A History of the First Fifty Years of the Sisters of Providence in the United States

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A HISTORY OF THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS OF
THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE IN THE UNITED STATES

BY

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VITA

Sister Lawrence Gonner

Born in Dubuque, Iowa. Graduated from the Visitation Academy, Dubuque, Iowa, 1918. Received degree of Bachelor of Arts from St. Mary-of-the-Woods College, Indiana, 1922. Instructor in the following schools of the Sisters of Providence: St. Catherine Academy, Fort Wayne, Indiana, Providence High School, Chicago, Illinois, Marywood School, Evanston, Illinois.
To Mother Theodore Guérin, a
woman of uncommon valor, and
to her courageous Daughters
who by example and precept
strove to spread the Kingdom
of Christ in pioneer Indiana,
I humbly dedicate this brief
history of the early years of
our Community.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I
Pioneer Missionaries

Need for Religious in the Diocese of Vincennes -- Bishop Bruté sends Monseigneur Hailandièrè to France, 1839 -- Negotiations at Ruillé-sur-Loir -- Arrival of Sisters of Providence in New York, 1840 -- Journey to Indiana -- Location of St. Mary-of-the-Woods -- Arrival at St. Mary's, October 22, 1840 -- Conditions upon arrival -- First postulants -- Events of the first winter ........................................... 1

Chapter II
Years of Trial

Early improvements -- First pupils -- Completion of the Academy -- Arrival of Sister St. Francis -- First mission, Jasper, Indiana -- Second mission, St. Francisville -- Burning of barn -- Privations of the winter of 1842 -- Spiritual joys -- Mother Theodore's journey to France -- Difficulties during her absence -- Success of the journey -- Mother Theodore's return from France -- Difficulties with the Bishop -- Mother Theodore's trip to Vincennes -- Her return to St. Mary's -- End of troubles with Bishop Hailandièrè. .............. 16
Chapter III

Laying the Foundation

Kindness of Bishop Bazin -- His death -- Bishop St. Palais -- Cholera in Indiana -- Demand for Sisters -- Scarcity of Vocations in America -- Deaths of the most promising Sisters -- Arrival of Elvire Le Fer and other postulants from France -- Mission of Fort Wayne -- Orphan Asylums -- School in Terre Haute -- New Motherhouse -- Trials of year, 1854 -- Persecution from Protestants -- Changes in Indiana -- Devotion to the Immaculate Conception -- Death of Bishop Bouvier -- Death of Sister St. Francis -- Illness and death of Mother Theodore -- Progress of the Community up to the Foundress' death .................. 33

Chapter IV

Transforming the Wilderness

Chapter V
Years of Growth

Effect of the Civil War -- Sister Mary Joseph's journey to France --
Approbation of the French Community -- Results of the journey --
Little Sisters of the Poor -- Death of Father Corbe -- Consecration
of the Diocese to the Sacred Heart -- Growth of the Academic Insti-
tute -- Cultural training -- Early teachers -- Training in virtue
and religion -- Sodality of the Blessed Virgin -- Retreats -- Death
of Bishop St. Palais -- Bishop Chatard -- Approbation of the Com-
munity at St. Mary-of-the-Woods -- Death of Mother Euphrasie --
Fiftieth anniversary of the Sisters of Providence in Indiana ...... 70

Chapter VI
The Apostolate of Charity

Rule on the care of the sick -- Charitable work of the Sisters in
France -- Qualification of Mother Theodore -- Training of Sister
Olimliade -- Visiting the sick in their homes -- Work for the sick
on the missions -- Desire for hospital work -- Military Hospital in
Indianapolis -- Opportunities for doing good -- Sisters in service --
Sister Athanasius -- Temporary hospital in Vincennes -- St. John's
Home for Invalids -- success of "begging tour" -- Hospital in Terre
Haute -- Transfer of the orphans to Providence Hospital -- Reasons
for discontinuing hospital work .......................................................... 93
Chapter VII
The Apostolate of Education

