had just scourged the city, the asylum was soon crowded. In 1850 a new asylum was erected on Wabash Avenue and Van Buren Street. Of these institutions Mother M. Vincent McGirr, still living, was appointed superior. In 1850 a parochial school was opened in the parish of the Holy Name, under Sister M. Euphrasia Kinsella. In 1853 Mother M. Agatha began a fine academy, which was finished and ready for use December 3, 1854, and which the Sisters, in loving memory of her, called St. Agatha's. It was then away out of town, and the largest brick building in the southern part; the people called it "the big brick house on the prairie," and indeed it stood among the tall, coarse grass and swamp known by that name. Till 1862 there were no omnibus lines or street cars, and the Sisters had to walk three miles or hire a private conveyance whenever they were obliged to go from the old house to the new. The daughters of the most prominent people of Chicago, of all denominations, were educated at St. Agatha's. From 1854 to 1863 it was used as a boarding-school. The pupils were then transferred to old St. Xavier's. St. Agatha's became the nucleus of the present Mercy Hospital. It was used also as a novitiate; nearly all the elder members were received and professed there. As it was quite in the country the Sisters spent their vacations and made their retreats in "the red house on the prairie." They made these retreats according to the order of the day in vogue in the time of the holy foundress, and with the aid of spiritual books, with which they were well supplied. The community was ten or eleven years old before the assistance of a priest was given on these occasions, except in one instance.

Bishop Quarter's sudden demise was a severe blow to the Sisters in more ways than one. He had no time to make a will or arrange any temporal matter. But his in-

tentions in regard to the Sisters of Mercy were well known, and his brother, Father Walter, who became administrator on his death, thought it but right to carry them out to the letter. He therefore gave them the ground intended for them, seventeen acres lying along the shore, between the lake and the old Catholic cemetery. The lake afterwards receded and the seventeen acres became twenty. Bishop Vandeveld, however, questioned the right of the administrator to transfer this property, but the Sisters held the deeds. Bishop O'Regan asked them to exchange the lake-shore property for the deed of the convent and grounds, which they did. The old place is now occupied by a beautiful massive building known from its site as St. Mary's Block. He gave them also the ground upon which the present Academy of the Christian Brothers stands, close to St. Patrick's Church. At that time it was partly covered by an old frame building which had been the first church on the West Side. This was repaired and fitted up for school purposes, and the Sisters of Mercy taught in it the first school on the West Side. Father Denis Dunn, V.G., afterwards wanted this property, and another exchange was made, Bishop Duggan giving the Sisters two lots adjoining the old convent on Wabash Avenue for the deeds of the West-Side property.

The archbishop's mansion stands on a portion of the old cemetery. The property once owned by the Sisters is the ground adjoining, between the archbishop's residence and the lake, beautifully located at the entrance of the magnificent grounds called Lincoln Park. The property thus transferred Bishop O'Regan, on reflection, said was of less value than that given the Sisters, and he required them to make up what he considered the deficit, the sum of four thousand dollars, in instalments of one thousand each. When he left Chicago he did not remove this obligation, and they were obliged to pay the first thousand to Bishop Duggan. When he left the remaining three were paid to

Rev. Thomas Halligan, administrator, from a bequest of three thousand dollars left the Sisters by Bishop O'Regan. This amount was subscribed by him to the Mercy Hospital, but never paid except in this way. It came to the Sisters in Father Halligan's time. He released their notes for the three thousand due by Bishop O'Regan's arrangement, thus balancing accounts. The free school taught by the Sisters of Mercy on the North Side was the first Catholic school on that side of the river. The whole square was given Bishop Quarter by Mr. W. B. Ogden, for educational purposes.

Property difficulties began in the lifetime of Mother Agatha, who, with all her prudence and charity, could not avert them. She therefore determined quietly to buy and build, and the site of the Mercy Hospital and St. Agatha's were the result of her determination. Property acquired in this way could be possessed in peace. She bought also fifty acres of land for ten thousand dollars, now worth over three hundred and fifty thousand. All of this, save five acres, has passed from the Sisters. The five acres form a square beautifully situated near the lake, a block from South Park, one of the loveliest parks in the country. A convent will soon crown this handsome site.

It would appear that the early Sisters—now almost all passed away—who were party of the second part in the above transactions were not very clever business women. Evidently their "kingdom was not of this world," and their treasures were placed where moths and rust cannot consume, and thieves cannot break through and steal. Yet a community of over a hundred women, with many thousands dependent on them as pupils, orphans, patients, sick poor, needs some share of the wisdom of the serpent. Despite the valuable property owned by the Sisters, and their large regular income, their temporalities early in the seventies had fallen into a desperate condition. What they owned was mortgaged to its value. The house over their heads was sold, and the chairs on which they sat were not their

own. Providentially, the community at this epoch came under the direction of Mother M. Genevieve Granger. "To her," writes the only survivor of the heroic band who settled in the miry village of Chicago in 1846, "we owe our preservation from financial ruin, and the peace, union, and good order that reign in our community. I know it is not well to praise people while they live, although I am aware that praise and censure are the same to her, except where God is concerned, provided she can do her duty alike to all."

Nobody outside the community believed it could "swim through the torrent"; all thought it must sink. The clergy said it was useless even to try to help; that anything they could do would be only like a drop in the ocean. Yet trust in God and unity among themselves proved their salvation. "We are now getting out of debt fast," writes one. "The Sisters have all worked together faithfully, each in her own department, for the common good, and God has blessed their efforts with success." But we have anticipated. We must now return to the regular narrative.

In the spring and summer of 1854 cholera was raging in Chicago; fourteen hundred and twenty-four persons died of that fearful plague. Mother M. Agatha and her Sisters were constantly with the sick and dying. It was while ministering to the stricken that the death sickness seized this amiable and beloved mother. On July 7 she came from the hospital to the convent on some business. When the door was opened she asked for a drink. This astonished the portress, for never before had the mortified mother made such a request. "Something must be the matter with reverend mother," said she, "for this is the first time she ever asked anything for herself." Death was in her veins; in a few hours she was no more. Naturally she had a great dread of death, and often said she would not fear it so much if only some of the Sisters could die with her; the thought of starting alone on the mysterious journey terrified her. Her heart's desire was granted. The

Sister who went to inform those kneeling by Sister M. Bernard that reverend mother was dead, met her who was coming to announce the departure of Sister M. Bernard. It was thought that both expired the same instant. That evening, July 8, another died, and a few hours later another, so that the poor mother had all the company she could wish. She gave out the night prayers the evening before her death. In the chapel was an appalling spectacle, such as never, before or since, was seen in a Convent of Mercy. The bodies of four of the dearest and best loved in the house were laid out together in the robes of the Order; and the four, Reverend Mother Agatha O'Brien, Sisters M. Bernard Hughes, Louisa O'Connor, and Veronica Hickey, were carried together to the cemetery. All died of the same mortal complaint after a few hours' illness. Mother Agatha was bewailed by the whole city; indeed, it would be more true to say by the whole State. How her spiritual daughters felt her loss can never be told.

The holy mother was succeeded by Mother M. Paula Ruth, who died within a year of dropsy of the heart. August 6, 1855, Mother M. Vincent McGirr was elected, and chose for her assistant Mother M. Genevieve Granger; for bursar, Mother M. Francis Mulholland; and for mistress of novices, Mother M. de Chantal Maxwell, all of whom are still living. The last named, who is a widow, is sister-in-law to the English novelist, Miss Braddon, a curious connection for a Sister of Mercy. Mother M. Francis proved an able financier; while she administered temporal affairs, the resources of the community were husbanded, and not only was there no debt, but a large capital for present and future works of benevolence. The community now numbered forty-six. In June, 1856, Sister Lucy Donovan was called to her reward. In her humble rank of lay Sister she edified all by her gentleness, her spirit of recollection and prayer, and her laborious life. Sister Benedicta Schlomer speedily followed, a lay Sister of wonderful

virtue, famous for her devotion to the sick. The fever of which she died was contracted during her attendance on them in the hospital.

In 1858 Mother M. Vincent McGirr was re-elected, but positively declined the office of superior, which upon her refusal fell to Mother M. Francis. During Mother M. Vincent's incumbency, a house was established at Ottawa, on the application of Father Terry and with the consent of the bishop and chapter. Ottawa has since fallen to the diocese of Peoria. The convent is in a flourishing condition. Sister M. Xavier McGirr, the first local superior, passed there the rest of her innocent and holy life. Her remains lie in the beautiful cemetery, and her venerable parents repose not far from her. Her widowed mother, as a benefactress, passed her last days in the Ottawa Convent, near her beloved children, Mothers M. Vincent and Xavier.

A parochial school was opened at St. John's Church in 1863, at the request of the pastor, Rev. John Waldron. Very Rev. Dr. Dunn waited on the mother-superior in the summer of this year, to beg her to allow the Sisters who taught St. Patrick's School to reside on the premises. But she, being unwilling to place a branch so near the mother-house, resigned charge of these schools, to the great regret of Dr. Dunn, who was in consequence obliged to invite another community to the parish.

In 1864 the Orphan Asylum was given to another Order. Bishop Duggan had been advised to place it under the control of a lay committee, and mother-superior, not wishing to subject Sisters to such supervision, tendered her resignation, to take effect when the bishop should have secured another Sisterhood. Long before the unfortunate complications existing in ecclesiastical matters in Chicago during the administration of its fourth bishop became public, several Sisters who had business relations with him noticed his gradual mental deterioration. The superiors, therefore, would do nothing to provoke him, and would not contradict or argue

with him for fear of increasing the tendency. They gave up the asylum without a word, though the writer, who was in Chicago at the time, well remembers the grief it cost them to resign this last benevolent institution founded by their revered Mother Agatha. The unhappy prelate was not able to cope with the spirit he had unconsciously evoked. In 1866 he closed, without any known cause, the fine university, St. Mary's of the Lake, then most flourishing under the presidency of Dr. McMullen, afterwards the Bishop of Davenport. Established by Bishop Quarter in 1844, this was the first institution for the higher studies ever founded in the State of Illinois. Every one now saw that the mind was impaired ; other evidences of mental derangement followed. He notified the best priests in his diocese that their services were no longer needed.

Bishop Duggan was naturally refined and studious. He was devoted to French literature, and in the long fits of despondency to which he had become subject, Sisters who could sympathize in his literary tastes and feed them spent many hours endeavoring to recreate his saddened spirit. For six weeks before his removal to the institution in which he has since lingered, the Sisters never left him day or night ; he could not sleep a moment ; none but the physicians and themselves were fully cognizant of the gravity of his condition. They kept it from the public as long as there was the faintest hope. But some months before he was induced to leave they found the case hopeless. "I saw," said his devoted attendant, one of the convent mothers, "the flash of insanity in his eye."

In 1865 a splendid convent was built on the lots adjoining the cathedral, and a story added to the old convent, which was now used as a House of Mercy. Besides the works peculiarly characteristic of their Order, the Chicago Sisters applied themselves to other deeds of mercy in the spirit, though not in the letter, of their constitutions. Among these was the establishment of a home for fallen

women, which they opened in 1858, at the request of Rev. Dr. McMullen. It was a two-story frame house on Price Place, in which the Sisters received as many as the limited space would admit. They speedily got everything into working order, and continued the good work until the arrival of the nuns of the Good Shepherd. Their convent is located at the corner of Hill and Market Streets, on ground purchased by Bishop O'Regan for the site of the Mercy Hospital, but which the Sisters declined to use, as he wished the hospital to be church property. The very humble institution for penitent women on Price Place has grown into one of the most commodious and important homes of the kind in the country.

The old convent came, in time, to be surrounded by hotels, in which were employed many young girls who had had but few educational advantages in youth, and were almost entirely ignorant of their religious duties. The Sisters opened an evening school where they could learn reading, writing, and any branch they chose, and were carefully instructed in the Christian doctrine. This work was discontinued after the great fire which destroyed all that part of the city. The new convent being at the southern extremity, is to a great extent out of the reach of those who formerly availed themselves of the advantages of the night school.

In May, 1870, the new Mercy Hospital was dedicated by Bishop Foley; and on the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, September 24, 1872, the same prelate laid the corner-stone of the splendid mother-house of the Sisters of Mercy on a site which cost seventy-five thousand dollars, corner of Wabash Avenue and Twenty-ninth Street. In May, 1873, Mother M. Scholastica Drum ceased to be superior and was succeeded by Mother M. Genevieve Granger, who still worthily holds the first office, having been elected this year by papal dispensation. Mother M. Vincent McGirr became assistant on the same occasion, and retained that responsible office till ill-health forced her to resign, to the great regret of the community.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

OFF TO THE WAR.

Colonel Mulligan secures Sisters for his Command—Sister M. Alphonsus Butler—War's Alarms—Magnificent Hospitality—"Danger ahead!"—Incidents—Narrow Escape of the *Sioux City*—Did not know Women were aboard—Saying her Office before being shot—In Ambush—On a Sandbar—Mulligan paroled—A generous Enemy—Colored Friends—Sisters • unlike—Wretched State of the Hospital—A cold Reception—"Who's dead?"—General Fremont—Brave Mrs. Mulligan—Thrilling Adventures—Ashamed to tell—The Soldier's Funeral—To the Battle-field of Shiloh—Pittsburgh Landing—Wanderings of the *Empress*—Courtesies—Warriors of both Sides—Blind, Deaf, and Dumb—Shot in the U. S. A.—Skilful Pharmacists.

SOON after the war broke out the "Irish Brigade" was organized in Chicago by Colonel Mulligan, whose life was sacrificed in the Union cause towards the close of the war. He was a devout Catholic and a warm friend of the Sisters of Mercy. As his command were nearly all Catholics, he determined to secure the services of the Sisters in behalf of his sick and wounded, and immediately before his departure from Chicago he called on Reverend Mother Frances,* and obtained her promise that the suffering among his soldiers should be cared for by her children. The regiment left Chicago in the summer of 1861, and was finally stationed at Lexington, Missouri. In August, Lieutenant Shanley, of the "First Brigade," arrived in Chicago, having been sent by Colonel Mulligan to conduct the Sisters to Lexington. On September 3 six Sisters of Mercy, escorted by Reverend Mother Frances and her assistant, left Chicago under the

* From the roof of St. Agatha's Academy there was a good view of Camp Douglas, from which the inmates could see the soldiers drill. Many of the girls had fathers brothers, cousins in the army, who often took their companies past the academy to let their relatives have a view of the soldiers in battle array.

care of Lieutenant Shanley. The superiors were to return when the Sisters were settled in Lexington.

The hospital was to be in charge of Sister M. Alphonsus Butler, assisted by her companions. To those who had never been within sight or sound of "war's alarms," this appeared to be an undertaking of no small hazard. The Sisters believed they were risking their lives. "Yes," said one, "I was fully convinced I should never see Chicago again." They went by St. Louis to Jefferson City, from which point they were to proceed to Lexington. During their stay in Jefferson they were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Moseley, who were slave-holders and ardent sympathizers with the Southern cause. Nothing could exceed their attention and kindness to the Sisters, to whom they showed every mark of respect, and who enjoyed their magnificent hospitality during their stay in Jefferson. When they withdrew to St. Louis, they left their beautiful home at the full disposal of their valued guests.

It was rumored that Confederate forces were stationed along the river banks, and that communication with Lexington would be speedily cut off. The Sisters, therefore, embarked on the first boat leaving Jefferson, the *Sioux City*, which was to convey them to their destination. It was under the command of Lieutenant Shanley, who was conducting a detachment of troops to Lexington. Several ladies were on board, among whom was Mrs. Mulligan,* who, with her infant daughter, was going to join her husband. As the steamer proceeded up the river the rumors of "danger ahead" became more and more alarming. At length, at the earnest request of some of the ladies, Lieutenant Shanley gave orders to return to Jefferson. On reaching that city the officer in command directed that the ladies who

* Mrs. Mulligan and her sisters had been pupils of the Sisters of Mercy. The sisters of General Mulligan were also educated by them. Mrs. Mulligan is now pension agent in Chicago, a position which, strange to say, has always been held by a pupil of the Sisters of Mercy.

were not willing to undertake the voyage should be put ashore, and that the *Sioux City* should resume her voyage to Lexington. The second attempt, however, proved that the alarm of the ladies was not unfounded. Danger was constantly apprehended. It was given out as certain that the Confederates were stationed at Glasgow, a small town on the Missouri. When the boat came within a few rods of it, the Confederates were seen rushing from the woods on both sides of the river. Sister M. Alphonsus, who was saying her office on deck, saw the men on the right bank uncovering a cannon and preparing to fire. She hurriedly entered the state-room, saying: "Here they are!" "Who?" asked a Sister. "The Confederates!" she replied. While they were still speaking, they heard the whizzing and rattling of bullets outside. The head of the boat was immediately turned, but the firing from both sides of the river continued for some minutes. Had the assailants waited till the boat had come within range of the cannon, nothing could have saved her. Their impetuosity defeated their attempt. As it was, the escape of the boat was considered miraculous. The Sisters afterwards met a gentleman who was among the Confederates at Glasgow on this occasion. He told them that the Southerners never could account for the escape of the *Sioux City*. There were five hundred infantry on the right bank, and one thousand on the left. No one on board was wounded, but the boat was very much damaged. The pilot-house was completely riddled, as the "enemy" had aimed particularly at the helmsman. In justice to the chivalrous Southerners, it must be stated that they afterwards declared they did not know there were ladies on board when they fired on the boat—above all, the Sisters, for they were grateful to all who wore the religious habit. During the danger the other ladies were placed by the officers in the part of the boat which was least exposed. The Sisters stood in readiness to wait on the wounded, but blessed God there were none such this time. When all

peril was over, one of the Sisters caused much amusement by saying: "I continued to say my office all through the firing, so that I might have it finished before being shot."

During the return voyage much apprehension was felt, because the Confederates were supposed to be in ambush at different points. About ten miles below Glasgow the boat stuck in a sand-bar, and the efforts of the men to release her were more terrifying than the Southern bullets. This was the last attempt made to reach Lexington. The Sisters landed at Jefferson. Meanwhile, Colonel Mulligan's brigade of two thousand men was surrounded by General Price's men, supposed to number twenty thousand. For three days the brigade made a gallant resistance. Their supply of water had been cut off for forty-eight hours, when they surrendered to General Price, September 20, 1861. The general proved himself a generous enemy, and his noble conduct won the esteem and gratitude of his distinguished prisoner. The two brave men became sincere friends before they parted.

The Sisters continued to occupy the Moseley mansion; they experienced the greatest kindness and respect from the colored people left in charge of it. To these simple souls they were a great curiosity. The old house-keeper wanted all her friends to come see the Sisters, and numbers responded to her ardent invitations. These guests were very kindly treated by their hostesses. They were puzzled to account for the want of resemblance between persons related to each other, as they thought, in the first degree. "You say this lady is your sister," said one, "but she doesn't look like you at all, nor this one either." It took some time to make them understand that the relationship was not in blood, but in spirit and profession.

The Jefferson City Hospital for the sick and wounded soldiers was placed under the care of the Sisters. This charge they readily undertook at the request of the authorities, as their original project of going to Lexington had

proved impracticable. They found the poor soldiers in a wretched condition. The hospital, a very recently established institution, had not yet sufficient furniture. Convalescing soldiers, who were the only nurses, could not surely be expected to bestow on the sick the tender care they required.

No religious women had ever before been seen in Jefferson, and such of the soldiers as had heard of them had heard little to their advantage. The Sisters, therefore, on taking charge of the hospital, met with a very cold reception. They showed neither surprise nor annoyance at this, but very soon the coldness and prejudice disappeared, and was followed by appreciation and gratitude. On entering the hospital they found a poor soldier in a wofully neglected condition, lying on a blanket laid on the floor. The superior requested the nurse to allow her to have a little water. When she received it she knelt beside the poor sufferer and bathed his face and hands. The nurse, a rather stern person, stood by during the process. "May I ask, madam," said he when she finished, "is that man a relative of yours?" "No, sir," she replied; "I never saw him before; we are here to take care of the sick, and we attend every patient as we would our nearest and dearest relation." In a short time the Sisters, by their self-devotion, had gained the good will of the inmates and officers; and the hospital began to wear a better appearance. It took a good while, however, for the citizens and soldiers to become so accustomed to the Sisters as always to recognize them as such. One morning, as they were going processionally to Mass, they met a new detachment of soldiers, who stepped aside to allow them the side-walk. They kept a respectful silence until the Sisters had passed, when one turning to another inquired, "Who's dead?"

When General Fremont and his staff came to Jefferson, they at once visited the sick soldiers. Desiring to have an interview with the Sisters, the general was shown to their apartment just as they had assembled for their frugal meal.

When he knocked, the door was opened, and, to their great astonishment, he and his staff, in brilliant uniform, stood before them. The interview was a very pleasant one. General Fremont was on all occasions most courteous to them, and granted everything they asked. Eloquently did they represent to him the wants of the poor soldiers, for whom he promised to provide, and his promises were religiously kept. This officer was noted for his kindness to his soldiers, especially the sick.

The Sisters also received several visits from Colonel Mulligan and his brave little wife, an old pupil of theirs. When she heard of her husband's capture, although she had but just recovered from a severe illness, she made her way across the country to Lexington, to comfort him by her presence. Soon after he was paroled, and they journeyed homeward together, stopping at Jefferson on their way. Mrs. Mulligan gave the Sisters a glowing account of her husband's exploits, and moved them to tears by her description of his sufferings. She was justly proud of him, for, as was universally admitted at the time, he was a man whose like is seldom seen. To rare merit he added rare modesty, and were it not for the animated recital of his devoted wife, the Sisters would have heard but little of his thrilling adventures in Lexington.

Rev. William Walsh, of Jefferson City, was a sincere friend of the Sisters during their abode in the hospital, and they remember him with lively gratitude. On New Year's Day, 1862, they made their renewal of vows in his church. They also derived much comfort and support from the many kind and encouraging letters they received from their superior, Rev. Mother Frances. The warmest sympathies of this noble-hearted woman were aroused for her children, working in a cause so dear and sacred. She visited them during the fall, and frequently sent them contributions, provisions, and delicacies for their sick soldiers. These soon became so numerous that two more Sisters and several

elderly women and young girls were sent to their aid. An additional hospital was now required, and a building formerly used as a seminary was devoted to that purpose. The assistants of the Sisters wore a uniform of gray, and as all went to Mass every morning, when hospital duty permitted, the procession of the black and gray-robed maidens looked rather solemn.

Except in case of Catholics, the ministrations of the Sisters were confined chiefly to the bodily ills of the sick. They rarely touched on religious subjects save when the patient desired it. On one occasion they found a dying man whom they believed to be a Catholic. The Sister who attended him asked to what church he belonged. He looked cautiously around the ward and whispered: "I am ashamed to tell." "But," said she, "you should not belong to a church of which you are ashamed." The poor man then acknowledged that he was a Catholic, though, through human respect, he had concealed it until then. He need not have feared to make it known, for there was now no prejudice against Catholics among the soldiers. The Sister spoke words of advice and encouragement to the poor man—a brave soldier of earth, a mean soldier of Christ—and had the consolation of inducing him to receive the sacraments. His death took place soon after, and his fellow-soldiers, having arrayed him in his uniform, placed upon his bosom the crucifix which the Sister had given him. This act of reverence in men who seldom gave religion a thought surprised and pleased the Sisters not a little.

They remained in charge of the Jefferson City Hospitals until April, 1862, when, the army having been ordered to another division, their services were no longer required. They, therefore, made preparations to return to Chicago. The night before the day appointed for their departure they were much surprised by receiving a serenade from the military band. Next morning Father Walsh said Mass in

the hospital. The Sisters then bade "good-by" to the few soldiers who remained, and the poor fellows were very much affected at the parting.

When the Sisters reached St. Louis they were waited on by Mr. Yateman, Sanitary Commissioner, who requested them to take charge of the hospital department of the steamboat *Empress*, then about to start for the battle-field of Shiloh, in order to transfer the wounded to places where they could receive proper care. Many of the sick and wounded were on the battle-field, sheltered only by tents, and deprived of almost every comfort. When the necessary permission from home was obtained, the Sisters went aboard the *Empress*, bound for Pittsburgh Landing, which they reached on Palm Sunday. They had been anxious to reach it that day, hoping to be in time for Mass. But they were surprised and disappointed to find that, instead of being a town or village, Pittsburgh Landing consisted of only one house, a log-cabin, in which there was no prospect of hearing Mass. They went ashore at once to visit the sick and wounded of both armies, who were in separate tents, and distributed to the poor men some refreshments, which were most gratefully received. Next day the *Empress*, laden with sick and wounded, started for Keokuk, Iowa. There were over three hundred sufferers aboard, and the Sisters were occupied from early morning till midnight waiting on them and endeavoring to soothe their depressed spirits. The *Empress* reached Keokuk on Holy Saturday, April 16, 1862. The removal of the sick to the hospital began at once and occupied two days; during which time the Sisters were engaged in doing everything possible to ease the pains of their patients.

On Easter Sunday they had the happiness of hearing Mass and receiving the sacraments. The Sisters of Notre Dame, who were present at Mass, awaited the Sisters of Mercy at the church-doors, and, knowing they were fasting, invited them to come to their convent to breakfast. Much

as the Sisters appreciated their kindness, they were obliged to decline, as they had to return as quickly as possible to their sick on the hospital boat. In the evening the Visitation Nuns sent a message to invite the Sisters of Mercy to dine at their convent. This invitation was accepted, as the sick and wounded had had their wounds dressed, and were made as comfortable as possible. At the Visitation Convent they received much kindness and had the happiness of being present at Benediction.

At Mound City, the Holy Cross Sisters, under Mother Angela Gillespie, showed much kindness to the Sisters of Mercy.

Next day the *Empress* returned to Pittsburgh Landing for another cargo of sick, which she conveyed to St. Louis. She made many voyages of this kind. The Sisters strove to get delicacies of every kind for the sick wherever they landed, and in distributing these there were scenes at once amusing and touching. The poor men would gather around the Sisters like big children holding out their pieces of bread and begging for "just one little bit of jam." The Sisters, not having the heart to refuse any one, would give away all they had, trusting to kind Providence to send them more. The *Empress* also made a voyage to Louisville, where they placed under proper care the last cargo of the sick and wounded from the terrible battle of Shiloh. This concluded five weeks' service on the hospital boat, towards the end of May, 1862.* To this day they express gratitude for the kindness and almost reverential courtesy they experienced during their stay with the invalided soldiers. Accustomed to a life of seclusion and tranquillity, they did not venture on this undertaking without nerving themselves to encounter much that might be repugnant to

* At home, too, the Sisters of Mercy aided the soldiers. After the fall of Fort Donaldson, when the Southern prisoners were brought to Chicago, they were marched past the academy, and presented such a desolate appearance that the Sisters were moved to tears. They visited the sick and the prisoners in the camp, and gave them all possible aid and comfort.

their nature and profession. But none of their gloomy anticipations were realized. They always felt that they owed a special tribute to the brave men of both armies for the deference and courtesy they invariably received from Confederate and Federal alike. The soldiers under their care showed them a child-like docility and respect, and never was a word uttered in their presence by a warrior of either party that could offend the most delicate ear. "If," writes one of the survivors of the nursing band, "the man who knows how to treat woman with respect is himself worthy of respect, then all honor to the soldiers of the war, North and South."

Many pleasant occurrences took place in war times, the recital of which served to enliven the convent recreations for years after. The superior of the Sisters who were so long on what they humorously styled "the war-path," Sister M. Alphonsus Butler, was a simple, holy soul, devoted to the works of mercy, whose name is still held in benediction among the poor of Chicago, where she labored for nearly two generations. On taking charge of the military hospital, much advice was given her by people more experienced than herself as to her manner with soldiers, officials, and the strange characters with whom she was sure to come in contact in her new position. To say little, to be reserved, not to appear to notice unusual occurrences, to dissemble when certain things were said or done that might naturally shock her sense of propriety, as the men were not expected to be as precise in their language as scholars or saints, not to seek (unless absolutely necessary) any explanation of expressions she did not understand—in short, to do all that was possible for every one, but, according to the old monastic regulation, to go through the house as one blind, deaf, and dumb regarding everything outside her actual business. This was followed to the letter by the Sisters, and it was a common saying among the patients: "Oh! if we all minded our business and nothing else, like

the Sisters." Yet there occurred amusing incidents enough to fill a volume. Here is one which the good Sister M. Alphonsus used to tell with an air of inimitable drollery: Every Union soldier wore a belt with the initials U. S. A.—United States Army—on the left side. When a wounded man was brought to the hospital notice was given to her, and she would naturally inquire if the wound were serious. Sometimes the answer would be: No, it is only in the foot, or the hand, or the leg, or the arm; and these terms she fully understood. Occasionally it would be: "He is as good as dead, Sister; he cannot live, because he is wounded in the U. S. A.," or under the U. S. A., or near the U. S. A. And the poor Sister was greatly mystified as to what part of the human anatomy the U. S. A. was. But as the man did not tell her, she was afraid to ask. She thought of United States of America, "but what have they to do with the human body?" she reasoned. One day, however, a man was carried in from the field dead, his brother in most violent grief accompanying the body. Sister M. Alphonsus stooped to ascertain if he were really dead. "O Sister! it is no use to try to restore him," sobbed the poor brother; "he is a dead man; he has three bullets in the U. S. A." And he took off the belt and told her to look at the three bullet-holes under it. All at once the mystery was solved and the Sister could not help smiling at her own stupidity. The poor, heart-broken soldier said: "Are you smiling, Sister, and that is my twin brother lying dead? and how can I ever tell our poor mother?" Sister M. Alphonsus consoled him as tenderly as she could, and offered to help him to break the sad news to the bereaved mother. And when she had soothed and calmed him, she related to him how the U. S. A. region had been a mystery to her until he had solved it. And during the recital the poor fellow "smiled louder" than she did.

In those times, which already seem so remote, the Sisters were content to work under the direction of the physicians,

nor were these at all anxious to be supplemented or served by women who signed M.D. after their names. The Sisters were excellent nurses and skilful pharmacists; this was what the doctors wished and needed. The first woman who ever received a diploma in pharmacy in the State of Illinois was a Sister of Mercy. The Mercy Hospital was so celebrated for the exactness with which prescriptions were filled, the freshness and purity of the medicines, that many physicians sent their prescriptions to the hospital pharmacy. A careless druggist, whose store had been well-nigh abandoned, complained that persons who had never been declared competent by the proper authorities were accustomed to make up prescriptions, whereupon the head of the pharmaceutical department presented herself, with many of the candidates of both sexes, before the Illinois State Board of Pharmacy, and underwent a rigid examination, with results that distanced all other competitors. This year, 1888, a secular candidate having won some distinction when examined, Secretary Day said: "This reminds me of Sister I——, now in charge of the Mercy Hospital, who distanced the fifty-seven licentiates under examination, and won distinction as one of the most accomplished and well-informed pharmacists in the United States. If Miss O—— can maintain her present standard throughout the remaining papers, she may achieve nearly as great a distinction as Sister I——." But so far the record of the good Sister has not been duplicated by any licentiate of either sex.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

BEAUTIFUL SOULS.

A few Flowers from the Garden—Mother M. Borromeo—The Davenport Hospital—Testimony—A wild Girl—"I want to be like Sister."—Preference for the Poor and Lowly—Carville—Good Father Dunn—The Reform School—Bishop Smith—Bishop Duggan's fine Qualities—Self-abnegation—Example—Monument—Sister M. Cecilia Mangan—Strives never to waste a Moment—Occupations—Sister M. Alphonsus Butler—"A poor little Woman around the Corner"—Complimentary Correction—Father Dunn organizes the Irish Legion—Sisters to the War—First Night in a Military Hospital—Looking for the Captain—"You are the Man"—General Fremont's Deference for the Sisters—Shot by a Guerrilla—Repentance—Sister Benedicta—Devotion to the Sick—Her poor sick "Mans"—A Martyr of Charity—Sister Philomena—"The Feast of Death"—Sister Regis O'Mara—Mother M. Camillus—Drs. Patrick and John E. McGirr—Events—Debts—St. Patrick's Convent.

TO give an extended notice of all the beautiful souls that passed from the miseries of earth to the glories of heaven in the Mercy Convent, Chicago, would be simply impossible, considering the space at our disposal. But we will glance at a few of them, keeping chiefly to those with whom we had the honor of being personally acquainted. Mother M. Borromeo Johnson, a highly favored soul, was born in Wexford, July 24, 1830, and professed in Chicago, February 2, 1857. She established several houses in Iowa, and died a holy death, after months of agony, patiently born, in the last of her foundations, Davenport. A beautiful mortuary chapel has been erected over her precious remains by a priest who admired her tender care of the sick in the Davenport Mercy Hospital. This institution, an offshoot of the Chicago house, is charmingly situated amid groves and gardens some miles outside the city. The writer could not

fail to perceive even in one short visit that the whole place is, as it were, embalmed with recollections of this holy woman. "When I came to Chicago at the age of fifteen," says one of her successors, "a friend took me to Sunday-school at old St. Mary's. Here I met Sister M. Borromeo, the first Sister of Mercy I had ever seen. She was then a novice, and looked to me like an angel. You remember what she was in 1864? Well, she was much the same to the end. She was so white, and her features were so regular, that to me she always appeared like a piece of statuary. Her large, deep, blue eyes were so mild and so full of sympathy and love that they thrilled one."

In school the children not only loved her, but had an almost superstitious reverence for her. A pupil of hers, now a religious, was inclined to be wild, and she loves to tell how sweetly "the dear Sister" would chide her for her faults, never using sharp or sarcastic language, but showing real sorrow as if she herself had committed the error. She reproved, not because she had been troubled or disobeyed, but because God had been offended. "How we should grieve," she would say, "for being ungrateful to our dear Lord." This gentle lecturing did not do the wild girl much good at the time, "but," said she, "in later life it completely changed me." The wild girl of that day is now a staid religious, who tries to imitate the mild yet firm ways of her beloved teacher. "If asked at the time I applied for admission to the community," said she, "why I wished to become a religious, I would have answered, 'To be like Sister M. Borromeo.'"

This dear Sister always showed a preference for the poor and unfortunate; they received marked attention from her. As she felt that the school days of most of the children of the parochial schools would be few, she took special pains with them. Twenty-five or thirty years ago few of the Chicago people could afford to give their children the educational advantages they can now allow them. She was

greatly devoted to instructing children for the sacraments, and teaching them to become upright, pious, honorable women. Though her preference was so markedly for the lowly, she was often employed at the academy, called St. Agatha's. This was not then in Chicago, but in Carville, a point on the prairie so called because the Illinois Central car-shops were located there. It is now the site of the Mercy Hospital. There was no church nearer than St. Mary's, corner of Madison and Wabash, or St. Patrick's, a long distance on the West side. About twenty Catholic families came to St. Agatha's on Sunday to Mass. The priest had often to walk that distance, as the roads were too bad for horse or carriage riding. Good Father Dunn, who was confessor, came to St. Agatha's in all sorts of weather, and often walked the whole way from St. Patrick's to say Mass for the Sisters. More than once he was nearly lost in a snow-drift. He gave great assistance to Mother M. Borromeo, who was so devoted to the poor, by establishing in Chicago the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Dr. Dunn * was a man of much energy. He interested himself greatly in poor boys, and was the founder of the Reform School at Bridgeport. He was a devoted friend to the good mother of whom we write, and indeed to all Sisters of Mercy. Another friend of hers was Bishop Smith,†

* The Sisters of Mercy had no more devoted friend than Dr. Denis Dunn, whose death, as Dr. Clark truly says, "was accelerated by his misfortunes." None grieved more deeply than they at the sad circumstances which surrounded the close of his eminently holy and useful life. Their position at this unhappy epoch was most trying.

† Many bishops visited Chicago in these early days, among them Bishop O'Connor. In a letter from Mother M. Agatha to her friend in Pittsburgh, dated October 26, 1851, occurs this passage: "You are aware by this time that the dear, dear bishop has paid us an unexpected visit. Never was I more astonished than on last Sunday when called to see some strange gentlemen, and whom should I meet but my first dear father, the bishop, with Bishop Purcell, of Cincinnati. I was, as you may imagine, more than delighted to see him. He stayed in Chicago from Sunday morning till Monday evening. You may be sure I asked him a thousand questions about my first American home. And oh! how delighted I am to hear that all are doing so well! The bishop, accompanied by Bishop Purcell and Father Walter, visited all our humble establishments. He preached a delightful sermon at last Mass on Sunday. The people were greatly pleased. In the afternoon many Protestants came to Vespers to see

who was administrator from the time Bishop O'Regan left (1857) till Bishop Duggan came (in 1858), and to whom the community is indebted for many acts of kindness and courtesy. Bishop Duggan, too, was devoted to the good Mother M. Borromeo, and to the whole Sisterhood. They knew him in his palmiest days, and wept over the sad close of an episcopate that had opened so brilliantly. Before mental troubles assailed him he was an accomplished scholar, and a head of whom their educational establishments might well be proud. When Senator Douglas, the Democratic candidate for the Presidency just before the war, died, Bishop Duggan was invited to deliver the funeral oration, and his effort on that occasion was considered a master-piece of eloquence.

When the hospital fell to Mother M. Borromeo's charge she showed the same devotion to the sick as she had shown to the children. She always took her turn in sitting up all night with the Sisters on watch. Though naturally tender and kind, it was very hard for her to bring herself to dress a wound, or do anything disgusting, or wait on a patient of repulsive manners or appearance. Once there was a woman in her ward who was literally rotting away, the flesh falling off her bones. Two Sisters were cleansing this poor creature, and trying to change her clothing. Mother M. Borromeo came to assist, but they, knowing how hard it was for her, begged her to leave, but she would not. Every few minutes she had to leave, sick, but, determined to conquer herself, she would return almost fainting. Finally she so overcame her natural delicacy as to regard these services to the poor almost in the light of pleasures.

the bishops. . . . How really interested dear Bishop O'Connor is in our beloved Order and how much he loves the community! May God spare him to you for many years, for never again will his equal be found."

Bishop O'Connor was always ready to assist and advise the Chicago Sisters in their often perplexing circumstances. Mother Agatha once wrote: "I am determined always to look on Bishop O'Connor as mine, though probably I may never see him again."

"I have seen her," writes one who holds her in loving remembrance, "take her pail and scrubbing-brushes and, on her knees, scrub the hospital floor, and clean the doors and windows. She was always a model of industry and humility."

The doctors held a meeting at the time of her holy death and passed resolutions of sympathy with the community, which are kept by her bereaved children. They also put up a monument which reads : "Erected by Medical Friends in Memory of Rev. M. B. Johnson, Foundress of the Convent of Mercy, Davenport, Iowa, who died September 2, 1874, aged forty-two years."

Sister M. Callista Mangan, a pupil of the Mercy Convent—she never attended any other school—was first cousin to the present pastor of St. Gabriel's, also a pupil of the Sisters; she was professed by Bishop Foley in 1878. A most exemplary religious, she was never absent from any community exercise until compelled by illness. It was her practice not to lose a moment, and she was most exact about the rule of silence. For a long time she was music-teacher, and in the interval between the going out of one pupil and the coming in of another she made scapulars and other articles to give to the poor. In manner she was most amiable and obliging. After her death a little memorandum was found among her papers on which she had the names of all the sisters, and opposite each name the virtue she admired in each and was trying to practise. In one, obedience; in another, silence; in another, candor, and so on; she saw something good in each, and tried to profit by it. This dear Sister was a fine disciplinarian, and consequently was employed a good deal among the boarders in the recreation room and dormitory, to their great edification. For a year she lingered in consumption, and the Sisters who attended her to the painful close found her gentle patience and holiness a silent but most eloquent sermon. This

Sister died the death of the just, October 9, 1883, aged twenty-eight years, having spent eight years in the Mercy Institute.

Sister M. Alphonsus Butler, who has already been mentioned in connection with the war, was enthusiastically devoted to the sick. Miss Butler was born in Galway, February 2, 1822, entered the Mercy Institute in 1850, and was professed by Mother M. Agatha, March 28, 1853. For the greater part of her religious life she had charge of St. John's Schools, which occupied her time from about eight A.M. to four P.M. She had, therefore, little leisure on school-days to visit her *protégées*. Indeed, superiors, thinking such a day's work enough, would not easily appoint any one to go with her, but simply say: "Well, dear, if you can find any one willing to go, you may go." Then Sister M. Alphonsus would beg some one to join her "just to visit one poor little woman around the corner." But once she was out she found many poor sick people, and, being a great walker, would tire out her companion. The Sisters were all afraid to go out with her, especially on days on which there was no school. For on such days, when she had seen "the poor sick woman around the corner," she would explore all the alleys and tenement-houses in the district. The people all knew her and were delighted to see her. They called her "Sister Al-Francis." She had a way of her own just suited to the poorer classes. "Of course," she would say to one of her friends, "you are a good Catholic Irishman. It's not you that would miss going to Mass on a Sunday." The reply would come: "Indeed, I'll tell you the truth, Sister, and shamed I am to say it: I was not at Mass Sunday; 'tis somewhere else I was. But I promise you, with God's help, to go next Sunday." Next Sunday she would look in on her friend about Mass-time to congratulate him on keeping his promise.

In a similar way she would "get after them" about approaching the Sacraments, always complimenting them and

telling them what a high opinion she entertained of them. Then they would come out with all, and promise better things for the future, she assuring them that she knew they never meant anything but good.

In 1862 work of another species claimed the zealous Sister. Dr. Dunn organized a Catholic regiment called the Irish Legion, of which he was, by acclamation, elected colonel. There was some joking about his exchanging the canon law for the law of cannon, but he formed the companies, because otherwise the men would have been drafted, and he thought it best to keep them together and send a chaplain with them. "Father Dunn's Regiment" was mustered into service as the Ninetieth Illinois. Father Kelly was chaplain. Dr. Butler, now of St. John's, was chaplain of Mulligan's Brigade. The services of the Sisters were sought for the soldiers, but, as we have seen, though they rendered good service elsewhere, they were never able to reach those for whom they had been specially asked.

The first night of their stay in Jefferson City a man knocked at the door of their apartments shortly after they had retired, and asked if the captain was there. Although Sister M. Alphonsus was in charge of the Sisters, Mother M. Francis, who had come with Mother Borromeo to see them settled, would not allow her to be disturbed, but answered, without opening the door, that the questioner was making a mistake; these were the Sisters' quarters. "I know that," said he, "and that is why I thought the captain was here." The tone in which this was said was such that the good mother knew it was meant for an insult. She immediately dressed, called up Sister M. Alphonsus and the rest, and all sat up the remainder of the night, but without disturbing the women who had accompanied them as nurses and who slept in an adjoining room. Next morning Mother M. Francis went into the corridor and asked for the man who had been on watch the preceding night. The soldier she

addressed said he would look for him. In a short time he returned, saying the night-watch could not be found. But she recognized the voice, and said in her own firm, determined way : " You are the man." He became frightened, and acknowledged that he was. She then learned he was a violent Orangeman, and wanted to insult the Sisters. The affair reached the ears of General Fremont, who was exceedingly annoyed about it. He gave orders that the Sisters should be treated with the greatest respect, and that any one failing in this particular should be rigorously punished, as the Sisters had been invited to take care of them in their hour of need. Our good Sister M. Alphonsus, however, had great compassion on the benighted Orangeman, and prayed and begged prayers for his conversion. Shortly after the poor fellow was shot by a guerrilla. He asked for the Sisters, who came at once to instruct and comfort him. He was baptized, and died a fervent Catholic. He most humbly begged pardon for the offence he had offered them, but which they did not accept as such ; said he had watched them closely, and had become a Catholic because he had been convinced by their heroism that the religion they professed must be the true faith.

Worn out by labors, this zealous worker among the poor, sick, and ignorant died the death of the just February 21, 1883, having spent thirty-three years in the Order.

We will notice here two German lay Sisters, who edified the whole community by their great devotedness to the sick. They were strong, young, healthy, and splendid nurses when they entered, August 31, 1850, a few weeks after their arrival from Germany. Both were sent to the hospital, where they spent the rest of their lives. Sister Benedicta (Elizabeth Schlamer) knew something of medicine, and could wash and dress wounds as well as any surgeon. Untiring in her care of the sick, she was sure to be with them late at night and early in the morning. The

poorer and more disgusting they were, the more she did for them. She would wash, comb, and dress the dead, men or women, it made no difference to her. She would coffin them in the dead of night, and carry them to the dead-house with the help of any one she could get. But, above all, she would see that the sick were prepared for the sacraments and had the comfort of a visit from the priest. She would wait for the chaplain after Mass, and beseech him to come see her poor sick "mans." She was as attentive about their spiritual as their temporal welfare, and most successful in promoting both.

The priests used to dread meeting her when they happened to be in a hurry, for she had so much perseverance that she would not let them go till they promised to do what she asked of them. She fell a victim to her zeal for the sick; took typhus fever from an emigrant whom she nursed, and it proved to be her road to heaven. She died May 5, 1856. It must have been difficult for this dear Sister to persevere in the community, for when she entered the convent she did not know one word of English. And the prayers and spiritual reading, in a language she understood not, could not have given her much spiritual comfort. But she was loved by all for her great charity and zeal for the sick, and although her years in the community were few she is still fondly remembered. Her example lives in memory for the old, and by tradition for the young, who are counselled to imitate the fervor and zeal of this self-sacrificing religious.

Her companion, Sister Philomena (Anne Schwart), who died of heart-disease, October 22, 1880, was equally devoted to the suffering. The death of the one seemed to draw the other nearer to God. She never learned English well, and always used her German prayer-book. As to spiritual exercises she was most exact, and liked to see others the same. It was a fault of her character that she was inclined to be austere. A few days before she died the Sisters were

celebrating some joyful festival, and one happening to meet her said : " I hope you are enjoying the feast to-day." She raised her eyes and hands to heaven and said : " I shall enjoy the feast of death." On the last day of her life she arose as usual when the calling-bell rang. When partly dressed she grew weak and was obliged to lie down. Again and again she essayed to rise, but could not. Then she called a Sister, who informed the superior. The priest and the doctor were summoned, but, though both were in the house, she was dead before they reached her. But all felt that though her death was sudden it was not unprovided, and that no one in the house was more fit to go without special preparation than she. For Sister Philomena had always lived in close union with God, and was filled with charity for all, especially the sick and the poor.