Pioneers in the field of education in Indiana -- Awakening of interest in education -- Influence of Father Damen, S.J. -- Educational work at first confined to Indiana -- Numerous applications for Sisters -- Division of the Diocese -- Schools opened in Indiana 1856-1890 -- School at Washington, New Albany, Cannelton -- Bishop Leurs' interest in Lafayette -- St. John's, Indianapolis -- Ferdinand and Loogootee -- St. Rose Boarding School -- Aurora and Jeffersonville -- Expansion during 1870-1890 -- Seymour and Greencastle -- Columbus re-opened -- Frenchtown -- St. John's Industrial Training School -- First out-state mission -- Schools in Michigan -- Entrance into Chicago diocese -- Galesburg -- First schools in Chicago -- South Omaha and Kansas City -- Difficulties in making foundations -- Type of schools -- Expansion of the Sisters of Providence up to 1890 ........................................ 112

Appendix ................................................................. 143
Bibliography ............................................................. 187
CHAPTER I

PIONEER MISSIONARIES

The history of every religious foundation is a story of courage and adventure. This is especially true of those foundations made by men and women who gave up home and country in order to sow the seeds of Christianity in a foreign wilderness. The religious who came to make settlements in the wilds of America were pioneers in a two-fold sense: pioneers of the soil, and pioneers of Christianity. Not only did they fell the trees and clear the land to build their institutions of learning and charity, but, as pioneers of religion, they struck the ax at the roots of unbelief and bigotry and sowed the seeds of Christian truth and virtue.

In 1840 the wilderneses of Indiana witnessed such a two-fold adventure in pioneering. From cultured France there came to a remote corner of the Indiana forests a band of dauntless religious, Sisters of Providence, to begin an apostolate of education and charity in the diocese of Vincennes. They came because of the desire of the sainted Bishop Bruté to have a band of religious women from his native France to establish a Motherhouse in his vast diocese which included all of Indiana and part of Illinois, a territory as large as half of France.

In the early decades of the nineteenth century the need for priests and religious in the diocese of Vincennes had become critical as

the territory began to attract many of the immigrants who were at that time pouring into the country. The people who came belonged to all possible religious denominations. Many were Catholics, but often an inordinate desire for temporal goods made them bring up their children without speaking to them of God or religion, and many died without baptism. In the hope of remedying this condition Bishop Bruté sent his Vicar, Monseigneur de la Hailandière, to France in 1839 to recruit priests and solicit funds for the diocese of Vincennes, and he very particularly commissioned him to find a community of religious teachers who would be willing to make a foundation in his infant diocese. The saintly Bishop realized he could no longer do without an order of religious teachers and he felt that somewhere in cultured Catholic France there were hearts eager and ready to make his dream of schools for his missionary diocese come true.

Bishop Bruté was not mistaken. The response to his call for missionary Sisters came from Ruillé-sur-Loir, in the diocese of Le Mans, France where the Sisters of Providence gave Monseigneur Hailandière the answer he was seeking. Although they had never before considered the foreign missions, the Superiors at Ruillé readily responded to the plea for Sisters for the diocese of Vincennes. Fortunately, Monseigneur Hailandière arrived at Ruillé at an opportune time, when the Sisters were assembled at the Motherhouse for the annual retreat and could give immediate consideration to his proposals. From the first, Bishop Bouvier

2. Clémentine de la Corbinière, Une Femme Apôtre, 249.
of Le Mans, ecclesiastical superior of the Sisters of Providence, welcomed the missionary project of Monseigneur Hailandière, and Mother Mary (Lecor), their Superior General seconded his zeal. She declared, however, that there was only one Sister capable of making the foundation in Indiana, and it was agreed that if Sister Theodore (Guérin) consented to be superior of the distant mission, the Community at Ruillé would send Sisters to Indiana.

Contrary to all expectations, Sister Theodore did not volunteer for the Indiana mission; she considered herself unworthy of so great a work. As the missionary Sisters were to be chosen from those who freely offered themselves, Mother Mary hesitated to inform Sister Theodore of her hopes. Finally she spoke to her, declaring her inability to accede to the request of the Bishop of Vincennes unless Sister Theodore consent to be the head of the new establishment; she did, however, not press her otherwise. After long and fervent prayer Sister Theodore recognized the will of God in the desire of her Superior and generously offered herself for the new foundation. Monseigneur Hailandière was then promised Sisters for the following year.

In the midst of these negotiations at Le Mans, word came of the death of Bishop Bruté, and this was shortly followed by the appointment of Monseigneur Hailandière as his successor to the See of Vincennes. On August 18, 1839, Monseigneur Hailandière was consecrated in the

3. Clementine de la Corbinière, op. cit., 162.
Chapel of the Sacred Heart, Paris, by Bishop Forbin Jansen, and a few days later sailed for his Indiana diocese happy in the thought that Sisters of Providence were soon to follow him.