Another worthy member, who, however, came rather late in life (at the age of thirty-four), was Sister M. Regis O'Mara. She was tenderly devoted to the orphans, in particular the infants, many of whom were foundlings. The good Sister invented a mode of fastening four or five cradles together and rocking them all at once with her foot, while her hands were employed in other works for them. A simple, humble, holy soul, entirely unworldly, it might be said of her as of a fragrant but not beautiful flower, that her qualities surpassed her charms. Always at her post, she took her rest in the children's dormitory, and, like a devoted mother as she was, she watched over her treasures day and night, and never became weary or impatient in so troublesome a charge. Her death was like her life, calm and peaceful. Bishop Foley preached her funeral sermon. And the present Archbishop of San Francisco, with Fathers D. Riordan, Waldron, and almost all the clergy of the city, attended her *Requiem*. Hers was the first funeral from the new hospital chapel. She died July 8, 1875, in the sixtieth year of her age.

The first buried from the new convent chapel was Mo-

ther M. Camillus Crowley.* She entered in the time of good Mother M. Agatha, and shared the labors of the early members both in Chicago and in Galena. Being an accomplished musician, Mother Camillus took much interest in getting a grand organ for the chapel of the new convent. It came, but her fingers never touched it. The first music ever played on it was her own *Requiem*. She died of typhoid fever, September 8, 1873, in the fortieth year of her age and the twentieth of her profession. Her funeral sermon was preached by Father Verdan, S.J., as Bishop Foley was not then in Chicago. The bishops of Chicago, when in the city, always presided and generally preached at the obsequies of the Sisters of Mercy.

On October 23, 1870, died the Sisters' early friend, teacher, and benefactor, the accomplished Dr. John E. McGirr. His attendance at all their institutions was given gratuitously, and he furnished medicines as well as professional advice. He also taught chemistry, physiology, and other branches in their schools. He had left Chicago on account of failing health, and died in Pittsburgh, aged fifty-one. His father, also a benefactor,† died at the Mercy Hospital at the age of eighty-four.

* Thirty-nine members of the Chicago Sisterhood have gone to join "the community in heaven" since 1856. among them two reverend mothers, Mother M. Agatha, and her successor, Mother M. Paula Ruth. The latter was born in Kilkenny, 1829, entered the Chicago Convent in her twentieth year, became superior at the age of twenty-five, and died one year after, August 2, 1855. Part of the old cemetery, beautifully situated (where now stand the archbishop's residence and Lincoln Park) on the Lake shore, was allotted to the Sisters. nineteen of whom reposed there. Over twenty-five years ago their remains were removed to the new cemetery, where all who have since been called away are interred. The Sisters' portion is on the first avenue, to the left of the entrance. It is very well laid out and curbed, but the headstones were not transferred from the old cemetery. It is the intention to place new ones on the graves very soon. The title of the square is cut into the stone at the entrance, and the emblem is a dove with an olive branch in its beak, fitting type of peace.

† Dr. Patrick McGirr gave up practice several years before his death, and spent most of his time in praying in the chapel. The patients were desirous of being visited by him to the last. There was another old doctor in the hospital of whom they were not so fond. "I'd be better long ago," said a sick man to Mother M. Vincent McGirr, "if I only had a doctor who was any good. The fellow that attends me is an old volume, good for nothing but saying his prayers."

Among the clergy who were administrators of the diocese of Chicago in early times were Father Walter Quarter, who returned to New York in Bishop Vandeveld's time; Father Dillon, and Bishop Smith—all devoted friends of the Sisterhood.

The old convent on Wabash Avenue was intended by Bishop Quarter for his own residence, and merely lent by him to the Sisters. But as one of his successors built a splendid white marble mansion facing the Lake shore, the Sisters took the deeds of the old house in exchange for other property, and used it as their mother house till the whole district was swept away by the great fire. Bishop Quarter intended to build a Convent of Mercy on the North side, where the cathedral now stands. Mr. Ogden, first mayor of Chicago, gave the bishop a large tract of land unconditionally. The Holy Name Church was built on it, but after the fire was rebuilt on the square given for educational purposes; its former site was sold by Bishop Foley. The Sacred Heart Convent and parish school are now in the same block with the cathedral. After the fire Bishop Foley offered the site of these institutions to the Sisters of Mercy, but they could not build on it at the time, 1872, as they were building St. Xavier's. He then offered it to any community that could build, and it was accepted by the religious who now occupy it. It was formerly occupied by Bishop Quarter's university, St. Mary's of the Lake.

The extent of the indebtedness of the Chicago institutions became public in May, 1873. Mother M. Genevieve Granger paid ninety thousand dollars, interest and back debts, the first year she was in office. The fifty acres bought by Mother M. Agatha * had now become of im-

* Mother M. Agatha purchased property with a foresight that would have made the fortune of a speculator. "Bishop O'Connor told me," she writes, "of your beautiful convent at Pittsburgh. Please God, if ever we build a new one here it will be on the same plan. We are dreadfully crushed for space, but we must have patience till Providence sends us means to build. *We have a great deal of property in the city which is very valuable, but we don't want to sell it yet.*" Some of this would now bring four hundred times the amount she paid for it.

mense value, but were heavily mortgaged. The Park bills passed about that time, which increased the taxes for park improvements, and the Sisters were unable to hold that property. It was with immense effort that they saved five acres of it as a site for an educational establishment which they intend to build in the near future. The Mercy Hospital and St. Xavier's were sold in the winter of 1876. Bishop Foley held the deeds at the time of his death, but Archbishop Feehan returned them to the community. The Sisters at first paid ten per cent. interest, but during the administration of Dr. McMullen the interest was reduced to seven per cent. They now pay five and a half per cent., and have greatly reduced the principal. The debt on the hospital and academy at the time of the sale was one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. God has signally blessed the efforts of the Sisters, and within a few years they hope to have all their institutions free of every encumbrance.

The Convent of Mercy, St. Patrick's, was built by Archbishop Feehan, whose sister, Mother M. Catherine Feehan, is superior of that flourishing establishment. It includes a fine academy and large parochial schools.

CHAPTER XL.

THE GREAT FIRE.

Chicago in 1871—A rainless Season—Fire October 7—Mrs. O'Leary and her Cow exonerated—Secessionists—Anarchists—The Cloud of Fire—Convent in Danger—Blessed Sacrament removed—Flight—Terrible Scenes—Martial Law proclaimed by General Sheridan—Incidents—Honesty—Hope against Hope—All in Vain—Mother M Vincent's Adventures—Mr. John Bonfield—Bishop Duggan's Pectoral Cross—The jewelled Crown—Better Drown than Burn—Anecdotes—Neither Gas nor Water—Distressing Scenes—Patients—Extent of the Calamity—Universal Benevolence.

IN 1871 the population of Chicago was over three hundred thousand. It had increased far more than tenfold since the advent of the Mercy Sisterhood. It was the great commercial emporium for the whole Northwest. Every kind of merchandise was to be found there. Fortunes were made with incredible rapidity by real estate and other kinds of speculation. The stimulus given to trade by the war did not seem to subside as in other places. But, when least expected, an awful check came to this abnormal prosperity.

The summer and autumn of 1871 were rainless in and about the city. The country was exhausted of moisture. It was even said that the night refused her refreshing dews to the thirsty earth. The prairie-grass was hay, and the marshes turf or peat, of a highly combustible nature. Many of the buildings were frame of the cheapest construction, thrown up, as in all cities of sudden growth, for the shelter of the hundreds who flocked thither, allured by those incentives which attract men to new regions. In short,

everything seemed prepared for a conflagration, which, nevertheless, no one expected.

About ten o'clock Saturday night, October 7, a fire broke out on Clinton Street, which, owing to a strong south wind and the state of the buildings, was brought under control with great difficulty. On Sunday, about nine o'clock P.M., while the Sisters were at prayers, a fire broke out six blocks west of the first, in a cow-stable. The whole world has heard of Mrs. O'Leary's cow, and the kerosene-lamp which that restive animal kicked over when her mistress was milking her on that peaceful Sabbath evening; and of the fatal consequences of that murderous fluid which laid a city in ashes. True, the stable of the O'Leary household was burned, and the fate of the historic cow is a mystery. But Mrs. O'Leary herself, in mortal terror of being arrested as an incendiary, barricaded the doors and windows of her domicile, and lay *perdu* on the top story until Chicago enterprise—alert even on that awful night—discovered her. She then solemnly and stoutly denied all knowledge of the catastrophe on her own part, and on part of her calumniated cow. And, indeed, the first fireman on the spot partly exonerated this much maligned pair, for, after the closest investigation, he declared that he could not ascertain the barn or stable in which the fire had originated, nor could the watchmen who held their lonely vigils on the city towers.

What is to our purpose is, that the Sisters were disturbed at night-prayers by smothered noises at a distance, which were no small distraction to them. Good Mother M. Vincent, who was giving out the Litany of the Saints, laid down her book and left the chapel. She had scarcely done so when the court-house bell rang out a general alarm. She was at that epoch as much afraid of the secessionists as she has since been of the anarchists. "They are now," she said, "going to destroy Chicago, as they often threatened, for being such a Union city." At this every one smiled,

and most of the Sisters, knowing that many years had passed since there was anything to fear from the secessionists—in 1871 an extinct body—and not knowing what other danger to apprehend, retired to rest as usual. But not for long. They followed Mother M. Vincent's example, and watched "from window and casement." From a great distance they saw advancing toward them a trail of fire, increasing in width and volume every moment. Sometimes it crossed the great business blocks diagonally, driven by a furious southwesterly wind, and irresistible in its progress. It dashed embers and fire-brands in every direction, and the wooden buildings in its path were annihilated in a moment. Some of the Sisters said they thought the whole city would be destroyed, and about eleven o'clock it was decided to send for carriages to convey the inmates of the two houses to the Hospital. The smaller children were sent off first, then the larger; then the inmates of the House of Mercy and most of the Sisters. No one thought at this time that the flames would come as far as the convent. At midnight Father Gavin, assistant at St. Mary's, came to remove the Blessed Sacrament. He advised the rest to leave, saying he felt sure the whole place would be consumed before morning.

The inmates of the House of Mercy took out their sewing-machines and other things, and the Sisters saved many valuable articles belonging to the chapel, but everything was burned in the streets. From the roofs and windows of the convent could be seen a ghastly yet brilliant sight. Midnight was bright as mid-day. A fiery pall was extending over the doomed city. Bells were ringing, walls were falling with many a heavy thud, flames were leaping from doors and windows of public buildings; the very fire-proof edifices were melting in the burning air, the light was dazzling in its intensity. There were billows of fire, quivering columns of flame, fiery arches, flames assuming every fantastic shape; hot walls fell into the water and sent up pil-

lars of fiery spray. Homeless women and children rent the air with their useless wailings, their feeble voices often drowned by the steady roar of advancing flames. The Sisters hoped against hope as they kept their awful vigils. Fascinated, as it were, they continued, as if dazed, to gaze upon the terrible scene. Half-crazed creatures were risking their lives at every turn, demoralized wretches yelled and cursed above the growling and hissing of the flames. It seemed as if a thousand mad-houses had been emptied into the streets of the flaming city. How could the Sisters that remained after midnight go through such streets? It seemed certain death to venture out of their convent home. There was fire north, south, and west of them; the only place free from flames was Lake Michigan. Yet they could not believe that their home, the fruit of so many prayers and tears, was doomed.

Some gentlemen, relatives and friends of theirs, now crowded in to help them save anything that could be easily removed. Many valuable things, whole cases of serge, nuns' veiling, and linen were loaded on trucks only to be burned in the transit.* Some much-prized paintings were saved by cutting them out of the frames. A gentleman, whose name the Sisters were sorry to have forgotten, admired one picture very much. It was the "Presentation in the Temple" by one of the old masters, and had been sent to the Sisters from Lyons by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Mother M. Camillus, who wanted to save her grand piano, told him he might have the picture if he would save her instrument. He did so, and cut the coveted painting out of the frame and took it with him.

* And this continued, like the fire itself, for days. The sidewalks which the flames had not reached were covered with valuables; men, women, and children were trying to save what was precious to them; thieves were plying their nefarious vocation on all sides; barrels of whiskey, wine, and beer were rolled out of saloons, the heads knocked off in a moment, and crowds drinking themselves drunk. On October 11 General P. H. Sheridan, who had already done good service to the hapless city, proclaimed martial law.

Some months after he returned it, telling the Sisters he did not wish to keep so valuable a work of art for the trifling services he had rendered them on that dreadful night. The piano taken out with so much labor was ashes in less than an hour.

In the vacation of 1871 the Sisters had spared no labor or expense on their schools. The study had been newly fitted up; maps, charts, globes, philosophical instruments were selected irrespective of cost; the studio was furnished with new models; everything was polished up, just ready, as they afterwards said, for a whole burnt-offering. Mother M. Vincent had been all night watching the progress of the fire. "Surely something will stop it before it reaches us," she would say; "the Blessed Mother of Mercy will not let this house, in which she is so much honored, burn." When she saw destruction was inevitable, she thought about what she would try to save, and concluded in favor of a tin box, given her by her sister, Mother M. Xavier, and filled with scraps of silk and cloth for *Agnus Dei*s and scapulars! She brought it down one flight of stairs and left it on the table of the community room. Some Sisters who came to hurry her off making fun of her when they saw what she was saving, she went down-stairs with them, fully intending to return for it. But a man with a buggy made his appearance at this juncture, and forced her into it, not allowing her to wait for her companion, who returned for something. He drove furiously through the scalding air until he reached the Wabash Avenue Hotel, corner Twenty-second Street, quite out of the range of the fire, and then bade her get out, which she strenuously refused to do, entreating him to take her to the Mercy Hospital. He then lifted her out, set her on the sidewalk, whipped up his horse, which he called "Dolly," and left her alone in the street about two o'clock Monday morning. A friend picked her up and drove her to the hospital.

About a week after, as she was standing near a window,

she saw a man approaching with a green box just like hers. All of a sudden she said aloud: "Oh! there is my green box." Always quick in her movements, she almost flew down-stairs, met the man on the stoop, and took the box out of his hands. He was astonished at her abruptness till he heard the story of the box. He had taken special care of it, and brought it home as early as he could, thinking it contained deeds or valuable papers. Indeed, he had rushed through the blinding smoke to secure it. The gentleman who laid the Sisters under these and many other obligations was Mr. John Bonfield, brother to Mother M. Agatha, and to-day Inspector of Police. He was in the convent when it took fire. Indeed he pushed the last of the Sisters out of the house. It was while rushing through the rooms to see if any one else loitered that he had discovered the box. Even after this, Sister M. Victoire,* a Canadian, one of the seniors, rushed to the chapel like one crazed, to see what she could save. Seizing a pair of candlesticks, she ran with them to the front door. Some one exclaimed: "Oh! why did you not take the cross and Our Lady's crown?" And she started back to get them. But flames and smoke were issuing through the windows, and she would not have come out alive had not some man, whose identity was never made known to her, literally dragged her down-stairs. The cross had belonged to poor

* This good Sister joined the Sisterhood about forty years ago, but would not take a prize to-day for reading, writing, or speaking English. She came from a part of Canada where coal was never used. One morning she was sent to make a fire. Having never seen coal she did not know how to use it; she put some lumps in the grate, applied lighted matches, but of course the coal would not burn. Bishop Vandeveld, in coming from the chapel to the breakfast-room, stopped and inquired in French what she was trying to do. She told him she had never seen such stubborn fuel; that she could not get any good of it. He took her to the parlor to Mother M. Agatha, and teased her about lighting a hard-coal fire with a match. She has always made a good deal of innocent fun for her companions. She asked a peddler for how much a bushel he sold his straw. She sent a man to buy her a bag of gruel, meaning meal. Whenever she leaves the house she has an adventure, for she invariably loses her way. When bantered about these little peculiarities she takes it very good-humoredly, and apologizes for the trouble she gives her companion by saying: "You know, *chère*, I could never learn *localité*."

Bishop Duggan. It was his pectoral cross, and was of magnificent workmanship. A relative had it suspended by a gold chain and placed on Our Lady's statue, in the fond hope that he would soon be sufficiently restored to reclaim it. The crown was set with real gems. No trace of either was ever discovered.

The last Sisters who left the building thought they could never get through the fire, for it had now gone south of them on State Street. Sister Victoire, thinking they were driving through a furnace, tried to open the carriage-door that she might rush towards the lake, "for, at the worst," said she, "I should rather drown than be burned to death." Many persons did get out of carriages to escape to the lake, but most of them were among the three hundred* killed on that awful night. The Sisters were filled with gratitude to God because not one of their household was hurt, or even lost. And on a night when wagons or carriages could scarcely be got for love or money—those who had them charged exorbitant prices for them—the Sisters were supplied with the vehicles they needed. Forty young women of the Industrial Home, fifty boarders, and sixty Sisters, badly frightened indeed but unhurt, reached the hospital in safety, after adventures that would fill a good-sized volume. "The first intimation I had of the fire," writes a Sister then at the hospital, "was when called to receive these guests. They said Chicago was in flames. I roused my companion with this information. Without opening her eyes she stretched her hand to the wall and quietly remarked: 'This is not hot yet, so I won't get up.'"

This good Sister went down-stairs to see what she could do for the refugees. She encountered Mother M. Vincent, who told her of the solitary ride she had had with the strange man, who by force set her on the side-walk, saying

* The real number killed that night will never be known ; three hundred is an underestimate.

he had to go back and save his books and papers. He was very kind, indeed, to take her so far on such a night. The Sisters never learned the name of a gentleman to whom they were so much indebted. Mother M. Vincent, however, thought only of her own misery wandering about the streets in the small hours. But providentially she met Mrs. Tolansbee, wife of a prominent citizen, who inquired if the Sisters were burned out. This lady had just arrived in her own carriage from the burned district accompanied by some ladies. She told Mother M. Vincent to get in, and bade the driver take her to the hospital. He objected that he had directions to go back for other things, but his mistress insisted. Very reluctantly he drove the poor mother to the corner of Prairie Avenue and Twenty-sixth Street, dropped her, and desired her to make the rest of the way herself. As he had put her out where the Medical College now stands, she had only a square to walk. She then realized that she was alone. "Oh! what will the Sisters think to see me coming in this manner at such an hour?" she exclaimed. But, indeed, her arrival eased their minds concerning her.

Meanwhile, children and people came crowding in from all points. The gas-works were destroyed and the house would have been in total darkness had not the Sisters had some candles for the use of the altar. The convent took fire from State Street. Those who were keeping watch looked towards Wabash Avenue, and the rear of the convent was on fire before they knew it. Despite the progress of the flames, some Sisters started back at this time, but Mr. Bonfield would not permit them to go near the place, for many houses larger than the convent were level with the earth five minutes after the first flame reached them.

The water-works and gas-works were destroyed, and the city was two weeks without water and a long time without gas. In about a week mattresses and bedding were given

the hospital by the Aid and Relief Society. Food and clothing soon came in abundance from all parts, and water they got in barrels from the lake. At first people suffered fearfully from want of water. All were so begrimed with smoke and soot that one could not tell a white man from a black man. Many were brought to the hospital badly burned, having inhaled smoke; these suffered untold agony, but did not live long. A rather bigoted Englishman, about thirty-five years old, who had a wife and children in England, while escaping from his hotel put up his hands to save his face, and got them so badly burned that he was never after able to use them. During the nine months he remained at the hospital he had to be fed and cared for like a babe. He was most grateful to the Sisters for their attention, and soon asked to be instructed in a religion which made them so kind to him, a stranger. He was baptized, made his first Communion, and was confirmed before leaving. On his return to England he wrote frequently to his friends in the Mercy Hospital.

It was by a special providence that this institution had just been made ready to accommodate an immense number. An addition of one hundred and fifty feet front, with two deep wings, had just been completed, making it the finest hospice then in the city. Delightfully situated near Lake Michigan, of which there is a noble view from the upper windows, it was entirely out of the range of the fire. Only a small portion was occupied October 8, 1871, but it was soon filled to overflowing. Every available spot from cellar to attic was brought into requisition, as people, left homeless by the unmerciful flames, came thither for shelter. Many were suffering from injuries received while effecting escape from burning buildings, and hundreds of faces and hands were blistered by the scorching heat.

One hundred thousand people, or about one-third of the inhabitants of Chicago, were rendered homeless that night; 2,124 acres of the most thickly settled portion of the city

was a waste ; 17,450 buildings were destroyed. But the charity evoked was in proportion to the calamity. In a few days bread, clothing, and all the necessities of life poured into the stricken city. And the contributions in money, sent literally from the whole world, were little short of three million dollars.* It was not for long that human beings were huddled together in the parks and on the prairies ; all that charity and benevolence could do for them was speedily done.

* In money and goods it reached nearly seven million dollars.

CHAPTER XLI.

OTHER INCIDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE GREAT FIRE.

Changes caused by the Fire—Bishop Foley's Exclamation—The old Convent—Relics—Bishop Quarter's Cathedral in ashes—Another St. Mary's—Bishop Quarter's Monument defaced—No Truth in a Sensational Rumor—Beautiful but sad Obsequies of Bishop Quarter—The Sisters' Losses—Awful Distress, but world-wide Charity—Pathetic Details—Dr. Hess—The Destruction of the Marine Hospital—The Marines received at the Mercy Hospital—Their Docility and Politeness to their Sisters—Edifying Examples.

AT the time of the fire the Sisters of Mercy taught the St. Louis* schools, Sherman Street near Polk. But the church and schools destroyed on that fearful night were never rebuilt. There arose so many railroad depots and monster warehouses in the neighborhood that the locality was deemed unsuitable for church or school purposes. Father Noonan, the worthy pastor, died from disease contracted by over-work and exposure on that awful occasion. Bishop Foley was not at home when the fire occurred; he was making a visitation of his diocese. When he returned and found his episcopal city in ruins and partially deserted—hundreds had left on every out-going train—he exclaimed with tears: "Oh! where are my people?" He sent priests about collecting to rebuild the churches, and, full of energy and enterprise himself, encouraged all to do their respective parts towards raising the city from its ashes.

* The Sisters' warm friend, Dr. McMullen, afterwards Bishop of Davenport, was pastor of St. Louis Church till he was made President of the University of St. Mary's of the Lake.

For some cause or other, possibly a change in the wind, the old convent * did not fall as soon as many other buildings treble its size. It was still standing at nine A.M. on Monday. But at half-past nine not a vestige of it remained. When the Sisters went to view the ruins the only thing that retained any form was the marble statue of our Lady of Mercy that stood in an oratory over the front door on a beautiful marble altar. It had fallen outward on the stoop; the head and hands were broken. They took it home, had the head fastened on, and kept it as a relic of the happy early days. It may still be seen in a glass house in the garden of the new convent. In the library is a still older relic—a picture of the crucifixion, brought from Europe in Bishop Quarter's time. It was the first altar-piece in St. Mary's Church, and occupied the same position in the Mercy Convent at the time of the fire. Some months after two Sisters saw it in the basement of the present St. Mary's. No one knew how it had come there, but it was restored to the community to the great delight of all, especially the older members.

Bishop Quarter's Cathedral, corner of Madison Street and Wabash Avenue, and the fine episcopal residence near it, built by Bishop O'Regan, having been reduced to ashes, Bishop Foley purchased a Protestant church, corner of Wabash Avenue and Eldridge Court, and converted it into a Catholic church. At the same time, being homeless, he

* The dearest recollections and associations clung about the old convent. In 1851 Mother M. Agatha gives a pleasant picture of the good done there. Speaking of a visit of Bishop Henni and other prelates, she says: "I suppose they saw we were doing the best we could. Although everything here is plain and humble, still it is almost incredible the good that is being done for our holy religion. You can scarcely imagine the amount of labor which our dear Sisters go through; yet all, thank God, is perfect peace, perfect unity. And oh! dear Sister, is not that preferable to all other things? We have now charge of three Sunday-schools, St. Mary's (Cathedral), St. Patrick's, and the Holy Name. These are all about two miles apart, yet we have to walk. We have also two free schools well filled, two asylums containing eighty-six orphans, the hospital, and select school. From this you can imagine all that is to be done. We have to struggle to make ends meet, but yet have all that is necessary, and what more should religious desire?"

accepted the hospitality of the Jesuits. The Sisters used the basement of the newly bought building as a school. From this parish, St. Mary's, Mass was celebrated for the first time, July 1, 1888, in the Cook County Poor-house, located at Jefferson, about five hundred persons attending. This parish, the first established in Chicago, has now only about twenty families, who, with "the help" at hotels and travellers in general, compose St. Mary's congregation.

Bishop Quarter's cenotaph, erected in old St. Mary's by the Protestants as much as the Catholics of Chicago, was not wholly destroyed. The Sisters prize its remains and part of the marble altar of the old convent as relics. The letters in relief were badly broken. W. and M., and part of the name, Quarter, were all that could be deciphered. Bishop Foley had the bishop's body, which was intact, transferred from beneath Our Lady's altar in the burned church to Calvary Cemetery.*

And here it may be remarked that there was no truth in the sensational rumor that Bishop Quarter, whose sancity of life and personal magnetism had won all Chicago for his friends, did not die a natural death. It was said that a wretched man, to whom he had refused some request, had entered his sleeping-room through the window and given him a blow which caused the brain disease he died of; and this intruder was thought to be identical with a man who afterwards committed suicide by opening the jugular-vein.

Mother M. Agatha, who was at once summoned to the bishop's bed-side, found him dead when she reached it. An artist of the city took a plaster cast of his head and face,

* Of the deceased bishops of Chicago, Bishop Vandeveld is buried in Natchez; Bishop O'Regan, in Ireland; Bishop Foley, in Baltimore. It was considered in keeping with the fatality supposed to be attached to the episcopal office in Chicago that Bishop Quarter's remains could not be left in peace in the spot he had selected, that the church which sheltered them burned over them, and that his beautiful monument was broken and defaced. "As he had no trouble in life," said the old people, "he must have some after death."

which remained uncovered until his burial. The Sisters of Mercy relieved each other at the bier during the day, and the students of the university watched at night. Almost every citizen of Chicago visited the sacred remains, and one of this large number, thinning out with pathetic rapidity every year, tells the writer that, had such a blow been given, it would have been impossible to conceal the wound it would have left.*

A pleasing feature of the obsequies, so touchingly and graphically described by Dr. McGirr, was the presence of the pupils of the Convent of Mercy, dressed in white and bearing lighted tapers. Altogether this was the most beautiful though the saddest celebration that ever took place in the old porticoed and pillared cathedral, which the early settlers considered second only to St. Peter's in Rome, and which, with so many other mementoes of the brave past of Chicago as a frontier town, perished in 1871.

The losses of the Sisters of Mercy by the great fire cannot be computed. Clothing, furniture, books, musical instruments, records, studio, museum, stores of food, chapels and oratories furnished in the richest style, were ashes in a few moments. As the old Wabash Avenue property had become unsuitable for its purposes, being at the time of the fire the chief business centre of the city, the Sisters had concluded to sell it. The contract for the sale was completed on Saturday, October 7. The deeds were to be delivered on Monday at 9 A.M., for one hundred and sixty thousand dollars. At that hour the place was on fire. The ground was sold later for sixty thousand, seven hundred and fifty dollars. There was then a mortgage of fifty thousand dollars on it. And the expenses of the transaction,

* Of his successor, Bishop Vandeveld, Mother M. Agatha writes: "Our bishop is really good and holy. He is well pleased with all and each of our movements, which is a great blessing. He says Mass for us every morning, and is also confessor."

interest, taxes, etc., left the Sisters only three hundred and seventy dollars. Here was a loss of one hundred thousand dollars on the oldest establishment.

But in view of the awful distress that followed the great conflagration, who could think of temporal losses? The cry of distress that arose from the once beautiful Lake City was heard at the ends of the earth ; the most remote places sent offerings. Even Liberia, in Africa, forwarded its share to aid the sufferers. Several Convents of Mercy, among others New Orleans and New York, sent help to their stricken Sisters in Chicago. They were greatly aided in their heroic charity by the Relief and Aid Society, who did wonders towards relieving the distressed. Those in health were easily cared for, necessities pouring into the city in abundance. But the sick and those injured in the awful disaster continued to suffer excruciating agony, despite the incessant care of the humane doctors and the Sisters.

One poor woman, carried in wrapped in a blanket, was in a most pitiable condition. The blanket, which could not be removed, formed her only covering. Every attempt to stir it to apply remedies resulted in peeling off pieces of the flesh that adhered to it. Her suffering was intense, despite all the Sisters could do for her. She had inhaled a great quantity of smoke. She had escaped safely from her house, but thought she could venture back to save some articles of value, and was surrounded by flames and almost suffocated by smoke ! The priest was called, and she was able to receive the last Sacraments. She died in terrible agony, but filled with resignation to God's holy will. Many lost their sight, and some the use of their hands from having placed them over their faces in rushing through the scorching air. Many of these poor burned creatures were as helpless as infants and needed the same care. All who have experience of such cases know how offensive it is to dress

burned patients. The Sisters aided the self-sacrificing doctors in this work of charity. Many gave up their beds to the needy and took their short rest on chairs or on the floor.

Among the unfortunate victims of this calamity was a sad case, that of Dr. Hess, who had lost all his property—the accumulation of years swept away in an hour. Added to this were domestic troubles which to him seemed too much for human endurance. In his despondency he attempted to end his mortal sufferings by shooting himself through the heart. Providentially, though a physician, he mistook the true region of that vital organ, and shot into the lower part of the left lung. He was taken to the Mercy Hospital, where his wound was probed and dressed. Though in a dying condition, with good care he rallied and lived about three months. Until that time he had never had any communication with the Sisters of any order, and at first regarded his kind nurses with aversion. But by their constant care and kindness they soon won his affectionate gratitude. Like another St. Ignatius, he began, while stretched on a bed of suffering, to reflect on the nothingness of worldly wealth and fame. He asked for good books, which were cheerfully supplied, and besought the Sisters to instruct him in the truths of the Catholic faith. He proved an apt scholar in the science of the saints, and had the happiness of dying a holy death after receiving all the blessings and consolations which Mother Church imparts to her dying children. This is one of hundreds of similar cases that occurred during the awful period that followed the great fire.

Many children from asylums, and many who were lost or had become separated from their parents, were brought to the hospital. One little girl, about two years old, remained with the Sisters three years before any one was found who knew her. They then learned that her parents

had died of fatigue and sorrow shortly after the fire. As her relatives were unable to undertake the charge, the Sisters adopted her, and she is still (1888) attending their school.

The conflagration having destroyed the Marine Hospital, the sick sailors were left without a shelter. The officer in charge called at the Mercy Hospital and entreated the Sisters to take care of the poor sick sailors till their own hospital could be rebuilt. He made many apologies for making such a request, and offered to employ private policemen to preserve order among those for whom he pleaded, promising that they would not give the Sisters any trouble. "That will not be necessary; we will take them and give them the best accommodation the house can offer in its crowded condition," said the superior; "they will not be unmanageable with us."

The poor fellows were found to be as docile as children, most polite and respectful to the Sisters, and kind and attentive to each other. Many received the Sacraments who had been negligent for years. Others who had been at sea from early boyhood were instructed for their first Communion. Few, if any, died without being baptized and receiving all the consolations of our holy religion. Two who became Catholics recovered and are still with the Sisters. One is at the hospital and proves a real acquisition to that institution.

For two years after his recovery he followed his old business; always on arriving in Chicago he would visit the Sisters, and tell them of his continuing faithful in the practice of his religion. He greatly regretted to be unable to hear Mass on Sundays and holidays while at sea. Once his vessel was wrecked, and in his fear of dying without the Sacraments he thought of our Blessed Mother and how often he had heard of her powerful protection being exerted in cases of extreme peril. He then invoked her maternal

aid, and promised her that, if he were saved, he would go no more on the lakes, but live where he could always perform the duties of a good, practical Catholic.

Our holy Mother rewarded his confidence. He was saved, came to Chicago, and applied to the Mercy Hospital for admission, requesting to be permitted to remain and assist that establishment every way in his power, asking in return no recompense but to be permitted to practise his religion. He was immediately accepted, and has proved himself most faithful and useful—a model of every Christian virtue, especially charity.

The other is engineer at the convent. He is a native of Ulster, was a Protestant and a Free Mason, but since his conversion went no more to sea, and is a most fervent Catholic. The sick sailors who were so long (October, 1871, to November, 1872) at the Mercy Hospital were in nowise anxious to remove to their new building on the lake shore, although it is a magnificent hospital with all the modern improvements, and everything to make the patients comfortable and promote health. The good-hearted old “salts” would prefer to remain with the Sisters, with whom they enjoyed many religious advantages of which they would be deprived in their grand new home. The marines who were very sick, those confined to bed and those whose recovery was not expected, requested the authorities to allow them to remain with the Sisters, and the kind-hearted doctors in charge granted their request. Those who were obliged to go were sad indeed, and the Sisters and sailors mutually regretted the stern necessity that compelled them to separate. These brave men, often very rough as to the exterior, were like little children with the Sisters, whom they regarded as their mothers.

It was easy to speak to them, to advise them; they took everything in good part, and they were individually anxious to give as little trouble as possible, and help their kind

nurses whenever they could. Their feelings, at once reverential and affectionate, often found vent in grotesque ways. But the Sisters thoroughly understood them and highly appreciated their good feeling and good will, however manifested.

CHAPTER XLII.

ALL SORTS—CONCLUSION.

John Devlin's Loss—Edward Warren's Story—He buys his Coffin at a Rebate and orders his Hearse—The oldest Ecclesiastic in the Country—Born in No Man's Land—In Arms in '98—Ordained before he was Born—Touching and edifying Particulars—Father Clowry's Patient—Mysterious Warnings—The last Sacraments administered—Sister M. Victoire—Patients undergoing Repairs—The Ghost—General View of the Chicago Foundation—Statistics—Sad Catalogue of the Bishops of Chicago—The Archbishop.

MR. JOHN DEVLIN, an old, respected citizen of Chicago, came to the hospital soon after the fire. He had no children, but he and his wife lived so happily together that they were the admiration of a large circle of friends. Their tastes seemed to agree, and they were thoroughly devoted to each other. Mr. Devlin was out of the city during the beginning of the catastrophe on Saturday, and his wife and residence were burned. When he returned on Sunday he had her charred remains removed to an undertaker's on the South Side. That fatal night the place to which he had taken her was consumed, and no trace of her remains could be found. Not even having the melancholy satisfaction of placing her in a grave beside which he might kneel in prayer, he came to the hospital, crazed with grief. For a long time he was out of his mind, and was never after able to attend to any business. He had lost everything, never got any insurance, even his life insurance, as he was unable to pay the policy or interest. The Sisters kept the poor gentleman till his death, six years later.

An old man, named Edward Warren, came, with many other homeless creatures, to the "Mercy." He had been a

brother at South Bend, Indiana, left that monastery, came to Chicago and got a situation in Bishop Duggan's household as sexton and messenger. He was there the night of the fire which made Bishop Foley houseless, and, being seventy-five years old, felt too weak and broken to seek another situation. For several years he lived at the hospital, gradually becoming more feeble, but having no organic disease. One morning he arose very early, put on clean clothing—he was always very neat—went back to bed, sent for the priest, and asked to be anointed. The priest refused, objecting that he was not sick enough, but the old man persisted, saying he would die that day, and, overcome by his entreaties, the priest at last administered the sacraments. Old Edward then got up, went to an undertaker, ordered a coffin, hearse, and carriage to be at the hospital at a certain hour next day. The ruling passion strong in death asserted itself in this transaction, for he "beat down" the undertaker five dollars in the price of the coffin. He then went to get shaved and have his hair combed. When he returned to the hospital he went to bed, and sent for a friend whom he desired to take his trunk, as he was going to die. Some one noticed him putting his fingers over his eyes as if to keep them shut, and asked what he was doing. He replied he was closing his eyes to this world, not wishing to trouble any one to do this service for him. After a while he crossed his hands on his breast as if in prayer, and calmly expired. He had always been very pious, and was instant in prayer for the souls in purgatory. Everything was carried out as he had arranged.

A still more aged inmate of the "Mercy" is Rev. John Carroll, the oldest ecclesiastic in the United States, born in Queen's Co., Ireland, June 30, 1798. Full of innocent pleasantries, he says he was born in No Man's Land, because his birth-place was the queen's land, and that he is not "afraid to speak of '98," for he was up in arms at that epoch, meaning his mother's arms. He received a very elaborate

education in Ireland, and, in 1817, entered the theological school of Quebec. In 1820 he was ordained at Halifax by his maternal uncle, Bishop Edmund Burke, Vicar-Apostolic of Nova Scotia. He says he was ordained the day before he was born, June 29. He is full of puns and jokes, and his mind is as clear as in the days of his youth. While chaplain of the Orphan Asylum in 1883 he became crippled by an accident, and was sent to the Mercy Hospital, where he still resides. The writer had the pleasure of visiting him some time since, and found him as bright and lively as a boy. Until a few months ago he said Mass daily, but his sight failing, he cannot now have this great consolation, which distresses him very much ; for he always had an extraordinary love for the Holy Sacrifice, and would not miss saying Mass on any account. Sometimes he has fallen on the floor of the sacristy through weakness. He would get up with help, rest awhile, and then say Mass. He begs every one who visits him to pray that his sight may be restored that he may say Mass every day of his life for the living and the dead. When unable to celebrate he goes to Mass and receives Holy Communion every day. He is very cheerful, full of anecdotes, remembers many distinguished people, whose peculiarities did not escape him. The signer, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, he remembers well, claims him as a relation, and corresponds with many of his descendants, notably with Mrs. McTavish, of Baltimore. Mrs. General Williams, formerly Mrs. Douglas, visits him frequently, as do many friends from various parts of the country. He is a great admirer of health and beauty, has always been truly pious, and a most exemplary priest. His closing years are consoled by a beautiful spirit of prayer, which keeps him in close union with the God of his youth.

When the hospital was on the North side it was attended from the Holy Name Church by Father Clowry. Sister Benedicta, of whom we have spoken, was most zealous about

having the patients prepared for death by the worthy reception of the sacraments, and her zeal sometimes made her a little trying to others. Father Clowry had been sent for at night several times when he thought there was not sufficient necessity. Dr. Davis had told the Sisters to send for him any hour, day or night, and he was not spared, as the Sisters at that time had not much experience with sickness. One day a man suffering from pneumonia was brought in from Captain Prinderville's boat. The doctors visited him during the day, but at night he grew worse. Sister Benedicta, who thought he was going to die, came to Mother M. Vincent's cell, and asked her to send for the priest and the doctor. Mother Vincent* told her to send for the doctor but not the priest, as he had that day found fault with the Sisters for sending for him at night, thinking they should be able to know during the day if there were danger of death and have the patients attended in the day-time. The Sister, in great distress, did as commanded. Mother M. Vincent was only settled in bed again when a loud knocking disturbed her, and she came to the door somewhat impatiently, thinking it was Sister Benedicta still persisting. But no one appeared. She went into the hall, and locked a cross-door that led to her cell to keep away intruders. No sooner was she settled in bed than another fearful knocking at the door made her rise. This time she dressed, went out, and found the cross-door locked as she had left it. There was no way of getting into the Sisters' dormitory save through the cross-door or the chapel. Mother M. Vincent went through the chapel in search of Sister Benedicta, who, how-

* In a letter of Rev. Mother Agatha to Mother Elizabeth Strange, Pittsburgh, June 28, 1851, is the following passage: "Sister M. Vincent is in charge of the hospital, which succeeds very well, and is making many kind and interested friends for our dear Order among our Protestant neighbors. We hope soon to build a new hospital more convenient than the present, which was built for a hotel, and does not well suit hospital purposes. It seems to me that our Order is destined to do immense good in the United States. . . . Everything is doing admirably here, far better than I deserve. Clergymen in various missions throughout the State are continually crying out for Sisters to form new missions in their districts."

ever, had not gone to her door; she said the man was worse, and was begging and praying for a priest. And she conjured the good mother not to let him die without one. The priest was summoned, the penitent made his peace with God, and was dead before his confessor left his bedside. Mother M. Vincent is far from being superstitious, but she always has believed there was something supernatural about this incident.

When Sister M. Victoire assumed charge of the hospital in 1859 the Sisters were very poor. They had few paying patients and from these hardly anything could be collected. Mother M. Francis, then superior, told her the institution must be made at least self-supporting. She forbade them buying anything on credit, and said they must pay for everything they bought when they got it. The poor Sister was in great distress. Food was needed and she had no money. Her assistant told her to pray to St. Joseph, to whom up to this she had never had much devotion. She went to the chapel and, kneeling before his image, fervently besought him to help the community in this dire necessity. Soon after the door-bell rang. She opened it to a little old man who inquired about the hospital, the number of patients, and how they paid. She answered all his questions, and he spoke very kindly to her and took his leave, dropping two ten-dollar gold pieces on the chair as he left. Shortly after a number of patients came in, who paid their way generously, and never again did Sister M. Victoire find herself in such straits. "This," she would say in telling the story, "is how St. Joseph helps those who confide in him." It is hardly necessary to add that she herself has been most fervid in her devotions to that great saint ever since.

Sister M. Victoire has always been devoted to the sick, and has spent the greater part of her life in the hospital. In early days she used to get so interested in her patients that she was anxious to know how those who died fared

after death, and several, among them two priests, promised to come back and tell her. One night, being up on watch with the sick, she went to the chapel at 2 A.M. to say some prayers. Prostrate before the altar was a figure dressed in white. Now, thought she, I am going to see a ghost at last. There was no light in the chapel but the sanctuary lamp, and, feeling "a leetle teemid," she went out for a candle. Returning, she approached the ghost that still lay prone and motionless, but it proved to be the elder Dr. McGirr,* in his white cashmere dressing-gown. He was accustomed to pray before the Blessed Sacrament every night, but Sister M. Victoire had not chanced to meet him before.

In the earlier days of its existence the hospital was seldom without patients "undergoing repairs," who had been bruised or got broken legs or arms in the stages of the day, which rarely went far without upsetting. Many accidents occurred to the Sisters and the clergy obliged to travel between Chicago and Galena. By travelling night and day the journey was made in three or four days. But if the traveller wished to rest at night it took at least a week.

From the foregoing it will appear that the Chicago foundation was tried by every ordeal†—poverty and riches, friends and lack of friends, prosperity and adversity, plague, war, fire—and, sustained by the Almighty arm, has come out of every peril unscathed. Nothing could be more humble than its beginnings, forty-two years ago, in a poor hut on the bleak prairie. "Unless the seed die, it remaineth alone." Of the valiant women who came thither through

* Doctor McGirr was always pious, and exact even to scrupulosity. The Sisters often heard a certain archbishop say that when a young man, before his ordination, he used to dread being next the doctor to go to confession in old St. Mary's—he always took so long.

† In 1851 the Chicago community numbered forty-six. Even then the Sisters of Mercy seem to have had some enemies. Speaking of one such, Mother M. Agatha writes: "It is useful to know how he feels towards our Sisters. Perhaps a little kindness might make him feel more kindly towards us." A revenge at once blessed and politic!

perils by land and water, only one survives to tell the tale. Nothing can well be more splendid than its success of to-day—success achieved through the cross.

At present the Mercy Institute of Chicago contains one hundred and ninety members and over five thousand pupils. There are seven convents, the mother-house being the superb edifice at the corner of Wabash Avenue and Twenty-ninth Street. The Sisters teach ten parish schools and several academies, conduct the Mercy Hospital, the Home for Women of Good Character, and several other useful institutions. The sodalities, industrial schools, classes for converts, directed by them it is not necessary to describe here.

By believers in luck Chicago used to be considered unlucky in its episcopal aspect. Its first and best-loved bishop died a young man, and it was said, though untruly, that he did not die a natural death ; its second and third bishops, unable to cope with difficulties which they themselves were supposed to have partially evoked, resigned, and died soon after ; its fourth has had the saddest fate of any—the light of his once brilliant mind quenched by mental disease ; life survives reason, and his nearest and dearest friends pray God to take him home. Bishop Foley, though full of health and energy, passed away in the zenith of his usefulness. No bishop of Chicago has worn the venerable locks of age. Let us hope that the present respected incumbent will have broken the charm, and that the archbishops of Chicago may be more fortunate than its bishops.

CHAPTER XLIII.

IN THE WILDS OF ARKANSAS.

Three Bishops—Sketch of Bishop Byrne—His love for Bishop England—At the Parent-house—Mother Whitty—Naas—Bishop Haly—Foundation for Little Rock—Personnel—The Journey—"Captain, turn back!"—Fearful Storm—Mission on Ship board—Christmas in Mid-ocean—Among the West Indies—Up the Mississippi—Sojourn at the old Convent of New Orleans—In a floating Palace.

ON the 10th of March, 1844, three pastors of New York churches were consecrated in old St. Patrick's by Bishop Hughes—Right Rev. William Quarter, of whom we have already spoken; Right Rev. John McCloskey, afterward Bishop of Albany and Cardinal, and Right Rev. Andrew Byrne, first Bishop of Little Rock. All three were enthusiastic friends of the Sisters of Mercy, and introduced them into the dioceses over which they were called to preside.