The next year the Sisters of Providence fulfilled their promise, and on July 27, 1840, six Sisters embarked from Havre on an American boat. Six weeks later the New York Catholic Register announced their arrival in its columns:

_Sisters of Providence_  
_Ruillé Sur Loir_

It is with feelings of sincere gratification that we have the pleasure of announcing the arrival of the Cincinnati, Capt. N. Barstow, Friday the fourth ... passage of 40 days with the following ladies of Providence, Ruillé Sur Loir, in the diocese of Mans, France: Sr. Theodore, Superior; Srs. Vincent, Basilide, Olympiade, Mary Xavier, and A de Liguori.

Their destination is Vincennes, Indiana, where they propose taking charge of an Academy, and to visit the sick. They left this morning for Philadelphia.

In our next issue we intend giving some particulars respecting the origin and extended sphere of usefulness of the benevolent Sisters of Providence.

When their boat landed in New York the Sisters were somewhat perplexed by the fact that no representative of Bishop Hailandière came to meet them. Fortunately, however, they were able to send word of their arrival to Bishop Dubois of New York who had been forewarned of their coming. He sent his Vicar, Reverend Varela, to meet the Sisters and conduct them to the home of Mme. Parmentier, a Belgian

5. Sisters Olympiade, Mary Xavier, and Mary Liguori were novices.
6. New York Catholic Register, Thursday, Sept. 16, 1840; Vol. II.
Catholic, famous for her hospitality to missionaries. This dear lady received the Sisters "like angels from heaven," and they remained with her one week, during which time they awaited word from Bishop Hailandiere and made preparations for the journey to Indiana. As Bishop Dubois insisted on their wearing secular dress while traveling, they found it necessary to provide themselves with dresses, shawls, and bonnets. In her Memoirs, Sister Mary Cecilia writes:

They did their best to disguise themselves, but they could not look like women of the world—to use their own expression. They were neither like religious, nor like ladies, and the mien that worldly dress gave them was more calculated to excite laughter and ridicule than if they had appeared in their religious dress; and all that was to no purpose for everywhere they were recognized as Sisters; and well it was so, for it was the character of religious, which showed itself in spite of disguise, that procured them the consideration given them on the road they had to travel. The very thing that was feared would draw on them rude and impolite conduct, was the reason for the civility shown them all the way through, excepting one time, and this was only the unmannerly ignorance of the lower class to which everybody is exposed....To speak of it and describe in exaggerated terms the ludicrous figure they made, rigged out in dress, shawl, and bonnet, was for a good while a frequent theme of mirthful recreation.  

The journey from New York to Indiana, though tedious, was full of interest and adventure. It gave the Sisters an opportunity to observe American manners and customs, and, above all, to experience American modes of travel. Mother Theodore's description of their first train journey is delightful. Her Journal relates:

7. Mother Mary Cecilia, Life of Mother Theodore - Foundress of the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence in America, 33.
Finally we arrived on the other side, where the immense machine which was to take us was already smoking. More than a hundred persons were elbowing each other, each one wanting to enter first. In the midst of such commotion we received the adieus of those devoted friends who had treated us so hospitably; and then, preceded by our attentive guides we entered one of those large coaches where forty persons can be seated. As many as sixteen of these coaches can be drawn by the same engine. Scarcely were we seated than the whole thing darted off like lightning and we beheld unfold before our eyes a magnificent country.... We went so fast that in an hour we had made twenty miles. 9

At Philadelphia the Sisters were joined by Reverend Chartier, a priest from Canada, who spoke both French and English and who was to be their interpreter on the way. When they arrived at Cincinnati, Bishop Purcell himself came to meet them, and, "like a hand helped to carry their baggage from the boat." His appearance in citizens clothes slightly disconcerted the French Sisters who were always accustomed to see a Bishop in ecclesiastical dress. This, however, was only the first of many revelations in store for them, for they were soon to learn that they had come to a country where religion was in its primitive simplicity.