Dr. Byrne, with whom we have to do at present, was born in Meath in 1802, and studied under the celebrated Father Eugene O'Reilly. In 1820 he volunteered to accompany Bishop England to America, and continued his studies under that great prelate. In due time he was ordained and spent some years ministering to the spiritual wants of the scattered Catholics of the Carolinas. In 1836 he removed to New York. When the diocese of Little Rock, comprising the State of Arkansas and the Cherokee and Choctaw nations in the Indian Territory, was formed, Father Byrne's long experience of missionary life under the great Bishop England* pointed him out as the fitting head

* To the close of his life Bishop Byrne was enthusiastically devoted to Bishop England, and often spoke of him to the Sisters. The most eloquent sermon he ever preached was his eulogy of the splendid services and wonderful genius of that great prelate—a eulogy inspired by genuine love and admiration for his first father in the Gospel, and spoken when God had called him home.

of a diocese including 117,048 square miles. His first efforts were directed towards procuring priests and teachers for Arkansas and the vast but ill-defined Indian Territory over which he was now placed to rule. In autumn, 1850, he repaired to the Island of Saints in quest of Sisters of Mercy, as the houses then in America were unable to supply them. He directed his steps to the parent-house, and made his first appeal to Mother M. Vincent Whitty, one of the most distinguished women in the Order, who had been specially beloved by the holy foundress, and inherited much of her double spirit of sweetness and zeal. His earnest entreaties and eloquent exposition of the wants of his vast diocese touched her to the heart. And it was with deep regret that she found herself unable to respond to his pressing invitation. She assured him that nothing would give her greater pleasure than to prepare a foundation for far-away Arkansas, but for the moment not a single Sister could be spared. When the will to succeed was so strong she readily found a way. Aware that there was a fine working community in Naas, whose ranks had not been thinned by foundations or deaths, she counselled the eager prelate to try there. And lest he should have to brook a fresh disappointment in that quarter, she anticipated his visit by starting there herself to interest as many as possible in the good cause. Much of the exquisite personality of the holy foundress seems to have been transferred to this dear daughter, and she spoke with power, for her words, as the hearers said, seemed to be the words of the holy Mother herself, whom a literary personage styles "the most beautiful, noble, and lovable of women founders." Next day Mother Whitty returned to Dublin, after having, by her eloquent words and genuine zeal for Bishop Byrnc's mission, inclined the hearts of the Kildare Sisters to aid the great work, and imparted to them no small share of her own enthusiasm.

The bishop followed closely upon his zealous friend. To the Sisters assembled in the community-room to receive

him he spoke forcibly and well of the good to be accomplished in the wild region committed to his spiritual care, the great necessity for educated teachers for the children, and thoroughly instructed religious to enlighten adults ignorant of everything concerning their salvation. He came, he said, in search of a religious community to aid him in his arduous work ; and having carefully examined the rules and workings of various orders, he found the Mercy Institute best fitted to help to regenerate his people and promote God's work in his diocese. When the bishop, in plain but persuasive language, laid before them the object of his visit, every one was willing to brave the dangers of the ocean and the still greater perils of Western life. Not a soul held back. Superiors, however, limited the number of missionary Sisters to four. The bishop thought this very few for the immense diocese of which he himself did not know the exact extent, and which he said would one day be governed by six prelates.* But the number could be swelled by secular ladies desirous of being postulants, and he lost no time in seeking such. He had impressed the community very favorably. Besides being holy, zealous, and eloquent, he was adorned like his friend, Bishop O'Connor, though not in so great a degree, with all the exterior graces one naturally associates with a high and holy calling. Bishop Haly gave his blessing and sanction to the good work. He had a special zeal for foreign missions, and was often heard to regret that he could not, like so many of his earlier countrymen, pass beyond the seas to preach Christ crucified to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death. From his diocese Sisters of Mercy went to the United States in 1843, to New Zealand in 1849, and to Arkansas in 1850. But regarding the last-named he had some scruples and misgivings. The wild,

* The diocese of Little Rock contained seven hundred Catholics when Bishop Byrne took charge of it in 1844, and fifteen thousand at the time of his death, 1862. The Church in Arkansas has not increased as rapidly as he anticipated.

terrible, and often romantic stories of border-life that had reached Braganza House made him doubt whether he ought to allow the Sisters to risk themselves in such lawless regions. "I should never suffer the Sisters to leave," said he, "were I not afraid that otherwise I should stand responsible to God for the good which I know they will accomplish."

Mother M. Teresa O'Farrell was appointed superior of the Arkansas mission. A native of Naas, Mother M. Teresa had joined the Sisters in that town in 1841, about four months before the holy death of the venerated foundress. She had thus been associated with several of the early members, and was well versed in the traditions and usages of the Institute. Three professed members, Sister M. Agnes Green, who had the honor of receiving the white veil from the holy foundress in Carlow, 1837; and Sisters M. de Sales O'Keeffe and Stanislaus Farrell, with eight postulants, were Mother M. Teresa's companions in this great work. The scenes usual on such occasions took place as they bade an eternal farewell to their beloved community and their convent home, but the bishop, fearing something might occur to mar his projects if he allowed his new children to linger, hurried them off to Dublin. They were most cordially received in the parent-house by the superior, Mother M. Vincent, who would gladly have joined them if she could. But God reserved this great soul for the Australian mission.

The party remained at the parent-house for several weeks, during which every facility was afforded them for preparing themselves for the great work in which they had engaged. It was settled that they should leave in a sailing-vessel, and the *John O'Toole* was selected for the purpose. On a bright and beautiful winter day, November 30, the Feast of St. Andrew, patron of the bishop, the missionary party saw "the last glimpse of Erin." There were aboard three hundred emigrants. Many clergy, relatives, and

friends of the Sisters came to say some last and loving words to the bishop and his little colony, and remained on board until the signal for departure was given. The last adieux were heartrending, and it was only when the long, narrow vessel began to move out of sight of motherland that some of the Sisters realized what the sacrifice involved. One of them exclaimed with a burst of anguish: "O father! I cannot, cannot go." The bishop, whose own eyes were swimming, affected to be amused, and to distract them from their grief called out: "Halloo, captain, turn back. Here are people who declare they cannot go on. Stop the vessel!" This made every one laugh. After a while the grief was abated, and all renewed the sacrifice of themselves to God.

For about a week the *John O'Toole* sailed a'long smoothly and pleasantly, and the Sisters lived pretty much as they had been accustomed to live in their convent home. The state cabin was their chapel and community-room. Spiritual exercises, study, and work went forward with unfailing regularity. Teaching the children, instructing adults, and visiting the sick were carried on for many hours daily among the steerage-passengers. The bishop had chartered the whole cabin that the Sisters might be free from intrusion. Their evenings were spent instructing the older emigrants in the Christian doctrine. Their mornings were devoted to the children. After a week a strong wind arose, and kept increasing gradually until it became a terrific storm. The vessel tossed and rocked at a fearful rate, and was driven by contrary winds to the shores of Scotland, and about eight hundred miles out of her direct course. The angry waves rose like mountains, and for a while no man could stand at the helm; the iron-clad ship was left to take care of herself, and the destruction of vessel and passengers seemed inevitable. For a whole night and the greater part of the following day the bishop and Father Sheehan remained in the Sisters' cabin. The captain and

crew declared they had never passed through such a series of tempests. But the eye that sleepeth not rested on them, and when all seemed hopeless He whose aid was sought by fervent prayer bade the waves be still. The sailors pronounced their preservation miraculous, and all regarded it as the fruit of frequent, or rather constant, prayer. After days and nights of apprehension, if not terror, a calm followed the storm, and all on board united in fervent thanksgiving to God for His mercies. The rest of the voyage was very pleasant. The bishop gave the spiritual exercises, heard confessions, administered Holy Communion, and, as almost all on board were Catholics, gave, assisted by Father Sheehan, a regular mission. Many of the passengers seemed uncouth and uncivilized; and though the Sisters, except one who had been educated in France, had never been out of Ireland, they had never before encountered such rough specimens of their country people. Yet beneath the coarse exterior was many a pure and honest heart capable of receiving the holiest impressions, and yielding a golden harvest to the spiritual husbandman, as the sequel proved. Many of them have since become wealthy and honored citizens of their adopted country. And under all circumstances they and theirs have clung to the Sisters of Mercy with unfailing affection.

Christmas Day, 1850, on the *John O'Toole* was a delightful experience. Dr. Byrne said the early Masses, all receiving Holy Communion at the first. The fervid devotion and respectful demeanor of the sailors and emigrants were truly touching. During the Masses the Sisters sang, and never was the *Adeste Fideles* more sweetly and harmoniously rendered than on that rare and solemn occasion of Christmas Day in mid-ocean. At Father Sheehan's first Mass the bishop preached, and all agreed that they had never spent a more delightful festival. The ship made headway with little interruption until she came in sight of the West Indies. Here she was becalmed. The islanders

came alongside of her in canoes laden with immense oranges, which the passengers gladly purchased, as the fresh water on board was nearly exhausted. After a while the wind blew up briskly and the *John O'Toole* soon got into the Mexican Gulf, and having weathered its storms, the Sisters enjoyed a smooth and delightful sail up the Mississippi after the dangers and alarms of the sea.

After landing in New Orleans the bishop and other passengers presented the commander, Captain Thompson, with a handsome silver service, in gratitude for his kind attentions.

By a happy coincidence the Sisters arrived on January 23, the Feast of the Espousals of the Blessed Virgin, a day of particular devotion in their Order, as it was on it, 1832, that the first band of Sisters of Mercy received the religious habit.

After the ceremonies of the custom-house officers, during which the Sisters had an opportunity of observing the weird and curious sights of the Levee of those days, Bishop Byrne conveyed the Sisters in carriages to the beautiful Ursuline Convent, where the nuns received them with the greatest cordiality. To visit this community was a treat, as it is the oldest in the United States—founded in 1727. It was then at the height of its temporal prosperity. No house in the country lost more by the civil war, and its losses have not since been made good. But in 1851 none could foresee the ruin that one short decade of years would bring. On the 2d of February their charming visit to the venerable Ursulines came to a close. They took passage on the steamer *Pontiac*, one of the floating palaces which are now little more than a memory, and continued their journey up the winding Mississippi.

CHAPTER XLIV.

EARLY DAYS IN LITTLE ROCK.

The Home amid the Forest Trees—Welcome!—No Convent—The Bishop gives his House to the Sisters—Works—Bishop Spalding—A noble Subject—Non-Catholic Pupils—"The Individuals called Nuns"—Mr. Green—The Green Flock—The Green Opponent—Sudden Death—Refined Women in the Backwoods of Arkansas—The Know-Nothing Movement—A Gunpowder Plot—The Bishop the finest-looking Man and the best Speaker in the State—Forgot to put on his Horns—The new Convent—Immigrants—Bigotry disappears.

ON the 6th of February, 1851, the Sisters, under the fatherly care of the bishop, reached their new home among the forest trees after an unusually prosperous journey. They were met at the Little Rock wharf by Rev. John O'Reilly and several leading people of the neighborhood, but there was no convent to receive them. The vicar-general, to whom the care of building the convent had been entrusted, died during the bishop's absence, and nothing had since been done. But the holy prelate at once gave them his own house—a poor, humble abode, indeed—a one-story frame palace, which he surrendered with a good heart, and kind, endearing words. He and his three students lived as best they could among the faithful; he making his headquarters with his old friend, Judge Carroll. The very next day the Sisters were called upon to exercise the works of mercy—the visitation of the sick and the instruction of adults becoming duties of almost hourly recurrence. Their religious garb was a source of great amusement to the people, who had never before seen anything like it. On the Sunday after their arrival they opened catechism classes with three children. But gradually the number increased until it reached two hundred.

On the 10th of March the first postulant entered—Miss Margaret Fitzpatrick, an Irish lady whose virtues and accomplishments made her a very desirable acquisition to the young community. The first reception took place June 22, Right Rev. Bishop Spalding, of Louisville, officiating. One of the postulants gave not only her life and services for the good of religion in Arkansas, but also a very large fortune. To her the community was indebted for many of the conveniences found within the convent walls, while her charity, piety, and submission to the Divine will were truly admirable.

The bishop's house adjoined the cathedral, where the Sisters heard Mass and made their spiritual exercises every day. They opened a school in a house opposite the church with an attendance of thirty-five children, chiefly non-Catholics.* There were then scarcely a dozen Catholic families in Little Rock. Of the non-Catholic pupils who flocked to the Sisters, one of the first members says: "Some came through curiosity, some to criticise, and others in an honest search for knowledge." A brick edifice, formerly used as a meeting-house, was purchased for a school, and the Sisters having now more ample accommodation, their pupils, from far and near, soon swelled to hundreds. Barely a dozen of these were Catholics. This state of things soon aroused the ire of some sectarian clergy. A Presbyterian minister, named Green, called a meeting of his congregation "to warn them against the errors of popery and draw aside the veil that hid from public view the real character of the individuals called nuns who had just come among them." The attendance was large, but the result unexpected. Next morning, at eight o'clock, several prominent members of the "Green flock" appeared

* It was the same with the Chicago Academy. Speaking of a non-Catholic who spread some injurious reports of the Sisters, Mother M. Agatha says to a member of the Pittsburgh community: "Is it not hard, dear Sister, to deal with worldlings? See how observant they are! How easily disedified! The Lord preserve us from them. Here I am often afraid, I have so much to do with Protestants. They visit us constantly, and we have some very warm friends among them. Almost all the children in the select school are Protestants. But all goes well, thank God!"

at the poor, shabby-looking convent and introduced themselves as representatives of that distinguished congregation. "We presume, ladies," said the speaker, "you have heard that our minister assembled us last evening for the purpose of embittering our minds against you." Mother M. Teresa acknowledged they had heard something of the kind, but had given the matter little attention. The visitors begged to assure them that Mr. Green's "harangue" could do them no injury. So disgusted were they with his coarse, abusive language that they had resolved never again to enter his church—a resolution they faithfully kept. Ever after these liberal people were among the best friends of the community.

The "Green opponent," however, was not to be so easily daunted. He issued a proclamation of the same import to his disciples at Pine Bluff—a village near Little Rock—appointing a day on which he would deliver a lecture in the court-house "On the Turpitude of Rome." But the bishop thought that in dealing with this poor man he had arrived at that point when patience ceases to be a virtue, and he now showed a front that rather alarmed the aggressive among the sects. "For the future," said he, "every one that makes an accusation against the Church will be compelled to prove it." He ordered Rev. P. Behan, an able divine and an eloquent speaker, to confront Mr. Green at the court-house, and politely interrupt him if he made any false statement. There would doubtless have been a hot debate had not poor Mr. Green's career been cut short, with scarcely a moment's warning, before the hour appointed for his lecture. This had a salutary effect on the people, who regarded it as a signal proof of the Divine wrath. But, as a rule, the Sisters had little to suffer from bigotry in Arkansas. In those remote days they were looked upon as the most precious boon which Providence could bestow on the rising country. People blessed God on account of them and the bishop for bringing them.

They thought it a great thing to find for their children in the backwoods of Arkansas teachers of the highest order—ladies who could instruct them in every accomplishment, and at the same time imbue their minds with every religious and moral virtue, and while bestowing mental culture keep their hearts free from evil in the dangerous period of youth. Few States at that early period possessed such a treasure, and the rareness of the blessing made them value it the more. During the Know-Nothing movement, it is true, the good religious suffered some annoyance, and were frequently in danger of their very lives. The unholy creatures who engaged in this odd species of warfare were constantly prowling about the shanty known as the convent, uttering fearful blasphemies against everything sacred in the eyes of its inmates. They had sworn the destruction of this poor edifice, which a strong man could almost knock down with his shoulder. The friends of the community, Protestant as well as Catholic, earnestly besought them to seek safety in flight, and provision of the amplest kind was made in more places than one for their security. But they preferred to stand their ground, and die at the foot of the altar, should God call for the sacrifice.

One night, when all was ready for the execution of a gunpowder plot, a guard was placed around the convent. About 9 P.M. two shots were fired, which the nuns would have taken for "signal guns" had they not been followed by loud and distressing cries. Two brothers-in-law, who had headed the rioters, had quarrelled, fired simultaneously, and killed each other. Next day all the combustibles necessary for the blowing-up were found in an empty house opposite the convent. After this the Know-Nothings troubled them no more.

Yet they were often regarded with a suspicious eye. When the backwoodsmen came into Little Rock they would crowd about the premises to catch a glimpse of the strange women who wore mourning robes for ever, and gave up their whole lives to labor and sacrifice. By word and work the

bishop did much to remove prejudice. A man of fine appearance and noble presence, he was in height almost a giant. His manners were frank and kind, and he was careful never to give offence. He was by far the best speaker in the State, whether religious or political, and he explained the articles of faith so as to instruct his hearers without paining those who differed from him in creed. He did not always succeed in persuading or convincing his opponents, but he never failed to make them his friends. Though he was simplicity personified, there was something majestic in his mien, and people who met him for the first time felt instinctively that they were in presence of the chief man in the State. Thus a person with the dress and air of a gentleman once accosted him as he was going about the country in search of his scattered flock: "Is it really true that a Catholic bishop has come to Little Rock?" "I believe it is," he returned. Gazing inquiringly at him, the stranger continued emphatically: "Then you must be the man!" The bishop did not deny the impeachment. "Pardon me," said another, "but I always thought Catholic clergymen wore horns." "Well, you see," said the prelate, smiling, "I have not put on mine this morning." A pleasant conversation ensued, and the questioner left the bishop's presence with more knowledge than he had when he entered it.

The convent which Bishop Byrne erected for the Sisters was ready about nine months after their arrival. On the Feast of All Saints, November 1, he blessed it and dedicated it to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. Next day he offered up the Holy Sacrifice in a room fitted up as a chapel, barely large enough to hold an altar and two prie-dieux. It opened by folding doors into the community-room, which was used as a choir during the hours of prayer. It also served as a chapel of ease to the cathedral, many persons assisting at early Mass there on Sundays and holydays. The grounds were spacious and finely shaded by large forest trees. The children were delighted to follow the Sisters to

the convent grove, where they could enjoy themselves during their short recreations on their verdant play-ground. Early in 1852 * Bishop Byrne was called to New Orleans on business. On his return he brought the daughters of several Irish families with whom he had been long acquainted to Little Rock, and placed them at school in his convent. Others joined them from New Gascony and various parts of the surrounding country, and St. Mary's Academy was now regularly established. Many of the emigrants who had come to New Orleans with Bishop Byrne on the *John O'Toole* proceeded to Fort Smith and other parts of Arkansas, where they bought land, built homes for their families, and settled down comfortably. It is rather unfortunate for a region of such fine resources that emigration was never directed to its borders to any great extent—perhaps because it was a slave State, or that other portions of the country held out greater inducements. The bishop's intelligent measures to promote it were of good benefit to the Southwest. But many even of his settlers subsequently removed their household gods to regions which they considered more congenial.

Many of the friends and pupils of the Sisters became Catholics, and bigotry disappeared wherever their influence extended. Everything seemed to augur a brilliant future for the community, but the civil war, and still more the death of the bishop, retarded their prosperity. The instruction of adults in the principles and practice of our holy religion, the training of the young in piety and knowledge, the visitation of the sick have been the chief works of mercy undertaken by the Little Rock religious. Many of their pupils have devoted themselves to God in various religious orders.

* Bishop Byrne was exceedingly popular in New Orleans. Many of the prominent merchants and most of "the cotton men" of the Crescent City of his day were Irish. They showered gifts and favors upon him whenever he came among them, of which his Sisters got the benefit on his return. But, indeed, New-Orleanians of every nationality loved him, and none more than Archbishop Blanc.

CHAPTER XLV.

NEAR THE CAMPS OF THE RED MEN.

Fort Smith—On the Borders of Civilization—Mother Teresa goes to Ireland for Subjects—Progress—Indian Princesses at the Convent School—An *al fresco* Reception—General Zachary Taylor's Quarters—At Helena—A beautiful School—Colonel Biscoe's Property—Illness of the Bishop—His holy Death—The War—Services of the Sisters to both Armies—Disastrous Effects of the War—A Desert studded with Ruins.

THE first town outside of the episcopal see favored with the Sisters of Mercy was Fort Smith, on the border of the Indian Territory. While on his visitation in this part of the State, 1852, Bishop Byrne purchased a large tract of land for church purposes. On part of this was a frame cottage, with several smaller houses scattered around it, all of which had been built by the government for the headquarters of General Zachary Taylor during the Mexican War, 1846. The bishop gave the use of this property to the Sisters of Mercy for a convent and schools. He concluded it would be more satisfactory for them to come at once, as the buildings had to be changed and partly reconstructed, and this could be best done under their own supervision. On March 4, 1853, the bishop took Mother M. Teresa and four Sisters to see their new acquisition. They travelled by steamboat up the Arkansas River, enjoying the wild and beautiful scenery on its banks for nearly three hundred miles, till they reached, in about four days, the Indian Territory, near which was the old fort. The party was warmly greeted by the many friends of the bishop, Catholic and non-Catholic, for he was known and loved in every portion of his vast diocese. The Sisters were conducted processionally to their new home, about a mile from the landing place. In

the middle of a beautiful grove they found their new convent, but there was no furniture of any kind in it. Two rooms were allowed the Sisters, in which they managed to take some rest after their long and pleasant journey; the care-takers were not yet ready to vacate the premises. In Fort Smith there were two resident priests and a large Catholic population.

Next morning the bishop escorted the Sisters through the houses and grounds they now occupied, that they might suggest to him whatever alterations they desired. He lost no time gathering in building materials and workmen, promising to remain in Fort Smith until the improvements and repairs were completed. The people contributed liberally to furnish the convent. Schools for girls and small boys were immediately opened, besides catechism classes and instruction classes for adults, all of which were well attended. The bishop remained over six months, preaching, catechizing, administering the Sacraments, inspiring and fostering the good projects of the Sisters. In September he resumed the visitation of his diocese. The following year, 1854, he returned to Fort Smith, and was greatly consoled and gratified at the progress of the young institute. He had opened a college for boys, over which he placed four priests. On the college grounds there was a small church dedicated to St. Patrick, in which the Sisters heard Mass every day. The literary reputation of the schools soon spread abroad and many wealthy planters hastened to confide their daughters to the Sisters. A boarding-school for children of this class was now begun.

At this juncture the bishop requested Mother M. Teresa and Sister M. Vincent to proceed to Ireland on business of importance to the community, and in search of subjects to help them to carry on the good works they had begun. They left Fort Smith in May, 1856, and after a toilsome journey to New York sailed for Ireland, which they reached before the end of June. They visited the parent-house, and sev-

eral other convents in Ireland and England, and returned to Little Rock the following year accompanied by five candidates.

Among the pupils educated at Fort Smith about this time were three princesses, daughters of the chief of the Cherokee Nation, and three ladies of the same rank from the Choctaws. Many other Indian maidens followed. They were all docile and easily managed, and though not at all interfered with as regards religion, they chose to go with the Catholic pupils to prayers and religious instructions, and finally embraced the Catholic faith. This is what the Sisters gained by establishing themselves on the frontiers of civilization. At the profession of three Sisters at this house in 1855 the bishop "congratulated the community on the successful progress of their Order, then to be found as far as the utmost bounds of civilization, close by the encampments of the wild sons of the forest."

In May, 1857, the bishop conducted a retreat for the clergy of this portion of his diocese, nine in number. At its conclusion he blessed a Catholic cemetery, part of which was allotted to the Sisters. On the 15th of June he gave the white veil to several candidates with great solemnity. As neither the convent chapel nor the church could accommodate the crowds desirous of being present, an altar was erected in the handsome front portico of the convent, which was most tastefully decorated. The convent choir was aided by several musical priests, and the effect on this bright summer morning was most pleasing. Seats were set in the vast lawn before the house. The procession of clergy and religious up the long piazza was a unique and lovely sight, and the spectators were deeply impressed. The bishop as he proceeded explained the various parts of the ceremony, and the objects of the Institute now firmly settled in this place. He preached a stirring sermon on vocation to the religious life, given only to a few, and dismissed the immense congregation with his blessing.

The great benefit that resulted from the Sisters' labors at the Fort and the Rock impelled Bishop Byrne to found a convent at Helena, Phillips County, at that time the richest county in Arkansas in planters and plantations. This turned out to be the most arduous and perhaps meritorious work they had yet undertaken. He purchased a beautiful property with a fine house, once the residence of Colonel Biscoe, situated on an eminence commanding a splendid view of the Mississippi, and surrounded by gardens, orchards, and vine arbors, the whole in perfect order. In January, 1858, the bishop conducted four Sisters to this fairy home, which they at once occupied as a convent. After a most toilsome journey by land and water they reached this beautiful spot in time to open school in the beginning of February. Helena, by the circuitous route of those days, was several hundred miles from the Rock and the Fort, and, being directly on the river, was much more accessible than either. The Sisters taught all the children of the town, and conducted a fine boarding-school for those living at a distance. Early in 1859 the bishop again sailed for Ireland in quest of help, and returned on the morning of December 8 in time to offer the Holy Sacrifice in honor of our Immaculate Mother, and in thanksgiving for his safe arrival. As candidates for the convent he brought twelve gentlewomen, and several students for his college. For some months he remained at Helena to superintend the erection of St. Catherine's Academy. The postulants were sent to the novitiate at the Rock, and in due time received the veil from the zealous bishop. On October 2, this year, died a most zealous and efficient member, Sister M. Aloysius Fitzpatrick—a great loss every way to the community.

Although sixty children of Helena attended the day-schools, and many others crossed the river in a ferry, and some in dories and dug-outs, from the State of Mississippi for the same purpose, although the academy was well patron-

ized by the planters of the surrounding country, who would hear of no other school for their daughters, yet very few convent girls thought of joining their teachers, and the novitiate had to depend almost entirely on Ireland * for its reinforcements. Many non-Catholics embraced the faith, especially of those who remained a considerable time in the institution. The pupils were of all religions and no religion, yet they willingly conformed to the external discipline of the house, and even chose to attend the spiritual exercises, though not in the least obliged to do so. The establishment at Helena was certainly the finest in the State and the most prosperous. It was soon, however, to receive two severe blows from which it was not destined to recover.

In the summer of 1861 the bishop was taken seriously ill of fever at Fort Smith, and was unable to return to Little Rock till October. A relapse followed the fatiguing journey, and in February, 1862, he went to Helena, thinking the change would benefit his health. But years of unbroken toil had undermined his fine constitution, and in his debilitated, languid appearance the Sisters saw the beginning of the end. They fitted up a house at the lower end of their garden for him, and here he took up his abode with a faithful man-servant, who remained with him during his long and painful illness. For some months he was able to walk about the garden and visit the convent. The Sisters, to whom he had been more than father, lavished upon the dying prelate every possible care and attention. He loved children, and they were very fond of being with him. The convent children would run to meet him and crowd about him whenever he came in sight. He would sit down

* In 1857 the mother-superior of the Chicago house made application to have a professed member of her community transferred to Little Rock. The request being granted, the religious in question, Sister M. Catherine Ryan, joined the community at the Rock in May, 1857. A little later Mother Warde, in reply to a petition for help from the Little Rock superior, sent Sisters M. Paula Lombard and Madeleine Kelly to aid their Sisters in Arkansas. It was then a slave State. Sister M. Paula was greatly surprised when a big "plantation nigger" came one day to the convent and offered to sell himself to her!

in the midst of them, tell them stories, and amuse them till he could scarcely speak. On the 1st of June he grew very much worse. The Sisters had the consolation of receiving his parting benediction, which he gave in Latin and English with heartfelt affection. They prayed around his dying bed, and when the voice of prayer, choked with tears and sobs, faltered, he would say in gentle accents: "Pray on, dear children, pray on." His pure soul passed away in the most holy sentiments of faith, hope, and love, June 10. The Sisters who had the happiness of being present can never forget his peaceful and beautiful falling asleep in the Lord. His last act was to raise his feeble hand in benediction over them.

The reverence, gratitude, and affection of this great prelate for the Sisters of Mercy, especially those who had left their homes and country "to labor with him in the Gospel," could not be described in words. He was their father and best friend, and they felt that, though separated from them, he would still watch over them. To this day they maintain that their first father was made of no common mould, and that zeal, charity, and devotion almost deified his character. To them he had been everything—friend, consoler, instructor, adviser. Their institutions he regarded as the gems of his diocese. He labored incessantly for their success—found them Sisters, pupils, houses, lands—and was to them a model of every Christian virtue. He won the respect of friend and foe, and used his immense influence to promote the well-being of the Sisters whom he so highly prized. His sacred remains were laid in the Convent Cemetery,* where they rested for nineteen years, when his successor had them removed with great pomp to the crypt under the vestibule of the new cathedral of Little Rock, in November,

* Death had been very busy among the Helena Sisters. Sisters M. Aloysius Fitzpatrick, M. Joseph Byrne, Mary Mercedes Leonard, and M. Ignatius Nolan already slept in the beautiful cemetery by the Mississippi. So the bishop was not alone. He reposed, according to his dying wish, among his children.

1881. Beloved of God and man, his memory is held in benediction.

The war was the next disaster. A week after the bishop's death thirty thousand soldiers of the Federal army encamped at Helena, where a terrible battle was fought July 4, 1862. The sick and wounded were scattered on every side, and the Sisters had ample scope for the exercise of mercy among the poor sufferers in the hospital and refugee houses. During the sad period of this unnecessary, fratricidal war, they were constantly engaged with the ailing soldiers of both sides. Arkansas being a border State, they were brought in contact now with Federals and again with Confederates, and the commanding officers of the contending armies always vied with each other in their respectful attentions to the religious gentlewomen whom they called their benefactresses. For seventeen months guards of three, often six, soldiers were detailed to protect the convent premises at Little Rock.* At one time the capital was occupied by Texas troops, who knew little about Catholics and less about nuns. Now they missed the bishop who had been the most influential man in the State with all parties, but the Almighty arm protected their weakness. When the Texans saw the Sisters for the first time nothing could equal their surprise. Their services, however, soon reconciled the men to their garb. The poor fellows expressed gratitude for the least favor. Many asked to be instructed in the Catholic faith, and several of these fervent converts died happily of mortal wounds received on the field of fame, if not of glory.

The effects of the war on the Arkansas convents were most disastrous. Helena being on the river, and Fort Smith near the Texas border, were especially scourged.

* Little Rock was in possession of the Confederates till September 10, 1863, when it was captured by General Steele. Several Louisiana companies were encamped about the town. The Sisters attended them whenever sickness broke out among them, and after the skirmishes.

The former never regained its pristine prosperity. Its chief support had been derived from a pay school, but the pupils who once filled its benches were scattered. The lands of their patrons were confiscated, and many became so poor that they were obliged to leave that once smiling region in search of work. After laboring incessantly in Helena for ten years, the Sisters were obliged to return to the Rock, January 23, 1868. As late as March, 1869, the writer passed through this once charming town. Even then it appeared like a desert studded with ruins, and the whole region of which it had been the flourishing outlet was thoroughly impoverished.

NOTE.—In his will, made in June, 1857. Bishop Byrne leaves the Sisters of Mercy “his books, chalices, vestments, and paintings.” His successor, Bishop Fitzgerald, being informed that Bishop Byrne intended to give them ten acres of land surrounding their convent in Fort Smith, kindly deeded them about twenty acres.

CHAPTER XLVI.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR.

Death of an old Friend—Little Rock in 1851—Early Days of the Sisterhood—Disastrous Effects of the War—The old *Régime* gone for ever—Good Work in the Prisons—Sad but consoling Instances—Brought for Trial to Fort Smith from the Indian Territory—More like a Martyr than a Criminal—Convent burned—The first Convent in Arkansas—Not all a Dream—Remarkable Conversion—Ill Consequences to the Sisters—House at Hot Springs—The U. S. Surveyor—Inconvenience.

VERY REV. FATHER O'REILLY, who had been appointed chaplain to the community in 1851, became administrator on the death of Bishop Byrne. This zealous priest, lovingly known throughout Arkansas as "Father Pat," was a second father to the Sisters of Mercy, and his interest in them and their works continued to the latest moment of his life. They found in him a true and faithful friend, and the example he gave of self-denial, patience, and forbearance they never could forget. His meekness and gentleness, combined with great charity and unostentatious piety, won him universal love and admiration, and the least expression of his will had the weight of a command. Towards the close of his life his health began to fail. He returned to his native land in hopes of restoring it, but God ordained otherwise. The faithful steward who had labored so long in his Master's service was called to his reward in June, 1881.

When Father O'Reilly welcomed the Sisters to Little Rock,* February 11, 1851, that capital presented a bleak

* The population of Little Rock in 1851 was little over two thousand. Ten years later it was over five thousand, of whom nearly half were colored. It is now over twenty-five thousand.

and discouraging aspect. They expected that the chief city of a vast State would possess some noteworthy attractions, but of such it was wholly destitute. It was a small, straggling, poor-looking town. That day it was set off in its holiday attire ; the streets were clean, and the houses—they all looked like paste-board—had each a new coat of paint in honor of the new arrivals. They were all dead white, and the more stylish had green blinds. They were so low that from any part of the town one could see the cross on the cathedral, which towered above every other building and designated the humble church lately erected by Bishop Byrne. To this a few faithful adorers came every Sunday to partake of the Bread of Life. Here they were wont to listen with breathless attention to the burning words that flowed from his lips. For many months it served as a convent chapel ; the small house in which they lived could not spare a room for a choir. The Sisters worked incessantly inside and outside. Hired help was not easily procured in those days, and hands unused to labor did much of the rough work—cooking, washing, house-cleaning, baking were every-day tasks.

The people were delighted with this energetic addition to their town. And their praises of the religious were not flattery, as they explained, but an honest tribute to genuine worth. The mother-superior encouraged her children by her own example ; if anything difficult had to be done, she was the first to put her hand to the work ; and having the heart of a mother for the weakly among her children, she tried to procure for them by her own personal labor whatever their health required. The bishop's great interest in the new institution helped it wonderfully. Whatever he could do to advance it was joyfully done. To hear it praised was his delight. To know that it deserved the praises ungrudgingly bestowed was his consolation. The Sisters were wholly at the service of the people, and it was their pride and pleasure to second in every possible way

the pious wishes of the bishop. They were continually employed in teaching, studying, instructing, ministering to the sick, and consoling the afflicted—occupations varied only by their spiritual exercises and household labors. It was said that almost every Catholic learned from the Sisters how to make the sign of the cross. The few clergy then in the diocese had little time to instruct converts or negligent Catholics; all this devolved on the Sisters. The priests went from place to place to offer up the Holy Sacrifice and administer the Sacraments.

The war all but ruined these flourishing establishments. During its continuance many of their pupils, whose fathers were away fighting, came to stay with the Sisters, as their homes were either burned or confiscated. Circumstanced as they were, it was not easy for the Sisters to undertake the responsibility of supporting so many. But they deemed themselves happy, even at the risk of some embarrassment, to afford protection to their dear children in such perilous times. For five years after the death of Bishop Byrne the Church of the Rock remained a widow. Communication with the Holy See was interrupted or restricted in consequence of the disastrous war. In 1867 Right Rev. Edward Fitzgerald was appointed bishop. Before his arrival the old *régime* had passed away, and a new order of things had been inaugurated. But the woful consequences of the civil war have not yet wholly disappeared; it will be much if they die with the nineteenth century.

The communities in the Arkansas houses have performed from the beginning, as far as possible, all the works of mercy characteristic of their Order. Although a House of Mercy was unnecessary in an inland country, they performed many of the duties of such an establishment by instructing poor women and providing situations for them, which they have been frequently called upon to do, especially since the abolition of slavery.

Like their Sisters in all parts of the world, the Little Rock religious have interested themselves greatly in the well-being of prisoners, whom they visit at stated times to relieve, console, and instruct. In June, 1859, they prepared for the Sacraments a youth under sentence of death. Every day they visited him, to bestow such comfort as he could receive in his woful situation. And their efforts were not unsuccessful. It was their sweet consolation to see him prepare piously for his sad fate, and meet it resignedly, in a spirit of penance. Many such cases came into their experience, among others a young man brought from a distant county for safe-keeping, December, 1875. He remembered having been baptized in childhood by a priest, but knew nothing of religion. During their daily visits they instructed him thoroughly, prepared him for confession and Communion, and had the comfort of seeing him go forth to execution more like a martyr than a criminal. A good deal of this kind of work fell to the share of the Fort Smith Sisters also. That town being on the frontier line of the Indian Territory, those accused of criminal offences in the Indian country are brought thither for trial. Many notorious convicts, prepared by the Sisters for Baptism and Holy Communion, have given up their lives on the scaffold in holy and penitential dispositions.

On December 8, 1875, the convent at Fort Smith was burned to the ground. The following year it was rebuilt with great elegance. The Little Rock convent is situated on a square once on the outskirts, but now almost in the centre, of the city. The east wing was originally the first Catholic Church in Little Rock. Many additions have been made, which give the *tout ensemble* a rather irregular appearance. But the buildings, shaded by fine old trees, are quite airy and comfortable, and all that the duties of the Order demand.

Among the remarkable conversions which the Sisters were instrumental in effecting was that of a well-known

gentleman who had been brought up an Episcopalian. He met with a severe accident and was obliged to have his leg amputated, but his constitution was not robust enough to bear up under the sufferings which this operation entailed. When he found he could not live he turned his thoughts to eternity, and showed great anxiety as to the final destination of his soul. One night he dreamt he saw all the churches struggling in a deep ocean, and while the others were engulfed in the waters, the Catholic Church alone rode triumphantly over them. Up to this his dislike of Catholicism was so great that when his wife expressed a desire to have their infant baptized by a priest—there being no Episcopal minister then in Little Rock—he said: “No; rather let my child die without baptism.” After his dream he sent for the Sisters, who visited him daily for the six weeks he lived. Once, at midnight, he sent for Bishop Fitzgerald to come to his bedside and give him some assurance of safety beyond the portals of the grave. The bishop was then absent at the Œcumenical Council, but Father O’Reilly came at once, and ere morning light dawned on the sick-room received Mr. B. Nowland into the Church. He died with perfect submission to the Divine will and heart-felt gratitude for the gift of faith. His last act was to kiss the crucifix and repeat devoutly the holy name of Jesus. His conversion gave great dissatisfaction to his Protestant friends, who were among the first families of the State. Some of these, who had previously been warm friends of the Sisters, withdrew their patronage and friendship, saying they could not forgive them for the part they had taken—not unasked, as we have seen—in attracting this gentleman to the true Faith.

In September, 1880, the Rock community took possession of a house at Hot Springs, given by Rev. Father McGowan. There was much to be done to make it suitable for its new purpose, but in time all was happily accomplished. Six large rooms were fitted up for school-rooms. At that time

there was a good deal of trouble at the Springs about the boundaries of property, which retarded somewhat the Sisters' prosperity. The United States had settled some old-standing claims, and a rather disagreeable consequence of the arbitration was, that many had to buy their homes over again. The United States surveyor, too, in his official capacity, gave them some little annoyance. Desiring to beautify still more a spot to which nature has been so prodigal, he laid out the town anew, regardless of the rights of property-holders. He arranged so as to bring the belfry of the Catholic Church to the junction of two streets, and the church itself under a hill. Visitors throng Hot Springs by hundreds, the waters being a specific for rheumatism and neuralgia. "The views are like those in the Switzerland mountains," writes a Sister. "Some hills rise abruptly within a few feet of us, wooded to the top, the rocks everywhere peeping through the trees." The schools here, as all others conducted by the Sisters of Mercy in the State, are flourishing, and a large infirmary has been erected, chiefly for rheumatic and neuralgic affections, so common in our day.

We shall conclude our sketch of the Sisters of Mercy in Arkansas by taking a closer view of their institutions of to-day, and giving their statistics and other matters of interest as we gathered them on the spot.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THINGS LEFT OUT.

Contrast—Attempt at Colonization—Deceased Sisters—Father Hoar's Colony—Father Frank O'Donoghue—His lonely Death—"His Sepulchre no Man knoweth unto this Day"—Disappointment—New Ireland—Ordinations—Father Patrick O'Reilly—Immense extent of the Little Rock Diocese—Lonely Lives of the early Missioners—Perils and Surprises of the Wilderness—Incidents—Sleeping under an Umbrella—The Seven Little Hoosiers—Father Pat surrounded—He walks the Baby—The laughing Negroes—The good Priest's Death—He leaves a Legacy to the Sisters—Another Friend, Rev. Patrick McGowan—He gives them a fine Property—St. Joseph's Hospital, Hot Springs—The saintly Octogenarian.

COMPARED with the first convent, Pittsburgh, the Little Rock house has not been numerically great. In the former two hundred and eighty have been professed since 1843; in the latter not quite one-third of that number. In the exquisite cemetery of the Pittsburgh community at St. Xavier's sixty-eight Sisters of Mercy sleep their last sleep. In the scarcely less exquisite "God's acre" in Little Rock* and Fort Smith about a quarter of that number. But the circumstances of the places were very different. There was a steady stream of immigration towards the "Smoky Queen," while several attempts to populate the rolling prairies and rocky hills of Arkansas proved abortive.

In 1850 Father Hoar, of Wexford, brought to Little Rock from Ireland many prosperous families, in all three hun-

* Three deceased Sisters of Little Rock were buried in the convent garden, but afterwards disinterred and laid in the new cemetery, over three miles from the city, where Bishop Fitzgerald gave the community nine grave lots. In the centre of the plot is a white marble cross with the inscription: "SISTERS OF MERCY. On whose souls, sweet Jesus, have mercy." Each grave is marked by a cross bearing the name of its tenant. The Fort Smith cemetery is arranged in the same manner. But, besides, the people of that town have raised an imposing monument to the deceased Sisters of Mercy.

dred souls. The heads of this colony had given in their own land evidences of vigor and decision, and came to reclaim wild land or clear forests or undertake some prosperous business. Bishop Byrne intended that they should settle in the vicinity of the Rock. His vicar-general, Father Francis O'Donoghue, was in possession of the bishop's views regarding these thrifty and most valuable settlers. He was also commissioned to build a temporary convent to receive the expected Sisterhood. But his sudden death frustrated these schemes. While on the mission, endeavoring to give the scattered Catholics an opportunity to comply with their duties, he stopped at a cabin in the bush owned by a family named Reilly. Worn and exhausted by hunger, labor, and rough travelling, the priest, by persuasion of the good woman of the house, threw himself on a rough pallet to snatch a little repose while she set about preparing him some food. Mr. Reilly, a big, bearded, sunburnt man, was glad to perceive that the revered guest slept well and long. But when the frugal meal was ready he came to awake him. He found him lying calmly, his hands crossed on his breast, his breviary open beside him, his hat over his face (probably to keep off the devouring insects), and his eyes closed—not in sleep but in death. This family alone formed his funeral cortége next day, when they laid him with reverent hands in the red soil beneath the whispering trees. In after-years they removed elsewhere, and to-day the lonely grave of the apostolic man is forgotten. A surveyor promised the Sisters to search the whole region to find it, should not God Himself see fit to make it known, as many hope. Bishop Byrne, who revered Father Francis as a saint, never ceased to deplore his loss.

The young priest, Father John O'Reilly, who was in Little Rock when the three hundred strangers arrived, knew nothing of the bishop's intentions with regard to locating them. Only sheds could be procured for their shelter, and their numbers were soon thinned by ship-fever. This trial

over, the survivors were too disheartened to await the bishop's arrival. Eight families settled in Little Rock, a few went to Fort Smith, and the rest founded in Iowa the flourishing colony of New Ireland. The Sisters were greatly disappointed on their arrival to find this large colony scattered. The bishop had held out to them, as an inducement to come to his diocese, that they should minister to these people, teach their children, and attend them in sickness.

Bishop Byrne was heart-broken to find that his saintly vicar-general was dead and his grand immigration scheme frustrated. Mr. O'Reilly, a mature student of thirty-five; Mr. Behan, a most eloquent preacher, both of Maynooth, and Mr. Martin, of All Hallows, who had come out with Father Hoar's colony and given all possible assistance in the unlooked-for emergency just described, were at the wharf to welcome the bishop and Sisters, February 5. All three were ordained on St. Patrick's day, 1851. The first named was immediately appointed vicar-general, an office he held till his death.

From his ordination till his latest breath Father O'Reilly was the devoted friend of the Sisters of Mercy, and their spiritual director. A most laborious missionary, he knew every nook of the diocese. It then included much of the Indian Territory, and in fact, though not by obligation, portions of other dioceses near the boundary lines of the neighboring States, Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Missouri; Bishop Byrne kindly giving this assistance to the prelates whose dioceses touched his own. On the bishop's death Father O'Reilly, or Father Pat, as he was universally styled, was unanimously chosen by the clergy for administrator, an office to which he was appointed by Archbishop Blanc, and which he worthily held for six years. A mural tablet in St. Andrew's Cathedral commemorates the services of this eminent divine to the Church of Arkansas.

During his long and lonely years of missionary toil this good father often said that the example of the Sisters of

Mercy was a support to him and a stimulus to fervor. In all his religious duties he was scrupulously exact, and left to himself he would have been an anchorite rather than a missionary. When his course at Maynooth was finished, such were his tenderness of conscience and fear of the awful responsibilities of the sacerdotal office that he persistently refused to be "priested," and returned to his paternal home near Tara, where he lived as a recluse for seven years, dividing his time between prayer, study, and penance. It was Bishop Byrne who forced him out of his solitude, by assuring him that it was God's will he should labor for souls under foreign skies. He was, therefore, already a man of deep experience in heavenly things when the bishop placed him at the head of his clergy.

The penances of his solitary days at home were as child's play to those he endured in the backwoods of the wild West. Fatigue, hunger, labor incessant, extremes of heat and cold, roving Indians who brandished their bloody tomahawks at every unarmed white man, wild beasts, bloodthirsty insects—these were but a few of the perils and surprises of life in the wilderness. In honorable rivalry with his missionary brethren, he penetrated places where the pale-faces, allured by hopes of gain or conquest, had not yet ventured. In those days highways were few or none, and houses of entertainment for man and beast practically unknown. Groves of scrub-oak, clumps of gum-trees, acres of pine; mountain, valley, and prairie; rivers, streams, and springs; natural water-courses cut by heavy rains in the porous soil; swamps of mud and clouds of dust, awful droughts and heavy snows, smiling farms, miles of cotton, belts of fruit regions, diversify travel in Arkansas to-day. But steam, by land and water, has effected prodigious changes. What this good priest endured to plant the faith in these wilds only He knows who can repay. His years passed by without blame or blemish, while the cross in many ways pressed rudely on his shoulders. To his people he was always the "great priest

who pleased God," and they fondly hope that the seed he sowed in these uncultured plains will yet bear fruit a hundred-fold.

The incidents of his stainless, irreproachable, and holy life had an infinite charm for his people.

Once, when he and Father Martin were on a mission at Rocky Comfort, near the territory of the aboriginal Indian, a hospitable family treated them to a comfortable shuck bed. But the snow came in through the primitive chimneys and the crevices of the log cabin, and the missionary pair were thankful that they had an umbrella to protect their heads from the snow and sleet while they slept.

On another occasion Father Pat was called to a dying man thirty miles east of Little Rock. Having fortified his penitent with the consolations the Church bestows on her departing children, he found that it was out of the question to get to the Rock that night. The housewife prepared the best bed for him on the floor. The hovel consisted of one room. Blankets were hung up at night in the spaces intended for doors and windows, and with similar drapery a partition was made between the priest's room and the family room.

Tired by his long journey through prairie and forest, the good father soon fell into a heavy slumber. Like Bishop Byrne, he was almost large enough for a giant. In stretching himself out and tossing about in his sleep some rather unusual noises awoke him. Something was pressing against his feet and something at his sides, and, as he partially arose and made an effort to shake off the foreign substances, stretching his arms so as to get free, seven children, ranging from seven years to seven months in age, rolled off the hastily improvised mattress. The night was very cold, and when the poor woman, who was sitting up with her sick husband, had found the big priest asleep, she put her little ones around him in the best bed, to keep them snug and warm. It was moonlight, and some grinning niggers at

the temporary window hugely enjoyed the priest's discomfiture. The ascetic father could sleep no more that night. He tucked in the six as well as he could, and walked about with the baby, a fat little Hoosier that could not be pacified for being so unceremoniously rolled over and disturbed in his first sleep. But further reminiscences of early missionary life in Arkansas belong rather to the general history of the Church in that region than to the Annals of the Mercy Sisterhood.

Towards the close of his life Father Pat's health was so broken that his physician sent him to Ireland for its restoration. But his hour soon came. His dying wish was to be laid with his people in Arkansas. God ordained otherwise, and he sleeps with his ancestors in Kilmessan churchyard, Navan. From his death-bed he sent his beloved daughters, the Sisters of Mercy, his best blessing, and seven hundred dollars towards the building of their convent at Hot Springs. He died April 29, 1882, aged sixty-six. He was passionately beloved in Arkansas. The Protestant *Journal* spoke of "his kind, generous, and manly soul; his heart gentle as a woman's, brave as a hero's, and pure and forgiving as a saint's." His loss to the Sisters of Mercy, with whom he had been so happily connected from the day of their arrival in Arkansas, could not be described.

God raised them up another friend and benefactor in the person of the venerable Father Patrick McGowan, who gave them their convent property at Hot Springs, saying: "The Sisters of Mercy have worked hard for God in Arkansas; the clergy and people are deeply indebted to them. In hard and trying times of missionary life they taught the children the first principles of faith. And the name of Mary, Mother of God, was not known in our State till they proclaimed it." In July, 1888, Father McGowan commissioned Dr. Keller, of Hot Springs, to purchase ground or a building for an infirmary. A very fine edifice near the Catholic church, built for a hospital at a cost of

twenty-five thousand dollars, and never used, was purchased, by Father McGowan's direction, for ten thousand. Two thousand were paid on the spot. Father McGowan's farm in New Gascony is up for sale, and when the bargain is closed the proceeds of the sale will, it is expected, clear all encumbrance off St. Joseph's Hospital. Father McGowan is the last priest ordained by Bishop England* (April, 1840). Like his friend, Father O'Reilly, he would not receive ordination when his studies were finished, but waited till he was past thirty. This venerable patriarch, though eighty-two years old, officiates as convent chaplain, and is at the altar every morning a little after five. He has known the Sisters since their arrival, and has always ranked among their warmest friends. For almost half a century he labored to the full measure of his abilities among the traders and hunters and venturesome pioneers in the wilderness. His headquarters were at New Gascony until quite recently, when he made the home of his declining years among the Sisters, his beneficiaries. He remembers Hot Springs when known to few besides the Indians. The water issued from the mountain-side boiling hot. The poor people boiled eggs and potatoes in it, and used it medicinally. "Ah!" said he, "it was then cures were wrought. There were no doctors, no bath-tubs; the waters were sent by the providence of God for the relief of the suffering poor, and the Indian and the white man tested their efficacy." The Sisters have fine schools for the white and the colored at the Springs. The convent is a large, handsome frame building, surrounded by shade-lined, flower-dotted grounds. Mountains, almost vertical, may be seen on all sides. Good old Father McGowan is a link between two epochs of the history of the Church of Arkansas. Vigorous and undaunted, he still fights for his Master, though

* Father McGowan is full of reminiscences of the great Bishop of Charleston. "Ah!" he would say, "how that man worked, how he wore himself out in the service of God!"

all his early companions have laid down their arms. His life has been kind, beneficent, and holy. When we bade him good-by at the convent gate on a bright fall evening, the glow of heaven irradiating the snows of his venerable head, we thought of his spotlessness and usefulness in the Church of God, and prayed Heaven to spare him still to his loving children. We envied the religious who derive from this saintly soul no small share of their inspiration and direction.

NOTE.—St. Joseph's Hospital, Hot Springs, was solemnly blessed and opened for patients on the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, September 24, 1888.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

EARLY DAYS.

Little Rock House to-day—The People regard the Removal of the old Convent as an Act of Vandalism—Historic and religious Associations of the Convent Square—Camping-ground for the Troops going to the Mexican War—First Church—Abbé Maenhaut—Abbé Richarbole's sudden Death—A wealthy Subject—"I gave all to the good God long ago"—"Beautiful Death of Sister M. Vincent"—"I always considered her a Saint, and I know she died one"—Bishop Fitzgerald officiates at her Obsequies—The Convent School the oldest School in Arkansas—Laboring under Difficulties—Painful Accident to Bishop Byrne—Early Members almost isolated in Arkansas—The June Freshet—Father Begly, S.J.—Missionary Journeys of the Sisters—They learn to wait—Old-gold Waters—Muddy Lemonade—Peaches for the Hogs—The Sisters did much to promote Fruit Culture—Gooseberries—Mr. Hager's Vow—His Thank-Offerings—Benefactors—Cardinal Cullen blessed the Sisters' Work in Arkansas—Occupations—War Times—The white Flag—Just before the Battle—Bishop Byrne's Coffin—His episcopal Ring—Silver Jubilee.

THE beautiful Convent of Mercy in Little Rock is of red brick with light facings. The main building is two stories, but the tower and observatory rise considerably higher. In front is a small garden, enclosed with iron railings. The main entrance is very fine.*

The square on which it stands has some historic and religious associations. It served as a camping-ground for the troops going to the Mexican War in 1847; and the first Catholic church† built in Little Rock stood on it, and was afterwards incorporated in the convent, in the older part of

* In order to build the above, a great part of the old convent had to be removed, to the intense regret of the older inhabitants of the city, who regarded it as one of the ancient landmarks, and were accustomed to point it out as the oldest school building in the State. It had grown unsafe.

† Bishop Byrne erected a frame cathedral eight blocks distant, which is still standing. He would never officiate in the old church, which had been under an interdict. The priest who built it in 1840, Father Richarbole, left in 1844. He fell off the gangway of a vessel in New Orleans and was drowned. Father Maenhaut bought what is now the convent square at an auction in New Orleans.

which it may still be traced. It was sold to Bishop Byrne by Abbé Maenhaut, of New Orleans, for two thousand dollars, to be expended in Masses for his soul. The bishop transferred it, together with the obligation of having the Masses said, to the Sisters of Mercy. At first they were literally in the wilderness. The square was simply an unfenced piece of primeval forest, surrounded by bush. When some wild men of the town sought to alarm the more peaceful inhabitants by assuming what they supposed to be the masquerade of ghosts, they were pursued to the convent ground, and thence escaped to the bush adjacent, where they easily eluded pursuit.

But little assistance was then to be had from the people in Arkansas; the Catholics were few and poor. The Sisters built a convent at once with funds brought by them from Ireland. A very wealthy young widow, Mrs. Anne Healy, a cousin of Bishop Byrne, well known to the clergy and poor of Dublin for her unlimited charities, joined the Sisters in that city. The bishop chartered two vessels to convey the belongings of this wealthy lady to her American home.* For thirty-five years she was revered throughout Arkansas as Sister M. Vincent. On Christmas day, 1885, she died at the Little Rock convent. Though past sixty, she appeared as fresh and lovely in death as she had been in early days. By special request of Bishop Fitzgerald her sacred remains were removed to the cathedral. In the funeral discourse he remarked that "he had always considered her a saint, and knew that she died one." She was particularly remarkable for her ardent love of God and her desire to serve Him in her neighbor.

* In the convent and in the bishop's house may be seen to this day heavy, old-fashioned furniture, mirrors, and silver which once graced Mrs. Healy's beautiful home in Dublin. Sometimes the Sisters would tease her by asking if certain articles were not hers. "No, dear," she would say simply, "I have nothing of my own; I gave all to the good God long ago." The letters of Bishop Fitzgerald to the Little Rock Sisters during his visit to Dublin are full of praises of this holy woman, as he heard on the spot of the heroic deeds of charity performed by her before she entered the convent, and piously treasured up in the traditions of clergy and people.

Sister M. Stanislaus Farrell, who labored twenty-seven years on the Arkansas mission, had also a large inheritance. The academy, which is the oldest school in the State, was erected with her means. Had it not been for the ample fortunes of these and other ladies who generously devoted their earthly possessions to the furtherance of religion and education, Arkansas would not so soon have enjoyed the privilege of superior schools. For the public, in early days, were unable to offer the aid and co-operation necessary to build and sustain such institutions. But the time speedily came when the convent attracted multitudes of wealthy and liberal Protestants, who have since been, like the Catholics, its steadfast friends. The community went to work in 1851 under immense difficulties. Mechanics were scarcely to be had for love or money. Brick-masons were out of the question, all the houses being built of wood. The old brick church needed repairs; the bishop was forced to send to New York for bricklayers. He bought some ground on which brick could be made, built a kiln, had an expert imported to oversee the work, and made an addition to the little church, then, as now, part of the convent. A cellar with a five-foot stone wall around it was finished at an expense of two thousand dollars. Lumber was easily procured, and Providence sent two carpenters named Forster from foreign parts for the wood-work.

Some time after, when the bishop went into the bush to select material for the new convent, he fell from his horse. Apparently the fall did not amount to anything, but he was hurt internally and felt the effects of the accident as long as he lived.

The difficulties * which beset the pioneers of religion some

* One consequence of this was that the Sisters never saw any clergy or community but their own. They conducted their own retreats regularly twice a year, "with God alone for our guide," writes the late superior. In August, 1874, the Little Rock Sisters had the aid of a priest for the first time; Rev. Henry Begly, S. J., gave the retreat that year. The Fort Smith and Hot Springs Sisters have not yet had such assistance. It usually took a week or two to get from Little Rock to Fort Smith, whether by land or water.

forty years ago can scarcely be appreciated to-day. It was often difficult and sometimes impossible to get in or out of the State. For this one had to depend on the "June rise." When Mother M. Teresa returned from Europe in 1856 with six other Sisters, they were detained at Helena seven weeks waiting for this "June freshet" to cause a rise in the Arkansas River before they could start for their destination, Fort Smith. Here the bishop had opened a college for boys conducted by three priests, Fathers Monahan, Walsh, and Whelan, and two seminarians, Messrs. Nagle and Shanahan, who were ordained in due course. It was then a military post. The families of the army officers and planters gladly sent their boys to the college and their girls to the convent. Fort Smith was much more Catholic than the Rock.

The Sisters made many missionary journeys with the bishop, during which they learned "how to wait." He would while away the tediousness by telling them stories of his early missionary life with Bishop England, and, simple as a child himself, he would work on their simplicity to raise many an innocent smile. When they contrasted the sparkling wells of their native land with the old-gold waters of the Mississippi, which they drank only because no other could be procured, the bishop tossed off the muddy contents of his glass, declaring that, innocent as they were of icing or filtering, the waters of the great river tasted to him like lemonade. "As for peaches," said he on their first voyage, "they are so plentiful in Arkansas that the hogs get a surfeit of them." The variety devoured by these ravenous animals could scarcely be deemed edible by the human. Peaches such as they had known in Ireland sold at the rate of three for two dollars.

To-day, however, some parts of Arkansas, especially about Fort Smith, form one of the finest fruit regions in the world for apples, peaches, pears, and plums. The Sisters did much to promote fruit culture in their respective sections. The extensive grounds attached to their convents

soon became smiling gardens, orchards, and vineyards. They introduced the fruits of other countries, but, to their great regret, have so far failed to acclimatize the gooseberry. The intense heat of the sun burnt up all they planted before the berry reached maturity.

Among the early friends of the Sisters at the Rock was Judge David W. Carroll, who did all in his power for clergy and religious, and has lived into our own day to see their prosperity. Nor must we forget the Reider family, who were the first to welcome the Sisters of Mercy to Arkansas and have since been their kind benefactors. The first Sunday-school held by the Sisters consisted of Adele Carroll and Cassie Reider; their second, of the same, with Brigid Ryan, Emily Sellers, and Lizzie Prasche. Cassie and Amanda Reider had the satisfaction of converting their mother and the husband of the former. Another early friend, Mr. Hager, frequently gave the Sisters meal, pork, and money for the poor. In 1873, when yellow fever* was raging at Memphis, so to say, but a step from Little Rock, Mr. Hager made a vow to give all his property for a hospital for the poor if God would mercifully save the city.

Little Rock was saved, and the good man gave seventy-five thousand dollars to carry out his pious project. The beautiful white marble altar in the cathedral is a thank-offering from Mr. Hager, for favors received.

Mr. Williamanse left the Sisters of Mercy a plantation worth twelve thousand dollars, the interest of which to be applied for ever to the education of poor girls in Arkansas. Seven thousand dollars were lately bequeathed to the Fort

* One case, a negress, reached Little Rock. There was no inhumanity shown to her, as unfortunately happens in many places to-day. Some persons went to nurse her, and Bishop Fitzgerald attended to her spiritual wants. When she died she was buried as a Christian. The bishop, who never had the disease, and the nurses returned to their homes, and there was no talk of shotgun quarantine. No one took the disease from them. Indeed, many distinguished physicians maintain that yellow fever is neither infectious nor contagious, but due chiefly to atmospheric conditions, and that one should quarantine the atmosphere to quarantine it. The bishop also attended, against the advice of his friends, a Mr. Moody who died of yellow fever in Little Rock.

Smith Sisters for the same object. Bishop Byrne, when the Sisters were coming out with him, did not think the divided attentions of a stewardess sufficient for their comfort. He brought out two young women to attend them during the voyage. Both married well. The children of one are now pupils of the convent. The other, who had no children, left her early friends the above bequest. From the first, visitation of the sick and instruction of the ignorant went on incessantly. In a few years the converts instructed by the Sisters numbered several hundreds.

Finding that their work lay so much among non-Catholics and the upper classes in general, Mother Teresa O'Farrell, on a visit to Ireland, laid the matter before Cardinal Cullen, bewailing to His Eminence that there was so little scope for working among the poor in Arkansas. The cardinal, having consulted Rome, desired her and her Sisters to rest assured that they were doing as much for the Church by teaching the upper classes and attracting non-Catholics to the Faith in America as their Sisters in Ireland could possibly do by being more immediately concerned with the poor.

From the first the Sisters have visited the sick in their homes, the hospital, and penitentiary, and taken orphan girls under their protection. Some of their orphans are comfortably married, and all are doing well. In a short space ten of their pupils, six of whom are converts, have become religious in various orders. During 1887 they prepared eleven for baptism in one of their schools. They are now teaching the grandchildren of their early patrons. Religious instruction has always been a favorite work with the Arkansas community. During their seven weeks' cruise in the *John O'Toole* they instructed the emigrants, visited the sick, and consoled the afflicted. The most bitterly tried of the latter was a poor young woman "coming to America" with her only brother. He died at sea, and her terrible grief on seeing his loved remains consigned to a watery grave was never forgotten by those who witnessed it.

During the war the Sisters opened a hospital for Confederate soldiers. They owned a good brick house opposite the convent, into which they received twenty-five ailing men. Two or three died every day, but their bunks were speedily filled with others. When General Price, after his defeat in Missouri, retreated to Little Rock, men were dying on all sides from cold, sickness, and exposure. The Sisters were indefatigable in serving these poor fellows. The Little Rock garrison was composed largely of Texans, many of whom on their beds of sickness embraced the true faith. Where St. Andrew's Cathedral now stands was a coffin factory, which at one period of great mortality turned out forty coffins a day for the deceased warriors. For a while there was almost a famine. Ladies had to dress in furniture cotton, shoes were fifty dollars a pair, a spool of thread cost four or five dollars. Food itself was at famine rates. Clothing such as the Sisters usually wear could scarcely be got at any price.

For nearly two years no one in the convent tasted tea or coffee. Once, when Father O'Reilly was coming from Fort Smith to Little Rock, the Sisters of the Fort, who had some way or other procured a little tea, sent some in a stocking by their good friend for reverend mother's feast-day celebration. Want of sufficient food and clean clothing was partially the cause of the high death-rate. Ladies, Protestant as well as Catholic, kindly aided the Sisters in their ministrations of mercy. To prevent the remarks likely to be made should the local clergy attend the hospital, the Sisters called on Father Dicharry, chaplain of the "Pelican Rangers," a Louisiana regiment, to give the sacraments to the dying soldiers whom they had induced to prepare for eternity. The Confederate officers who were personal friends of the Sisters gave them a guard of seven men to protect the convent at night.

Priests and religious were closely watched by both parties, and any bias, or supposed bias, towards either care-

fully noted. It was well known that the Sisters of Mercy were equally kind to Federals and Confederates, but the Union men sometimes suspected them of a slight leaning towards "the enemy." At Helena the Sisters could see the battle from their galleries. From the moment when the standard-bearer was killed till all was over they remained in readiness to give assistance. Some novices passing out of the convent by the piazza, the Federals said: "Ah! see these people signalling the rebels with white flags." They mistook the white veils for flags, and afterwards averred that it was ungrateful of the Sisters, to whom they had been very kind, to hold such communication with the "enemy."

General Price was three days taking his troops and wounded out of the vicinity. The incoming Federals and the vanquished Confederates passed on either side of the convent grounds. As the last detachment left, shells and bombs were discharged from the gunboats at the wharf in the hope of destroying the receding troops of the Confederate army. These destructive missiles passed harmlessly over the convent, but shattered many of the tombstones in the city cemetery, at some distance. General Steele* also gave the Sisters a guard, which never left the grounds for seventeen months. "The enemy" was now at the Rock. Being hungry, they took the citizens' provisions, not forgetting to appropriate hay and corn from the convent granary. In ignorance of the nature of the institution, the Northern troops bivouacked on the grounds and helped themselves to whatever was movable. The Federal authorities, however, treated the Sisters with great respect. At daybreak the Sisters could see the Union soldiers looking in through the windows of the first floor and school-rooms, and hear them saying: "What place is this?" Their one cow was walking out where the intruders had broken

* General Steele entered Little Rock in September. The Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, as celebrated that year, the inmates of St. Mary's never forgot.

the fence. A Sister said: "There must be Catholic Irishmen among these Northern soldiers. If they see the religious habit they will respect it." Taking a child as a companion, she went towards them. A soldier advanced to meet her. "Will you be kind enough, my friend," said she, "to turn our cow back into the enclosure?" "Certainly, madam," said he, in soft accents that suggested the banks of the Suir; "can I do anything else for you?" From that moment the Sisters and the new brigade were the best of friends. And if the soldiers did make free with their hay and oats before they knew to whom the premises belonged, they made ample restitution. For when they had no longer means to get food for their large family, the Federals supplied them from the commissariat.

Early in war times Bishop Byrne's health began to decline. He came from Fort Smith to Little Rock very ill. Nothing could exceed the kindness of the people; they offered to nurse him day and night; they put all their servants—it was slave times—at his disposal. He thanked them with great feeling, but declined their services, saying: "The Sisters of Mercy will do all I need. And Pat,* my good, faithful servant, will see that I want no attention. Dr. Peyton, my personal friend, will not neglect me." From October to February the Sisters watched him day and night. His house † was eight blocks from the convent. Two Sisters went down every evening and returned in the morning in time for Mass. The doctor ordered him to Helena for change of air and scene. Before leaving he told Mother M. Alphonsus Carton to bring him certain papers. Then asking for pen and ink, he said: "I want now to se-

* Pat Montgomery, a waif the bishop took off a Mississippi boat, was known as "the bishop's man." He never left his master. In September, 1888, the writer had the pleasure of seeing this venerable "faithful servant" at the Mercy Convent, Fort Smith. He takes care of the garden. As a rule he is rather silent, but very voluble when he speaks of "his bishop."

† The same he vacated for the Sisters in 1851—a one-story frame house with dormer windows. It has since been enlarged. The old frame cathedral beside it is no longer used for church purposes.

cure your home to you." He then signed the deeds of the property, and handed them to her. The Sisters often speak of the beautiful death of this holy prelate, in the log-cabin of the Helena convent garden, which they made so comfortable to receive him. Besides the Sisters, Fathers Smith and Shanahan, and the ever-present "Pat," the dying bed was surrounded by the school-children. "Let the children come to me," said he in the words of his divine Master. And it was his delight that their fresh, innocent voices mingled in the last petitions to Heaven for mercy on his pure soul. He begged God to take the Sisters of Mercy into His own keeping, and invoked a special blessing on those of Little Rock and Fort Smith, who were not with him and could not come to him.

The war no doubt hastened the end of this eminent prelate. He foresaw the temporary ruin through it of the fruit of much of his labor in his beloved Arkansas. For he did love with a passionate attachment the land of his adoption, especially that portion of it that fell under his spiritual sway.* No coffin† could be procured for his sacred remains; they were committed to the earth in a large cypress box. The men had all gone to the war, and nothing could be imported. He was robed in his episcopal vestments. The Sisters happened to have some purple silk, with which they covered the mortal coil of the faithful servant of God when they placed it in its poor receptacle. Nineteen years later the body lay for three days in the chapel of the Little Rock convent, previous to being removed to its final resting-place. His second obsequies were as grand as his first

* Even rogues and schemers knew of Bishop Byrne's love for Arkansas and for the Sisters of Mercy. If they praised the State, or the Sisters or their schools, the bishop's heart softened towards them at once, and he would grant what they asked. They knew this, and often traded on what more shrewd friends of the bishop regarded as an amiable weakness.

† A member dying shortly after, it was feared that no coffin could be procured, but one of the soldiers, a carpenter, made her a fine oak one at the request of a Sister. Such as were mechanics in the army then offered to use their skill for the convent whenever it was required.

had been humble. "What a delight for the old Sisters who had crossed the Atlantic with him," writes one of them, "to have him again under their roof!" Day and night were prayers sent heavenward for his happy repose, as he rested in the *chapelle ardente* in which their love had placed him. No prelate had assisted at his first funeral in the dark war times. Archbishop Ryan, of Philadelphia; Bishops Fitzgerald, Neraz, Gallagher, McCloskey, Watterson; Abbot Fintan, and many other ecclesiastics, were present at his second. Bishop Fitzgerald removed the episcopal ring—a heavy gold band set with a large amethyst—from the fleshless finger and presented it to the venerable Mother M. Teresa O'Farrell, who had crossed the Atlantic at the bidding of the wearer thirty years before.

"Have you no conditions to make?" asked Bishop Byrne of the young superior in October, 1850. "I have but one thing to ask," said she; "it is that you will never leave us without Mass or the Sacraments." The bishop promised, and faithfully kept his word. The Sisters were never without daily Mass. If their chaplain took sick, he would replace him for weeks, if necessary. Even in the height of the war, when their sustenance was parched rye "and whatever Providence sent them," they always had daily Mass, and even Benediction on Sundays, which outsiders attended in large numbers. And during the worst times their instructions were fruitful in keeping up the fervor of Catholics and drawing non-Catholics to the true fold.

When the Sisters were twenty-five years in Little Rock the silver jubilee of their establishment was celebrated with great *éclat*. Bishop Fitzgerald sang a solemn High Mass of thanksgiving, with deacon and subdeacon. The four surviving members of the first band were ranged in front of the altar. All the old people of the city knelt behind them. Congratulations and presents poured in on them in their con-

vent home all day. The oldest paper in the State, the *Arkansas Gazette*, spoke of their progress from the earliest days, and remarked, with no less truth than good feeling, that during the quarter of a century of their mission in the State no applicant had ever been sent from their doors without the temporal assistance or spiritual consolation which the case required.

NOTE.—The Cathedral of Little Rock, in which Bishop Byrne's second obsequies took place, is the finest church building in the State. It was erected by Bishop Fitzgerald of Arkansas granite, a beautiful, light-colored stone of firm grain. The bishop was the first to use native granite in a public building.

CHAPTER XLIX.

HOT SPRINGS, HELENA, AND FORT SMITH.

Dino Casat—Disturbance—Touching Letter—Gratitude—Walking in Blessed Traces—Traditions—Under the Greenwood Tree—The Bishop's Portrait—St. Andrew's Cross—Hot Springs—Preaching to the Indians—Helena—In the Convent Barn—General Steele frees the Slaves—Bishop Fitzgerald goes through Helena in a Boat—Fort Smith—Frontier Life—Catholic Avenue—Fire—The Reserve—Antiquities—The new House—Granite Walks—Recollections—Mother Teresa confirmed by Dr. Doyle—O'Connell at her Profession—Wigwams and Garrison—A Bear among the Guests—Antics of the Red Men—Their Love of Music—The Sisters play and sing for them—Anecdote—The Bishop brings the Indians to the Convent—A holy Cherokee Maiden—Paint and Feathers put aside—Across the Poteau in a Flat-Boat—The Union Soldiers—A Feast for the Gods—Indemnity—"I know how to shoot a Fed."—Terrible Sufferings of the poor Confederates—The Pangs of Hunger—"To Scare the Rebs"—Put your Trust in God—Reward exceeding great.

ONE of the works of mercy frequently performed by the Sisters was instructing and preparing for heaven prisoners condemned to death. Some of these were wild and ferocious, but all became gentle as lambs under their sweet influence. Bernardino Casat, a native of New York, of Spanish descent, deserves particular mention. Dino, as he was called, was not twenty-four when he committed the crime for which he paid the penalty on the scaffold—the murder of a man whom he supposed to have deprived his father of a situation. After his conviction the Sisters visited him daily, gave him a thorough course of Christian doctrine, and by God's grace effected in him a true change of heart. His case was appealed to the Supreme Court, but the judgment of the lower court was affirmed, and he learned that he must die. He confessed his crime to the

Sisters, but to no one else out of confession, and the sympathy felt for him was extraordinary, many believing him innocent. The priest who attended him was approached on the subject, but of course had nothing to say. The partisans of the condemned man, the non-Catholic portion, thought that the priest should come forward and clear him, and do his part towards preventing the sacrifice of an innocent life. In a while, from one of the most popular men in the State, he became the most unpopular. People threatened to shoot him if he would not divulge; he could not leave his house without an escort. At last the Sisters persuaded Dino, as he must die—all efforts to save his life having failed—to make a last sacrifice in the interests of peace and disclose his guilt. He followed the advice, and his friends no longer blamed the priest. For the rest of his days the poor youth led the life of a saint. The following letter, which he wrote, on the eve of his execution, to the Sisters who had attended him so faithfully for months, shows that if he had joined the penitent thief in his sin he also joined him in his repentance, and that he had a grateful heart:

“DEAR MOTHER: It is by the divine will that I am called to leave this vale of tears. With unrelenting grief I address this little farewell to you as a token of my appreciation of the kind and tender, motherly devotion you and your dear Sisters have bestowed on me in my trying moments of anguish and despair. No mouth can utter the abundance of gratitude that exists in my heart—I, who was not worthy to stoop at your feet or grovel in the dust beside you. But by the divine intercession of our Holy Mother, the Blessed Virgin, *inspired to you*, you have directed me to the right course. I feel confident that your labor has been successful, and that I am saved. I, who have broken the law of nature and man, will soon be brought to appear before the Holy Tribunal, where justice and mercy are bestowed on all sinners, to answer for my numerous crimes that I committed through my weakness—I, who have the heart and instinct of God's creatures, and who rebelled against His divine will through older heads and evil influence. But, mother, when I think of the divine grace that you have

brought me it fills my soul with joy—I, a hardened sinner, who never worshipped my divine Ruler until my last hours; but, as my Redeemer says, it is never too late to repent—ask and you shall receive. When I think of those few words spoken by Himself, He that believeth in me shall never die, I, who thought I could not be saved, am confident that all is not lost. But, mother, I ask the divine power that conducted me to your gentle care to grant me zeal that I may not be misled from your divine instructions till the last moment when all sin and temptation are banished from my sight. I hope our heavenly Mother will cast her mantle over me and drive all stains from my guilty soul. When I reflect on my future destiny, how sweet it seems that we are all to enjoy a perfect life of bliss and harmony, and worship our divine Lord, who shed the last drop of His blood for sinners who approach Him with a penitent soul! Mother, should I gain the reward of a true penitent, I will remember the dear Sisters who directed me to my Redeemer and fitted my soul for His heavenly kingdom. So, mother, accept my sincere farewell from one who was once lost but is now found, and by His grace will never stray again. I give my dying thanks to you and the priest and all the dear Sisters. And if my thoughts can be collected in my future home, I will pray for all the Sisters of your holy Order. So please take my hearty farewell, hoping the day is not far distant when we will all be reunited—the earnest wish of your sincere friend in Christ. I remain, in Faith, Hope, and Charity,

DINO CASAT."

The poor fellow expressed gratitude to all who had tried to help him. "They worked hard and failed," said he, "but I feel as kindly toward them as if they had succeeded."

Next day he passed from the scaffold to the tribunal of the great Judge, who, we humbly hope, had mercy on his chastened soul. A little later the Sisters instructed a desperado, who during their ministrations had seven pistols levelled at him, which would have been discharged had he made the least movement towards an escape. He, too, became truly penitent and offered his punishment, in union

with the sufferings of Christ, in expiation of his sin. These and other conversions were among the best consolations of the Sisters in their sequestered home.

Recently we followed literally the footsteps of the early members, and of the bishop who knew so well how to mould men and bring out their latent forces, from the Mississippi to the Rock, thence to Hot Springs and Fort Smith—now in prairies, again under the rocky ledges of mountain ranges, or by the yellow, winding Arkansas River. Reality in many places eclipsed all that had been feigned of the Land of the West. But what we found most pleasing was the reverential love with which the great souls of other days are cherished, even by those who know them only by tradition. The Little Rock convent contains the oldest school in the State. Here may be seen the best and newest appliances to make learning easy. Everything reminds us of the brave and gentle souls who made their home in the forest nearly forty years ago. Since they were driven from the wharf to their poor home in a wagon painted red—there was no carriage in the little town—many changes have taken place. Their ground, then part of the wilderness, is now a neatly fenced square, which contains several of the early buildings. Their beautiful chapel is a later creation.*

Tradition points out the seats under the ancient forest trees where the bishop often sat in the midst of his children, and the ambush from which he threw nuts and candy to the little ones, with whom he loved to play. The large influence he exercised on public affairs was always used in the interest of the Sisters. With feelings of reverence we gazed on this place where so much ceaseless, hidden work has been done for God. In the principal room the bishop's life-sized portrait holds the place of honor. Across

* The Little Rock convent chapel is a gem. The altar is walnut, gilt and ornamented. The stalls are of the same material, and so perforated that air and light can come through them from the large stained-glass windows. The ceiling is arched, and matches the altar and stalls in color. It is quite large and roomy.

Louisiana Street, exactly opposite the convent, is the imposing basilica which shelters his remains. Whether in the bright glare of the sun or the mild effulgence of the moon, this stately white granite cathedral is a poem in stone. It is dedicated to St. Andrew, in loving memory of the first bishop who knocked at the gate of the great West, forty-four years ago; and the red arms of St. Andrew's cross are conspicuous among its decorations.

Hot Springs, the paradise of rheumatic invalids, treasures its reminiscences of the good bishop, and one of the first band presides over the destinies of the Convent of Mercy. He travelled leagues through the Ozark Mountains in search of souls. Here by "the dripping spring" he stood in stately pose among his Indians, towering like Saul above his brethren, a big man every way—big body, big mind, big soul, big heart. Here he told them of the Great Spirit: "What you worship without knowing, that I preach to you." And here, too, lives between the porch and the altar his venerable disciple, Father McGowan; his benign aspect, his coronal of silver hair, his deep and tender piety at the altar he has served from youth, give the soul glimpses of heaven. It is the blessed portion of the Sisters to have this patriarch to celebrate their morning Sacrifice.

Helena is not without its memories. The Sisters who nursed the dying bishop tell how the sweet influence of his virtues irradiates their toilsome lives. They can see in spirit the gory field, and hear the clash of arms and the din of battle. They thank Heaven for the relief they were able to afford the sick and wounded, irrespective of nation, color, or religion. It was in the barn of their convent that General Steele, in the name of his government, proclaimed the negroes free. The saturnalia which followed that auspicious event will never be forgotten by the terrified inmates of the convent. The newly made freedmen roamed through the town armed with knives and clubs and infuriated with liquor. There were few or no white men

at home ; the conflict had shifted its quarters. The poor women barred their doors and barricaded their windows. When their enthusiasm had spent itself the Sisters had again to thank God that they were unmolested.

Sometimes the Sisters had to go in skiffs to visit the sick. Occasionally, when the river overleaped the levees, there were sixteen feet of water in the streets. More than once the general, who lived next door to the Sisters, had his despatches brought to his house in a small steamer. The convent, reached by a flight of thirty-three steps, was high above the water, but the floods caused great suffering in many ways. Bishop Fitzgerald paid his first visit to the Helena convent, 1867, in a boat which was moored to the banisters till he came out.

Not the least interesting place is Fort Smith, on the frontier line of the Indian Territory. Here the bishop founded, in 1853, the second convent in his diocese. The palace in which he took his death-sickness is now the kitchen of the modest parochial residence. At one time the Sisters could walk half a mile towards the town on their own ground; now they are almost in the centre of the town, and own some thirteen acres, all well laid out in groves, gardens, orchard, pasture, and playground. The church and convent occupy the finest site in the town. As the land was once nearly all church property, the street which the church faces is "Catholic Avenue," and toward the river, near the "Reserve," the same street is called Garrison Avenue. The river bounds this fine street on one end ; the church, which flanks it on the other, can be seen from all points, the first object one recognizes on entering Fort Smith. The early convent* is now the laundry. The first put up by the Sisters, a fine house on stone pillars, was burned during High Mass on the Feast of the

* When the Sisters went there in 1853 the fleas were so numerous as almost to cloud the light. Their sufferings from these bloodthirsty atoms were fearful. It took years to rid the place of the plague. Soldiers had been quartered in the house and hogs lived under it,

Immaculate Conception, 1875, from a defective flue. The men assembled for Mass rushed to the rescue and saved everything but the house.

The present convent, 64x32, erected in 1876, is a two-story frame on a stone foundation. It has seven windows across above, and six and a door on the first floor. The large porch is surmounted by a cross, and the hall is reached by a flight of stone* steps. The academy, 65x33, is a fine, airy building. Below is the meandering river, and the wharf on which the Sisters so often landed after tedious journeying from the Rock. They are now thirty-five years at the Fort. Here lives the venerable foundress of the Mercy Order in the West, Mother M. Teresa O'Farrell, full of years and graces, a link between the present and the past. As a fair young girl she received the Sacrament of Confirmation from the great Dr. Doyle (J. K. L.); and among the celebrities that attended her profession forty-five years ago was O'Connell.

When this good mother led her flock to the Fort in 1853 it consisted of a few straggling houses, some wigwams, and the quarters of the garrison. The convent was in the depth of the woods. It was not safe to venture far from it, for wild beasts still made their lairs among the trees. Once, when some priests were dining with the bishop, an enormous black bear thrust his head through the window. The tableau that followed may be more easily imagined than described. Often the Indians, mounted on steeds which they loved better than they loved their squaws, galloped around the convent, yelling and whooping, till the Sisters felt that each moment might be their last. But these wild sons of the forest never harmed them. One day a Sister was playing and singing at the piano in the parlor when, behold, a shadow fell athwart the music. On looking around she saw

* Sandstone is very common about Fort Smith. All the garden walks of the convent are made of it. The Sisters own a fine quarry. A monument in the garden commemorates the benefactors of the second convent and asks prayers for them.

a tall Indian, his gaudily painted person draped with blankets and skins and decorated with beads, copper rings, and feathers. With great presence of mind she continued to play. A glance at the window revealed crowds of the same *genus* standing in expectant wonder. She motioned them in and sang her best for their delectation. The Sisters all came in to see them. The mother, wishing to make them a present, gave several rosary beads to the chieftain, who came forward to receive them. To himself he appropriated the longest; the next longest to the next in rank, and so on till all were supplied. Then they marched out single file, the chief first, the next in rank following, till all were outside, to the great relief of their hostesses, who were more frightened than amused.

But they soon came to love these simple children of nature. Whenever the bishop met a group of Indians in the vicinity he invited all, including squaws and papooses, to come hear the Sisters sing, and whenever they came a concert was the result. Many who came to hear the music asked to be instructed in the true faith. Among the convent boarders* even now are several Indian girls. They are docile and industrious and love the Sisters. But their picturesqueness has vanished. They now dress according to the fashion-plates. Even in their own Territory one does not see many costumed in the old style. They have, to a great extent, discarded paint and feathers and adopted the tame habiliments of civilization. Fort Smith is surrounded by mountains. At one point the Poteau separates the town from the Indian Territory. At any hour of the day this river may be crossed on a flat-boat; Bishop Byrne used to cross it in a canoe to preach to his Indians, whom he often brought to the convent to be instructed. They have fine

* The memory of one boarder, a beautiful Cherokee maiden of thirteen, who died in the convent after being received into the Catholic Church, is still fondly cherished in Fort Smith convent. The girl seems to have been a little saint. She is buried close to the Sisters whom she loved so dearly for teaching her to know and love the good God.

farms and gardens. There has been a good deal of inter-marriage with whites, and one often finds red men, somewhat modified in shade, answering to very pronounced Irish and Scotch names.

The Fort Smith community did and suffered much during the war. When the Union soldiers arrived, tired and hungry, they encamped near the convent, and at once sent word that no one was sick, but that all would like something good to eat. In reply to this humble petition several cooked hams and other dainties were sent them, to their great delight, and they thanked the Sisters for giving them a repast fit for the gods. From that moment both parties were excellent friends. But the men cut down much of the Sisters' timber. For this an indemnity is now claimed at Washington.

Skirmishes occurred almost in sight of the Sisters. Party feeling was at the murder point. A man and boy coming from the "Confederate direction" were seized by the "Yanks." "You had better go home," said a soldier to the boy; "what do you know about fighting that you come here?" "I know how to shoot a Fed.," retorted the high-spirited lad, suiting the action to the word. But in the twinkling of an eye he fell, riddled with bullets. His lonely grave in the field next the convent ground is still unmarked. These were terribly trying times for the Sisterhood. They saw their friends of the gray uniform, sometimes mere lads from the extreme South, in tatters and shoeless; their poor feet in winter covered with rag-wrappings; their food such as had never been offered to their poorest slave—sometimes none. Now and then the blockade-runners came to their aid with a few commonplace necessities, now deemed luxuries. Poor fellows! in little knots here and there, how often they had to fly before the blue coated soldiers whose glittering ranks were sustained, not merely by their patriotism, but by well-filled wagons. High hopes were soon disappointed, but the fighting went on; now the Sisters heard

of a friend killed by guerrillas in some mountain defile ; now of one shot as a spy ; now of a whole company disabled by cold—how often must the poor boys from semi-tropical lands have thought of the words : “ But pray ye that your flight may not be in the winter.” They were a pitiful sight to see, as they almost froze in the poor entrenchments they so bravely tried to throw up. Apart from politics, the sympathies of the Sisters of Mercy belong to the vanquished and unfortunate. They could bear balm and oil to the suffering, but to stay hunger how little they were able to do when they often felt its pangs themselves ! Sometimes the incoming detachment, entering in the dust of the retreating corps, swept the place of all it contained, though that all was but little ; and the cavalry rode through, firing right and left “to scare the rebs.” But the muskets of the blue-coated warriors were never directed towards the convent, and the Sisters received kindness both from the victorious “blue” and the sad and vanquished “gray.”

When Bishop Byrne died the Sisters, left unprotected amid the horrors of war, exclaimed : “What shall we do now ? Who will help us ?” The venerable Father McGowan, who came at the risk of his life to console them, said : “Put your trust in God. He will sustain you.” This has been splendidly verified. They trusted in Him, and He has wonderfully provided for them. “My child,” says the Holy Ghost, “give me thy youth and I will guard thy old age.” The Arkansas religious gave themselves to God in early youth, and He Himself blessed old age in those who have attained it, and sustains the young in their labor for Him. They have seen strange vicissitudes while they themselves remained steadfast. They have borne the burden of the day and the heat, while others have faltered and dropped out of the ranks. Trials of every species have assailed them, but, as we have seen, not even war at their doors could injure them. We shall leave them in their fair homes by river, spring, grove, and mountains, in their setting of

greenery, praying that their future may be worthy of their past. They have borne nobly and well the yoke of the Lord, and taught others to bear it. For if there be one work of mercy more than another in which this pious Sisterhood has excelled, it is in teaching the young and the old to serve God, to serve whom is to reign. Magnificent will be their reward from their Father who is in heaven. "For they that instruct many unto justice shall shine like stars for all eternity."

CHAPTER L.

RABID BIGOTRY.

Bishop O'Reilly applies to Pittsburgh for Sisters—History—The Great Exodus—The "Paddy Priest"—A Lesson and a Warning to Papists—The Blackened Ruins of Charlestown—From Pittsburgh to Providence—How they entered the Puritan City—A Cradle of Poverty—Mass of Thanksgiving—Rapid Increase—Jane Warde—Letters—Couleur de Rose—The Soul of Music—Details—Eyes and No Eyes—Fearful Intolerance—Flying of Rocks—Corner Broad and Claverick—Poor Quarters—No Æstheticism—Accessions—Showers of Insults—Specimen Gentlemen—"My Cup of Happiness is full"—Some Students of Yale College—A good Boxing.

IN 1850 Right Rev. Bernard O'Reilly, who had just become Bishop of Hartford, applied to Pittsburgh for some Sisters to open schools in Providence.

Dr. Tyler, first bishop of this see, was a convert and nephew to the celebrated Virgil Barber, both being members of that family of predilection who, called from the shades of error, almost all embraced the religious state or the priesthood. He was consecrated on St. Patrick's Day, 1844. In 1849 he applied for a coadjutor, being anxious to resign. June 18 in the same year he died. His diocese consisted of Rhode Island and Connecticut. He resided in Providence, which contained four times as many Catholics as Hartford. In his whole diocese there were six priests. St. Paul's Church, begun in 1835, was his cathedral. Previous to its erection Catholic services were held in the Town Hall. When Bishop Fenwick visited Providence in 1828 he said Mass and preached in the Mechanics' Hall, and gave confirmation to five persons. On Father Tyler's promotion to the mitre Rhode Island and Connecticut contained eight churches and not quite 10,000 Catholics. Pre-

viously New England had formed but one diocese, subject to the Bishop of Boston since 1810.

The Catholic population increased slowly until the great exodus from Ireland. Bishop O'Reilly came to Providence expecting to find bigotry and intolerance rampant, Catholics few in number, and his country-people socially weak and poor—and he was not disappointed. There were no religious of any kind, and scarcely a Catholic school in his diocese. The bishop was a man of fine physique and dignified deportment, but his splendid appearance did not prevent the Yankee boys from saluting him as “Paddy the priest.” Robust in health and active in habits, he had a strong will to succeed in whatever he attempted. He found the children entirely neglected, and he at once determined to supply them with religious teachers. Preferring the Sisters of Mercy to all other teaching religious, he had scarcely reached his diocese when he wrote to Bishop O'Connor for a few of the holy women who were doing so much for religion and education in his episcopal city.

So rabid was the spirit of Know-Nothingism at this time in New England, especially in the Hartford diocese, that it was regarded as a very daring thing even to propose to establish a convent within its limits. The blackened ruins of the Ursuline convent near Boston conveyed a lesson and a warning which the *papists* or *papishes*—names indiscriminately bestowed on Catholics—were supposed to have learned with such effect as to restrain them from attempting to establish similar institutions in future. “There were no two ways about it, the natives would not have it.” They had provided proselytizing or godless schools for the stranger within their gates, and they would allow no emissary of Rome to sully their borders. Every convent erected on the free soil of New England would court the fate of the Charlestown academy, and foreigners had better look to it how they provoked the heads of factories, and the controllers of labor, and the moneyed men in general in these

States. Bishop Fitzpatrick, himself a Bostonian, who governed the see of Hartford from the death of Bishop Tyler to the appointment of his successor, did not *openly* advocate Catholic schools, perhaps through fear of a repetition of the Charlestown horrors. But neither Bishop O'Connor nor Bishop O'Reilly shared these fears, if they existed in the Boston prelate. They would at least try to do what they considered of paramount importance: provide Catholic education for the young.

Bishop O'Reilly asked for an experienced religious of great prudence and good address, with a few companions, to begin the good work in Providence. As Mother Warde had just resigned the office of superior in Pittsburgh, it was agreed by all concerned that she would be a suitable person to undertake the establishment of her Order in New England. It was expected that her position in that region would be no sinecure, but she was a brave, courageous woman. Rhode Island was considered the bitterest State in the Union, and the worst bitterness of the State was supposed to be concentrated in Providence. The people gloried in the destruction of Charlestown convent, and they swore with many an oath that never again should a similar institution be permitted to rear its head on the "free" soil of New England.