In the early nineteenth century the fatigues of a journey across the country were necessarily excessive, and the Sisters were often in dire need of rest. The long steamboat ride of 355 miles down the Ohio was a strenuous test of feminine endurance. As the

10. Mother Mary Cecilia, op. cit.
wretched boat had no cabins or berths, and only a few beds, the Sisters were forced to lie down on straw pallets spread in an open passage. The Journal relates: "We were too exhausted to sit up all night; there was no alternative. Our embarrassment was made the matter of great sport for the vulgar passengers, mostly negroes." After such a trip it is easy to imagine the joy Mother Theodore and her companions experienced in the kindlly welcome given them by the Sisters of Charity at Cincinnati. "Dinner was served," the Journal relates, "but the need of food was not the most imperative; it was rest we needed most; so after saying our prayers, we hastened to our beds. It was seven days since we had undressed."

From Cincinnati the travelers went by boat to Madison, a town eighty-five miles east of Vincennes. Here they hoped to meet Bishop Hailandière who was expected on a visit of his diocese. When they landed they learned that the Bishop had gone to another mission. The Journal relates: "We waited for him in an Inn where we nearly died of lonesomeness." After two days, on Oct. 1, the meeting of the Sisters with their Bishop took place and again the French Religious were shocked by appearances. Bishop Hailandière was finishing one of his long arduous mission trips and his citizens clothes were dingy with dust and mud-bespattered to the knees. He was also very much tanned and flushed from constant exposure so that the Sisters who had seen him

11. Mother Theodore, Journal of Travel, I, 34
12. Ibid., 35.
13. Ibid.
in all his episcopal dignity at Ruillé were rudely surprised at his appearance—"his ring alone told who he was." After giving the travelers his blessing, the Bishop gave as his excuse for not sending for them at New York the fact that all his priests were sick. When the interview was over, the Bishop conducted the Sisters to the boat and promised to join them at Vincennes in two weeks.

On October 6, 1840 the Sisters of Providence reached Vincennes, the seat of the Indiana diocese—their long anticipated goal. It would be difficult to describe the emotions of these warm-hearted French women as they knelt in the poor Cathedral and consecrated themselves anew to the Indiana mission. The poverty of the Cathedral and clergy wrung their hearts, but it also helped to prepare them for the greater poverty which awaited them in the depth of the forest.

The Sisters of Providence had left France believing they were to be located at Vincennes, but when Bishop Hailandière met them there they learned definitely that he had decided to establish them in the country near Terre Haute. Of the various sites proposed by the clergy the one near St. Mary's, Vigo County, had been chosen. From every human viewpoint this spot had not a single redeeming feature; it was a perfect wilderness! A few families lived in log houses here and there, but there was not even the appearance of a village. It was merely a backwoods settlement of movers just beginning to clear the forest. Besides,

16. Ibid., 38.
it was four miles from Terre Haute and separated from that city by the Wabash River which at certain seasons flooded its banks far and wide over the bottom lands of the valley. Certain it is, that the site of St. Mary-of-the-Woods was chosen without a single good human reason, yet it is evident that the positive Will of God prompted the choice since it has since proved the correct location.

After receiving Bishop Hailandière's explanation, and learning from him that four postulants awaited them at St. Mary's, the Sisters began the last stage of their journey. It was one of unexampled terrors. On the way to Terre Haute the coach overturned, and the Sisters were forced to spend the night in a farm house. The trip from Terre Haute to St. Mary's was equally harrowing. Early on the morning of October 22, the travelers left Terre Haute expecting to arrive at St. Mary's by noon, but as there was no bridge over the Wabash, they were forced to wait their turn to be ferried to the other side. After five hours and a half of waiting they were finally conducted across the river. The Journal states:

At last we crossed, but scarcely had we been on the road tow minutes when we came to the wood and the ground was so covered with water that it was like a vast pond....The horses were whipped up and they entered the water. At every moment we were at the point of being upset. The water entered the coach, the horses were swimming rather than walking. It was like being in the middle of the sea, but in a sea surmounted by thick forests, for the trees were so near together that it required an experienced

American driver to be able to get through... At one time the coach struck a tree and was again thrown on its side. The water poured in... a short distance farther dry land appeared, and the horses cheered at the sight went into a gallop, the water passing over their backs... We continued to advance into a thick wood till suddenly Father Beuteux stopped the carriage and said: "Come down, Sisters, we have arrived."18

The astonishment of the Sisters at finding themselves in the midst of the forest was too great to find expression. They looked for a village, for a house, but none was in sight. Silently they followed Father Beuteux across a ravine. When they arrived on the other side, he pointed to a house in the distance and said: "There is the house where the postulants have a room, and where you will lodge until your new house is ready." Years after, Mother Theodore used to tell that when she saw the place they were coming to her strength failed, and it was with difficulty that she was able to walk down the ravine and across the stream below on a log, and come up to the rude habitation to which they were being conducted. To the Sisters it appeared as if they had come to bury themselves in the wilderness. What prospect could there be of a school in the woods where there were no families, no population; what opportunity was there for works of mercy in such a place?

The missionaries had agreed among themselves that their first act should be a visit to the Blessed Sacrament; so they asked Father Beuteux to direct them to the church. Then they received the greatest

19. Ibid.
shock of all. They found their God residing in a poor log hut, ten and a half by thirteen feet, which served also as the dwelling of the priest. Later in writing to France, Mother Theodore described it as a place so poor "that the stables wherein you keep your cattle are palaces." The explanation for this rude chapel was that the church built by Bishop Brute at "Thralls Station" had burned down earlier in the year and the half-erected brick convent which awaited the Sisters stood upon the spot where the original church had been. It was completed that next spring and used as the first Academy.

After having adored God in the humble chapel, the Sisters were conducted to the Thrall's farmhouse where four postulants awaited them. For their accommodation the kind farmer gave them a small room and a part of the garret where eight straw ticks on the floor served as beds. "It is so crowded," Mother Theodore writes, "that we have to dress ourselves on the beds and make them up one after another. This unique dormitory is directly under the roof. The shingles, badly joined, let in the wind and rain which makes it very cold...." During these first weeks the community kitchen was an outdoor shed where Sister Olympiade cooked their frugal meals which frequently consisted of soup made of bacon and salt beef; except on fast days, when it was made of water, salt, and vegetables.

One of the postulants who awaited the Sisters was a Mlle.

22. Annals, I, 323.
23. Mother Theodore, op. cit., 44.
24. Ibid.
Parveillan, a young lady from Alsace, who had come to Indiana the year previous under the protection of Father Martin, Vicar of Bishop Hailandière. She was well educated, refined and capable; as Sister Mary Joseph she proved a worthy addition to the little community. Another of the postulants, a Miss Doyle, had been a Sister of Charity. Her reason for joining the new community was that she expected to give it valuable aid because of her experience and knowledge of English. Sister Aloysia's ambition to rule was soon discovered and she was dismissed with the approval of the Bishop. With the aid of a Mrs. Williams she set up a school in Terre Haute to rival the Academy at St. Mary's and was the cause of much prejudice in the surrounding country. The third postulant, Miss Genevieve Ducant, became Sister Agnes and was the first American Sister of Providence. For many years she taught the day-school which was held in a frame structure north of the village church. Because of delicate health the fourth of the original postulants was dismissed a month after the Sisters' arrival.

For five weeks the Sisters and postulants lived with the Thralls family in their cramped quarters, but, when Bishop Hailandière arrived early in November, he made arrangements to purchase the farmhouse and ninety and a half acres for $1800.00. After the necessary repairs were made, the Sisters took possession November 27, 1840. The next day they had the happiness of assisting at mass under their own roof as they had

29. Diary, I. Deed of Thralls to Bishop Hailandière, Nov. 12, 1840, Drawer in Archives.
prepared an altar in the best room of the house which was to serve as their chapel. The same day, which was the first Sunday in Advent, they began their retreat under the direction of Father Martin, later Bishop of Nachitoches. It ended December 7 by a general Communion and the renovation of vows by the professed Sisters. On the first Christmas eve midnight mass was celebrated in the Sisters' little chapel for the congregation, and on February 2, the Bishop came to give the habit to Sister Mary Joseph and Sister Aloysia, and to receive the vows of Sister Olympiade.