It took a good deal of time and prayer and consultation to come to a decision,* but, once obtained, preparations went on briskly. On Ash-Wednesday, 1851, Mother Warde, with four companions, accompanied by Very Rev. James O'Connor (now Bishop of Omaha) and Mother M. Josephine Cullen, began their tedious journey. They left St. Xavier's, about fifteen minutes' walk from the old road that was the highway to Philadelphia, about dusk, and waited about fifteen minutes for the stage going east from Pitts-

* Several letters of Bishop Michael O'Connor are extant in which the Providence foundation is discussed. He sent his brother to St. Xavier's to "help poor Mother Josephine" to make the necessary arrangements, and commissioning him, in case all should be favorably concluded, to accompany the Providence colony to its destination.

burgh.* Bishop O'Connor and all the Sisters accompanied them from St. Xavier's to the stage, a mournful procession, for the Sisters who remained were grieved to part from Mother Warde† and the other missionaries, who were also grieved to part with them. When the stage rumbled on the Sisters returned to St. Xavier's with the bishop, in tears and unbroken silence. Meanwhile the travellers proceeded on their journey through Harrisburg, Philadelphia, New York, and reached their destination on the 12th of March, a day on which is celebrated the translation of the relics of St. Francis Xavier, the patron of Mother Warde. It was considered by all a happy omen to have arrived on such a day. Bishop O'Connor still remembers the delight with which Bishop O'Reilly received his little colony, the first manifestation of the religious life in his immense diocese. But they were welcomed very quietly. The bishop and Father Edward O'Brien received them stealthily, as it were. No demonstration was made as in other places, lest such might stir up angry feelings against the new Institute. They travelled in secular garb, and did not assume the religious habit until they were safely housed in the poor cottage which formed their first convent. Prudence, caution, and quiet were deemed indispensable, and had these women been guilty of some dreadful crime more pains could not have been taken by their friends to isolate them. Their house was described by one of themselves as "a cradle of holy poverty." Nothing of the comforts or conveniences of life could be seen, and scarcely were the simplest necessa-

* St. Xavier's, now addressed Beatty's Station, was in early days addressed to Latrobe or Youngstown. Latrobe was in 1851 a thing of the future; Youngstown, a considerable place, has now dwindled to a village.

† The only survivor of the party who accompanied the Providence missionaries through the forest path from St. Xavier's to the turnpike road in the gathering twilight writes: "Mother Frances (Warde) was in good spirits. She took an affectionate leave of all. The shades of evening were gathering as we walked home. A small body of our pupils, the larger girls, accompanied us." The Sisters and pupils always went to the "pike" to meet Mother Warde when she came from, or returned to, Pittsburgh. The bishop's carriage was always placed at her service on these occasions.

ries provided. They found means to fit up a temporary altar, and had the happiness of having the Holy Sacrifice celebrated and receiving Holy Communion the next day in thanksgiving for their safe arrival in this hostile city.

The members composing the Providence foundation were Mother Warde, Sisters M. Camillus O'Neil, Josephine and Paula Lombard, and Joanna Fogarty. Not one of these is now living. In a short time they increased fourfold. In a letter from Jane Warde, dated August 27, 1851, there is a flourishing account of the new establishment. This lady was a fine character, but proved to have no religious vocation. Her aunt invited her from Pittsburgh to assist in the schools, and in a few weeks she joined the Sisterhood. Nearly three years later she withdrew with her mother, feeling that God did not call her to the convent. But Mother Warde could not foresee this. She felt sure at the time that her niece was called to religion, and that the fine education she had received from the Sisters of Mercy in Carlow and Pittsburgh would make her no slight acquisition to the infant establishment. Already several candidates had entered, and the little community numbered twenty. Mother Warde adds some lines to Jane's descriptions. As Michaelmas was approaching she sends her congratulations to Bishop O'Connor, promising that some obliging priests, "who will do anything we ask them," will say six Masses for him on his feast. She mentions several highly accomplished ladies who were preparing to join her, among them Miss Lizzie Davis, of Carlow, who certainly was an artiste in music. "You would never tire of hearing her masterly touch on the piano and organ." The praise bestowed in this instance was well deserved, for the musician, who had the soul of music, as many still living can testify, lived till quite recently. "Our good Mother Josephine took charge of the novitiate on the feast of Our Lady of Mercy. She has seven novices and seven postulants to lead to perfection, truly promising Sisters. She has labored so suc-

cessfully for her own perfection, to become a spiritual person and a fervent religious, that I felt grateful to God to have so exemplary and edifying a Sister to give the all-important charge of mistress of novices to ; she is so generally loved and respected that all are pleased and gratified at her appointment. To give her extra rest, and time for prayer, reading, and reflection, I took her from the schools some time since." The writer mentions a visit to New York just over, "where we got many useful books for our schools. The archbishop was extremely kind. He promised to come to Providence to preach at our next ceremony." She thinks the new house will be scarcely large enough for all who are coming. "We move into it, please God, next week. When Archbishop Hughes' box comes from Rome he will send me some relics. Was it not very good of him to say so?" The good mother fears all is going on too well and happily, and tells her correspondent, Mother M. Elizabeth Strange, that "all are as well and good as possible, the writer, of course, excepted."

Mother M. Agatha O'Brien writes to the same, October, 1851: "In Providence they seem to be going ahead. They have twenty-two Sisters already. May Almighty God guide and guard them! Mother Warde wrote to me to get some work done for a fair which they are to have. I did so, and forwarded the things by New York. Although we are busy and have no time to spare, still I think we should do all we can to assist one another. And besides, I think we should endeavor to keep on charitable terms with all the houses."

It was, if not a virtue, a very pleasing weakness in Mother Warde * that she always saw persons and things

* The writer has hundreds of letters of Mother Warde which will, no doubt, yet illustrate the life of that remarkable woman.

The last letter ever written by her was to the writer. It is all the more prized because unfinished: death claimed her while she was in the act of writing. These letters, covering the period from her early days in Baggot Street to her death, nearly sixty years, abound in sentiments of piety, zeal, friendship, and generosity, and, unlike the letters of other remarkable personages recently published, are highly favorable to the character of the writer.

connected with herself at their best, or perhaps wrote only while she held such views of them. The house she happens to govern for the time is actually or prospectively the best in the Institute, and her subjects the wisest, the brightest, the most holy and zealous in the world. She could see weak points in her children and surroundings with an Argus-like vision, but to no human being outside the walls would she admit this. Her letters to other members of her Institute, to ecclesiastics, relatives, and friends, covering the fifty-six years of her conventual life, are eloquent of this amiable trait. It often made certain persons feel something like the little reprobate in that story of our childhood, *Eyes and No Eyes*. Where, for instance, this distinguished woman saw an exquisitely proportioned convent, others could perceive only a very commonplace house; and so of other matters. Perhaps she viewed things as they ought to be rather than as they are—a comfortable way of getting through a life that is for most human beings often sad, and rarely exempt from sorrow and failure. Despite the eloquent descriptions which made her distant friends happy, the prosperity of the new house was not so great as to exclude the cross. If the Sisters had peace and happiness within, they had plenty of persecution outside. Whenever they appeared in the street their lives were in danger. The inveterate hatred of the benighted people among whom their lot was cast never slumbered. Time and again the windows of their poor dwelling were smashed. Often they sat, after the day's toil, at their well-merited recreation amid a shower of missiles. One bright midnight the glass and sashes of every window were completely shattered. Fortunately, amid all this flying of "rocks," no one was injured, unless we call a good fright now and then an injury.

In this poor house, decayed by age and battered by so many assailants, the Sisters continued to live till September, 1857, when the bishop purchased for them a good

solid stone house, with a fine garden, in an excellent location, corner of Broad and Claverick Streets. The property had belonged to an old and respected resident of Providence, Mr. Stead, and was in excellent order. A frame house in an adjoining lot, also the property of Mr. Stead, was bought at the same time for an Orphan Asylum, the first established in New England under Catholic auspices, save one in Boston.

The new convent, though it presents a dingy appearance to-day, was a castle in comparison with the old. It had parlor, kitchen, and refectory below; chapel, community room, novitiate on the second floor; and on the third an attic which made a freezing dormitory in winter. The chapel was merely two rooms knocked into one. It was exquisitely clean, and was arranged as prettily as a low, dull, irregular room—the back room was not nearly as wide as the front—could be, with poor and scant “fixings.” Paper roses on tall sticks set in very plain vases, and some cheap candlesticks, were the only adornment of a very plain altar, painted white. Before this poor altar, hideous in an æsthetic sense, the first religious formed for the extension of the Order in New England received the white veil and made their profession. For to hold these ceremonies publicly in the cathedral, as had been done in other places, was not to be thought of in the beginning. The novitiate was so small that a large man standing in the centre could almost touch the walls. The novices were crowded about a very narrow table, and in this poor room they were trained to labor under difficult circumstances for their own perfection and their assumed duties of teaching the young, instructing adults, and visiting the poor and sick. Free schools were opened in different parts of the city as the community increased. Mother Warde’s eloquent pen made known far and wide the advantages of the Providence house for “intending novices,” as the new English would say.

The young, the fair, and the gay came from all points to the old stone mansion on the corner. Miss Harriet Kelly, an Irish girl for some years resident in New York, who might have posed as a professional beauty, and Miss Eliza Bradley,* daughter of Dr. Bradley, of Rochester, of whom almost as much might be said, both ladies of great piety and no small intellectual ability, were the first Sisters of Mercy to make their vows in New England, and they made them in that dim old chapel. Misses Read, of Kildare, and Coleman and Douglass, of Dublin, speedily followed. In six months twenty-one candidates were received. These young religious labored, under very adverse conditions, to spread the kingdom of God among souls. In their daily walks to and from the parish schools, and on the visitation of the sick, insults and opprobrium were heaped on them by the fanatics that represented the religion and culture of the Providence of that day. The epithets which these refined exponents of liberty and equality bestowed on them will not bear repetition; it is sufficient to say that the religious never once appeared on the streets without exciting some one or other of the "natives" to fury.

One day two persons, dressed like gentlemen, bent the knee before two Sisters in the street, and one of them, addressing the taller, said dramatically: "My cup of happiness is full!" The same Sister, always large and portly in height and figure, tells that as she was going on one occasion to an out-school in New Haven with another Sister, she was raised bodily from the ground by a well-dressed youth, amid the cheers and jeers of his companions, and carried a considerable distance to a street corner, where he suddenly "dumped" her, as he said. Were these youths coal-heavers, or drunken brawlers, or ignorant laborers, or, to use provincialisms applied to-day to some of the danger-

* Miss Kelly (S. M. de Sales) died in four years; Mothers Camillus O'Neil and Gertrude Bradley in five.

ous classes, hoodlums or roustabouts? No such thing. They were students of Yale College, and no doubt had got gold medals for gentlemanly deportment at some past "commencement." This feat on the part of one of their number, uproariously applauded by the rest, was the result of a bet.

As a rule the Sisters bore all manner of insults in silence. When their clothing was covered with mud or marked with chalk crosses they simply rubbed them off. One day they were surrounded by a mob of urchins, each of whom strove to outdo the other in insolence. One of the Sisters—a lady from Cork, who still lives and has converted hundreds of New-Englanders to the true faith--turned "right about face," and, looking steadily at the assailants, came to the conclusion that she had reached that point where patience ceases to be a virtue. Slipping her hand along a row of heads of "every color but gray," she took off the caps of six or eight of them, and walked on briskly. "Gimme my cap! gimme my cap!" was shouted on all sides, but she "kept moving." At last she turned into an open hallway. The bare-headed lads surrounded her, begging for their caps. As each approached she boxed him soundly and then gave him his cap. For a long time the Sisters traversed that portion of the city unmolested.

CHAPTER LI.

THE RIOT—TRUE AMERICANS TO THE RESCUE !

Catholicism introduces Refinement—The Professor and Mother Warde—From the Ranks of the Enemy—Miss Rebecca Newell—Bewitched—Converted—Banished—Sudden Death—A Daughter of the People in the Convent—Dismay in the *K. N.* Camp—In other Days Mother Warde would have been burned as a Sorceress—Mrs. Glover executed on less important Charges—The Convent to be blown up—A Death's Head—Silver Plate defaced—"Set Free the Beautiful Yankee Girl"—The Mayor visits Mother Warde—She knew her own Business, but could not presume to direct His Honor—He declares he cannot preserve the Peace of the City—She could if she were Mayor—Mob Law—Placards—Intense Excitement—Danger—American Friends advise the Sisters to leave—They refuse to stir—Ready to die before the Altar—The Convent besieged—Incidents—Bold Stand taken by Bishop and Clergy—Disguise—Bravo!—Mr. Ryan—Prayer—Dr. McGowan means to wound and heal—Everything ready for the Gunpowder Plot—Like a Forest stirred by the Autumn Wind—Gallant Defence by Mr. Stead—Remember Limerick!—"Go, say your Rosary"—John O'Rourke—His Beauty departed—Valor—Anecdotes.

THERE is no doubt that the Catholic religion introduced an element of refinement among the "native" class in New England, and that it influenced them for good even when they did not embrace it; for the scenes we have described and others to follow would be impossible in any part of the New England of to-day. Despite incessant persecution, the academy opened with a large number of pupils, many of whom were non-Catholics. Some of the most bitter of these afterwards sought refuge in the one fold. Among these was a "graduate" of the "High School" who was admitted to be very finely "cultured"—a Miss Rebecca Newell. She was no longer young, but it was no uncommon thing to see "girls" of twenty-eight or thirty at school in New England in those days. Miss Newell was said to be

greatly admired for her personal qualifications, which were of the solid order and did not include beauty or brilliancy. Belonging to an old Puritan family highly, and no doubt deservedly, respected in the city, she described herself as a person who had given her mind to the serious study of spiritual things from childhood. It happened that one of Miss Newell's professors at the High School had been brought in contact with Mother Warde, who, in reply to his questions, told him how and where her early education had been conducted. To his amazement he found that not only she did not say *tin* for *ten*, or *persave* for *perceive*, but spoke with grammatical precision and an elegance of style and purity of diction that was something new in his ears. Of the external gifts of this zealous woman the most remarkable were her soft, sweet voice and her fine conversational powers. Her gift of language was something like genius, and the writer has never known any one to excel her in a qualification so useful in her position. The professor, like many another, was thoroughly fascinated, and spoke everywhere of the Irish nun, whom he considered the most refined and accomplished lady in Providence. This excited Miss Newell's curiosity, and she became most anxious for an introduction; but he, disturbed by prophetic fears as to the result, declined to become the medium of introducing her. She then sent to the convent to ascertain whether she could see the "mother abbess." A very gracious affirmative and an invitation to call as soon as convenient followed.

Miss Newell speedily presented herself at the parlor of the corner house, and the consequences may be imagined. The first greetings were scarcely over when she felt that she was in the presence of a superior woman, who would lead her to a spiritual life of grace. Though naturally reserved, she soon poured her whole soul into the ears of her sympathetic friend. She had studied the many sects of the city, but had never found anything among them to satisfy to the

full the cravings of her soul. She borrowed books to enlighten her ignorance. She asked information on such points as she did not understand, and finally she begged to be instructed in the Catholic faith. In due time she was admitted to baptism. This, from the prominence of her social position, became the talk of the town. Rebecca was banished from home by her infuriated mother. Her eldest brother, to whom she was very dear, expostulated with Mrs. Newell, but in vain. He besought the family not to treat his sister unkindly or drive her from home, but his manifestations of love and sympathy, though they comforted her, were of no avail to allay the wrath of the rest of the family. She was sent to Pennsylvania to live with an uncle, a very prejudiced minister, who was instructed not to allow her from his house until she consented to abjure Catholicism. In a short time a distressing event called her home—the death of her beloved brother. He was a general favorite in society as well as in his family, and was entirely free from the insane bigotry of the rest. While dancing at a ball he was seized with a violent pain in the head, which caused him to hasten home. His mother, hearing him enter the house sooner than she expected, asked the cause. He told her of his headache, but begged her to retire, as it would pass away in sleep. She listened at his door, heard him pacing up and down. Suddenly he fell heavily on the floor. She rushed in to find him a corpse. In an agony of grief, tinged, perhaps, with remorse, she summoned her gentle daughter to her side.

The bereaved sister returned broken-hearted to Providence, and, despite the closest watching, she managed to remain faithful to her duties as a Catholic. The terrible lesson she had just received caused her to reflect much on the uncertainty of life, and she often exclaimed: "Oh! how good it is to be a religious, always prepared for death!" She now ardently desired to become one, and, though the difficulties of the state were explained to her, she thought

herself called to make the trial. Her entrance on probation was a signal for renewed outrages, not on the lady alone, but on the whole body. All at once it was noised abroad that a daughter of the people was in the nunnery. Like wildfire the news spread in the camp of the Know-Nothings. They unfurled their flag, summoned their brethren from adjoining States to follow the standard, through the bigoted press of the day ; and flaming yellow posters placarded all over the city summoned all good men and true "To the Rescue ! All true Americans ! Attention ! To the Destruction of the Nunnery !"

All free Americans were urged to deliver their young countrywoman immured in the monastic dungeons of Broad Street. Although quite old enough to know her own mind, being, to put it roundly, between thirty and forty, she was pictured as a guileless young creature, bewitched by the fascinating Madame Warde, enticed into the convent against her better judgment, and detained against her will. And this in face of the fact that her friends made daily calls on her to ascertain from her own lips the truth or falsity of these assertions, and that she on every occasion assured them that she was perfectly free to leave any moment.

Had poor Mother Warde appeared in New England in earlier days she would certainly have been burned as a sorceress. A countrywoman* of hers was executed there in the pious early days on less grave charges. The evil passions of men were aroused. For weeks preparations for the destruction of the convent went forward with ever-increasing alacrity. Noisy boasting of the methods to be used in blowing it up assailed Catholic ears on every side. Coming events formed the topic of conversation in every house. Men strode or rode past the convent with scowling faces

* Mrs. Glover, who was accused of witchcraft by a Mrs. Goodwin. The test of her innocence being to say the Lord's Prayer, the hapless lady could say it in Latin or Irish, which her accusers did not understand, but not in English.

and angry gestures, denouncing vengeance on its inmates. A death's head was fastened to the hall-door, and the beautiful silver door-plate, the gift of a valued friend, was shamefully defaced. On the evening of the day appointed for the burning of the convent the Sisters, when returning from school, were saluted with cries of "Ha! we'll give you Charlestown." "Unlock your prison and free the beautiful Yankee* lady." "We'll have this vermin out of the city before to-morrow."

Mother Warde was then about forty-four, not much older than the girl of "extreme youth" she had lured into her "den." The mayor, Mr. Knowles, deemed it his duty to call on the "fascinating" mother and advise her to send Miss Rebecca adrift. "Not unless she wishes to go," was the reply. The lady,† who was at perfect liberty to go, and actually did go some months later, refused to stir. "What, then, shall I do," asked the mayor, "to preserve the peace of the city?" Mother Warde sweetly replied to the effect that she understood her own business, but would not presume to counsel him. Pressed again, she said: "Is it possible that your honor cannot assist in saving life and property in the event of a riot?" He replied that against such a force of armed men as had been called out he was powerless; his fellow-citizens had determined to blow up the convent, even though they destroyed the lives of its inmates. His honor, who seemed anything but honorable in her eyes, then begged her to leave the convent quietly with her community, as ten thousand Know-Nothings were expected from other cities to join their Providence brethren

* At this date the word *Yankee* was used often and boastfully for *American* in New England. It was also synonymous with non-Catholic. Children spoke of the Yankee church, the Yankee school, etc., meaning the Protestant church and the common school—the latter as well as the former being entirely non-Catholic. An American family being converted and instructed at the convent, the only child, a girl of twelve, when being prepared for her first confession, asked: "And must I confess all the sins I committed when I was a Yankee?"

† Miss Newell was found to have no religious vocation. But she always remained a fervent Catholic, and kept up a correspondence with the Sisters. She was living quite recently—perhaps is still.

in the work of destruction. "No," said she, "we will remain in our house." And she added, not without a tinge of sarcasm: "If I were the chief magistrate of the city I should know how to prevent a riot and keep order." But the representative of the magisterial dignity of Providence could see no way out of the dilemma but submission to the demands of the mob.

Mother Warde, more anxious than Mr. Knowles to prevent bloodshed, appealed to Governor Anthony. He was very kind and promised to use his influence with the citizens; with the mayor he could do nothing, as that functionary signed K. N. after his name. Whatever the governor did had no effect.

The flaming orange placards called out the *K. N.*, but there was a large contingent of *O's* and *Macs* who determined to come out without being invited, and proclaimed that the opponents of religious liberty should not have things all their own way as at Charlestown. They resolved to defend their rights and show their strength in protecting the consecrated virgins whom they called the guardian angels of their children. Two hundred men, mostly from Tipperary, came in small detachments to the convent, and told reverend mother to have no fear, for they would, by God's blessing, guard her and hers from evil. Several of the most respectable persons in the city, some non-Catholics, besought the Sisters to accept the shelter of their homes until peace should be restored. One lady asked reverend mother to come to her house with all her valuables, for persons and things could be effectually concealed therein. Amused at the various propositions made her, she assured all of her trust in a higher power than man to deliver her and her community from the poor, misguided creatures who knew not what they did. Should God demand the sacrifice of their lives, they would assemble in the chapel and die before the altar.

So when on a clear, frosty evening in November, 1855, the

native element, several hundred strong, mustered round the luckless house on the corner, they found the best positions occupied by stalwart men, who, far from being frightened at their number, were eager to do battle with them. A demand was made for the innocent girl who had been coaxed from her happy home by "that designing old creature," Madame Warde. The lowest and grossest reviling followed the mention of her honored name; then all was dead silence. The bishop, who had made his will, arranged his affairs, and prepared for martyrdom, was on the door-step, and several priests, in attire that was not exactly clerical, were scattered through the crowd. A straw hat and a linen duster partly concealed the bishop's face and the generous proportions of his commanding figure. When the mob a third time demanded the youthful maiden and threatened the Sisters with death, Bishop O'Reilly exclaimed: "The Sisters shall not leave the house for an hour. I will protect them with my blood, if need be." Then arose many a "hear," "hear," and "bravo!" in response, but the mob continued to scream and yell and vomit forth the most awful blasphemies against everything that Catholics hold most sacred. The friends of the house passed in and out through the garden wicket, and the Sisters took care to provide an excellent supper for their gallant defenders, making them promise, as they came in in groups, that they would not fight without orders. For, we grieve to say, many among them were eager to give "the mean curs" who could shout before poor women, but were very meek before men that meant to show fight, what they called a "sound drubbing." No one in the convent slept that night. A Mr. Ryan, from Tipperary, begged reverend mother to remove the prohibition, and let the boys give just one whipping to "the sneaking ruffians." But she was most anxious that all should pass off peaceably. The prayers of the Sisters were granted. To their regret the crown of martyrdom was not awarded them, but no one of their defenders was hurt. The convent was

saved by prayer and confidence in the divine protection, though the arm of flesh was not wanting.

The Sisters often in after-times spoke of the events of this fearful night, which were not without their ludicrous aspect. The details were sufficiently interesting. After dusk four hundred Irishmen, armed to the teeth, glided noiselessly into the convent garden and took their places according to orders. Mother Warde went to every man and exacted a promise of him not to fire a shot except obedience and necessity required it. All readily promised to carry out her wishes. Had they not remained quiet during the excitement of the past three weeks and never given the least provocation to the enemy? She then turned her attention to the good order of the convent within. As she passed, the side door opened and a little gentleman popped in; he showed her a shining revolver, and, on taking off his cap, a quantity of sticking-plaster and other material useful in a *mêlée* tumbled out. It was Dr. McGowan. He came thoroughly equipped to do some fighting on his own account and assist the wounded.

Between nine and ten the rioters began to move at a given signal. They were fully armed, and had in reserve kegs of powder and everything else necessary for the success of this gunpowder plot. One of the Sisters, who could see all from the darkened windows, wrote :

“They came with hearts on fire and furious hate against those who had never injured them. Many of them were in after-years nursed by the Sisters of Mercy, especially during the war. The night was beautifully clear; the moon shone out with unwonted splendor, distinctly revealing, as far as the eye could penetrate through the dense mass of human beings, each individual countenance glaring wildly at the doomed abode. Perfect order prevailed; the multitude waved to and fro like a vast forest stirred by the autumn wind.”

Within the convent all was silent as the grave. The

novices, unconscious of danger, had enjoyed their recreation in an apartment in the rear, and were now in prayer. The seniors kept the men quiet ; their arms lay on the floor or on a table, and the owners were ready at a signal to act on the defensive or the offensive. About eleven o'clock the bishop and Mr. Stead, the former owner of the Sisters' property, appeared on the front steps, and the riot act was read. Mr. Stead courageously addressed the angry multitude :

"The first shot fired at this house will go through my body. Let me tell you there are four hundred strong Irishmen, armed with deadly weapons, within the enclosure of the garden walls. At the least attempt at violence they will defend it. Should even a stone be thrown at the building your lives will answer for it. Our streets will become rivers of blood, and your homes will be fired."

These very pointed remarks were received with a silence that was more sullen than golden. There was an odd blending of the ludicrous with the tragic in the events of the night. Mr. Stead had scarcely ceased speaking when a fine-looking old Irishwoman, who probably "remembered Limerick," came suddenly upon the scene, breaking through the ranks of the Know-Nothings, and asked if she could be of any use, were it only to "scatter Hail Marys among the haythens." This innocent apparition naturally made one of the disguised clergymen very angry, and, quite oblivious for the moment of the place and the circumstances, he eyed her sternly and exclaimed in stentorian tones : "Woman, go home and say your rosary !" Thus adjured, she curt-sied deeply and moved slowly to the edge of the mob, where he lost sight of her. The words were taken up and repeated in mocking tones by the besiegers. They sarcastically advised their friends to "go home and say the rosary"—no doubt the best thing they could have done, if they only knew how.

John O'Rourke, the convent man-of-all-work, was particularly anxious to have "a lick at the villains," whose threats he had frequently heard during his business trips through the city. "If they hit us," he would say, "they will get the worst of it." He had borrowed an old rusty carbine from a man in Owensville, and spent a day brightening it for use. Before the siege he presented himself to Mother Warde with a revolver in each pocket, and said: "Madam, I'm ready for the night. You'll see how John O'Rourke will do battle for you." He expressed an unchristian eagerness to break a lance with some of the persecutors of his friends the Sisters. "They'll meet with their match in me," said he, with great complacency. The good mother remonstrated with him, saying it was a shame to speak so of men whom killing might send before God in their sins. But the uncompromising volunteer thought "they might as well go that way first as last." John proved invaluable on that fatal night, but, to his great regret, was not allowed to use his weapons.

Though plain in person John was stylish in dress. One morning, as he was coming up from the cellar with a hod of coal, he struck his head against the trap-door, and rolled down the stairs with the contents of the hod. He was found prostrate on the floor, proclaiming most piteously that he was "killed entirely," his face all smeared with blood and coal-dust. To the doctor, who was hastily summoned, he said excitedly: "O doctor, am I disfigured for life?" An aged Sister, who was dressing his wounds, gave him poor consolation. "Yes, John," said she, "your beauty is gone for ever." This was more grievous than the pain. For months after he heard Mass behind the vestry door, and it was impossible to get him beyond the yard. The children enjoyed his misery and could scarcely refrain from laughing whenever they spied his face, covered with patches of court-plaster. He found it hard to become reconciled to his misfortunes. "Oh!" he would

say, "if I had only received my wounds fighting the Yankees, what a proud and happy man I'd be!" But in point of fact John was not the bloodthirsty creature he proclaimed himself. He was very tender-hearted and would not harm a living thing.

When the misguided numbers collected around the convent, swelled by confederates from Boston, Salem, Taunton, and other places, who had been pouring in all day in special trains, learned that the Sisters would be valiantly defended, they wisely concluded to raise the siege. They had come out to fight against women, but had no notion of risking their precious lives in combat with men. One by one they slunk away through every egress in the opening crowd. By one next morning not a man was to be seen in the streets near the convent. The defenders sat down to supper, sorry that their only part in the defence had been to lie in ambush. Several days before the Know-Nothings had ordered a sumptuous banquet in the hall over the railway depot to celebrate their triumph. But they never assembled to partake of it.

The strangers took the first opportunity of leaving Providence, glad to escape alive to their homes. It was the intention of the mob to destroy the bishop's house and all the Catholic schools and churches. The only injury done to the convent was done early in the evening by a small boy who broke a pane of glass, but who promptly ceased stone-throwing when an American gentleman threatened to have him arrested. Had the mob attempted the destruction of the convent the city would have become a scene of frightful carnage and destruction. Employed in almost every "Yankee" home were women and girls of Irish lineage, who declared that if the convent were destroyed they would set fire to the houses of their employers; and some of them, no doubt, in the passion of the moment, would have imitated their masters in the work of destruction. The prayers of many holy souls, the gallantry of the

defenders, and the intrepid spirit shown by Mother Warde and her friends no doubt averted what would have been a terrible disaster.

The city was very quiet next day, and it was funny to see many subdued-looking men tearing down the yellow placards. No disturbance of any kind has since occurred, though insulting epithets often reached the Sisters' ears. Boys, elderly and even aged persons forgot their manhood and abused them in the streets. Persons who dressed like gentlemen but behaved worse than galley slaves addressed them in contumelious language: "You darsn't look up; if you open your eyes I'll tell the priest on you." "Laugh, and I'll give the priest ninepence* to forgive you." "Oh! you're adoring the Virgin now." "Hail, Mary, full of grace!" "Do tell me, how much must I pay the Paddy Priest to take my grandfather out of purgatory?"

Not for a generation have insults of this kind been offered to the Rhode Island Sisters. The spirit of bigotry which so fiercely assailed them in the beginning has almost entirely passed away, and their blameless, useful, and edifying lives have won the love and esteem of all denominations.

* *Ninepence* was, perhaps still is, a Yankee coin of about seventeen cents.

CHAPTER LII.

PROVIDENCE FOUNDATIONS.

Hartford—Father Brady—His Labors in Connecticut—He Loves Children and Music—First Sisters—New Haven—Newport—Mrs. and Miss Harper—Father Fitton—Viragoes—Rats and Fleas—Real Poverty—Father William—Mother Warde appeals to Ireland for Help—Response—Sisters from Ireland—The Providence Children all but unmanageable—Wonderful Change—Bishop O'Reilly lost on the *Pacific*, January, 1856—Dr. McFarland succeeds him in 1858—Great Interest taken by him in the Schools—Devotion to the Sisters—New Orphanage—Bayview Seminary founded—Rochester—Journey thither—Bishop Timon—At Niagara Falls—Success at Rochester—Buffalo and other Houses—St. Augustine—Bishop Verot—Columbus—Macon—Details—The Pastor's Whip—Nashville—Right Rev. Patrick Feehan—Manchester founded by Bishop Bacon.

THE first establishment (1852) made by the Sisters outside of Providence was Hartford. Bishop O'Reilly, seeing the community increase so rapidly, would give reverend mother no peace until schools were provided for other places. The new foundation was begun in holy poverty. They lived in a poor house belonging to Father Brady till 1854, when they removed to a house on Trumbull Street. In the spring of 1855 they settled in a house erected for them (which was small and close for the number) in the shadow of St. Patrick's, then considered the finest church in New England. Mother M. Paula Lombard was placed in charge of this poor but promising mission. An orphan asylum and an academy were begun by the Sisters, aided by the untiring zeal of Father Brady.* Free schools were

* For eighteen years Father Brady devoted himself to the spreading of the faith in Connecticut, when, some difficulty occurring between the bishop and himself, he was relieved of the pastorate of St. Patrick's in the summer of 1854, the present (1883) pastor, a nephew of the bishop, soon replacing him. On Thursday, November 13, Father Brady died, it was said, of a broken heart, aged forty-eight years. The unhappy controversy was very injurious to the interests of the Sisters, as it divided the people into

opened in the roomy basement of the church. Father Brady was appointed pastor of Hartford in 1836, with more than half the State for his parish. For many years he lived in the cellar under his poor church. He is fondly remembered by the aged as a man of great zeal and a lover of children. In 1840 he founded a temperance society, which included nearly every adult member of his flock. He was passionately devoted to the cause of Catholic education, and spent most of his spare moments teaching in the schools. "He delighted in furnishing books and prizes to deserving pupils, and had a habit of finding all of them more or less deserving." Passionately fond of melody and harmony, he had music and singing taught the children at his own expense. It is easy to imagine what a help so zealous and generous a pastor was to the teachers of his schools.

Little Sister M. Camillus Byrne, the godchild of the holy foundress, labored in Hartford in the first years of its existence. Mother M. Pauline Maher, cousin to Mother Warde, and sister to the saintly foundress of the Mercy Institute in New Zealand, was the second superior of the Hartford convent, and spent there the greater part of her religious life. The early days of this house may be described as full of work, poverty, and devotion. Its great prosperity began when, on the removal of Bishop McFarland from Providence to Hartford, it became a mother-house.* Its history in detail from that date will be given in its chronological order.

Bishop O'Reilly had been praying Mother Warde for many months to open schools in New Haven, the "other

parties, the larger of which sided with the pastor. His sudden death intensified their affection for him. The Sisters did their utmost to smooth the angry passions of the people, and took no part in the dispute, save to use their influence for peace and pray for the same. They deeply deplored the death of Father Brady, whose kindness the early members could never forget.

* The Sisters at first occupied a tenement house on George Street, near Broad. In 1854 they removed to the new convent erected for them near St. Mary's Church, Church Street.

capital " of Connecticut. Father Edward O'Brien, who had been begging for a colony from the day of their arrival, gave reverend mother and her Sisters (1852) a cordial welcome, and had a comfortable house prepared to receive them.* A second establishment was soon made in the City of Elms, Father Hart, of St. Patrick's, having invited the Sisters to his parish. This once bigoted city is in advance of most other cities in the country in doing justice to its Catholic taxpayers. The Sisters of Mercy teach such public schools as are used chiefly by Catholics, and receive salaries like other teachers of the same grade. This shows how strong Catholic influence is in New Haven. They also conduct a fine academy.

On the Feast of the Holy Cross, May 3, 1854, Mother Warde, with Sister M. Gertrude Bradley and three other Sisters, boarded the steamboat *Canonicus*, which left the Providence wharf for Newport at two P.M. No sunshine greeted their entrance into the Eden of America; the rain fell in torrents. An old "hundred-and-two" coach was the only conveyance to be had. As they stepped into it from the boat they perceived that it was occupied by two individuals who proved to be viragoes, and who at once began to abuse them and call them polysyllabic names. When the coach stopped at the little cottage that was to be their convent Father Fitton came out to help them to alight and offer them umbrellas. Reverend mother politely thanked the scolding women for their attentions, which made them somewhat shamefaced.

No fire warmed the cottage, and there was nothing to eat or drink. The wet and cold outside made everything look extremely dreary. Towards night they managed to make a little fire, and the good pastor, recollecting that, after all, they were human beings, kindly sent them some bread and

* Father O'Brien resolved that his church should be the first in Connecticut to have a convent, but, by a little stratagem, Father Brady got Sisters one day before him.

tea by his housekeeper. This was the coldest reception they had ever had ; but love makes all things light, and they went to work with a will to put the house in conventual order. The room selected for the chapel was soon decorated as handsomely as their scanty means would allow. Good Father Fitton was so pleased with their efforts that he gave them a valuable oil-painting of our Divine Lord with His hands bound as a prisoner, which they reverently placed over their humble altar. Matting covered the floor, scarlet drapery lent a sombre hue to the surroundings, and prie-dieux were received from Providence. On the following Monday the schools were opened with a very fair attendance. Every morning the Sisters heard Mass in the church across the street, "The Star of the Sea." The convent was styled St. Marie's of the Isle, in memory of the exquisite convent of that title built on the Lee by Mother M. Josephine Warde, sister to the more celebrated Mother F. X. Warde.

Mrs. Goodloe Harper was the donor of this property. To this gentlewoman and Miss Emily Harper, daughter and granddaughter to the renowned Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Newport owes a debt of gratitude. The cottage had been the first church. When the new church was finished Miss Harper suggested that the old could be modelled into a convent, and she gave it to reverend mother for that purpose. All the wealthy friends of Miss Harper came to visit this poor house, but she alone offered aid to make the necessary improvements. This zealous lady has always kept up her interest in the Newport convent. For many years she was accustomed to spend her summers at her charming residence, "The Rocks"; and while there she would frequently visit and encourage the Sisters. Although she has now no home at Newport, she usually spends a few weeks there every year. A fine convent and schools have since been built by Father Fitton's successor, Very Rev. William O'Reilly. It was thought that Newport would

make a delightful resort for sick and aged Sisters, but the cottage was subject to a nocturnal plague of fleas and rats which made it all but uninhabitable. The new house is said to be quite free from these distressing creatures.

In May, 1856, Mother Warde, feeling urgent need of experienced members, wrote a touching letter to her sister, then superior of St. Marie's of the Isle, Cork, begging her to give or lend a few professed members. When read aloud for the community it excited in many a burning zeal for the foreign mission. Two were selected for Providence—one a professed member of fifteen years' standing, highly educated, a brilliant musician, and very eager for the foreign mission. This lady was well known to Mother Warde. Of the other Mother M. Josephine wrote: "I send you Sister M——, to my own great loss. She is fully capable of doing any duty in the Order, most valuable regarding the management of the schools, and has a lively and most amiable disposition." The former came to labor among Indians and suffer martyrdom, but, as no chance then appeared of doing either, she returned to Ireland after seven months of missionary life. Absolutely without the slightest vocation for the foreign mission for which she had been sighing for years, she could not make up her mind, unless commanded, to live in the frigid regions of New England or labor among a people with whom she could never assimilate. The other at once adapted herself to the circumstances of the new country, and took an active share in every duty. Their labors were no longer in the bright, airy school-rooms of St. Marie's of the Isle, situated amid smiling gardens, but in close, crowded, dingy quarters, half-chapels, half-schools. Nor were their pupils like the bright, docile children they had known "at home." Anything to equal the roughness, rudeness, pertness, and insolence of the young people of that epoch the Sisters never encountered since or before. The Catholic children had all come from the common or, as they styled them, the "Yankee" schools. The process of education to

which they had been subjected in these establishments was unknown to the Sisters, but as to literary progress their standard might be represented by *zero*, while in behavior they were Hottentots, without fear or respect for God or man, angel or devil; and of exceptions there were barely enough to prove the rule. The writer saw these children gradually grow docile and obedient under the guidance of the Sisters, and surely this was a change of the right hand of the Most High.

In 1854 the Catholics of the Hartford diocese numbered 55,000. On December 5, 1855, Bishop O'Reilly sailed to Europe in search of priests, religious, and Christian Brothers, and on private business. He succeeded in gaining sufficient help for the present, and sailed from Liverpool, January 23, on the ill-fated *Pacific*, which was never again heard of. This was a great loss to the Mercy Sisterhood, to whom the bishop had been most friendly. They could now show their gratitude only by carrying out his behests and praying for his soul. His brother, Father William, pastor of Newport, who was equally friendly to the Sisters, became administrator. When Father McFarland came to the diocese, 1858, his first visit, on the eve of his consecration, was to Mother Warde and her community. He expressed great delight on finding such a fine working community in his episcopal city, and he took the greatest interest in the Convents of Mercy in his diocese, already numbering five. He gave the Sisters lessons in various branches of science, and more than one among them became elegant classical scholars under his gentle tuition. He built a fine orphan asylum for the boys and girls of Rhode Island, to which the Sisters removed all the little waifs and orphans they had been collecting in the wooden house on the Stead property. Here they have trained many hundreds of boys and girls, who annually go forth from this happy home fully equipped to do battle with the world.

Later the Sisters purchased a fine property at Bayview-on-the-Narraganset, to which their boarding-school was removed. This is one of the finest seminaries in the country. In 1870 the new see of Providence was erected, and Bishop McFarland's diocese included now only the State of Connecticut. The clergy and people of Providence greatly deplored the removal of Bishop McFarland, and none more than the Sisters of Mercy, to whom he had always been the kindest of fathers and friends. In 1857 Providence sent a foundation to Rochester, N. Y., at the urgent request of Bishop Timon, of Buffalo, who had already made several unsuccessful attempts to procure Sisters of Mercy from Pittsburgh. As Bishop O'Reilly, who was lamentably lost at sea, and his brother, the present administrator, had been successively vicars-general of Buffalo, he considered he had peculiar claims, and Father William could not refuse him.

In May, 1857, Mother Warde set out with six Sisters to establish the Rochester house, Father William escorting the party. They stayed one night in Albany at the Delavan House, and their escort made their stay in that capital very pleasant, for he took them to see all the religious houses in it, and brought many of the clergy to visit them at the hotel. Bishop Timon met them on the road, and insisted they should see his grand cathedral at Buffalo. Thither he escorted them. They put up at the Clarendon. The wife of the proprietor being very ill, they at once visited her and contributed much to her comfort. But the bishop was desirous that they should be his guests. They spent Trinity Sunday at his house, and, having seen the few institutions the city then could boast of, they accepted an invitation to visit a college he had just established at Niagara Falls. They dined at this institution, and were served at table by Bishop Timon and Father Lynch, who afterwards became Archbishop of Toronto. The students, twenty "good little boys," played some accordions during the repast, and other-

wise entertained their guests with such hearty good-will that Mother Warde considered herself bound to promise them some pretty story-books and other good things—a promise she religiously fulfilled. One of the party was much disappointed by the wonderful Falls, the picture she had made of them in her mind was so much grander than the reality ; but the rest found them, as indeed they are, a sort of eighth wonder of the world.

The party crossed the Suspension Bridge to the Canadian side, where the bishop was anxious to have a convent founded. But as few of the works of mercy could be performed in the place selected, it being entirely in the country, the project was ultimately abandoned, and the Loretto Nuns from Dublin afterwards established themselves on the beautiful site. Next day the Sisters were escorted to Rochester, a pretty town near the Genesee Falls. Here they took possession of a small convent prepared for them by a good, zealous priest, Rev. Thomas McEvoy, who did not allow them to want for anything.

Free schools and a select school were opened at once. Several sick persons were visited, and everything augured well for the new establishment, though from the first it had in many ways its full share of the cross. Within a year it had to send Sisters to take charge of St. Brigid's Schools, Buffalo. The Buffalo house, though founded in the greatest poverty, became a flourishing establishment. Rev. Martin O'Connor, who through the bishop had invited the Sisters, was their sincere and devoted friend to his latest breath. Batavia and seven other houses were founded from Rochester, and, later, Auburn and Charlotte. Attached to all these houses are extensive schools of every grade.

In the Rochester convent is a very fine industrial school where young girls are taught trades. Fifty are daily at work at as many sewing-machines. The Sisters have also an employment bureau for providing workingwomen with situations, and a *crèche* for very young children whose mothers

are obliged to go out to work. Infants even are received. Much is done here as in other convents of the Order in visiting and assisting the sick and dying and instructing adults. Hundreds prepared by the Sisters have been baptized in the convent chapel. In 1863 a house was founded at Malone, N. Y., afterwards transferred to Hogansburgh. From Rochester most of the houses in the Empire State have emanated.

In 1859 Bishop Verot, of Florida, came to Providence for a colony for St. Augustine. Several young ladies joined Mother M. Liguori Major, a convert, who was sent to found this house. Boarding and day schools were established in this quaint, beautiful old town. Like all Sisters of Mercy in the South, they did much for the negro and Indian races.

In 1862 Bishop Verot, who had been translated to Savannah in 1861, came to St. Augustine for seven Sisters for Columbus, Georgia. A house near the church was fitted up for a convent, and the schools were attended by Protestants as well as Catholics. The war now began to devastate the country, and the Sisters in both houses felt its effects severely. In St. Augustine they were unable to recuperate, being too poor to repair the damages done to their convent.

In 1867 the present convent in Columbus was purchased. During the many troubles arising from the war, and the unsettled period which followed it, the Sisters found true and generous friends in Rev. Fathers Cullinan and O'Hara, gentlemen whose virtues were recognized by Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Their universal charity and self-sacrificing zeal caused them to be loved and esteemed by society at large. In the untimely death of these estimable priests in 1872 the Georgia Sisters of Mercy met with a loss all but irreparable. Their prayers are frequently offered for these and other true and tried friends who gave them such consolation and assistance in the hour of need.

In January, 1871, a house was opened at Macon. Here, as elsewhere, many inconveniences had to be borne patiently. The best room was fitted up for a chapel; unfortunately it was close to the street, and the distractions arising from such unpleasant proximity were many and frequent. When the Sisters were engaged in reciting the office a throng of curious urchins, attracted by the voices, would echo the sounds in unintelligible jargon, until some Sister would be obliged to vacate her *prie-dieu* to send the intruders away. On one such occasion the pastor, happening to pass, surprised all parties by driving his horse almost to the chapel window and dispersing the noisy crowd with his whip. The clatter of the swiftly retreating footsteps was too much for the gravity of the Sisters, but the pastoral whip freed them from further annoyance. In 1876 a house was bought in a desirable location, and a wing was added for a boarding-school. Mount de Sales, as the new establishment is called, is in the most elevated section of Macon, and commands an extensive view of the city. The grounds are spacious and very beautiful. The schools are largely attended. The parochial schools are under the Board of Education.

Among other afflictions the Macon community have had the very painful one of losing by death many of their most holy and efficient members. Among these was Mother M. de Sales Wall, who entered the novitiate in 1867. Having a robust constitution, she labored from the first with the burning zeal of a true Sister of Mercy. Very soon consumption set its seal upon her young life. For years she battled with it, and when obliged to abandon her post in her beloved class-room she turned her attention to other duties with a cheerfulness peculiar to herself. Possessing the charming trait of making all around her happy, she was the soul of the recreation, and even when sick and suffering her joyous spirit did not desert her. Towards the end she would sit, propped up in bed, fashioning pyx-cases and other things destined to holy purposes, with the rare artistic

skill for which she was remarkable. When the sad news of her death (1872) spread through the city, crowds came to take a last look at the friend whom they had loved and esteemed in life and sincerely mourned in death. Her dear remains were followed to their last resting-place by childhood and old age, rich and poor, all testifying by their tears the grief they felt for one who had been as a guardian angel to the children and a consoler to all. Her memory lives in her convent, and her name is spoken in tones of love and reverence.

The Macon community is numerous and flourishing. The college, built not far from the convent, has lately passed into the hands of the Jesuit Fathers, who have everywhere shown themselves friends of the Sisters of Mercy.

All Saints' Day, 1866, Providence sent a foundation to Nashville, Tennessee, at the request of Right Rev. Patrick Feehan, Bishop of Nashville. Here the Sisters are occupied chiefly with schools, visitation of the sick, and the instruction of adults.

The most important foundation made from Providence was Manchester, New Hampshire, which Mother Warde established July 16, 1858, at the request of Bishop Bacon, of Portland, Maine, and with the consent of Bishop McFarland. We shall treat this, and several others which we have named, in their chronological places.

CHAPTER LIII.

EXPANSION.

Providence in Bishop McFarland's Episcopacy—Intense Interest in the Schools—An intellectual Pair—The Bishop's Visits to the Schools—Salutary Effect on Pupils and Teachers—Rapid Increase of Pupils—High Standard attained by the Graduates—Mother M. Angela Fitzgerald—Pawtucket—Hartford and New Haven—Death of Mother M. Josephine—Mother Mary Bernard—St. Patrick's, New Haven—Woonsocket—Rev. Father McCabe—Mother M. Pauline Maher—Bishop McFarland withdraws to Hartford—Bishop Hendricken—He accompanies Mother M. Bernard to Ireland in search of Subjects—His Death—Fall River Schools—Orphanage—Extraordinary Progress—New Bedford, the Quaker City—St. Joseph's Hospital—Father Smyth's Schools—Grand Celebration—Honors conferred—Sister Juliana's last Graduates—Her holy but deeply lamented Death—Bayview—The accomplished and saintly Sister Juliana watched over its Destinies—Golden Jubilee—Characteristics of the Bayview Girls—St. Catherine's Literary Society—Death of Mother C. O'Brien—Silver Jubilees—Branches and Foundations—Jesuit Fathers in Providence apply for Sisters of Mercy for their Schools—French-Canadian Schools—Then and Now.

WE shall now give a brief sketch of the Order of Mercy in Providence from the departure of Mother Warde, 1858, to the present time. The new bishop and the new superior, Mother M. Josephine Lombard, agreed in this, that they were thoroughly devoted to education. Mother Lombard scarcely ever passed a day without studying something, and every moment that she could snatch from other duties was devoted to preparing for school. If she had to wait for any one or for any exercise, she did so book in hand, and the time allowed for relaxation on the greater feasts she spent in study, when she could do so without failing in courtesy or charity.

The united efforts of this intellectual pair were needed

to further the interests of the diocese as embodied in the cause of education. Bishop McFarland began at once to pay frequent visits to the schools, and soon awoke a new degree of emulation in teachers and pupils. Rev. Michael Tierny was for many years the bishop's devoted auxiliary, and made the schools his special care. He was "the fast friend" of the Sisters, and was deeply regretted by them when he went to Hartford at the division of the diocese. Ere long the Sisters learned to look eagerly for the bishop's visits, and to prize highly the valuable teachings of the able, scholarly man who showed himself so kind a friend to them. From first to last Bishop McFarland was devoted to the Sisters, and it was his pride and delight to watch the progress of the scholars and to see his schools rise steadily to a higher standard in aim and scope. The cathedral school, Lime Street, increased so rapidly in numbers that in a few years fourteen Sisters were needed where three or four had at one time sufficed. In September, 1859, the Sisters took charge of the small boys. In 1860 schools were opened on South Street for children of both sexes, which are still well attended, though held in a very poor, plain structure. The schools attached to St. Patrick's Church, which were opened soon after the Sisters came to Providence, were now growing in numbers and improving in discipline as well as in the quality of the instruction furnished. A fine school building soon replaced the old one, and a convent was added, both buildings being monuments of the zeal and energy of the pastor, Rev. C. Hughes.

In 1861 Mother M. Angela Fitzgerald succeeded Mother Lombard. In her term the orphan asylum was opened in South Providence, in charge of Sister M. Patricia Phelan. The bishop, desiring to have more accommodation and better air for the children, had plans made for the erection of a beautiful home. On their removal the mother-house, having more room, was put in condition to provide

for the pressing wants of the community. The Academy speedily became what it is to-day—one of the largest and best conducted in the country. Its reputation for art is wide-spread. Its graduates take the first rank in every position they fill, and are an honor to their alma mater.

In 1861 Rev. P. Delany, of Pawtucket, succeeded in getting four Sisters for his schools, which soon became a credit to the little town. As it was too fatiguing for them to go so far to school every day, he built a fine convent, which was opened in July, 1862, under Mother M. Camillus Purcell, who was released from the office of mistress of novices to take charge of it. The Pawtucket convent has gone steadily forward from good to better, and teachers and pupils reap the fruit of the zealous labors of Father Delany, who gave his heart and will to his duties as a priest, and, though called to his eternal home in 1879, still lives in the Christian lives of his people. His worthy successor is about to build one of the finest schools in the country for the ever-increasing numbers of pupils.

The work in the Hartford and New Haven missions progressed favorably, more Sisters being called for continually. New schools and asylums were constantly going up, the educational establishments increased in numbers and reputation. The Connecticut Sisters had always a great spirit of emulation to keep abreast of the times, and readily adopted any new educational methods that might help them to bring their work to greater perfection. Bishop McFarland, not having Sisters to supply the wants of his diocese, introduced a colony of Sisters of Mercy from Ennis, which has spread over the State and gives universal satisfaction. The Order of Mercy has taken deep root in New England and may be found in most of its cities.

During Easter week, March 30, 1864, the gentle spirit of Mother Josephine Lombard passed from its tenement of clay to join, we hope, in the chorus of heavenly alleluias. Her death, like her life, was a prayer; she died with the

last words of the Hail Mary on her lips, as the Sisters were reciting the rosary at her request. A more simple, devoted Sister of Mercy never went to meet Our Lady. She was a living copy of the Rule, and a fearless defender of the principles of perfection in the religious life as opposed to vanity and worldliness. Whoever knew her knew a religious after God's own heart. During her declining years she—who had spent the greater part of her religious career in high places in her Order—was content and happy in the ranks, and ready at all times to engage in the simplest duties or take the place of the most junior Sister.

In August, 1864, Mother M. Bernard Reed became superior, and has since continued in office, except for a short time. In 1865 the Claverick Street house was enlarged and a commodious chapel erected for the community. In Hartford a school and convent were established at St. Peter's parish by Rev. Lawrence Walsh. In January, 1867, St. Patrick's schools, New Haven, were placed under the Board of Education. The relations of the Sisters with the board have always been most satisfactory, and their schools are of a high order. In 1869 Rev. M. McCabe, Woonsocket, applied for Sisters for his parish. This house was opened August 20, under Sister M. Juliana Purcell, late mother-assistant. The convent and schools were soon too small to accomodate Sisters and children, and new ones replaced them.

In 1870 Mother M. Pauline Maher, who had been local superior of Hartford for over sixteen years, became superior of the Providence house. That sweet, lovable mother has long since been called to join the ranks of the blessed, but the memory of her gentle sway, her kind considerateness, her genuine humility and unostentatious piety, will never die in the hearts of those who had the privilege of knowing her. On July 5, 1872, she left Providence for Hartford, where she was installed superior of the Hartford community. Mother M. Bernard became superior of the

Providence house. Father Hendricken had just become bishop of the newly-created see of Providence.

Bishop McFarland, being Bishop of Hartford, had to tear himself from the city and people he had loved so well and served so long and faithfully. No bishop ever worked harder or succeeded better in his work than Dr. McFarland. He labored for his flock with an energy that would acknowledge no weariness. His life was one of negation and poverty, more redolent of the early days of Christianity than of the present age of pride and luxury. His palace was a poor frame building furnished with almost primitive simplicity, and his surroundings were, so to say, the key to his life and character. He left stricken hearts behind when he left Providence. But his virtues and teachings were enshrined in those hearts—a precious heritage, the memory of the days that were gone for ever. “The grand old tree, thus transplanted,” wrote his beloved spiritual daughter, Sister M. Juliana Purcell, “never took root in the new soil. About two years after the saintly prelate bade adieu to the world and set out for his heavenly country. And in losing him the New England Sisters of Mercy lost their best friend.”

Bishop Hendricken's onerous duties and delicate health left him little opportunity to show an active interest in the schools—a great pity, for he had fine abilities and great tact for educational matters.

The want of good subjects for the novitiate forced Mother Bernard to go to Ireland in May, 1873. Bishop Hendricken kindly accompanied her. Mother M. Vincent O'Sullivan, mistress of novices, was her companion. They were most successful in their mission, and a band of zealous workers was added to the community. Great preparations were made for Mother M. Bernard's coming home, and a hearty welcome greeted her on her arrival. Every year on the recurrence of her feast, August 20, a fine celebration is held, with festive gladness and innocent gayety. Presents of

needlework, paintings, books, and ornaments are given her by the Sisters and other friends—testimonials of affection and esteem, and tributes of honor to the mother of all who by her position represents so much to them.

Bishop Hendricken died June 11, 1886. As he always wished to have the Sisters with him when sick, they ministered to him during his last illness and watched beside his lifeless form until it was transferred to the cathedral, which is really his monument. The first function performed in this superb temple was his own *requiem*.

On February 23, 1874, a convent and schools were opened in Fall River under the auspices of that venerable pioneer of Catholicity in New England, Rev. Edward Murphy. A second convent followed later. "A magnificent convent and schools," writes Sister M. Juliana Purcell, "will soon supplement the splendid granite church that lifts its tall spire above the waters of Mount Hope Bay, and St. Patrick's parish will yield precedence to none in the diocese."

The Sisters of Mercy also conduct at Fall River St. Vincent's Home for Orphans. It is built on a very fine property, Forest Hill Gardens, charmingly situated on a point of land jutting into the bay. It commands a superb outlook of sea and shore. This was purchased by the priests of Fall River, as a joint possession, for God's heritage to them, the destitute children of their parishes.

In 1872 Fall River had but one Catholic church and no Catholic school. In January, 1888, there were nine churches, twenty priests, six schools, seven religious houses, two orphan asylums, three academies, and one boarding-school—progress truly extraordinary. New Bedford, too, that picturesque Quaker city, the beauty of which is as a story in some wonder-book, has a splendid record. When Bishop Hendricken was consecrated that city of century-old elms, so rich in Puritan pedigrees and traditions, had one church and a chapel-of-ease. It has now four churches, nine priests, two convents, three magnificent schools, and

an intensely Catholic spirit pervading all. In March, 1873, a fine property known as the Russell Homestead was purchased by Father McMahon, now Bishop of Hartford, to be used as a hospital. He had it furnished in first-class style, and it was opened March 19 and named St. Joseph's Hospital. Sister M. Borgia Douglas was appointed superior.

The first act of Father H. J. Smyth on being made pastor of New Bedford was to take measures for the erection of a school. And he succeeded in the face of an opposition so persistent that it would have made a man of less force of character give up the project in despair and disgust. He built two of the grandest schools in the country, which have an enrolment of nearly fourteen hundred children. June 9, 1887, witnessed the crowning of his work. On that day the new bishop, Rt. Rev. Matthew Harkins, paid his first official visit to New Bedford, and at the reception given him conferred honors on four young ladies, the first graduates of the Catholic High School. It was a day never to be forgotten, and its triumphs must have gone far towards healing the wounds which early prejudices might have made in the breast of the proud and happy pastor. The guiding spirit and the inspiration of the very elegant celebration of this day was the dearly beloved Sister M. Juliana Purcell, the real founder of the school which closed so happily, and the accomplished instructress of the brilliant girls who carried off the first diplomas given in New Bedford. They were the last graduates she prepared, and never will they forget the thorough training they received from her in virtue and science. She died at Fall River on the following Ash-Wednesday, deeply regretted. Her death deprived the Providence diocese of one of its most saintly and learned teachers.

In September, 1874, the boarding-school was removed to Bayview, a fine property purchased by Mother M. Bernard. Next year the priests of the diocese generously contributed

sufficient money to build an addition. In 1884 another wing was built, making the building complete in every department, and admirably suited to the wants of a boarding-school, every possible point in connection with the health, comfort, and advancement of the pupils being carefully considered in the plans. The vicar-general, Father McCabe, was always foremost in every movement for the benefit or well-being of the Sisters.

Bayview makes a delightful and healthy resort for the Sisters in summer vacation. The two yearly retreats are made there, the Sisters making them in sections. Sister M. Juliana Purcell opened Bayview and for many years most ably presided over its destinies. Bishop Hendricken never failed to be present at the closing exercises and the ceremonies and *fêtes* held during the year. He gave a superb gold medal every year for Christian Doctrine.

On December 12, 1881, the Golden Jubilee of the Order of Mercy was celebrated throughout the world, as one might say, at least in five hundred Convents of Mercy and by half a million children and their parents and friends. It was celebrated with due solemnity in all the New England convents, and bishops and priests strove to add in every possible way to the splendor of the occasion. At Bayview there was a peculiarly beautiful celebration which must ever awaken happy memories in those who were present. A prize essay on Mother McAuley was read by one of the advanced pupils, and several original hymns and songs were sung. But the great feature of the entertainment was the rendition of the beautiful drama composed in verse for the occasion by the all-accomplished principal, Sister M. Juliana. The music also was very fine.

It is said that the Bayview pupils win golden opinions wherever they appear. Many of them have entered the Providence community and shown themselves worthy of their early training. As a whole, the scholars nurtured within its walls are characterized by an earnestness of pur-

pose, good common sense, fervent piety, and withal a great eloquence of manner that is in itself a charm. One of the most active agents in promoting the culture and refinement of the pupils is the St. Catherine's Literary Society. Many brilliant girls owe their upward direction and the development of their tastes to the help given them by this society.

Mother M. Climacus O'Brien became superior in August, 1875. She was a person of consummate prudence and solid piety. During several years' devoted care of the orphan asylum her wise administration of its affairs attracted the attention of all. Unfortunately her useful career was brought to an untimely end by a virulent cancer, which developed rapidly, October 18, 1877.

On March 12, 1876, the Providence community celebrated the silver jubilee of the foundation. It was sad that not one of the original members was there to rejoice, all being dead save one who had left years before to found a new colony. It is thus that so many joyful days are overcast by clouds of sadness. On January 28, 1879, the silver jubilee of the first two professed in the community was held—Mother M. Bernard Read, Sister M. Stanislaus Spain; these, with Sisters M. Borgia Douglas and M. Patricia Phelan, whose day came February 16, celebrated their jubilee together. The venerable Mother Warde, the only one of the original foundresses living, came from her home in Manchester to do honor to her children, and she placed on their heads silver crowns during the celebration. On that day it could not be said that all is not silver that shines. This first silver jubilee was really kept with great splendor and rejoicing. Besides several guests from other communities, there was a large gathering from the houses in the diocese. Other silver jubilees came thick and fast; the following were soon added to the list of jubilarians: Sisters M. Catherine Morgan, Juliana Purcell, Scholastica Myron, Evangelista Curtin, Di Pazzi Tobin, Teresa Hanrahan, and Gertrude Coughlin. Others have followed, and the

silver jubilee has become so common that but little notice is taken of it now.

In early years there were many deaths in the Providence community and a constant increase of duty, while there was great difficulty in getting suitable subjects. Many applications for colonies had to be refused, not only outside of the diocese but at home. The house at St. Augustine, finally transferred to Macon, had to be reinforced. Bishop Feehan came to Providence in 1866 for Sisters, and six were given him, with Mother M. Clare McMahon as superior. In September, 1877, Rev. Thomas Kane, of Valley Falls, opened a school and convent, which he gave to the Sisters of Mercy. This enterprise was blessed with signal success. Two Sisters of the Valley Falls convent go every day to Central Falls to teach the French school attached to the church of Rev. George Mahony.

Easter Monday, 1877, the Jesuit Fathers were introduced into Providence by Bishop Hendricken and took charge of St. Joseph's Church. They at once opened the fine school which the late incumbent, Father Kelly—a most zealous and holy priest, recently deceased—had built, and the Sisters of Mercy assumed the direction of it. More than a generation before they had taught in the same parish with Dr. Carmody. Every year the High School sends out a large graduating class, many of whom have entered the novitiate.

In 1881, at the request of Rev. Thomas Briscoe, the Sisters of Mercy took charge of the French-Canadian schools of Fall River, which they soon brought into fine condition. In the same year Rev. E. Flanagan placed his schools, hitherto taught by seculars, under their care. About this time several convent buildings in the diocese were found to have outlived their usefulness, and Rev. Dr. Grace, Newport; Very Rev. M. McCabe, Woonsocket; Rev. C. Hughes, Providence; and Rev. Thomas Kane, Valley Falls, erected fine structures for the Sisters of Mercy who taught their schools.

What a change from the days of the pioneers of Catholic

education in Rhode Island nearly forty years ago ! Then the Sisters slept in attics, freezing in winter and scorching in summer ; now the water does not freeze in their dormitories, which are furnished, not with luxuries—God forbid !—but with everything that health and good order require. Then the Sisters at the out-schools never ate a warm dinner ; a cold lunch wrapped in brown paper, the chief ingredients of which were soggy bread and perhaps a “ cookie,” formed their mid-day refection. Now they can sit down to a comfortable meal—for those that work ought to eat—in their neat convent refectory.* Several schools were then at a great distance from the headquarters on Broad Street, and a carriage was sent for the Sisters when Mr. McNamee, the undertaker, had no funeral. But frequently they had to walk to and from their schools through blinding snow, or sleety rain, or broiling heat, and when the weather was fair and the elements beneficent they were pelted with expletives by their never-failing friends, the small boys. Now they pass from well-built convents to well-built schools, perhaps through a covered passage, and when duty brings them on the streets demonstrations of love and reverence greet them. Then they taught in wretched barns, furnished, if at all, in the most primitive style ; now they teach in school-rooms furnished with every appliance to make the thorny path of learning easy. Stately convents, noble chapels, palatial colleges have replaced the wretched structures of other days.

Not content with the hard toil of teaching, in miserable barns, schools in such a crude condition that one might say the process of development had not yet begun, the Sisters at the out-schools took advantage of the long recess, from noon till two P.M., to arrange the altar, keep the lamp before the Blessed Sacrament trimmed, and visit the sick and dying in the neighborhood. When doing these works of mercy they

* Those who taught at St. Patrick's were well off. for Father Lamb's house-keeper never failed to send them on cold days a pitcher of warm tea.

were often almost lost in snow-drifts. Poor clothing, scant fare, wretched lodging, incessant work were the portion of the early members, many of whom were elegant and refined, and possessed no small share of the best culture that Europe could give. Yet the few who have survived these trials and privations of the early days—"old times," as they affectionately say—regard them as some of the happiest of their lives. They worked for God in the spirit of their vocation, and He poured out upon their guileless souls the blessings of joy and gladness.

The intense zeal shown by Bishop McFarland for education not only improved the schools of his diocese intellectually, but gave a great impetus to school building. Teachers and pupils, encouraged by the high appreciation placed upon their labors by bishop and pastors, endeavored to raise the *status* of their respective schools and aim at higher results. The venerable barns in which the truths of the Catholic faith were first taught to the youth of Rhode Island began gradually to disappear, and the priests seemed to vie with each other as to who would erect the handsomest structures for their children.

A devoted pioneer of Catholic education, Rev. E. Murphy, died July 9, 1887, in Ireland, whither he had gone to take a little rest. His remains were brought back to the land of his adoption, and repose near the altar on which he had so long offered the Holy Sacrifice for his devoted children.

Very Rev. William O'Reilly erected in Newport a "75,000-dollar school," as the legend, cut in gilt letters on a white marble tablet in the west wall of the school, sets forth. This school, and the neighboring church, a gem of mediæval Gothic, used to be the admiration of the fashionable people who visit Newport in the summer months, and thousands of the great ones of this world, including more than one crowned head, have knelt as humble suppliants before the beautiful altar and crowded the corridors of the stately school.

The foundress of the Newport Convent of Mercy, Miss Emily Harper, continues her interest in the schools and regards the poor of that town as her especial charge ; no matter in what part of the world she may be, a timely provision is always apportioned for her dear pensioners. The exquisite taste of Father William O'Reilly appears in church and schools. He was a kind father to the early members,* and was particularly friendly to the venerable Mother Warde. Rev. Dr. Grace, who succeeded Father William, continued and increased the good works he found in operation. His career has been fruitful in blessings to his people ; "the real secret of his success," writes Sister M. Juliana Purcell, "being, no doubt, an untiring devotedness to the schools." The enthusiasm with which the silver jubilee of this eminent priest was celebrated, June 14, 1887, especially by the youth of his congregation, showed in what high esteem his labors are held.

But it would take more space than is at our disposal to describe in detail all that has been done to this date for the cause of Catholic education. The second bishop of Providence, but the fifth who made his residence in that city, Right Rev. Matthew Harkins, is fully as interested as his predecessors in the good work, and his efforts are ably seconded by those pioneers of Catholic education in New England, the Sisters of Mercy. For the thirty-seven years of its existence the Providence community has a most edifying record to show. In all those years of trial and difficulty, and often in circumstances peculiarly painful and mortifying, the Sisters have been remarkable for heroic devotion to duty, and have even been foremost in the ranks to take up the pioneer work of education in the most remote and bigoted sections where the names of Jesus and Mary

* When any of the Sisters was dangerously ill Father William would visit her at once, to see that she was comfortable. On leaving he would put a five or ten-dollar bill in her hand—sometimes more—and say : "Now, child, you must have something better than they have been giving you." The community was very poor during the early years of its existence.

were all but unknown. And by their sweet, holy, and laborious lives they have spread abroad the good odor of Christ, attracted unbelievers to the true fold, and removed the prejudices of thousands.

In the spring of 1888 New England was gladdened for the first time by a visit from a prince of the Church, and on March 14 Cardinal Gibbons visited this now venerable community.

It is rather curious that the Providence Sisters have never received a bequest. The only assistance outside of the regular income that has ever come to them was in connection with Bayview, when the clergy of the diocese kindly built an addition to that institution. The statistics of the community are as follows: Convents, 11; academies, 4; hospital, 1; orphanages, 2; parochial schools, 16; Sunday-schools, 20. In these institutions there are 270 orphans, 319 pupils in the academies, 6,165 scholars in parochial schools; graduates pursuing higher studies, 99; Children of Mary, 2,803; Angels' Sodalties, 1,213; Infant Jesus' Sodalties, 957; Rosary Societies, 395; Altar Societies, 1,287; other sodalties, chiefly boys', 463; Sunday-schools, 8,100; Literary Societies, 90; Ladies' Aid Societies, for providing clothing and other necessities for the poor, 619. All these are under the direction of 159 Sisters of Mercy, who form the Providence community, governed by Mother M. Thomasine O'Keeffe, present mother-superior. Her predecessors were Mothers M. Xavier Warde, Josephine Lombard, Angela Fitzgerald, Bernard Read, Climacus O'Brien, Pauline Maher, all of whom, except Mother Bernard, have been called to meet their Heavenly Bridegroom.—R. I. P. The number professed since 1851 is 225, and the number of deaths 49.

CHAPTER LIV.

VALE, SED' NON IN ÆTERNUM, VALE !

A Picture-Gallery of Saints—One bright, particular Star—Ellen Purcell, in religion Sister M. Juliana—Birth and Early Life—Intellectual Facilities in Rare Clonmel—Books and Fun—The wild Freshness of Morn—Personal Appearance—Matrimonial Project—Accepted and Rejected—Renounces the World to give Herself to God—Forsakes Home and Country—What People said—Mistaken—In the Convent—Development—Literary Work—Touching Dedication—Offices—Labors for the Community—Last Illness and Death—Beautiful Sentiments—Fondly remembered in New Orleans—The Mediocre do not readily forgive Distinction—Bright, sympathetic Ways—*Ma Sainte Joyeuse*—God's Delight—"Half my Prayers are Acts of Thanksgiving"—Beautiful Traits—Friends—Letters—Farewell, but not for ever—Obituary—Sure of Heaven—Unselfish—Condolence—Details—Father Hughes' Letter—Views and Sentiments on various Subjects—Conclusion.

In Memoriam—Sister Mary Juliana Purcell.

MANY noble women of sterling worth, true piety, immense energy, and high intellectual endowments have glorified God and done good to souls in the Providence community since its humble establishment in the heart of Puritanism, March 12, 1851. To recount the story of these favored souls would be, in some manner, like making a picture-gallery of saints. But from this galaxy our limited space will not allow us to choose more than "one bright, particular star." We shall, therefore, conclude our notice of the Mercy Institute in the Providence diocese with a brief sketch of the holy and most lovable woman whose name gives title to this "nutshell biogram."

Miss Purcell was born in Clonmel, November 8, 1838, of parents remarkable for piety, good sense, and love of music—qualities which she inherited in a high degree. Her

early education was conducted in that pleasant town, which, though inland and far from the great intellectual centres, was blessed with superior educational facilities. As a girl she was frank, bright, and engaging ; not particularly pious, but upright, honorable, and truthful. She liked to divide her time between books and fun, and had such a talent for making friends and keeping them that her companions of the school-room were the saddest mourners of her too early death. Indeed, the circumstances attendant on her girlhood and early womanhood were so peculiarly happy that up to the close of her life she always reverted to them with delight. Her letters are full of allusions to the joyous days of old.

When about sixteen Miss Purcell was a tall, fine-looking girl, and readily passed for twenty. During her early days she appeared older than she really was—a circumstance that pleased her highly, as it gave her access to the ranks of the big girls. She had attained a maturity, mental and physical, quite uncommon at her age. Endowed with talents of a very high order, and a voice the equal of which is rarely heard, this fair girl seemed to possess all that the world calls dear, and few were so eminently fitted to adorn and enjoy life. During a short absence from home a matrimonial alliance was proposed to her, and, without going into details, we may say that the proposition was not displeasing. Before retiring for the night she gave in writing an affirmative reply, left the letter on her toilette-table, and slept soundly till morning.

Her views of the important subject in the moonlight and at sunrise were very different. “What !” she said, “can I give myself away absolutely in this manner? How do I know the consequences of an act that involves my whole life?” She thought of the folly of living for aught save God, the vanity of earthly pleasures, and, in a flash as it were, determined to give up all she had or could hope for, to become a religious. To make her sacrifice the more complete

she tore herself from her devoted parents and friends, and, turning her back for ever upon the home and country she loved with such passionate affection, she entered the Convent of Mercy at Providence, Rhode Island, in 1854, at the early age of sixteen. People said she had no vocation; that she entered religion only because her dearest friend had recently taken the veil; that all was too sudden, and when the expected reaction came she would certainly leave the convent. But people were mistaken. Rapid as her decision had been, it had all the marks of a genuine vocation. And in the house of her choice and the convents depending on it she labored for thirty-four years at her own perfection and the salvation of souls. Having once put her hand to the plough, no consideration could induce her to look back.

"I remember her well," writes a novice companion some years her senior in age and religion; "she was tall, fair, and blooming, the picture of health and jovial spirits. From her first day in school as my companion at St. Joseph's, where she taught with fervor and zeal, her beautiful voice attracted and charmed the children. No one would believe she was so young, as her demeanor, size, and formed figure gave her the appearance of being over twenty-two at least. Besides, even as a postulant, she commanded the respect of the children. She was very warm-hearted and most charitable in disposition—easy to approach for forgiveness, although sensitive, and quick in the extreme at taking offence where she loved. But her better judgment always prevailed after a few moments of calm reflection; then came humility and sorrow. Reverend mother (Warde) highly appreciated her warm heart and open, candid soul. She took the greatest pleasure in hearing her sing the praises of God at Mass and Benediction."

This attractive girl speedily developed into a magnificent woman. It would be difficult to find one more thoroughly accomplished. As a teacher she was unique. Indeed, she was a natural-born instructress. Bishop McFarland, himself a man of elegant culture, took great pleasure in helping

to develop her fine intellectual powers, and for a long space came several times a week to read with her and others the Latin poets whom he loved. Latin she knew almost as well as English. Her facile pen was often employed in contributing to Catholic periodicals, for which she wrote many articles, original as well as translations from Latin, German, and French. At least one superior work issued from her pen. It is entitled *Meditations and Considerations for a Three Days' Retreat. Designed for Religious, especially those engaged in Teaching*.^{*} It is dedicated to her best-loved school friend, "whose tried and trusted friendship has, from early childhood, blessed and brightened my life." Any one who peruses this work will perceive that her style is always clear, vigorous, and beautiful, and the matter most solid and useful.

Sister M. Juliana spent six years at the Providence convent as mother-assistant, and a great part of her religious life as superior, respectively, of the convents of Fall River, Bayview, and Woonsocket. Her closing years were relieved of this responsibility and devoted entirely to her favorite occupation—teaching. She was greatly beloved in her community, and exercised a marvellous influence for good over her large circle of friends and pupils. On February 9, 1888, she was stricken with an illness that proved fatal. After suffering for six days her soul passed to the God whom she had so faithfully loved and served from childhood. The Sister who soothed her last hours wrote :

"Our darling died as she had lived, a most saintly and edifying religious. In the full enjoyment of her peculiarly fine intellect, she prepared for death with as much composure and deliberation as if she were only going to her daily work in the class-room. Immediately after being anointed she said to me: 'O darling! you have no idea how happy I am. Now if I can only die! I long to go to God!' Never shall I forget the impression made on me that day, and I

^{*} New York: P. O'Shea. 1880.

shall always consider myself truly blest and privileged to have been with my dearly loved Sister during the moments of her saintly preparation for heaven. She talked with me quite awhile about how little afraid she was to meet Almighty God. How beautiful indeed must have been the life which so completely robbed death of all its terrors !”

The life of this lovely and most beloved woman could not be more fitly summed up than in her own beautiful words, written just before her death :

“My idea of life is to be for ever doing good, making progress, extending one’s sphere of usefulness, and laboring to perfect what is already good. To have to stand still and be circumscribed is, I think, the greatest trial of life to a nature like mine.”

The older girls of the New Orleans schools of the Sisters of Mercy, who had the pleasure of meeting Mother M. Juliana during her long visit to New Orleans* some years ago, will not soon forget the strains of her exquisite voice, which she so willingly lent to add to their pleasure at recreation. Nor do they need the testimony of her Sisters and pupils to tell them of her sweet, engaging disposition and the simple grace of her manner. She was never more happy than when doing favors for others. Though, like all persons of exceptional ability—the mediocre do not readily pardon distinction—she had to suffer occasionally from the meanness, baseness, jealousies of creatures formed in a meaner mould, she never retaliated ; on the contrary, she loved to do good for evil ; always kind and obliging, bending to every one in things lawful or indifferent, sooner or later she won all hearts.

In appearance Sister M. Juliana was very pleasing. Fresh

* To the last Sister Juliana loved the South in general and New Orleans in particular; and, could the permission of her superiors be obtained, she would gladly have changed the scene of her labors from New England to Louisiana. The natural beauties of the Southland captivated her poetic soul, and the frank, courteous manners of the people charmed her. A little before her death she wrote: “I often think of delightful New Orleans and count up the many pleasant persons I met there.”

complexion, laughing blue eyes, and pearly teeth gave her a bright, attractive look, and in her childlike sweetness was blended with the dignity of womanhood. Her troubles and difficulties—and they were neither few nor light—were never inflicted on others. In life, and still more in death, she proved how good a thing it is, and how pleasant, to have borne the yoke of the Lord from youth.

The bright, beautiful, sympathetic ways of this great soul drew many into the true Church, and a still larger number to the practice of virtue. One of the former, who styled her *Ma Sainte Joyeuse*, wrote of her as follows in the *Boston Pilot*:

“Sunlight, God’s beautiful sunlight, rising behind the world’s hills and flooding the world’s fair valleys, . . . powerless art thou, and a mockery in thy gladness, to the heart writhing in fresh grief whom thou reachest with thy rays across a new-made grave.

“Thou wert so welcome with all thy revelations in the world of nature to one whose own being absorbed and reflected the sunshine of the soul, *Ma Sainte Joyeuse*. . . . With her has faded for the moment the brightness of the summer landscape, the exhilaration of the winter dawn, and the world seems most suitable when draped in sullen cloud and storm. Omnipotence may have its side of holy joy; . . . for all purposes of nature could have been fulfilled with sober movement and in sombre shades, but it was His pleasure to clothe the fruit-trees and fill the gardens with flowers, and even the tropical desert with rich beauty, ripening for Him alone. Why did He vary the landscape and bathe it in a revel of sunshine, and flame the humming-bird’s throat, and set waterfalls leaping, and make music in bird-song and man’s, and, beyond all these, endow some of His higher creations with the charm of radiance in their human souls?

“*Ma Sainte Joyeuse*, what you have been, what you have done, is the response.

“There are virtuous souls moving calmly on in the path of duty, but, to the world at large, as isolated and chilling as rocks of substratum. I doubt not these are to God’s satisfaction. But if He knows delight it must be in a nature

which, large to receive His love in brightness, was lavish to dispense it in equal joy. Such a one as, turning from the enthusiasm stirred by a robin's song in spring, says: 'Half my own prayers are acts of thanksgiving.'

"When one is glad and happy, godward, other souls in contact have to be borne along that tide to shores of infinite love.

"This tribute belongs to one who, not of earth earthy, in any sense of dross, and without flaw in the purity of her affection towards God, or frailty in its exercise towards man, drew unto herself a rarely equalled wealth of love.

"A large, warm being, whom to know was to love, became thus soul-winning. Even practical boyhood yielded. The newsboy of the train brushes his hasty tear over the item of humanity, and stifles, 'She taught me,' with words of honor. A youth unused to praise stops in the fever of graduation to write in the intimacy of home correspondence: 'I think she was one of the most agreeable and kindly persons I ever knew.' . . . The man of business brings from his counting-room safe her written page that has borne an atmosphere of sanctity into that of finance and worldliness.

"'So bright, so kind, so cheery; but wasn't she good?' tell other versions of the tale in school-room and kindred localities. In ruder phrase, but as genuine, come the words of a pair of boy voices . . . as they fraternize in boat-work beside the bay, and lay schemes for the coming summer which would, in ordinary, have been brought to her for approval. Her gladsome reception of these trifles has woven an influence about them that just now is drawing a sacred bond to firmness.

"She was appreciative of all innocent pleasures in a fashion which brought her many a shell or mineral; a child's amusement or a school-girl's triumph was none too trivial for consideration, if it asked sympathy or was joy-giving. And the trifle thus viewed by a heart 'at leisure from itself' expanded by her nurture into an item of serious living. Buds open to sunshine.

"As she taught the children she trained their parents. 'Don't be too strict on the non-essentials; they are only boys still,' turned rough paths to smoothness over and over, where gratitude to her has helped to earlier manhood.

"Strictness to self, out of sight and only to be guessed

at, might make a temporary shadow for self, but for others the sun ever shone at need. Its penetrating rays once fell upon a soul in a crisis of doubt touching despair, and settling into an inadequate religious faith which was shown to be but a graceful paper bridge over a gulf—how deep?

“She might have come in coldness to the rescue, and her hand been taken, but in later hours the clasp would surely have unclosed. Then, with extended arms and a valiant heart that admitted no obstacle to be too strong for God’s grace, loved down to the soul and up to Him, until the holy alliance was made. Days of nursing and cheer for the convalescent from sin-sickness followed, and forth to new fields of action, always pioneer work.

“How rarely such a friendship measures years! How glorious to have had a decade of it! Even the blankness of doing without her cannot dim that record; such years are worth their double in sorrow, when that sorrow is chastened by conformity and assuaged by hope.

“Precious hope of the cross and open sepulchre that, returning with Easter sunlight, says of that near festival: ‘It was made for such pain as yours.’ And some day the Resurrection is surely coming to the dear grave in St. Frances’ Cemetery.”

In the Providence *Visitor* is an obituary not less appreciative. The friendship between herself and the writer began by the latter, then a Protestant, finding seats for Mother M. Juliana and her companion on a crowded Fall River boat. Some time after, during an animated conversation, she said:

“‘Why are you not a Catholic?’ The reply was: ‘I like them too well. There is not hatred enough to work on for conversion.’

“From that time she never gave me over, and her prayers and efforts were unceasing until she saw their result. There were other causes remotely at work, but the threads were gathered up by her hands, and there were crises which to human judgment would certainly have put an end to progress but for her zeal and faith. Once I wished I had never seen her, so resolutely did she work, so cruel seemed the ordeal; but in proportion to the struggle was the reward,

and when the moment of mutual holy joy came my sense of obligation was deep and has never since diminished. If my soul ever approaches her own hereafter, or those of members of my family are given her to rejoice over, I believe it will be the legitimate harvest with which Almighty God has crowned her faithful exertions.

"Wherever she was at ease the most prominent trait of her character was a joyousness born of innocence. I can never read of St. Filippo Neri, 'Saint of the merry heart,' without filling out the picture from Sister M. Juliana. But this mirth was never excessive or trivial. The face that was ever smiling rarely laughed, and in moments of the greatest freedom she never for a moment lost dignity.

"The hearty sympathy she extended to all brought her a larger circle of friends than is given to most. Friends multiplied about her wherever she was placed, and well do I remember the reproach of a school-girl who thought that friendship meant exclusiveness: 'Sister M. Juliana has so many friends.' To my thought her love for the great numbers was like concentric circles. The more they extended the more room they gave those of the inner space, and those with her were holy ones. It was at one time my privilege to see this sweet soul sorely grieved, and for a continuous time. From this I learned one of the best lessons of my own life, and one of my strongest consolations at this bitter moment are the firm ejaculations of her hour of trial: 'Now I am sure of heaven,' and she repeated the assertion.

"If, in ordinary life, she showed solicitude, the greatest I ever saw was for pupils for whom she feared she had failed to accomplish what she strove for. I have sometimes felt a reflection from the cross in its infinite sacrifice for all mankind, as I have seen the face grow weary and the brow contract with pain over some stolid, indifferent scholar, yet blaming only her own want of skill. Small wonder that her pupils loved her.

"With her admirable organization, the capacity for every enjoyment was marked, and in the later years of our acquaintance I did not fear to allude to her sacrifices. Her responses would have satisfied the most rigid. Never for a moment had she known a regret, though she keenly appreciated the cost of her devotion. Her sheltered life was her choice, and would have been had it to have been made

again at any day or hour, and in moments when its safety was peculiarly clear I have known her to kiss 'the dear habit' and thank God that she 'wore it for Him.'

"The single word which I have heard in endless repetition from both religious and secular, as applied to her life, was *unselfish*. With this affiliation to the only unselfish Sacred Heart, I think we have a clue to the most that we saw.

"A fine, high nature has gone where, for the moment, we may not follow; but if ever I saw a being that God might in its purity delight to place in heaven, it was this holy woman."

Vale, sed non in æternum, vale!

"Surely," writes a devoted friend, "my Wednesday will be ashen. . . . Guess what the night has been with waking, praying moments of unreprieve, and this dull news at heart like a reiteration of blows. I go out this morning to a case of wretchedness, feeling years older. I shall carry my darling S. M. J. everywhere. She will have a place in all my prayers. . . . My love and pain will be but poor comfort to her now. One consolation helps. It is the number of prayers I have been able to obtain for her."

But we must give some further details of a bereavement that evoked such loving and tender sympathy.

About two A.M. the Sisters in her cell were startled by hearing her ask in a very strong voice what Sisters were in her cell, and whether they had permission. She had been unconscious for some hours previous. When they were named by the infirmarian she desired each one to go to the mother-superior for leave to stay with her. But her failing sight refused to recognize the loved faces, and she said with emphasis: "Surely there must be an eclipse." She again relapsed into unconsciousness. Several of the local clergy called, and the morning train brought Dr. Grace, of Newport, an old and true friend of hers. He called her name and spoke to her, but sight and hearing were now waning, and she did not recognize him or hear his voice. He wept long and bitterly. Two Sisters from Brooklyn, one an old

and dearly loved friend of hers, Mother M. Teresa McManus, came to aid her ; the latter declared that she must not die, and her hopefulness infused new life into the saddened community. But the good God wanted this beautiful soul "to deck His paradise." She had been anointed while perfectly conscious, and Father Hughes said he had never been so edified at any other death-bed. He could not forget the ecstasy of her countenance when he asked her if she had any fear to meet her God. "Fear to meet my God!" she exclaimed. "Oh! no, father; how could I fear a God who has done so much for me and mine, and to whom I gave my life? Rather I long to see His face." One of the physicians asked several times if she twitched the bed-clothes or got excited, as persons affected as she was sometimes did. Sisters M. Cecilia and Antonia replied that she remained immovable through all. "Well," said he, "this proves what a mind and head she has, and her wonderful self-control."

The holy priest who administered to her the last consolations of religion wrote :

"It was my privilege to administer to her the last rites of our holy Church. During a long and active ministry of twenty-two years I have seen a great many pass from this world to the world beyond the grave, but among them I cannot recollect one that died a more beautiful and edifying death than S. M. Juliana. It was, indeed, the death of a saint. When she felt that time for her was about to end she was by no means dismayed, but gave the most convincing evidence of the well-founded hope that animated her to the most heartfelt confidence in God and in His abounding goodness and mercy. To this she joined the sincerest contrition, most earnest and intense acts of which she never wearied of making. Her fervor and piety in receiving the last sacraments were such as to convince us that she was undoubtedly enriched by a supernatural supply of the graces of which these sacraments are the constituted channels. The thought of her holy death suggests the prayer of the inspired writer : May my soul die the death of the just, and may my last end be like unto hers."

Many beautiful letters of condolence reached her community in which a sister and a niece bewail her ; we shall give a few :

“MY DEAREST S. M. C. : Poor, dear, afflicted Sister ! How grieved I am for you this day ! I cannot express how deeply I mourn her loss and how sincerely I sympathize with you in this great cross which the larger number of us are called upon to bear. Your beloved holy Sister has gone to receive the reward exceeding great of her arduous, exemplary life. It is grand, joyful, happy in the extreme, for her ; it is for those who are left that grief belongs. You especially, and poor S. M. A., your loving hearts must be crushed, almost broken. Since I came here [New Bedford] I brought to my mind with much pleasure the many acts of kindness of a most refined nature with which she so often favored me. Our darling will be missed many years in this community, in which she labored so earnestly to bring respect and honor to all of us. The remembrance of her piety will live long in many hearts. Her great and loving kindness and her many other virtues will be the means of leading numerous souls to God. My poor prayers she will always have, though I consider we need them more. May the Heart of Jesus, Support of the Afflicted, console you, dearest Sister ! Yours fondly, in deepest sympathy, etc.”

Another letter of condolence from New Bedford says that Father Smyth is to have a solemn High Mass for her soul at nine A M. the following day, at which all the people and children were to be present. The writer proceeds : “You cannot imagine the grief of the people here, and how they regret our beloved Sister. Father Smyth spoke beautifully of her at all the Masses to-day.” *

From the letters of a secular lady who had been brought into the Church through her prayers and efforts we shall give some extracts :

“It is like all the other kindness, permission to write to

* Even the grave-digger showed intense feeling at the death and burial of this precious Sister. In making the grave he found in it a very beautiful stone. This he had cut and polished, and he sent it to the elder sister of the dear deceased as a souvenir of the sad occasion. His wife had been a pupil of Mother M. Juliana's.

me now, when I am craving the sympathy you can give. All the worldly world around me expect everything as usual, and while that is well, and I have made rigid efforts to fail in no duty,* or the giving even of most trivial pleasures, when all is done I can turn to no human eye for the glance that shows what you can share with each other in the community—mutual sorrow. I get through the crowded, busy days as a worker must, and the evening being also full of duty, then comes night and my right for a little selfish moaning. And the hours one doesn't sleep, or at the instant of waking, back it all comes with renewed force.

"Most of the day I am on guard, but the souvenirs with which the darling strewed this house are many, and, suddenly coming upon them, I am surprised with thrusts of pain, like knife-blades. . . .

"The work among our sufferers† naturally piled up in my absence of last week, and the instant home duty allowed I went out to it. Sunday was full from dawn to eight P.M., with only room for Mass and Vespers. From many sources kindly offers of prayers came, and those that came out of strength of feeling from those relieved I turned from myself for her. And it has been the same ever since—I am avaricious of prayers for her, feeling that I can at last truly serve her.

"So I get through one more day, and say at night, How have I lived without her?

"You will understand how she entered into the life of our household from finding our last letters—perhaps even that of my husband was unread. It was so hard, after the sad close of Friday, not to sit down and write S. M. J. all about it!—from long habit if anything important occurred.

"She was brave, and I wish to be, but how ever will I manage outwardly? . . . I get through no day without some sudden surprise of tears. Since I do not let them hinder duty, I do not accuse myself badly. . . .

"There are moments when I make acts of gratitude that I had ten such years as S. M. J.'s beautiful friendship made mine, and feel as if I never could suffer so much from the

* Here is an instance of the strong, solid piety she inculcated on those who might be called her disciples: Devotion to duty under all circumstances.

† And here it will be seen that friendship with her always excited to good deeds, works of benevolence among the poor, etc.

privation as would be comparable to the joy and value of what God gave me in her. Then while the fervor is still on comes a sense of the loss for all this life, and when that brings tears it is a relief. At other times the sorrow is beyond them, and at moments nearly unendurable.

"There is but one refuge—the Foot of the Cross. No hour of night is too late for the book of that name, and, though Father Faber often annoys me, his fine analysis of grief and wisdom of instruction find me a patient student. Then her own book, my fully loved *Following of Christ*, which never leaves me now, indoor or out—and the days get on, I know not how.

"In a letter written a year ago the dear child says prophetically : 'Well, dear, you and I have just to plod along and trust God through all, knowing that if we do but go on trusting Him fully we shall one day find ourselves lost in the joys of His glorious presence.'"

The following is dated Easter Sunday, 1888 :

"What this festival will bring you of mingling faith and pain I cannot doubt.

"I send you Father Faber's ineffable hymn, always possessing for me a charm of strange exaltation, but never so fraught with meaning as now. And with it a small gold heart so tiny that I hope you will be permitted to attach it to your scapular.