During the first winter in their simple farmhouse convent the Sisters endured the privations of pioneer missionaries. They suffered especially from a lack of wooden shoes. "If I only had the tools," Mother Theodore writes in her Journal, "I think I could make a pair for each one of us. We shall not be able to go outside without sinking deep in the mud, except when it freezes." And writing of the cold, she says: "We shall at least be able to warm ourselves, for we might burn fifty cords of wood without clearing ten acres of our land." Her Journal also lists their worldly possessions and gives us an idea of their furniture:

Twelve folding beds, a bureau, a small cupboard of unpainted wood, a dozen wooden chairs and a table for the kitchen; our dining room table belongs to the farmer. The kitchen stove is outside in the wood-shed; we have pots, pans, etc.; also a soup tureen, two dozen plates, two dozen spoons, knives and forks. Besides these we have the trunks and boxes in which we brought our belongings from France. Some unbleached muslin we bought for sheets. This

30. Diary, I.
31. Ibid.
then is what we have for the foundation of a house which Monseigneur foresees will one day be very flourishing.33

The greatest trial of the first winter, however, was not want of necessary furniture or substantial diet, but the severe illness of Mother Theodore, who was several times at the point of death. The Bishop became greatly alarmed; who would take care of the infant community? It is related that at the crisis, when the approach of death seemed certain, he knelt immovable in prayer for more than an hour. The Sisters made special promises to our Blessed Mother and offered every sacrifice possible, even burning their precious letters from France. When Mother Theodore gradually recovered, her cure was attributed to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, and a beautiful statue was procured from France to fulfill the promise Mother Theodore made to have her honored more frequently in this country.

This first winter, which caused so much anxiety for Mother Theodore's life, was necessarily spent very quietly as their isolation and the severity of the season offered the Sisters little opportunity for beginning their works of zeal. The time was no doubt spent in learning English and in preparing themselves and the postulants for the apostolate of education and charity which they hoped soon to begin. The Diary gives few details concerning the events of the first winter; Mother Theodore's Journal, however, reveals the uncertainty the Sisters felt in their iso-

33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
lated position. She writes:

It is astonishing that this profound solitude has been chosen for a novitiate and especially for an Academy. All appearances are against it. I have given my opinion freely to the Bishop, to Father Beuteux, and, in fine, to all who have any interest in the success of the work. All have given reasons that are not entirely satisfactory; yet I dare not disregard them. The spirit of this country is so different from ours that one ought to be acquainted with it before condemning those who know more about it than we do. 36

In truth, there was little that the Sisters could do during the first months at St. Mary's but hope and pray that the coming spring would bring opportunities for doing the work for which they had come so far.

CHAPTER II
YEARS OF TRIAL

The spring of 1841 witnessed the beginning of important activities about the simple convent of the Sisters of Providence in Indiana. Land was cleared, fenced, and put under cultivation; roads were made and work begun on the half-finished building which had been intended for the Sisters' home. In the labor of clearing and planting the land the Sisters themselves took an active part. They gathered brush, rolled logs, tilled the soil and planted seeds until St. Mary's began to assume a new aspect. Soon several Catholic families were attracted to the neighborhood and the wilderness began to change into a cultivated and settled country.

In the early summer the unfinished brick structure which had been intended for a convent was completed as an Academy, and on July 1 the first pupil, Mary Lenoble, arrived. On July 5 the Diary records: "Sr. Basilide, Aloysia, and Mary Joseph slept in the new house with Sr. Therese and three boarders." The following day four more pupils arrived—Miss Hebb, the Misses Kelly—and before the end of the year the total enrollment reached twelve. Among these early pupils were Susan and Elizabeth Lalumière, nieces of the noted Father Lalumière, first priest ordained by Bishop Flaget for Indiana, who was one of the earliest admirers and staunchest friends of the Community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

1. Mother Mary Cecilia, Life of Mother Theodore - Foundress of the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence in America, 48.
2. Diary.

-16-
Set in the midst of the noble forest, with beds of roses on each side of the walk leading to the front steps, the first Academy presented an attractive picture. It was a brick building of two stories with basement and attic. In her Reminiscence, one of the first pupils gives a detailed picture of the arrangement:

Each floor opened on a wide porch in the rear, and there were two rooms on each floor, with wide halls between them. To the left as you entered was the large drawing room; on the right, the school room. This school room was used for study and recreation. There were two large dormitories above, with a washroom in the hall. The refectory and kitchen were in the basement, also a small room where every Saturday we blacked our shoes—school being dismissed at four o'clock on this day to give time to prepare for Sunday.