"The initials S. H. J. can, by a pen-stroke, be made to express, with a merely added line, S. M. J. And I have united them, to breathe a prayer, by so doing, that the latter may be truly embraced in the living Sacred Heart. This suggestion came to me in one of many sleepless nights which followed our bitter days that opened Lent. . . . Our freshness of grief will with God's mercy be stayed, but our affliction will remain. And, as the years roll on, with some sudden moment of need, some hour in which we had been used to lean on her, we shall know that we have lost her and what we have lost ! God be good to you !"

Here is a beautiful letter written April 9, 1888 :

"Your kindness in sending me Father Benedict's letter is fully appreciated. But the very magnitude of his high piety kept me from writing to you.

"The little human cry in my own weak heart seems disabling and ought not to be inflicted upon you.

"When I can go to the blue room and not feel a pang at the sight of the last work on which her fine hands laid, I can speak more freely of *Ma Sainte Joyeuse*.

"Now there are left only tributes of affection and devotion. Thank God! affection does not die even when the acuteness of first grief passes.

"S. M. C. sent me a little book to make use of for souls. What would the dear child [S. M. J.] have said in all her own instructions to me, had she known that her soul was the first of the 'faithful departed' that I was ever to pray for? How bitter that I cannot couple such consolations with others dear to me who had left me before!

"Many little suggestions which affection makes I gladly seize on—such as methods of continuing work, keeping on in friendship with those she loved. . . . Dear Sister A. was a study, an illustration of Father Benedict's letter—determined to be unselfish, but hiding her grief, which gave her a subdued manner that made me think of the saints. Poor little girl! I am glad you have each other, with such holy and beautiful alliance between you."

And another:

"You underrate yourself greatly in your humility, and in comparison even with dear S. M. Juliana. . . . Yet it would be vain to pretend to compare the light which affection threw upon her qualities with the same in one dear hitherto, for her sake, chiefly.

"I send you the few letters I have retained of those she wrote me. It was an innocent relief to both of us to write with freedom, yet, like the face of death, there was a sanctity which demanded security from the common gaze. Thus we spoke to each other with great liberty, thus I learned the traits best which made this character so difficult to grasp, and I do not regret the loss of material in the mutual gain it afforded us. Yet in the whole of it I do not think there was a word which I could not gladly submit to such a loving eye as yours or dear Mother A.'s."

A letter of Mother M. Juliana's to the above, written a few days before her holy death, is endorsed by the receiver: "The Last": "*Amici, comedia finita est.*"

In explanation the writer says :

“I thought nothing then of any other person seeing it, and quoted the legend of one of my greatest favorites in music, a piece which poor Robert Schumann wrote in intense sadness—hence his use of the word ‘comedia’ in Italian was not the light one that English translation would make it. It was more fully to say : ‘Friends, this comedy of life is ended.’ That was what he felt, and there was a little bitterness, as well as sadness too, which I myself was not free from as I quoted it. But the music so dear to me hardly gives the least bit of that. It is tender, pathetic, full of sad yet happy associations. And so I wrote it, speaking to myself more deeply than by mere words.”

Some hundreds of letters of this gifted and saintly Sister are now before us, to friends within the convent and outside of it ; some written in the bright, joyous moods that seemed her normal state, others when every nerve was quivering with pain and every heart-throb counting. Some are powerfully written pieces of character-painting. In others she shows her own soul as with a microscope ; or rather she, so to say, casts her heart of hearts upon the dissecting-table, and bares with keenest of scalpels its innermost secrets to the loving, sympathetic gaze of her dearest friend.* It is obvious that letters of this latter nature are confidential, and letters in general seldom have much interest save to those to whom they are written. Though her letters would be precious to hundreds of her friends and pupils as loved memorials of a noble character, yet they are for the most part of too personal a nature for the public eye. Nor would they, in the garbled state in which we should be obliged to give them, do justice to her really lovable character, her practical goodness, or her high mental qualities. We shall, therefore, merely give some

* Some of her letters were so intensely confidential, and made so rigid an analysis of her genuine human soul and her great, throbbing heart, that the receiver at once destroyed them, thinking that no one ought to look so deep down into our nature save Him who knoweth our frame.

extracts, with her views on various topics. And this we do in deference to the wishes of her friends, who are eager to see a sketch of her life illustrated by a few words directly from herself :

“No need to say I am charmed with your letter narrating all the Christmas joys you made and had. Dear Mr. — was so good as to write, and I enjoyed all he wrote. He seemed delighted with everything that went on, and the tone of his expressions of it to me pleased me much. Please offer him my most fervent, most affectionate greetings for the New Year. O my darling ! there is no need to detail all I wish for you for this glad New Year that has but just opened its portals to us. You know all my heart would say, and you can very well guess at all it holds for you.

“Is it not a blessed thing to do good, to make people happy, to take away even momentarily a portion of the ills, and miseries, and want, and wretchedness that surround us ? You certainly are blessed in having the heart and the will to use what resources God has put within your reach for a good end.”

“You know we can never merit final perseverance, and if God withdraw His grace from us what will become of us ? As to me, I am often frightened lest I may not get grace to persevere. Believe me that if your saintly parents could come back to give you counsel, they would say what I now say : Carry your cross faithfully after Jesus in poverty and contempt.”

“The enclosed, which I got from M. A. yesterday, will interest you. I saw in the Catholic papers several interesting items about her community, among them an account of the presentation of her late works to the Holy Father. That great man wrote to her in congratulation and approval, as did also Pius IX., of holy memory.

“Father S—— published last Sunday that four rooms of the new South School will be ready for occupancy in September. We did not expect it to open so soon, but he is so energetic that he wants to push things ahead.

“I am delighted the French nuns are with you. I am sure you will always be lovely to them.”

"Darling, you are the *bestest*, kindest, lovingest friend in the world. Ten thousand thanks for your goodness! I had an inspiration that there would come another letter this week. The fragrant jessamine blossom enclosed is lying on my desk and uttering its delicious perfume over all its contents. I received the sugar-cane, cotton, pecan, oak-leaves; it was so thoughtful of you to send them. Here I have no cabinet, so I gave them to a friend who appreciates them highly. God love and bless you for all your goodness to me! . . . He is so good that we can never do enough to thank Him. Really, often when I am awake at night I am lost in wonder when I go over all His goodness to me and to you and to all we love."

"Certainly, the will of our superiors is God's will for us, and if the cross is given us to bear it is then more than ever God's will. After all the graces you have received, you should show yourself a valiant, generous, and courageous soldier of Christ, and try to imitate your crucified Model and Spouse. If we don't suffer a little for Christ, what is the meaning of the habit we wear or the vows that bind us? Come, now, my dear, show yourself worthy of your saintly parents and of yourself, and do not be a cross and an affliction to your superiors. God knows it is hard enough for them to fix us all, and you and I should set good example and submit humbly and cheerfully to their directions. If you don't like the charge assigned you, once you represent your objections, it is your duty to submit and make no more objection. Why not you as well as another take that duty? We have made a vow of poverty, and must earn our bread in hard and painful labor as long as God gives us health. When that fails us, then our superiors will provide for our necessities."

"Let us be ever grateful to God, for He withholds from many others the favors He lavishes on us. . . . I had a long letter from M——, after years of silence. They are in Salem, Oregon. Next time she writes I expect to hear they have moved to the Sandwich Islands. They have not yet amassed the fortune they went in pursuit of; I fear they are chasing a phantom."

"*Chérie*, I envy you with a holy envy when I see the ripples of the circle of good you have surrounded yourself

with widening every day, while I am left to wrestle with a life so narrow that it cramps all my aspirations after a higher and better good. I feel within me the divine *afflatus* raising me to a nobler plane and filling me with desires to accomplish great things for God and for God's poor, but I cannot do as I wish. I am bound hand and foot, but then it is God's will, and I kiss my chains. . . . I don't know how you can have such courage and cheerfulness when you have so much to contend against. You must write often and encourage me to bear and forbear. Surely that we must do if we are to get on at all."

"I have no taste for being superior. If I were appointed I do not say I would refuse to obey, for that would be mock humility. It would also be selfish and ungenerous if, of course, matters were satisfactorily arranged, because if it came to me without my seeking it God would help me, as He does others. Still, I should not be able to live for worrying if I had as much on my back as you, and I don't think I am very faint-hearted. . . ."

"I am at my old post in the school, and am heartily glad of the change. I never did like to be in charge of a house. Of course there are many little things connected with it that may be pleasing to one's independence of character, but they weigh only as a feather with me in comparison with the hundred-and-one nameless annoyances to which such a charge is subject, or, rather, the person holding the charge. . . . I was delighted to hear from dear J—, and it is a great happiness for me to think that the chasm of apparent neglect and forgetfulness that yawned between us is at length happily bridged over by that dear, kind, affectionate note of hers. She is just the same, only finely purified."

"I want you to be happy always as well as on your feast day. But, I dare say, we all expect an additional parcel of consolation on those occasions. Your patron, gentleman and saint as he is, will give you the gift you have set your heart on obtaining. Don't forget the spiritual destitution of some of your friends, and scatter not your favors with a sparing hand."

"Too many burdens are laid on your too willing shoulders, and you never attend sufficiently to your health. I should

be better satisfied if you could ease my mind on these points. . . . I am glad you enjoyed the joke about *Quid rides?*

"The air is lovely to-day (April 25), though we had a snowstorm yesterday. The capriciousness of the New England climate should be set down in geographies with natural phenomena.

"Now, darling, I will close, begging of you to have mercy on yourself, and not drive and rush at the rate you do. Love to all."

"Your delightful letter was gladly received. It did seem like an age since I heard from you, and I was beginning to fear you were ill. I congratulate you on your good health and well-being, and I rejoice at the flourishing condition of the community. Your account of the visit of that excellent bishop interested me greatly. God has certainly raised up for you many kind friends. I suppose M—— is engaged professionally in your city. I can well imagine the brilliant woman she has developed into, when she was such a prodigy at eight years old, conversant with Shakspeare, Bulwer, and so many other authors. Her sister must make a lovely nun—an ideal one."

"As to me, I am perfectly happy in doing God's will, and He is too good to me every way. Do not think superiors are unkind to me. Not at all. If I were dying I could say that I have always been treated far better than I ever expected or deserved. . . .

"My school is lovely, and everything going on grandly. My health is good, and I am as happy as the days are long."

"I fear we shall not meet now until we go to heaven. Oh! pray that we may meet there. If not, what good is all else? Get all the prayers you can for me. In my whole religious life I never needed them so much as at present.

"J——'s health is poor. She is alarmed about herself and feels that death is near. I should be sorry to lose so good and true a friend as she has always been to me.

"Poor M. Superior lives a living death, and the doctor thinks she may live a long time, since no vital part is affected. She is a perfect pattern of patience and long-suffering, and we all learn a lesson from her that ought to make a lasting impression."

"I often think of K—— and the heights of holiness she must have reached by this. Somehow I always imagine J—— as a sort of walking *Miserere*, but K—— as a glorified Canticle of Canticles. Do you remember how awed we used to be of ——'s sanctity when he was yet a young man? Where shall we come in if God measures us by his standard of holiness? Well, darling, when we get to heaven, and all have a grand *rendezvous*, what fun we shall have relating our experiences and comparing notes!"

"How delightful it must be in the South just now! I often find myself longing to be there, and it will be no fault of mine if I am not sojourning in your latitude one of these days. Here the spring is very coy and gives us only stolen glances. The capricious maiden seems loath to encroach on the domain of stern winter, and ventures only on little excursions that leave us all more desolate than ever, thinking of possibilities not yet within reach. The head of Buzzard's Bay is a few hundred yards from our cell window, and you cannot imagine how despairingly tired I was looking at its frozen bosom all the winter. The first day I saw the blue heavens mirrored in it was a joyous day to me. My very soul shudders at the thought of these frozen regions in which we have to pass the better half of our existence."

"Here one has to rush through life; there are so many little duties to fill up and flow over every moment that time is always at a premium and cannot be bought. Demands on time and labor, even in vacation time, are endless. Two French nuns have come all the way from Canada to take lessons of me. . . . Let me offer you my warmest congratulation on your first branch. You don't know how it thrilled me when I heard it. How lonely the dear Sisters must have felt leaving, probably for ever, that peaceful ark where they spent so many happy days with not a care but to become better every day, and profit more copiously of the abundant means of grace with which you surround your children! How touching must have been the parting with the dear ones left behind—those with whom they had lived in such perfect charity and a harmony of sentiment and unity of purpose almost divine! May the blessing of God go with the valiant little band of heroines who so generously go forth at the beck of obedience, sundering all ties, re-

linquishing all hopes that fondly clung around a visionary future."

"Here I am already so many miles from you. How I miss you and all; how lonely and heart-sick I am at leaving you! The kindness I received from all will be forgotten only when I shall have lost the power to remember. Your delicate attentions, your unparalleled generosity, can never be repaid. But I will ask God to assume the debt and repay you in graces and blessings. I shall ever bear in mind that I am your debtor, especially before the altar, where I shall realize it most sensibly. Your dear ones have taken my heart captive. Never have I met a sweeter set of Sisters. I can say with truth that each one edified me in her own person. It has never before happened me to leave a community where so many inspired me with a particular affection. Moreover, I am hard to please, and by no means easily susceptible of tender affection. May God increase you and them in holiness, and may He multiply to you all the gifts of His grace! Your gifts will be prized as precious souvenirs of the pleasantest visit I ever made, and of those who wove around me the spell of happiness."

"I should not know how to do without your letters if you failed to send them to me. You have spoiled me. With regard to subjects, my idea is that the interests of the community should be the first consideration, and should certainly take precedence even of charity towards the candidate, except in isolated cases."

"My memory is failing very sensibly. I do fifty awkward things in a week. Sometimes I *cut* people I ought to know, and hurt them deeply. Well, I never forget when your feast is coming. You must be reminded that you have your old place in my heart; that place now so old, so dearly, so tenderly cherished. Shall we ever meet again? Or must we wait until we go to heaven to renew all our old associations? We cannot tell what the future may bring, but we are in the hands of God and He knows what is best for us. I don't know whether I can finish this letter respectably, as I am trying to write at recreation. I cannot find time otherwise. I am sure you and your flock are perfectly happy in your mutual relations. . . . You know how dear all your friends are to me, and how fervently I share your gratitude for their kindness to you. Darling, I wish you from my heart of hearts a

plenitude of graces, favors, blessings, and good gifts of all kinds. Always keep me in your heart."

"You may be sure I was delighted to hear from dear S—— that you were so well and happy. Do you just go on from day to day, trusting God and hoping in the multitude of His mercies. I think your motto is: Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. Now, then, what is the use of adopting such heroic sentiments if we embody them not in our life and character? For me, I confess that the remembrance of the lives, merits, and virtues of our departed Sisters fills me with courage and enkindles within me a strong desire to emulate their noble lives, so edifying, so lovely, in their beautiful, simple heroism.

"I see by a lovely letter from your old friend S—— that —— are enjoying themselves in a very healthy way. It is glorious to have the capacity to communicate with nature and enjoy all her various aspects. Ah! believe me, if we but knew where to find them, there are many means of making ourselves happy within our reach. Thorns are everywhere, it is true; but the green grass still more abounds.

"S—— has been heaping kindnesses on your friends since they came, and altogether their reception by our community will for ever sweeten the bitterness of the cup of loneliness they are destined to drink in the wilds of the West. They look old and careworn, but are happy and flourishing in their mission. If you could lend them a couple of teachers for music and algebra it would be a great charity."

"I hope this will find you well and happy, with everything going just right. G——'s death is a fearful trial to a man like his father. When I think of all the changes a few years have wrought, I feel as if I were a hundred years old. Between exhibition, sodality receptions, and the confirmation children I have not a moment. With teaching and housekeeping, there is no time to amuse one's self."

"It seems as if I must write to you from this holy spot [Toronto]. I have been thinking how you would be impressed by the nuns, their dress, mode of life, etc. The foundress is here at present. I don't know if you have heard of her. She is greatly favored by our Lord. Often, immediately after receiving Holy Communion, the Sacred Host turns to blood, and the miracle is perceived by the priest who communicates her. The day of her First Com-

munion, when a child, she was, as well as the rest of the band, dressed in white. The officiating priest saw her in red, from veil to shoes, and afterwards sent for her mother to reprove her for having her dressed differently from all the others. Several in the church saw the red garb as well as the priest.

"I am very sceptical indeed of all external manifestations of sanctity, and came prepared with a battery of prejudice and scepticism to meet the mother. But the moment I beheld her all doubt as to her sanctity vanished, and I felt that I was in the presence of one most dear to God.

"Mother T—— took me here, the nuns being special friends of hers. We spent two days at the L. Convent, which is built immediately over the Horseshoe Falls. I have no need for note or comment here. The pen that would be daring enough to depict Niagara scenes deserves to be broken; so I shall spare you—and my pen.

"Darling, I hope you are well, and happy in the well-being of all your dear ones."

"From the depths of my heart I wish you a most holy and happy Easter, with every possible grace, blessing, and favor our Lord can bestow. Does not Easter always send your thoughts back to the days of youth? Dear Lord, how very little we foresaw the cares and responsibilities 'the flood of years' would bring to us! Well, if we only serve God through it all it is right enough. I often think the peculiar circumstances that surrounded our early lives, together with the characters of our parents, tended greatly to strengthen our minds and develop very forcibly our inherent strength of character. For one thing is sure, we were not weak-minded women. Both you and I will have much to answer for, so let us see to it that we do not bury our talents in a napkin."

"I am delighted to learn that all are doing so much for God and His poor. Thanks for your kind mention of my brother. He was perfectly charmed with your last letter. You are ever so good to write to him. Indeed, indeed he needs sympathy and kindness as much as any person on the American continent."

"In your new position you will have difficulties and trials, I know, but then you possess in an uncommon de-

gree the art of winning hearts, and you will easily gain the confidence, and even the love, of all. Father Faber says this is a dangerous gift, yet I believe you have always used it well. My darling, *nous voici*, heart to heart once more. Yet words are idle when we wish them to convey our hearts to those we love. Are we not happy to have loved each other for so long? I think God has been very good to us to have united us so closely, to have made us but one person, as it were, so intimate has been our friendship. If friendships are made in heaven, surely ours was, for its precious fruits are love, peace, and kindness. I know you will always cherish me, and follow me with love and prayer, beyond the grave, should you survive me.

"Introduce me in spirit to each of your dear ones, and tell them there is at least one in the world who loves you truly. If E—— R—— calls, do all you can for her; she is a dear friend of mine."

"I did not formally ask to be released from my charge here, but I intimated that it would be very agreeable to me. I positively hate to be local superior, and am very anxious to get back for good to the school-room; but still *Fiat!* Always what God wills. . ."

"Our new building is twice as large as the old. I could never teach all day and keep charge. It is an intense relief to me to have the burden of superiorship lifted off my shoulders. I don't know myself, I feel so light and happy. Get lots of prayers that I may do whatever is best for my salvation."

"Don't be troubled about your past. You have done more than enough to satisfy God and yourself. But as to life being weary, there I agree with you perfectly. Did we but know what it would turn out, how easily could we have laid down the burden at the close of our school-days, had God so willed it! Well, we did enjoy life then, if there is aught of enjoyment in the doubtful boon of living."

"Ever so many thanks for the sweet little books. We are having a real old-fashioned New England snowstorm, so the Sisters can enjoy themselves. They cannot go out, and now they are all around, chatting away, and I can scarcely write.

"Tell me exactly what you think of the *Erl-King*,* and if you consider it worth while for me to dip into that sort of thing. I send you some translations that will please you."

"I was so frightened while reading your letter that I did not stop to think that if the letter came safe out of the storm I might reasonably conclude you were safe, too. Well, thank God you are not making a meal for the fishes this cold night, for I assure you it is mighty cold here. My dear, you are, like St. Paul, going through all sorts of vicissitudes. May the good God take care of you! Through all my fright I had to laugh to myself at your description of Madame Angèle. She could not be much consolation to you in the danger. . . . It is well we have God and the *Credo*; they are our only stay. Ah me! life is often a desert without any oasis, humanly speaking."

"I was rather fond of our bishop. If he only had health he would have done a great deal for us. He was truly kind and his government mild and gentle. He did a great deal for religion, with the standing obstacle of wretched health. I hope he is now in the full enjoyment of his reward.—R.I.P. Get prayers that God may send us a fine, energetic man who will be a good friend to us.

"I am prostrate with fatigue after all the examinations and exhibitions, having nine hundred children to cater for one way or another. This moment I feel *hors de combat*."

"You are more than kind and loving to write such a nice letter for my feast. Never have you forgotten me at such times, and your fidelity is all the more touching when one thinks of the busy life you lead, with every moment fully occupied. Ten thousand thanks for all your goodness! It is consoling to me to learn that your labors are progressing so steadily."

"So you want to know what we Northerners mean by *culture*? Well, it has a variety of shades of meaning. Boston is the nucleus of culture, as we understand it to-day. It means Buddhism, Matthew Arnold, Swinburne, a corsage

* *The Erl-King*, or *Elfin-King*, a poem published by Mother M. Juliana, who adapted or translated it from the German of Goethe. It was signed by her *nom-de-plume*, L. N., by which was meant her Christian name, *Ellen*.

bouquet of five Maréchal Niel roses, *portières* woven of spun gold, heliotropes in yellow bowls, a knowledge of the stamps on pottery, an acquaintance with the finest operas, actresses, actors, etc."

"The rest from teaching has entirely cured my throat affection, and I have my voice back again as good as ever. The Sisters were surprised when I sang during the retreat. . . . I send a little gift for your feast, wishing it were a thousand times nicer."

". . . You managed to get yourself very powerful and very dignified patrons in heaven. God grant both may defend you in a singular manner, obtaining for you joy upon joy, blessing upon blessing, for this world and that to come ! I send a little gift which takes with it my heart's best love and blessing."

"You are singularly blessed in having so many talented, accomplished members. I wish you would write biographical sketches of celebrated people. They would take well, and are certainly needed in our serial literature.

"How kind and thoughtful you are for me in the midst of all your cares ! Your precious letter came the very morning of my feast. We had a twenty-four hours' visit from Mother Warde. She wears her age wonderfully and is as erect as a poplar. The Sisters she brings with her are admirable specimens of perfectly trained religious. My children sang for her like a grove of nightingales. I never heard such voices. . . . She has a great and noble heart."

"I was really delighted to get your precious letter with the perfume of violets and affection. What a vein of humor runs through A——'s writing ! Is she as irrepressible as ever ? . . . The work is a triumph of art. Our people declare they never saw anything so lovely. Thank the workers over and over again for me."

"My recollection of all the members of your family is as vivid as if I left them only yesterday. M——'s letter was a treat. I was glad to have her father's daughter write to you in such terms of eulogy. I am glad the Sisters enjoy themselves so much at the new place. God bless and prosper all you do ! How it must console you to have them so

good! That is a blessing for which, if it be wanting, no other can compensate.

"While I am not permitted to accept what you so generously offer, as well as other favors that could come only from the heart of a noble woman and true friend, I am none the less grateful than if I accepted all. You have crowned our friendship by the greatest proof you could possibly give of love and confidence."

"Darling, for your feast and for all time accept the devoted love of your old friend. True and trusted has been your friendship for me nearly since I was born. It cannot be but that we shall renew it in heaven and there make it eternal. Be at ease about me. I am perfectly content. God's peace is in my heart. I will not say happy in an earthly signification, but I really could go on so to the end of my life, as I am convinced that I am better off than thousands of others. So you must not fret in the least. Everything comes right in God's good time. Meanwhile, pray and get prayers for me. My heart will be with you on the 7th prox. *Don't* I remember that day thirty-three years ago? I feel as if I never got over that lonely homecoming when I parted from you. Well, life is a queer tangle, anyhow. M—— asks your prayers and says she feels for you a great deal of respect and affection. God is so good we can never do enough to thank Him. Often when I awake in the night I can do nothing but make acts of thanksgiving. . . ."

". . . I have not a moment to myself at present. I am preparing for an exhibition, and you may guess what that involves. I have some very nice, sweet girls, and, for children who have so few advantages, they really have very good taste. I have taken a great deal of pains with them.

"Half our people go to the Hartford diocese in July. I remain in Rhode Island. Dear Bishop McFarland! how I grieve to part from him! I shall never like another ecclesiastic as I do that dear prelate. I feel sad at the prospect of parting from so many dear Sisters that I have so long known and loved. . . . Would you believe, I had a letter from dear K——. Oh! how delighted I was to hear from her once again! There is an ineffable charm about her letters that inspires one; one could not help feeling

that it was the pen of a saint that traced the lines. I enclose the letter, as you may not have heard from her as lately as I.

"Does not life seem like a dream when you think of our dear past, and of the dear voices that are now still and the dear faces that smile no more upon us? Truly, life as well as death is an unfathomable mystery. . . . I hope everything will continue to prosper with you, and God's glory be promoted by you and yours. Thus will His blessing continue to rest on you."

"Your reviews get better and better. That on the *History of Mediæval Art* is finely done. That was *con amore*. If you have the book I would like to read it some time. I love everything connected with art. I shall keep the critique in case I have an opportunity of applying it. . . .

"The paragraph you enclose about G—— did not surprise me. That so many persevere to the end in such a life is nothing but a continued miracle of grace, let me tell you. . . . No need to say that all Lent long I will be praying for you, and hoping that the bright Easter-time will bring me good news of your renewed health, spirits, and happiness. May I hear grand accounts of your financial affairs, too!"*

"At this moment the miseries of poor B—— and of life in general are pressing upon me.

"God love and bless you and yours, my dearest!"

"Indeed I was charmed to get your card, so long it is since I had heard of you. You can guess how it makes me feel to hear you have been ill. I believe in devotedness to charity, but remember, my darling, your first debt is to your family, and you really must guard your precious health. I hope you will have mercy on yourself while this trying time lasts."

"I was hungry for a letter from you, and then came a golden shower. No need to say that every word had a special meaning and deep interest for me. You are most kind and lovely to give me so much of your precious time when you are so busy. You are really about your 'Father's business' in

* S. M. Juliana always rigidly adhered to the conventual regulation which does not permit letters to be written or received, or visitors received in the parlor, save on business that could not be postponed, during Lent and Advent.

earnest. God bless you, dear, and may He help you always!"

"No need to say your letter of yesterday was most welcome. I had been fretting lest you might be too ill to write, or that some of the other dear ones were ill. I see you have your hands full of business and your heart of cares. During the long, cold days of Lent I shall be praying that the good God may come to you and adjust matters to your satisfaction and greater financial ease. It is really too bad, when you must want all the help your estate could give, that it is to yield least.

"The clouds are dark now, but, please God, the silvery lining will come out all the brighter one of these days. It is so like you to begin the sacrifice and economies on yourself. With God's help there will be no need of that offering on the altar of adversity. I am deeply interested in Mr. ——'s new venture, and hope it will succeed. That the painting will be beautiful I have no doubt. I was hoping to see it, but now I hope against it, as I want it to have a speedy sale. . . .

"Dear, is it not delightful that the boys are doing so nicely? That must be balm to your loving mother's heart. I am always anxious for good news from the boys."

"I need not tell you how deeply grieved I was to hear of poor Willie's death. You must have felt it greatly. I do remember well how fond you were of him. Somehow it always seems as if we loved the one who is taken away more than all who are left behind. . . . I was proud when I heard of the honor the Holy Father showed you, and thankful that your dear parents lived to hear that good news. I hope our Lord is even more pleased with you than His Vicar on earth, and that He will reward all your labors in His service."

"The best thing we can do is to fit ourselves for high places in heaven. My whole heart goes out to you in the great sorrow God has sent you, and the poor city that shelters you. . . . Here we have no sickness, but thousands of poor people destitute, and no hope of amelioration of any kind, no prospect of better times, of work, or means of subsistence. The priests are begging from door to door for aid for the starving people; we do all we can. J—— is very ten-

der-hearted, but few really know it. I hope you are well physically, at least. Your mind must be in a pitiful state of anxiety. Still, how happy you must be to have it in your power to do so much for God !”

Many touches of Sister M. Juliana’s vigorous, responsive nature appear in her letters. Her well-disciplined experience, her love of everything noble and beautiful, and her large sympathy made her unique as a teacher of youth. Her taste for useful and elegant reading she imparted to others. She speaks of her enthusiastic love of deep studies, especially mental philosophy, and of the pleasure given her by the writings of Dr. Ullathorne, whom she considers “almost as a second St. Augustine.” She attaches great importance to training religious and watching their progress in the ways of the Holy Spirit. And to a superior who gave close attention to these points she writes : “Believe me, you are doing a great work for God and laying the foundation of great happiness for your dear ones in after-life. I am convinced that one of the most wretched beings on earth is an ill-trained member after the novelty and excitement of the first years in religion have worn off.” As candidates for conventual life, she prefers bright, earnest, energetic souls, and considers the dull and inanimate, who always lack energy, unfit to succeed in the world or the cloister. She mentions a friend who is “steadily deteriorating in an æsthetic point of view,” and regrets that, while keeping her good-nature, she has lost the delicacy, the all but fastidiousness, of the days of her young ladyhood. Affability she regards as essential to those to whom great interests are confided. Rude, uncouth manners she describes as odious, especially in persons placed over others.

Sister M. Juliana often bewails the superficial tendency of many of our present educational systems. Everything is to be taught to every person, but no branch need be thoroughly mastered. This she stigmatizes as “veneering

and soap-bubble." Of solidly educated people she finds but few, and knows only one family in which genuine culture is appreciated as it was among those with whom her early years were spent. To do God's work well she thinks people should be thoroughly educated. And she does not admire tame, unemotional natures, that cannot be inspired with enthusiasm on any subject. To herself she bears this beautiful testimony, which all who knew her will heartily endorse : "Thank God, I am naturally docile, and easily fall into discipline. Indeed, the love of strictness and discipline is implanted in my nature, and the want of this would make me unhappy."

The following letter gives further particulars of the life and death of this most amiable and holy religious :

"To write of my darling S. M. J. is a hard task to impose upon me. She was my dearest friend for twenty-seven years, and since her death I have not had courage either to speak or write of her. I will, however, help you all I can. On Thursday, February 9, 1888, she went to her school as usual at nine A.M. At recess, 10.30, she went into the community room, and told S. M. G., who was giving music lessons there, that she felt 'chilled to the heart.' S. M. G. noticed that she looked very ill, and offered to take her school for the remainder of the day ; but S. M. J. said: 'No, I'll go back and finish.' At noon she still complained of the chill, and again S. M. G. tried to persuade her to go to bed ; but she replied: 'No, I'll go down to dinner, and not have you bringing me up a whole waiter full of dishes, etc.' She went to the refectory for the last time, drank a cup of tea, and when she came upstairs said to the Superior : "'Tis no use ; I shall have to give up for the afternoon.' All agreed that she had taken a severe cold, and the usual remedies were administered. That evening the doctor called to see another member of the community who was ailing, and he was brought to see our darling. He thought it was nothing more than a cold, but said he would see her again in the morning. When morning came she felt better, but the doctor noticed symptoms of typhoid fever, and began treatment for the same at once,

"All day Friday the patient seemed comfortable and cheerful. Saturday the doctor feared pneumonia, and Sunday it set in. When this was mentioned S. M. J. knew she would not recover, but the near approach of death did not disturb or affright her in the least. When the doctor left the room after the first examination of her lungs, she said to S. M. G.: 'I would love to die now. If it is God's will to take me I'll be glad to go.' . . . S. M. G. tried to make light of the matter, telling her not to expect to get off so easily, and then said: 'Are you not afraid to die?' S. M. J. replied: 'No, I am not in the least afraid. God has been too good to me all my life for me to fear to go to Him now.' . . . Sunday she asked S. M. G. to write some letters for her, and to tell her correspondents she was ill, and that as Lent was near she would not be able to write to them. She did not suffer much, but the pneumonia made such progress that it seemed best to have her receive the last sacraments. Monday morning she went to confession. It took her about five minutes to prepare for the confession that she knew must be her last. Father C. Hughes gave her Holy Viaticum and anointed her, no one being present but S. M. G. S. M. A. was engaged with the doctors. At noon S. M. G. despatched to me. The message did not reach me until it was too late to catch the last train from Providence to Fall River. I left next morning at five, and reached my darling's bedside at eight, to find her sinking fast. She knew me, and I can never forget how her face lighted up when she saw me. 'I am so glad you have come.' She was able to speak only a few words at a time. After a pause she said: 'Are you able to be here?' (I had been ill and was scarcely recovered.) Then again she said: 'Must you go home to-night? Oh! do stay with me.' These were the only words she spoke to me, or almost at all.

"She seemed to be in a kind of stupor, and lay with her eyes closed, breathing heavily. She never asked for anything, but took everything we gave her and tried to do everything she was told. At noon M. Superior came and was greatly shocked to find her so low. . . . Next morning brought M. M. Teresa and S. M. Agnes, of Brooklyn; they came as soon as they got word, but only to find her dying. During the day others came--the Sisters of the other two convents in Fall River and all the city priests called, but S. M. J. noticed no one. At noon Wednesday the doctor

said all hope was gone. Still there was no perceptible change. At five P.M. we knelt and began the rosary ; as we were finishing it I noticed a change and said : ‘ She is dying.’ Some one handed me the book to say the prayers, but I could not read ; I could only look at her and pray aloud to God from my heart. In a few moments she was gone from us. There were no last words or seeming consciousness, and, if she were capable of hearing, my voice was the last she heard. On one side knelt S. M. C., on the other S. M. A., while I clasped her feet. Reverend mother, M. Teresa, and all the Sisters in the house were present except our local superior, who had been sent to bed by the doctor, as she was completely worn out. She had scarcely left S. M. J. from the time she was taken sick, and left nothing undone that could contribute to her comfort or relief. She remained with her the two nights before she died, and did not leave her till Wednesday, when the doctor insisted on her going to bed.

“I took her place, and mine were the last services rendered her. It was my privilege to close her eyes and robe her for the grave. But, indeed, all in the house were only too anxious to show their love for the dear one whom God was taking from them. She died at 5.20 P.M., Ash-Wednesday, February 15. The funeral took place on Friday. A solemn requiem was sung in St. Mary’s Church, at which over thirty priests and fifty Sisters were present. Bishop Harkins presided and gave the absolution. Father C. Hughes preached a very touching sermon. The church was crowded, and many a sob was heard during the ceremony.

“All the pupils of the New Bedford Catholic High School, where Sister had taught for the four years previous to her coming to Fall River, were present and gave evidence of their grief. The dear remains were taken to Providence on the noon train, and interred in St. Frances’ Cemetery with all our Sisters who have died during the past twenty-five years.

“No member has died in our community for whom such universal regret was felt. She was our best and our brightest, and no one can fill her place as she filled it. Yet I, who knew her so intimately and loved her best, and whom she certainly loved, can say, with a full heart, thanks be to God who has taken her to Himself ! You know what a

bright, happy disposition she had, what a capacity for enjoyment, and how she delighted in the beauties of nature and art; how affectionate and devoted she was to her friends, how generous and forgiving, how willing to forget an injury as well as forgive it.

“For the past few years her brightness and gayety were crushed—God permitted it for her greater good—and hers was truly the way of the cross. But she bore all in the true spirit of religion, and up to the day she lay down on her death-bed she was a perfect model of exact observance of rule. She never sought any exemption, would accept of none; was always first at the morning exercises, and gave the morning call the month before her death. She might have been called ‘the lawyer of superiors,’ so anxious was she to defend them and to find good reasons for all they did and said. But God permitted that she was not always appreciated at her true worth. Her generous, loving heart was often wounded and her bright spirit crushed. A year ago she wrote to me :

“‘I will admit that I feel heart-sick enough, but in the superior part of my soul I feel that I have great and many consolations. I know that I must hurry on in the path of perfection, if I mean ever to arrive there at all. God is giving me great helps in the way of crosses and humiliations, contradictions and contempt. Pray that He may help me to follow Him closely in the way of the cross, to imitate Him as far as my weak nature will allow, so as one day to be with Him in heaven.’

“We were together a few days in November, 1887. During that time she spoke a great deal on pious subjects, and urged on me the necessity of aiming at the perfection of our holy state. Several times she said : ‘Well, no matter what comes or goes, no one can prevent our being saints and gaining heaven, so let us strive with all our might to seize the prize that no one can take from us.’

“She gave her best energies to the service of this community, and did more for it than any other member.”

The local journal, which records her death as a calamity, says :

“Sister M. Juliana spent ten years at St. Xavier’s Academy, Providence, and to her zeal in great part can be as-

cribed the solid footing which that institution obtained. In 1874 she taught literature in Bayview Seminary. . . . She remained at St. Catherine's Academy here (Fall River) until success was fully assured and the parochial schools well recommended by the local school committee. . . . Her most agreeable work was performed in teaching the higher branches of study, in which she especially excelled. . . . In manner she was kind and courteous, and invariably made friends of her pupils. To many her loss will be a personal one."

This most unselfish of mortals, though often, from her peculiarly sensitive nature, suffering untold anguish, was always ready to support the weak and comfort the weary, feeling, as it were, a necessity to do good. In her measure, she might have said with the prophet: "I will seek out that which was lost, and that which was driven away I will bring back again, and I will bind up that which was broken, and I will strengthen that which was weak, and that which was fat and strong I will preserve, and I will feed them in judgment."

The letters we have quoted, garbled as they are, give glimpses of her bright and beautiful mind, her noble soul, her ready sympathy, her fond and firm friendship. The last of the series is not given; it was never finished. It is an agitated scrawl, written when death was in her veins, and finished by a strange hand. These few words, the last her eloquent pen ever indited, are the most precious of her whole correspondence. "That friendship never had a beginning which can have an end," said one of the great minds of old. These words convey the hope that her beautiful friendships, in God and for God, will be perpetuated in a fairer world, and all who loved her here below will be glad to meet again one who was always doing or saying something kindly, and drawing them nearer to God by the cords of Adam. "Blessed are they that saw thee and were honored with thy friendship," and may they all rejoice with thee eternally in the bosom of the Father.

When this sweet Sister entered the Providence convent we know that bigotry was rampant throughout the little State, and Sisters of Mercy went on the streets at the peril of their lives. But there has been a blessed reaction. And no wonder that prejudice vanished when such women donned the religious habit, and that Americans, who, in the early days, defiantly called themselves "Yankees," were attracted to God by this glorious woman and are to-day among her most devoted admirers. A gracious woman shall find glory !

CHAPTER LV.

SAN FRANCISCO, 1854.

Bishop Alemany sends for a Colony of the Mercy Sisterhood—Bishop Delany accedes to his Request—Preliminaries—Father Hugh Gallagher—Father Joseph—Disinterestedness—Bequest—To the Fountain-Head—Proceedings—Personnel of the new Foundation—Details—Journeyings—At George's Hill—The Nuns' annual Celebration of Mother McAuley's Entrance into their House, September 8, 1830—Providential want of Room in the *Arctic*—Dr. Ives—Arrival in New York—Blessed Sacrament exposed—Delay—At the Isthmus—Greytown—Nicaragua—A Rambling Hotel—Mild Pleasantries—Full Moon and Fireflies—A horrible Fright—Heroism of Mr. Kelly—First Sight of the Pacific—"My Lady to London Style"—A Rush to the Saloon—Courtesy of Captain Cropper—Jealousy—The unchristian *Christian Advocate*.

ON the 28th of July, 1854, Rev. Hugh Gallagher visited the Convent of Mercy, Kinsale, on part of Bishop Alemany, of San Francisco, for the purpose of getting a filiation for the distant mission of California. Bishop Delany, of Cork, who was well acquainted with his episcopal brother on the sunset slope, willingly acceded to his request, provided that all preliminaries could be settled to the satisfaction of the Sisters. All this naturally took the Kinsale community by surprise, but on inquiry it appeared that Father Gallagher had been referred to Kinsale by the superior of the parent house, Mother M. Vincent Whitty, to whom he had applied in the first instance some months previous, and who was not in a position to accept the mission herself. He imagined that the good mother had made the necessary arrangements with her friends in Kinsale, whereas she had never mentioned the matter to them, but left him to transact his own business from first to last. When Dr. Alemany had appointed him to go to Europe for

religious for the two chief cities in his diocese, San Francisco and Sacramento, he specified Sisters of Mercy as the order to be introduced. Father Gallagher was, as we have seen, well acquainted with the Sisters of Mercy in Pennsylvania. He had seen their brave struggles and hardships in the early days of the Mountain Mission at Loretto, which might have intimidated stouter hearts. For the villagers were quite primitive in their simplicity, and, having amassed but little worldly store, could give no material aid of any kind to the Sisters. Yet God's blessing was visibly with the work, and it grew and prospered, apparently out of nothing.

Father Gallagher* thought that to transport a filiation from Pittsburgh would be far less expensive than to bring one from Ireland. But the bishop, knowing that he could not be accommodated in that quarter, and being well acquainted with the Dublin Sisters of Mercy, desired his ambassador to apply for him "at the fountain-head." "The fountain-head," not being able to form a new source, directed him to the large and flourishing community of Kinsale.

As the new mission was supposed to entail unusual sacrifices, the Sisters were informed that none but volunteers would be accepted. They were counselled to consider the matter well, pray for Divine direction, consult directors and superiors, and on a given day all who were ready to go were told to offer themselves in writing and put the billets in a box at the oratory of the Sacred Heart. Twenty-nine, almost the whole community, offered, but Bishop Delany would allow only five to go. The Kinsale superior, Mother

* Father Hugh Gallagher and his brother, Father Joseph, whom we have met as recluses in the forests of Pennsylvania, came to California at the call of Bishop (afterwards Archbishop) Alemany, the one in 1852, the other later. Their names have been splendidly identified with the progress of religion on the Pacific coast. Both were sincere friends of the Sisters of Mercy. They were most disinterested, and never had money to bestow, but "that," writes a Sister who often experienced their kindness, "is by no means the most valuable mark of friendship." Father Joseph Gallagher, who died not long since, left the Sisters of Mercy his library and the larger part of his life insurance of ten thousand dollars.

M. Frances Bridgman, one of the grandest women, both spiritually and intellectually, that ever wore the religious habit, selected from the volunteers, with unerring judgment, Sister M. Baptist Russell, who had but just left the novitiate ; Sister M. de Sales Reddan, who was old enough to be her grandmother ; Sister M. Bernard O'Dwyer, Sister M. Frances Benson, and Sister Mary Howley.

To this contingent were added three novices who had the courage to offer themselves : Sister M. Gabriel Brown, Sister M. Paul Beechinor, and Sister M. Martha. Accompanied by Rev. Mother Bridgman and Sister Mary Aquin Russell, the whole party left Kinsale September 8. At Cork they were joined by five Presentation nuns who had accepted the Sacramento mission ; for Father Gallagher had found it impossible to get a second body of Sisters of Mercy. And this had the happy result of introducing the Presentation Order into the United States.

They continued their journey to Dublin, where they were met by Father Gallagher. The Sisters of Mercy were to go to Baggot Street and the Presentation nuns to George's Hill, but they got into the carriages indiscriminately, and several Sisters of Mercy were conveyed to George's Hill and Presentation nuns to Baggot Street, to the great delight of their hostesses. When the Sisters of Mercy entered the old cloisters of a monastery so dear to them, to their great surprise they found the nuns celebrating the twenty-third anniversary of Mother McAuley's admission to their novitiate—an auspicious event which they never allowed to pass unnoticed—and the guests were touched and delighted to find that the memory of her virtues were still fresh in the minds of the holy inmates of this venerable monastery. The Sisters of Mercy soon said good-by to their kind friends and repaired to Baggot Street, where they were most cordially received. That night Father Gallagher called to announce that, much to his disappointment, he could not secure accommodation in the *Arctic* for the whole party—eighteen in number. Not

wishing to separate them, he thought it best to defer their departure till the 23d, the eve of the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy. The Sisters of Mercy availed themselves of this delay to visit the Derby Convent of Mercy, a filiation from Kinsale, the superior of which, Mother Benson, was sister to one of the missionaries, Sister M. Frances.

On the 23d the party embarked in the *Canada*. A temporary partition was erected, which gave part of the saloon and several staterooms for their exclusive accommodation. The well-known convert, Dr. Ives, had his baggage actually on board the *Arctic*, but, to have the pleasure of Father Gallagher's company during the voyage, he went to the trouble of removing it and deferred his departure a week. Had he not done so he and his wife would have perished with the rest on that ill-fated vessel. The *Canada* hove in sight of New York on the first Friday in October. On reaching the Convent of Mercy, Houston Street, they found the Blessed Sacrament exposed and adoration going on; the Sisters received them with great affection. Mother M. Agnes O'Connor and Austin Horan, who had travelled with them from Ireland, were made doubly welcome.

As Father Gallagher was obliged to go to Pennsylvania to conclude some business of great moment, and as the Sisters of Mercy did not wish to undertake the perilous journey to California without him, they remained in Houston Street, to the great delight of the New York community, until November 13. The Presentation nuns went on with Fathers Cassin and Cody and some secular ladies and gentlemen. Nothing of interest occurred on the journey to the Isthmus. Greytown, at the mouth of the San Juan, seemed a town of tents; there were few regularly built houses. Going towards the Pacific was novel and interesting in the extreme. The heat was so intense that children and adults wore scarcely any clothing. At Greytown the Sisters were transferred to river-boats and packed so close that no one thought of lying down, so great were the crowds going out

in search of gold. Many, not knowing that food was not to be had on the Isthmus, had come without any, and had to beg or to buy some at exorbitant rates. But Father Gallagher, who was an experienced traveller, had provided necessaries and comforts for his party—preserved meat, fish, biscuit, bread, ice, tea—and they gladly shared with those poorer than themselves. In the middle of the night they reached a point on the river that was impassable. All had to go ashore, and after walking some distance north they embarked in another boat. A hotel of great extent and scanty comfort had been built on the beach by some enterprising parties. The Sisters were accommodated with the best room in it. It was formed of unpainted boards. In the centre was a roughly made table, on which stood a bottle holding a tallow candle, the grease of which spattered all over the floor. No seat of any kind cumbered the ground. So, Indian fashion, they squatted on the floor near the walls. Sister M. Paula, the artist of the party, who had a keen sense of the ridiculous, instantly pulled out her pencil and pocket-book to sketch the *candelabrum*. This was scarcely done when they were summoned to the river-bank, whence they were transferred to another boat. In due time they reached Nicaragua, where a pretty little steamer awaited them. The crowds being such as did not allow beds to be thought of as possibilities, the Sisters, weary from not a few night-watches, dozed a little, leaning their heads on their bundles. Happily the weather was exquisite, and they enjoyed it on the hurricane-deck till a very late hour. The religious party was large. Four Notre Dame Sisters and several Jesuits had joined our Sisters in New York. Father Gallagher entertained them with reminiscences of his recent tour in Europe and his experiences in the backwoods of America. All had something to contribute to the business of the hour, innocent recreation, and passed a pleasant night, though “their eyes were heavy” from want of sleep.