From the account of another of the early students we learn that the first "distribution des prix" took place on the Academy porch on August 2, 1841. At the first Commencement a play translated from the French was given and a number of prizes distributed, among them two crowns of artificial flowers, awarded for "good behavior." Besides the Academy, a day school for poor children was opened in the basement of the building, but after a few months this was removed to a little log house on the other side of the village church. The "free school," as it was called, was taught by Sister Agnes whose pupils were the boys and girls of the neighborhood.

The happiest event of the fall of 1841 was the arrival from

4. Sister Basilide, On the Beginnings and Progress of the Academic Institute, I.
7. Ibid.
France of Sister St. Francis Xavier (Irma le Fer de la Motte). Irma le Fer had joined the Sisters of Providence at Ruillé with the express purpose of going to Indiana with Mother Theodore, but on account of delicate health she was deterred from leaving in 1840. The following year, having obtained permission from Bishop Bouvier to join Mother Theodore, she sailed for the United States in the company of five Ladies of the Sacred Heart and Father Sorin and his Brothers. Sister St. Francis was highly gifted and immediately began to teach at the Academy. Her charming letters to family and friends in France give us a detailed picture of life in the Indiana woods. A few months after her arrival she writes:

Our forest is pretty now... We have sugar trees, and by making a cut in the bark a delicious liquid is made to flow out. The hens lay their eggs in our beds, and sometimes even in our caps. Every morning I find one on my coverlid. Cows and sheep graze at will without any other housing than the forest, where green, yellow, and red birds sing. Wood is commoner than dust, and the soil is so good that a man with one horse can till it. Pork is two cents a pound; beef idem; butter eight cents; eggs are five cents a dozen; but workmen charge so much that, with all this cheap living, we are still quite poor.

The month of February, 1842, saw the first branching out from the Motherhouse of St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Father Kundek, an Austrian nobleman, pastor of a German congregation at Jasper, Indiana, having applied for Sisters, Mother Theodore conducted Sisters Vincent, Gabriella, and Mary Joseph to Jasper where they were installed with

8. Letter of Sister St. Francis, Sept., 1841
9. Ibid., April 27, 1842.
elaborate ceremony on the feast of St. Joseph, March 19. Bishop Hailandière had praised Jasper highly and wrote that in a few years he expected to be one of the most flourishing parishes in his diocese. "The Sisters' home is especially nice," he writes, "They will have a garden, orchard, meadow, and grounds for cultivation." This school in Jasper differed from others in that it was a public school, supported by the county, and under the supervision of county school authorities. Mother Theodore loved this first mission and wrote to Father Kundek:

"Never shall I forget the happiness I experienced for the first time in this country when assisting at one of your feasts. Jasper reminds me of France, particularly of Brittany.

The second mission accepted was St. Francisville in the fall of 1842. The house here was a poor frame structure destitute of every comfort and the Sisters were often in want of the necessities of life so that they had to work after school to sustain themselves. Their zeal and sacrifice, however, were soon rewarded. The inhabitants of the place became anxious to send their children to school, and in less than a year the Sisters had the consolation of preparing more than forty for their first Communion. They also visited the sick, thus endearing themselves to the hearts of the people. Just when they were beginning to see the fruits of their labor the diocese of Vincennes was divided, and, in 1844 they were required to relinquish the mission because it was inside the new diocese.

13. Ibid., Dec. 4, 1850.
The fall of 1842 also witnessed a grave disaster at St. Mary's in the burning of the Sisters' barn with all the winter stores and farming implements. Their little farm had yielded a good crop of wheat and its harvest was carefully stored away. This fire was a real tragedy because the community depended on the wheat for its supply of flour, and there were no funds to purchase more. Worst of all, prejudice in Terre Haute and the neighborhood, due largely to stories spread by the dismissed Sister Aloysia, caused shopkeepers and merchants to refuse Mother Theodore credit. It was a critical state of affairs, and though the Bishop and other friends sent some supplies, the winter was one of great privation. In her Memoirs Mother Mary Cecilia writes:

The living was extremely scanty: the food consisted chiefly of corn bread and pork and not always enough of that; the table could scarcely be poorer. The same with regard to clothes; shoes were scarce, any kind that could be obtained were worn without regard to season, fit, etc. Clothes were mended and patched without end; in nothing did poverty show more than in the skirts of the Sisters, some had different colors of patches--black, green and brown of unlike pieces; others were so patched that the skirt was a piece of patches.16

As it was of greatest importance that the young girls confided to their care should not suffer privations, the Sisters often denied themselves even bare necessities. Sister St. Francis writes: "The Sisters, therefore, were several days in want even of bread, as they were unwilling to stint the nourishment of the boarders." Another Sister writes: "Often

16. Ibid., 53-54.
17. Clementine de la Corbinière, Une Femme Apôtre, 270
after a frugal breakfast we had nothing left for dinner, and I used to try to borrow something, such as eggs, corn-meal, or potatoes. The people to whom I applied were as poor as we, and their fear of not being paid often made them refuse me. I would then return home without any provisions."