Nicaragua is a beautiful lake, about ninety miles by forty,

studded with islands evidently of volcanic origin; two or three were active volcanoes when the Sisters passed them. The full moon added to the beauty of the scene, but prevented the fireflies from showing off to advantage. When the party reached their destination they expected to be obliged to mount mules, but to their great delight large, double-seated wagons, each drawn by six beasts, awaited them. From the lake to the sea-coast, about fifteen miles, the drive was delightful. But a horrible fright almost paralyzed them. The Notre Dame Sisters were within a hair's breadth of being dashed over a steep precipice. The mules of their wagon had become unmanageable. A Mr. James Kelly, who fortunately happened to be near, with superhuman strength and at the risk of his life, ran for about a mile along the edge of the precipice, holding the head of the leader and pushing him against the bank, until all danger was over.

About two P.M. San Juan del Sur was reached. The first sight of the Pacific was grand. The Sisters gazed on it in silence from the beautiful shelving beach, and thanked God that they had reached the ocean on whose shores they were to spend whatever remained to them of life. From this sublime sight they turned into the best hotel. It was a spacious structure, built of undressed boards set up on end. No privacy of any kind was to be had here, the openings being so wide that one could see from room to room, and doors and screens were unknown luxuries. Each apartment had a cot, a straw pillow, and sheets. The sheets they used to screen their rooms from the outside world. They had just settled themselves to rest when they were aroused by Father Gallagher, who thought it best for them to go aboard the *Cortez*, though she was not to sail till next day. The heat was terrific and the insects baffled description. When they came to the beach they were bewildered at the sight that greeted their eyes. Men almost naked were carrying ladies and gentlemen about fifty yards into the sea to a point at which small boats were stationed to take them

to the steamer, that stood far out in deep water. There was not the least semblance of a wharf, and in that shallow water not even the smallest *pirogue* could reach the shore. Presently their escort appeared with four "natives," whom he had induced to dress in linen shirts and pantaloons. By these the Sisters were carried in "My Lady to London" style to the skiffs. They were then rowed to the steamer, which they reached in time for supper. The supper-bell had caused a general stampede to the saloon, and, as the Sisters did not run as fast as the other passengers, they found it difficult to get places even at the foot of the second table. The other steamers in which they had travelled had appropriated one table to the religious party, but the *Cortez* managed differently. She had one large table extending the whole length of the cabin. The seats were numbered and a certain one assigned to each person. But the captain and the purser, being absent receiving passengers, did not preside at this meal, and dreadful confusion, amounting to a riot, was the consequence. At night the steward handed a package of tickets for the party to Father Gallagher, who was pleased to see that the first seats on each side of the table were assigned to the Sisters; the clergy, and even the seculars who had accompanied them, were placed above the other passengers. This and the marked respect shown the religious party on the voyage by Captain Cropper caused an unfortunate jealousy in some of the company. The outcome of it was a certain vindictiveness which, before the Sisters were many days in San Francisco, ventilated itself in the *Christian Advocate* in a manner that was anything but Christian. On this vessel there was a motley assemblage of human beings, wild creatures from every part of the earth, going in search of gold. The Sisters naturally kept to themselves, and declined any intercourse with this curious medley save what charity and civility seemed to require. This reserve, unavoidable in such an assemblage, was displeasing to many.

CHAPTER LVI.

AT THE GOLDEN GATE.

Up the Pacific—The Definition of the Immaculate Conception—On Terra Firma—The first Mass—Mother M. de Sales Reddan—Archbishop Alemany's first Visit—Our Lady of Guadaloupe—"She is not Dead, but Sleepeth"—The Moribund—"Here's your Boston *Pilot*! New Orleans *Picayune*! New York *Herald*!"—Looking for News from Home—Inmates of the County Hospital—Anecdotes—"Possessed beyond the Muse's Painting"—The Miraculous Medal—Good Example—Borrowing on Interest—Dreadful Visitation of Cholera—The devotedness of the Sisters to the Stricken.

THE voyage up the Pacific was a pleasure trip. The sea was perfectly calm, the air balmy. There was not a case of sea-sickness on board. Before any of the other passengers had emerged from their state-rooms every morning the Sisters were on deck and had their morning prayers, office, and meditation finished. As they neared their destination it was calculated that they would, with God's blessing, reach the city of St. Francis on the morning of December 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception and the day of its definition. All joyfully prepared to receive Holy Communion in thanksgiving on that great day. December 7 they began to catch glimpses of the coast range, and the excitement produced by the hope of soon landing in the gold region was intense. About midnight the vessel got into San Francisco Bay, but the religious remained on board till five next morning.* There was little sleep to be had that night. The passengers were in groups on deck and in the cabin. Some were discussing the Sisters' party, and sagely decided that the person with the gold chain was the lady superior.

* It was about midnight when the vessel passed through the Golden Gate, so the Sisters lost the magnificent view of that grand entrance.

On leaving the ship the Sisters drove directly to St. Patrick's Church,* on Market Street, and reached it just as the good old pastor, Father Maginn, was turning to salute the congregation before the last Gospel. With hands and eyes raised towards heaven he blessed his flock of twelve or fifteen persons, all who had assembled that morning to celebrate the feast. The Sisters communicated at Father Gallagher's Mass, and placed their mission under the protection of Divine Providence and the Immaculate Mother of God. When driving from the boat to the church the saintly Mother M. de Sales Reddan, of whom we shall have something to say later, threw a miraculous medal into the street, as if to take possession of the city in the name of the Immaculate Mother. This she did with tears of devotion.

The Sisters of Mercy were hospitably received by the Sisters of Charity, whose house adjoined St. Patrick's Church. The archbishop and his vicar-general came later in the day to welcome them. On leaving his grace promised to say Mass for them on Tuesday, the 12th. The Sisters, thinking he knew nothing of their history, wondered why he had selected a day so memorable to them, it being the anniversary of the foundation of their order and a feast of the first class with them. They afterwards learned that their anniversary is the greatest of the Mexican feasts of the Blessed Virgin, Our Lady of Guadalupe. On January 2 they removed to a small, neat house on Valley Street, which contained six rooms and a kitchen, all small, and had been selected on account of its proximity to the county hospital, where the Sisters had a good field for their labor, until they could decide as to their future course.

The Presentation nuns who had come out for Sacra-

* There were then three churches in San Francisco—St. Francis', on Vallejo Street; St. Patrick's, on Market Street, and the old adobe church at the Mission Dolores, then a suburb, but now an integral part of the city. St. Patrick's and St. Francis' Churches were shanties of the meanest description. The brick Cathedral was opened, but in an unfinished state, some weeks after the arrival of the Sisters of Mercy.

mento were deterred from going thither by the accounts they received touching the insalubrity of the climate. They had opened a school, and were now engaged teaching it. Consequently a school was not for the present such a pressing necessity. The first rain of the season fell in torrents on January 6. The first visitation of the sick was made January 4. The Sisters were called in to see a dead woman, as it was supposed. But while they knelt to offer a prayer for the poor creature, who had been found in that condition, they noticed signs of life. Immediately they sent for a priest, meanwhile employing the usual means of restoring animation. The poor woman revived and was conveyed to the county hospital, where she lingered several months.

A house next to the convent was rented for a House of Mercy, and this branch of the Institute was opened in a very humble way. Yet it enabled the Sisters to do a considerable amount of good. In the beginning it was filled with children sent to San Francisco to await news of parents in distant mining camps. Communication being difficult, it generally took a long time to notify them of the arrival of their children. Steamers came once a month; later, twice a month. No matter what hour of the night the steamer arrived, the newsboys went their rounds, shouting out in full capitals: "Arrival of the *Northern Star!*" (or any other steamer). "Here's your Boston *Pilot!* New Orleans *Picayune!* New York *Herald!*" Often the Sisters were aroused from their sleep by these cries, "and then," writes one of the few survivors of these early days, "our hearts would jump, hoping there was a letter from our loved *Alma Mater*, and many times we were doomed to disappointment." Every day two or four Sisters spent many hours in the county hospital, where they had the happiness of relieving and consoling numerous wretched creatures, bringing negligent Catholics to the sacraments, and a goodly number of non-Catholics to the true faith.

Among the inmates was a man who had left Ireland a mere boy and travelled over the world, learning its vices and losing gradually the little knowledge of religion with which he had set out. Still, he proclaimed himself a Catholic. Seeing that death was inevitable, the Sisters spoke to him of preparing for the sacraments, though to broach such a subject was to rouse the devil within him, and his language when excited was truly terrific. Every means of "getting around him" was tried, but in vain. One day a Sister, since dead, raised her crucifix, saying: "Since our Lord did not think it too much to bear such cruel sufferings to save us, we ought surely to do our part." At this the poor wretch became so enraged that he snatched the crucifix out of her hand and dashed it violently on the floor. At recreation in the evening the Sisters, when chatting over the events of the day, mentioned this awful incident. One suggested to give him a miraculous medal, but, knowing it would be useless to offer it, they decided on sewing one in a pillow of which they meant to make him a present. For at that time the hospital was as cheerless and comfortless as one could well imagine; in the whole establishment there was not one feather pillow. And, as there were very few hard ones, the Sisters, from their own slender resources, were accustomed to bring pillows and other little comforts to those longest confined to bed or in the greatest suffering.

The poor fellow accepted his pillow with effusive thanks, and Our Lady of Mercy softened his heart. The next day, to their joyful surprise, he apologized for his rudeness, and ever after was as wax in their hands, not only willing but even eager to do whatever they suggested. He begged to see Father Ingoldsby, the chaplain, to whom he had been most insulting, and when he had made his peace with God he asked for the Sisters to whom he had been disrespectful, that he might express his regret to them in person. He became such an altered being that Mr. Clarke, an English-

man in the same ward, gave the change he witnessed in his fellow-patient as the reason why he asked to be instructed in the Catholic faith.

Meanwhile the Sisters were looking for a more spacious house than the one they occupied. The city authorities were then building a new hospital, to which the patients were to be removed in October. The old brick county hospital was put up for sale. Its location was then quite central—Stockton Street, between Valley and Broadway. They decided to purchase it, which they did in July for thirteen thousand dollars. This sum they borrowed on interest, and the city became their tenant. At this period the care of the sick was let out by contract; the two Doctors Gibbons were receiving five thousand dollars a month for this service. Very soon cholera made its appearance. It was introduced into the city from the shipping, and immense was the terror it excited. The Sisters had already served some months in the temporary cholera hospitals in Clonmel and Kinsale in 1849; one had nursed it in 1832. They were familiar with all the phases of this dreaded disease and the best remedies. Now they were in their element. Day and night they worked among the stricken, and by their skill and devotedness, under God, they saved hundreds of lives. But as they conceived this to be only their duty, they never dreamt that their heroism would draw upon them the admiration that followed.

CHAPTER LVII.

“O LORD ! HAVE MERCY ON MY ENEMIES !”

Charges preferred in inelegant Language—“They didn’t keep the Sabbath and they drank hard”—Total Abstinence from intoxicating Liquors except as used medicinally—Captain Cropper—Hosannas—Fine Condition of County Hospital—Generosity of the Sisters—Avoidance of Debt—Victim of the Vigilants—“O Lord ! have Mercy on my Enemies !”—Conversion of Amanda Taylor—Splendid Magdalen Asylum.

LIKE St. Paul, Sisters of Mercy should know how to abound and how to be brought low, and of both conditions they had ample experience during the early years of their settlement in California. Indeed, the attentions they received from a small fraction of the people during the very first week of their sojourn were by no means reassuring. One of the papers advised them to return without delay, as “the institutions of our Protestant and republican country are known to be obnoxious to their tastes.” And if they do not, “we think it the duty of the attorney-general of California at once to institute proceedings in behalf of the State.” One of the bigots, whose jealousy was excited by the attentions of the captain of the *Cortez* to the religious party, wrote a slanderous epistle to the *Christian Advocate*, accusing that party of unbecoming conduct on the voyage. Among other things the writer says in rather unclassical English : “They didn’t keep the Sabbath” and “They drank hard” !

True, being Christians, not Jews, “they didn’t keep the Sabbath”; they kept the Lord’s day, Sunday, instead. As to the other accusation, as a general rule the Sisters of Mercy, except in illness, are total abstainers, in imitation of their holy foundress, who took the pledge and wore a tem-

perance medal to combat the more effectually the too prevalent vice of intemperance. When these vile calumnies were brought under his notice the captain was very indignant. He wrote to the editor of the *Herald*, denying them in strong language. "My position," said he, "as commander of a passenger steamer, makes me a servant of the public, and especially of those who come under my care as wayfarers. I pronounce the article alluded to the most detestable calumny I have ever known or heard of. The parties in question had their seats at table next to me, and I may say they were at all times under my eye and observation. Their religious exercises were performed not only on Sunday but every day, without intruding on others. . . . The extreme propriety of their deportment, their unobtrusiveness, and their gentle, ladylike manners should have shielded them from so gross an outrage." The letter is dated January 18, 1855, and signed "THOMAS B. CROPPER, commander of the steamer *Cortez*."

The Sisters of Mercy survived these accusations. Yet such an introduction to the people among whom they had been invited to abide, and that through the public press, was not a little injurious to their prospects. When, during the same year (September 5), the vessel *Uncle Sam* arrived bringing the fatal cholera, "Crucify them" was changed into "Hosannas." They *lived* with the stricken. Not to speak of their higher value, their labors were of untold worth in the temporal order, for they were the only persons on the Pacific slope who understood the nursing of this awful disease. The papers now changed their style. The *Daily News* notices their labors as follows :

"We visited yesterday the patients in the hospital ; a more horrible and ghastly sight we have seldom witnessed. In the midst of this scene of sorrow, pain, anguish, and danger were ministering angels who disregarded everything to aid their distressed fellow-creatures. The Sisters of Mercy, rightly named, whose convent is opposite the hospital, as

soon as they learned the state of things, hurried to offer their services. They did not stop to inquire whether the poor sufferers were Protestants or Catholics, Americans or foreigners, but with the noblest devotion applied themselves to their relief. One Sister might be seen bathing the limbs of a sufferer; another chafing the extremities; a third applying the remedies; while others with pitying faces were calming the fears of those supposed to be dying. The idea of danger never seems to have occurred to these noble women; they heeded nothing of the kind. If the lives of any of the unfortunates be saved they will owe their preservation to those noble ladies."

Of the labors of the Sisters of Mercy during this season of distress Archbishop Alemany expressed the highest appreciation. He considered them the chief factor in restoring religious harmony in San Francisco. And it may be said that Know-Nothingism did not again dare to raise its head, in the old way, in that fair city.

When the cholera moderated the Sisters of Mercy were officially asked to assume charge of the indigent sick of the county of San Francisco, which they gladly did. Here are some of the provisions:

1. From and after October 22, 1855, the Sisters of Mercy—known in this community as philanthropists who refuse all pecuniary reward for their self-sacrificing devotion to the sick and destitute—shall provide for the care and maintenance of the indigent sick.

2. All bills contracted to carry out the requirements of the above section must be presented to the Board of Supervisors monthly, and it shall be the duty of said Board to cause them to be promptly paid.

3. The Sisters of Mercy may employ such resident medical assistance as in their judgment may be necessary for the well-being of the sick in said hospital.

4. The Sisters of Mercy are hereby requested to cause to be made monthly to the Board a report of the general condition of the hospital; the number admitted and discharged;

sex, age, color, nativity of those who have died during the month, as well as such recommendations as they may deem best for the future welfare of the patients.

These and other arrangements met with the cordial approval of the press—for the moment. In March, 1856, the anti-Catholic party, by its organ, the *Bulletin*, the only paper which had published slanders against the Sisters, put forth its denunciations with great boldness and an affected zeal for truth. At the same time it admitted "that the fault does not lie with the Sisters—no doubt they have kind hearts, Catholic hearts, in the technical sense of the term, and they are pledged to the constant service of the Church. Nor does the fault lie with the priests. It is their policy, open and avowed, to unite Church and State" (!).

The items that gave an appearance of truth to the *Bulletin*' reports were furnished by a young man named Woodruff, a most profligate character, whose ire was excited by a stop being put to letters passing between himself and a depraved creature in the female ward. The staff of physicians and surgeons held a meeting to consider the propriety of contradicting the slanders, but decided it was better to treat them with silent contempt. Dr. Sawyer, nevertheless, wrote a lengthy explanation of the case, which concludes: "We cannot dismiss this subject without congratulating the public that we possess three departments that reflect credit on us: the schools, the fire department, and the hospital under the management of the Sisters of Mercy."

Many other letters from private and public individuals attested the zeal and capability of the religious, who, however, took no notice of the bitter invectives that called them forth. Prejudice and intolerance were rampant once more, but not for long.

On the 14th of May, 1856, James King, editor of the *Bulletin*, was shot in the street by a gentleman whom he had slanderously attacked in his paper. This tragic event, which resulted in his death a few days later, put an end to the

paper war he had so long waged against the hospital. It was also the immediate cause of the formation of a Vigilance Committee. "I opposed this organization," says Peter Burnett, * first governor of the State of California, "on the ground of principle, as I considered it incipient rebellion and a fatal precedent." Mr. Casey, who shot Mr. King, did not consider himself an assassin. Rightly or wrongly, he deemed that the terrible provocation he had received justified the act. But the Vigilants judged otherwise. In secret session they condemned him to death. He was desirous of being consoled by the Sisters of Mercy in the last days of his life, and Archbishop Alemany earnestly solicited that favor for him. But this new "Star Chamber" refused the doomed man that poor consolation. He then asked for a priest, and this boon was allowed him. Whatever wrong he had done he amply atoned for during the few days allotted him to get ready for his final passage. His end was most Christian. On the verge of eternity the following beautiful words trembled on his lips: "O Lord, have mercy on my enemies!" His monument in the old Mission Church, Dolores, which received his mutilated remains, contains his name and his dying aspiration: "O Lord, have mercy on my enemies!"

The Sisters took charge of the hospital only on condition that the entire control would be in their hands and the selection of all employees left absolutely to them. On October 24, 1855, they entered into possession. At once they selected an entirely new staff of nurses; for the old incumbents were, with scarcely an exception, characters of the most unscrupulous description. Of an old, unused room the Sisters made a very neat chapel for themselves and the convalescents. This was a grave offence in the eyes of certain bigots, but "that chapel" was not closed.

* California had some years earlier been admitted as a State. Burnett succeeded Governor Riley, who had been appointed to the civil and military administration of the Territory by the American government early in 1849.

In April, 1856, the Sisters rented a house and lot on Broadway, adjoining the hospital grounds. Here they opened a day-school and boarded about a dozen children of the humbler class whose parents lived in the country. The House of Mercy continued on a moderate scale, but the registry office occupied the time of one Sister every day from ten A.M. to four P.M., and by it hundreds were supplied with employment. The visitation of the sick was closely attended to, and the jail, a few squares from the hospital, was a favorite work of mercy.

About this time the archbishop authorized Father King, a very zealous priest, to make a collection in the mission districts to enable the Sisters to build a hospital, and commissioned several gentlemen to solicit subscriptions for the same benevolent object in the city. The persecution to which the County Hospital had been subjected brought the real facts of the case before the public, with the result that they desired, if possible, to place all their institutions under such efficient management. The unanimous testimony "of all competent observers and the public authorities" was that "no similar institution anywhere is managed more faithfully, more conscientiously, and, for the means at command, more effectually, than the hospital in charge of the Sisters of Mercy." Furthermore, the report of the grand jury revealed the fact that "the Sisters of Mercy, by whom the hospital is managed, have received no cash payments from the city for seven months, . . . and that the institution is at present supported mainly by loans at interest made to the Sisters on their personal security, their private means having long since been exhausted in the undertaking." The publication of these facts had, as the local journal surmised, the effect of damping the philanthropic ardor of the parties who desired to get the control of the hospital into their own hands.

People whose grand ambition it is to work solely for God and to promote the good of souls cannot always stop to con-

sider the material means by which it is His will that good works shall be partially carried out, and revelations similar to the above could be made in connection with many a Convent of Mercy. Good works have been undertaken upon promises or conditions that have never been realized; the affectionate and intelligent care promised by the Sisters when taking charge of certain institutions has been abundantly bestowed, but the parties of the second part have too often allowed them to find the means to this end from their own private resources. As a rule, the Sisters of Mercy act with such generosity as to sacrifice to the public good all that is their own. But beyond this they should not go. Their constitutions command them to avoid debt as much as possible. "It would be better to submit to a temporary inconvenience than to suffer the convent to be ruined—the inevitable consequence of debts inconsiderately allowed to accumulate."

It would seem that, save in periods of exceptional public calamity, as epidemics or famines, communities should not go in debt even to relieve distress, as God does not require us to relieve it save in proportion to the means He sends us. In this respect the worthy community of San Francisco seems to have gone a little too far, but the good God for whom they worked enabled them in time to pay all their debts and to come out of their difficulties with a useful experience. They now determined to have a hospital under their own exclusive management, and Archbishop Alemany, who had always been their devoted friend, encouraged in every way this praiseworthy project. A prospectus or explanation of the duties of the Order was now drawn up. This falling into the hands of some reporters was copied by them into their papers, and became the occasion of establishing another work of mercy. It met the eyes of one Amanda Taylor, a Protestant, about thirty years old and a native of New Orleans. This unfortunate person, though a leader in the depraved class to which she be-

longed, was at times so disgusted with the hideous life she led that she longed to leave it, but saw no way of doing so. In August, 1856, she came to the hospital, and so earnestly did she beg to be kept, "even in a coal-hole," that the Sisters, unwilling to drive her back to a life of sin, had to yield, though nothing was farther from their intentions than the opening of a Magdalen asylum.

A room was assigned to Miss Taylor, and every evening as the Sisters went to Matins one of them took her out on a little balcony to walk. This was all the airing she could get. Though they strained every nerve to sweeten the rigors of her penitential life, for eight months she went through a terrible conflict, and was often on the point of throwing up all in despair and returning to her old life of sinful luxury. But as soon as she applied her mind in good earnest to the study of the truths of religion she felt she had something real to cling to for support. Accustomed to a life of indolence and self-indulgence, in the beginning she would let the Sisters make her bed, sweep her room, and render her every menial service while she rocked listlessly in a chair. But before a year had elapsed Amanda was an altered being. By degrees she became a model of industry and devotedness. The first who joined her was a very young girl, the care of whom was a godsend to the lonely creature. Then came another and another, till the Sisters had to allot a whole suite of apartments for their accommodation and erect a balcony for their sole use. Such was the foundation of one of the finest and best conducted Magdalen asylums in the world. Within a short period, therefore, the San Francisco Sisterhood had all the works of mercy in successful operation.

CHAPTER LVIII.

CHINESE AND INDIANS.

Judas hanged in Effigy—Lawlessness in San Francisco—Presentation Nuns leave—Charivari—Yerba Buena—Jasper O'Farrell—Gold—In Haste to get Rich—Commercial Depression—Eggs from Boston double the Cape—Spiritual Wants well attended to—Extreme Courtesy of the Archbishop towards the Sisters—Noble Testimony—Chinese—A humble Apostle—Tracheotomy—A Chinese Girl of ten—Refuses the Ministrations of a Chinese Priest—Dressed in Christian Clothes—Indian Charley—Anecdotes—Timothy Harris—Frederick Nessinger—Hospital Register—St. Mary's—Anne Crudden—"Tipperary Bill"—"This Day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise"—Doña Ana—"This kind of Devil can go out but by Prayer and Fasting"—Rescued from Mormondom.

ON Good Friday, 1856, the Sisters were summoned to visit a dying woman, and, as they turned the crowded corner of Stockton Street and Broadway, on looking up to see if they could conveniently pass they perceived the body of a man dangling from a rope stretched across the street. Stunned by the horrible spectacle, they took the opposite direction, praying fervently for the poor wretch, whoever he might be. They were mightily relieved to learn that the "corpse" was only an effigy of Judas, which, according to a Mexican custom, was hanged every Good Friday. This and similar usages have long since been discontinued. There is no denying that at the arrival of the Sisters and for a long time after San Francisco was an awful place in which to pitch one's tent. Their sufferings in many ways could never be put on paper.

Even the Presentation nuns, whose cloistered life shielded them from so much misery, were unable to stay. With one or two exceptions all returned to Ireland within a few months. When it was in contemplation to send Sisters of

Mercy to California their friends inundated them with extracts from papers describing the wholesale conflagrations, floods, street-fights, murders that were of frequent occurrence, and the terrible *vendetta* the Indians kept up for the insults showered on them by the whites. Though these representations nowise affected the brave volunteers, yet they made an impression, and a brawl or any unusual occurrence "murdered sleep." The first time they heard a *charivari* they thought their end had come. The discordant shouts, the bugles and tin horns, the unearthly yells, and the peals of wild laughter, all under the midnight moon, made them rise from their beds and rush to the windows to see if there were any mode of escape for their poor, sick inmates. How relieved they were to learn that it was only a sort of mock serenade, given, according to a custom imported from Louisiana, to a young man who had just married, the bride being three times his age.

A thousand homicides had been committed in the little city between 1849 and 1856, and there had been only seven executions. The failure of the courts to administer justice promptly caused a general lawlessness. Criminals who had money and influence were safe, and the boldest and most dangerous of the evil-doers were themselves officers of justice. The city itself was a thing of yesterday. In 1847 it was the poor little hamlet of Yerba Buena (Good Herb). When it became San Francisco it was surveyed by the celebrated civil engineer, Jasper O'Farrell. January 19, 1848, gold was found for the first time in the American River, and Governor Mason, who visited the favored locality, assured the people that all necessities to gather up a fortune were a pick, a shovel, and a pan. Popular excitement knew no bounds; cities, towns, and villages were all but depopulated by the rush of people, "in haste to get rich," to the "diggings." The evil effect of all this on religion and morals can scarcely be overestimated.

On the arrival of the Sisters great commercial depression

existed. Over-speculation had ruined many, and the town was slowly recovering from a panic. The failures and bankruptcies were enormous in proportion to the population, which was scarcely forty thousand. Out of a thousand business houses more than three hundred were unoccupied. Everything was expensive. Good meat, eggs, or butter could not be had at any price. Eggs and butter were imported from Boston ; one can scarcely imagine how these dainties tasted in California. Early in the fifties a lady was presented on Christmas day with an apple, for which the donor paid five dollars. Peaches were a dollar apiece late in the fifties. The edibles produced in the country might be represented by zero. The Californians could not live a week without supplies from the East. From New York to San Francisco the distance was many hundred miles, and all freight, before the opening of the Panama Railroad, 1855, came by way of Cape Horn, thus passing twice through the whole breadth of the torrid zone. These and many other circumstances must be taken into account by such as would correctly understand the position of the Sisters of Mercy in California in the earlier years of their residence.

Yet from the first they had this consolation, that their spiritual wants were well attended to by the direction of the good bishop and the kindness of the clergy. From the cathedral the priests came in turn every morning to say Mass in the convent chapel, and continued their kindly ministrations until a resident chaplain was appointed. Their position as alternate chaplains was no sinecure. Rats were legion, and prowled about the streets during the night and until sunrise. A young priest, who had a peculiar horror of these vermin and feared they might devour him, used in the winter to force one of the more courageous to come instead of himself, as he had been set upon the first dark morning he went to the hospital by troops of them. For the first few years there was only one Jesuit in

the city, Father Maraschi. Yet they never missed a retreat, and their retreats have always been conducted by Jesuits. Their chief friends were Fathers Hugh and Joseph Gallagher, but all the clergy of the city were most kind to them, especially Fathers Cook, King, Cotter, and Harrington. Regularly every three months they had an extraordinary confessor, the archbishop himself acting in that capacity for the first three years. He strictly adhered to the rule of changing the ordinary and extraordinary directors every three years. And lest in the multiplicity of his duties this should escape his memory, he asked the community to notify him in due time.

In the matter of appointing directors Archbishop Alemany was most considerate and never acted in an arbitrary manner. He required the superiors, or the council and chapter, to suggest to him the names of three or four priests whom they deemed suitable for this office and who would be agreeable to the community. And it was from the clergymen so presented that he made his selection. His manner to the Sisters was paternal, but most deferential. He could not address a queen with more courtesy than he showed to the lowliest among them. When he had known them well and long the great deference he evinced towards them was mingled with gratitude and affection, especially in case of those who had labored long in his diocese. "From the first," wrote the mother-superior, who certainly wielded no hireling pen, "we felt that we had a saint to deal with in Archbishop Alemany"—noble testimony, elicited only after his great heart was stilled in death.

Many Chinese and Indians were instructed and baptized in the hospital. The former were allotted separate accommodations. Numbers of them owed their salvation under God to a noble though illiterate woman named Hannah Gallagher, whom the Sisters employed as a nurse and whose self-sacrificing devotion inclined them to listen readily to her advice. Two Chinese women recovered so far as to be

able to leave the hospital ; they were baptized respectively by the names of Mary and Brigid. Brigid presented one of the few instances of success in the operation called tracheotomy. Both persevered to the end in the Catholic faith, Mary dying with the Sisters a year later, and Brigid in the hospital six years after. The Chinese usually keep their sick until they are at the last gasp ; then they put each patient into one of their huge meat-baskets in some lonely place to die.

On one occasion, when numbers of sick Chinese were transferred from the ship to the hospital, a little girl of ten turned from her country-people with evident horror and threw herself into the arms of an Irishwoman who stood by. As soon as she could make an attempt at English she said : "The Chinese are bad, bad, bad!" She had been stolen from her parents, who were evidently of the upper class. Once when she was attacked with typhoid fever it was considered necessary to administer the last sacraments. A Chinese missionary, Rev. Thomas Cian, was brought to her bedside. Though he wore the clerical dress she at once recognized her countryman and turned from him with contempt and loathing. Nor could she be induced to believe that he was really a priest. "No, no," she would say, "Chinaman no priest, Chinaman bad man." The Sisters were obliged to call in old Father Maginnis, "the Orphans' Friend," to whose ministrations Nora, as she was now called, willingly submitted. She recovered, and as she was very good and pious and readily learned English the Sisters gave her a very careful training, in the hope that she might do good service to religion among her countrywomen. But to the last the poor girl shrank from them. The cruelties of which she had been the victim in her childhood came against her in later years, and she did not live long. So great was her sanctity that she was allowed to communicate several times a week. Before her death she begged to have the Carmelite habit, in which she was to be buried, pinned to

the curtain of her bed that she might have it constantly before her.

There were then several Chinese girls in the hospital under instruction. These Nora had brought to her, and for a long time she spoke to them in their native language. They promised her with floods of tears that they would never again go among the wicked Chinese, and to assure her of their sincerity they tore off their Chinese costume and dressed themselves in her "Christian clothes." On February 26, 1860, she died the death of the just, being about eighteen years old.

Of Indians much larger numbers were baptized. It was a common practice for American families to get Indian children to help them in household work. Very seldom did these poor creatures live long, and the families preferred paying for them in hospitals than nursing them when ill. In this way numbers fell into the Sisters' hands. After a short stay they invariably desired to become Catholics, and it was the great delight of the Sisters to instruct them for baptism. Once Mr. Andrew Jackson Warren, a gentleman who had held some position at an Indian reservation, came to the hospital for treatment, bringing with him an Indian lad of seventeen named Charley. The patient was completely paralyzed in the lower limbs, but his hands and brain were not affected, and reading was at once his occupation and his consolation. After some time he craved to be instructed and received into the Church. When he became a Catholic he wished Charley to be one also. While the Sisters were preparing the boy for baptism he began to cough. Mr. Warren told them to hasten his reception into the Church, for, though apparently robust, he would go quickly, and indeed he died some months before his master. When some one, to encourage him to bear patiently his transitory pains, spoke of the beauty and happiness of heaven, the poor child innocently asked if it would be as nice as that picture, pointing to a red, yellow, and blue daub of the Holy Fam-

ily. As a last request he begged Mr. Warren, when he returned to the tribe, to show them that picture and tell them to what a nice place poor Charley would be sent.

Another Indian, also Charley, a mere child, became so attached to the Sisters that he did not want to die unless all the Sisters died with him.

In the wards were all denominations indiscriminately. It happened once that an American Protestant was near a poor Catholic who was afflicted with a virulent ulcer which emitted a most disagreeable odor. The young chaplain when hearing his confession was obliged to bend over him, and his devotedness did not escape the attention of Mr. Johnson. The minister who sometimes came to see him went towards the afflicted creature, but, perceiving the disagreeable effluvia, he stopped short and, holding his nostrils, seemed to pray in secret. The prayer ended, the attendant Sister approached the dying man, wiped the perspiration from his brow and the saliva from his lips, and comforted him with heavenly words, to help him to despise his passing sufferings in view of the glory to come. Shortly after the poor man died happily.

At his next visit the minister, looking towards the empty cot, remarked in what Mr. Johnson described as very sanctimonious tones, "Our friend is gone; let us beware, our time will come too." He got a reply he little expected. "Well," said Johnson rather savagely, "when my time comes it won't be the likes of you I'll send for. Give me that young priest who is not afraid I'll contaminate him with my breath." There was a suppressed titter throughout the ward, in which some *no-religionists* joined; and Father King had soon the happiness of receiving Mr. Johnson into the fold.

The conversion of Timothy Harris, a New-Englander, was very remarkable. He was an intelligent, cultivated young man, well known in Marysville for his irreligion and exceedingly prejudiced against the Catholic Church. The

doctors, fearing mortification, were about to cut off his arm, but at his urgent entreaties they deferred the operation for a while. By the care and attention of the Sisters the necessity for amputation was averted. At first he thought their services would be confined to Catholics, but observing that they attended and comforted all indiscriminately he was greatly astonished. While convalescing he asked for Catholic books, and on perusing them was surprised to find them different from all he had heard of the Church. He was much impressed at this stage of his inquiries by one of his companions becoming a Catholic, and the stupendous change for the better that resulted from this conversion.

Mr. Harris soon asked to be instructed, but deferred making his profession of faith till after his discharge from the hospital. The change visible in his conduct after his return to Marysville created a sensation, especially when it was known that he had joined the Catholic Church. Five years later he returned to the Sisters in an advanced stage of consumption. After his holy death they found in his vest pocket a card they had given him when leaving the first time. On it were engraved the words : "What will it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Frederick Nessinger, a German Lutheran, after a long resistance to grace, embraced the true faith. A poor creature who was known as "the hardened man" followed his example. The hospital register contains such entries as these : "Brigid, Mary, Chinese, baptized ; Daniel Smythe, American, no religion, baptized, continued a firm Catholic ; James Pendlebury, English, Protestant, baptized, made his First Communion ; John Thomson, Norwegian, Lutheran, baptized, confirmed, made his First Communion." Within a short space two hundred were converted in the wards. And what in the first instance drew every one of them to the true faith was the exceeding great charity of the Sisters.

The most unmanageable patient ever received was Gen-

eral Williams. His oaths and imprecations were fearful. "My dear," said the attending Sister to him one day, "you had better desist, for you may be in God's presence before morning." "Let me alone," he answered; "I don't care if I die like a dog." She said no more, but quietly slipped a miraculous medal under his pillow. Next morning he was an altered being. He begged pardon for his rudeness of the previous night, and said: "I cannot understand what has come over me. The change I feel is unaccountable." She then told him what she had done. "Ah!" he replied, "that medal must be truly miraculous. Show it to me." On the following day he openly renounced Freemasonry and was received into the Church. Eight days later he died a peaceful, holy death, fortified by the sacraments of the Church.

But the wonderful conversions which occurred in the hospital would, if properly recounted, make many an interesting volume. It is not unlikely that they stirred up the fury of the Anti-Catholic party who fought so fiercely against the Sisters' management of the hospital. Among other accusations which they brought against them was one which oscillated between the horrible and the ludicrous. It seems that when a coffin happened to be too short for its tenant the Sisters cut off the feet of the moribund to make it fit! Great stress was laid on their having the best room in the house for a chapel. The room in question was unfit for the sick on account of the position of the windows. It had never been used till the Sisters turned it into a chapel and decorated it beautifully at their own expense. But what matter? Let it be a coal-hole, if you like, but not a chapel! The "vigilants" often sought to terrify the Sisters. They chose to drill under the convent windows, and the inmates were expecting some terrible catastrophe every moment. But they never injured them. By Archbishop Alemany's advice they wrote to the "vigilants" for leave to visit the poor men who were victims of the popular fury. But this was denied them in a document which they have

preserved. It is a real curiosity, being drawn up with great formality and signed in due form by the self-constituted authorities.

In July, 1857, the sick of the County Hospital were transferred by the municipal authorities to North Beach, and it would be hard to say which party, the Sisters or the patients, felt more grief at parting. The private patients remained, as well as several who were near death and could not be removed. The Sisters set about remodelling the institution, which, instead of "State Marine and County Hospital," had now painted over its portals ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL. Things now began to settle down somewhat. Immigrants began to see that the State was a desirable place in which to make permanent homes. Its wonderful resources in an agricultural and horticultural aspect were beginning to be perceived. Land increased in value, and buildings were rising on the sand-lots. In a short time Father King and several secular gentlemen collected over six thousand dollars, which they turned over to the Sisters of Mercy to help to build a new hospital. The ground for this establishment cost \$10,500, and the grading of the same, \$5,000. But the edifice was not begun for some years yet.

On September 3, 1862, the corner-stone of the present hospital, corner First and Bryant Streets, was laid by the archbishop with great pomp. Inserted in the stone was a parchment document written by his grace, which set forth the object of the new building, the names of the Pope (Pius IX.), the President (Abraham Lincoln), the governor (John Downey), and the clergy present at the ceremony; a copy of the Rule, and the annals of the house printed on parchment; a gold medallion with the Blessed Virgin on one side and the Pope on the other, silver medals of the Holy Family and the Sacred Heart, copies of the leading papers of San Francisco, and several minor articles. A most eloquent sermon was preached by Father Slattery, of Marys-

ville. It was his last effort. He died in the Sisters' hospital of typhoid fever, October 5, deeply regretted.

Miscellaneous, indeed, was the collection of people to be found in the nooks and crannies of the old hospital over and above the regular patients. There was the vigorous octogenarian, Mrs. Anne Crudden, who, abandoned by her own children, never recovered the mental faculties of which their ingratitude had deprived her. The poor lady sang seditious songs and told queer stories, yet she understood that there was a good God in heaven who would one day take her home. When the priest was anointing her it was necessary to remind her every moment of what was going on to keep her from saying or doing something ridiculous. But it was of little use. Indeed, when her feet were uncovered for the last anointing she made a desperate effort to catch the villain who was stealing her quilt. Despite the terrible troubles which overthrew this poor creature's reason, she lived into her eighty-fifth year.

Many receptions and professions took place in the old hospital. There Sister M. Gabriel Brown made her profession, being the first who consecrated herself to God in the religious state in California. Even at this early date the Sisters were engaged in every work of mercy. They taught a night-school for adults. They busied themselves in prisons, and were often consoled by the success of their ministrations among the helpless inmates. There was one terrible outlaw who had for years defied the ruling powers and that travesty of justice, the vigilance committee. No power could capture or restrain him in his lawless career. Finally, however, he fell into the hands of justice, was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death. So desperate was his reputation and so little sympathy was felt for him that the privileges granted his companions in guilt were denied him. He was chained, hands and feet, to an iron ring in a dark cell, which the smallest glimpse of light could not penetrate. The unhappy creature looked more like a savage than a

human being. The jailers were so much afraid of him that, though he was chained in this horrible manner, no one would approach him alone ; and they were immensely surprised that the Sisters had the courage to go near him.

As will be readily conjectured, they found it most difficult to make any impression on this unfortunate sinner. What pained him most was the thought of his dying on a gibbet, and of the satisfaction he knew the public would have in seeing him suffer the extreme penalty of the law. "They shall never see me on a gallows," he would say. It was necessary to watch him very closely, for he was determined to prevent what he deemed so awful a disgrace by self-destruction. His name was William Martin, but, though an American, he usually went before the public as "Tipperary Bill."

Though so terrible to every one else, Mr. Martin was most gentle with the Sisters. By constant attention, and instruction sweetly insinuated, they finally succeeded in bringing him to a sense of his awful situation. Their words seemed to open up a new world within him. Pious reading, which had for him all the zest and charm of novelty, helped the good work. The haughty, savage mind yielded to their sweet influence, and the lion became a lamb. His First Communion and confirmation were most touching ; he would have no more to do with this world, admitted no visitors save the priest and Sisters, and conversed only on heavenly things. The last morning of his life his fervor was so great as to move the religious to tears. But he, thinking they wept over his untimely end rather than with Christian joy at his complete conversion to God, bade them glory with him, for he had never before known the peace and happiness which filled his heart that morning. "Oh !" said he, "if you knew how I have been tempted to self-destruction you would feel how merciful to me has been the God to whom I go this morning." Grace, powerful with him as with the thief on the cross, wrought the completest

change in poor Tipperary Bill. He died like a saint. And the spectators could well believe that he heard addressed to himself the words which the dying Jesus addressed to the good thief: "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

Many similar cases came into the Sisters' experience in the wild early days of "'Frisco"; but never was a more savage creature brought under the influence of grace than poor Tipperary Bill.

Of abandoned women thousands have been reclaimed by the Sisters through God's special grace. The story of some of these poor creatures would make an "o'er true tale," stranger than the wildest fiction. Among them was a Chilian lady of the upper class, Doña Ana, who, after leading for many years a most profligate life, was abandoned by her associates and became almost idiotic. Some benevolent persons placed her in the asylum. When spoken to on ordinary matters she appeared to be deaf, never giving the slightest heed. But if religion were named or hinted at she became furious, and horrified all present by volleys of oaths and obscenity. The mere touch of holy water made her frantic. The Sisters having exhausted every means that charity and ingenuity could devise, mentioned the case to the archbishop. He called to see her, but she poured forth on him a torrent of the vilest language. When leaving her the prelate was sad. "This," said he, "is not insanity. She is possessed by the demon; you must do as our Lord described: you must fast and pray. This kind of devil can go out but by prayer and fasting." He then suggested that the religious divide into nine bands, and each division in turn fast one day, offering the Litany of the Saints and the penitential psalms for her recovery and conversion. Feeling that God spoke by the mouth of their venerable father they complied, and no doubt he fasted and prayed himself. The day after the novena ended the Sister who was down first in the morning found Annetta

standing at the hall door, dressed in the Spanish style for church—black silk robe, heavy lace mantilla covering her completely. Though the penitents never left the premises, she was allowed to go out, a trusty messenger watching her movements. She went straight to the cathedral. As soon as the archbishop entered his confessional, which he did every morning after first Mass, she followed and unburdened her conscience. From that day till her death, three years later, she led a most holy life.

On Christmas day, 1859, the Sisters established St. Mary's Society, and this for over a quarter of a century was a most important sodality. But as parish churches increased and confraternities were started in them, St. Mary's declined in numbers. It was the pioneer association on the Pacific coast.

Among the remarkable conversions that occurred within the range of the Sisters' experience we shall record the following as showing that little things may be instruments of good, and that the much-maligned Mexicans are not as bad as some tourists paint them. One wet evening in November, 1867, a Mr. Pember Brown called for the Sisters to visit his wife, who was ill of heart disease and disturbed and anxious on the subject of religion. Her mother on becoming a widow was seized with an infatuation for the preaching of Joe Smith, and in the frenzy of her enthusiasm sold most of her property and took her younger children to Salt Lake City. Very soon she repented of her folly, but her regret was useless and had to be concealed. She strove to make her escape, but was too well watched, and thus years passed till her son was advanced to some degree and her oldest daughter "sealed" to an elder. At length she got leave to return to Pennsylvania to dispose of some property that could not be sold during the minority of her children, but she refused to leave without her two "unsealed" daughters. As Brigham Young was greedy for the money he consented, but sent the elder who had

married her daughter to accompany them and bring them back. It seems this man was as anxious to get rid of his Mormon friends as any of the party. He settled in Pennsylvania, and left those he was sent to guard to do as they chose.

Soon after the old lady died, filled with bitter remorse and unforgiven by her children. The girls married and made their homes in California. The elder joined the Methodists, to which her husband belonged. In 1865 he, Mr. Brown, went to Mexico on a mining expedition, leaving his wife in Sacramento. A casual remark of a Mexican pedlar who called at her house excited her curiosity to know something of the Catholic faith. She borrowed Catholic books, read them assiduously, and by the time of her husband's return had learned enough to know that the Catholic religion was far above everything she had ever imagined. When she told him what she had been doing, he said, to her great surprise, that he would join her in entering the church, as his prejudices had been entirely removed by his sojourn in Mexico. As Mrs. Brown was unable to leave the house, the Sisters came daily to her bedside to instruct her and her husband, and they often said that it was a real pleasure to instruct these zealous souls, so earnest in their desire for spiritual knowledge. Both were soon received into the church, and fervent converts they were. Mrs. Brown died quite suddenly a few days after while conversing with a friend. Her husband continued a most faithful Catholic.

NOTE.—The fourth and last volume of this series will contain, besides the concluding chapters of San Francisco, Baltimore, 1855, Buenos Ayres, 1856, Manchester, N. H., 1858, Cincinnati, 1858, New Orleans, 1869, Hartford, as a mother-house, 1872, and the other houses of the Institute of Mercy in America.



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