Besides material hardships the early Sisters also experienced many spiritual ones. Sometimes when the resident chaplain was forced to be absent they were without mass for fifteen days at a time, while the nearest priest was fifty or sixty miles away. The poverty of the newly erected village church also grieved these sensitive French women, but they had the consolation of seeing the sanctuaries of God made gradually beautiful by the lovely gifts that came in generously filled boxes from France. Sister St. Francis' family were especially attentive to the wants of the Indiana mission. After receiving a Christmas box, she writes:

If anything arrived apropos it was the beautiful ruffle for the altar. They just had time to make it up for Midnight Mass, at which it produced a very fine effect. Our good Mother did not give Sister Mary Cecilia time to come from the church to see the beautiful ostensorium, but took it to her there, where both fell on their knees to thank God and pray for Alphonse as well as all our friends in France. 20

The arrival of gift boxes from France was always the occasion of great jubilation, not only among the Sisters, but also among the pupils. Nothing excited more admiration than a toy dog. "Never before," writes Sister St. Francis, "has a dog that could bark but not bite been

18. Ibid., 278.
seen in our woods."  

As the years passed, many spiritual joys compensated the zealous missionaries for their privations and labors. There is a perceptible note of happiness in the Diary record for December 23, 1842: "Father Corbe sang High Mass in our chapel, the first that has been sung in our forests. At ten-thirty another was sung for the people who were charmed on hearing the praises of God sung by the Sisters." The little that the Sisters then had to offer seemed wonderful to their neighbors, simple people who were either totally ignorant of the beauties of religious service, or had been deprived of them for a long time.

Sister St. Francis was a true apostle, and from her letters we learn much of the apostolic work of the Sisters at St. Mary's. She writes: "We have a class of poor little girls, one of whom came yesterday. Although born of Catholic parents she has never heard of God."

And again--

The other day I had the pleasure of taking our little boys to confession. I have been giving them catechism and Bible-history lessons for some time. Their examination of conscience was not the most difficult for them; they were more puzzled to know how to kneel down and join their hands in the confessional. Before going to the chapel the eldest, having found an old comb and some water, made all his companions' toilet. They had never before been so well washed. I assure you, when I saw them kneeling so devoutly--although some turned their backs towards God, and others to the Blessed Virgin--I was very much touched. One of the

22. Diary, I.
smallest asked which was more necessary, to remember his examination of conscience or the manner of making his genuflection towards the Blessed Sacrament; "for," said he, "I cannot think of what I have to say and at the same time remember how I should make my bow...."23

One of the continual joys of the Sisters was the First Communion of the children. Christmas, 1843 nine boys and six girls received their First Communion in the unfinished village church. Sister St. Francis describes the scene: "Although the floor was not yet finished and there were no doors and windows, the feast was, for all that, very beautiful in my eyes. We decorated our altar with all the precious gifts which your charity had enriched us the preceding years. Instead of tapers, our children had candles. We placed on the heads of our little girls the veils which we use in taking the habit."24

The accumulation of difficulties both spiritual and financial caused Mother Theodore, in 1843, to contemplate a visit to France in order that she might confer with Bishop Bouvier and her Superiors at Ruillé, and solicit funds wherewith to pay her debts. Bishop de la Hailandière, realizing that he was unable to aid the Sisters further, approved her project and gave her an impressive letter of recommendation. April 30, he writes:

I have weighed before God your reasons for undertaking a journey to France. I approve of this measure and hope that God may give you success.... Go, therefore, my dear Sister, to that France which is so charitable, so zealous for poor

23. Letter of Sister St. Francis quoted in Une Femme Apôtre, Corbinière. 258-259
24. Ibid., 261.
missionaries, and whose resources seem to increase in proportion as it gives. Make the faithful understand well your position and your wants. Tell them, that notwithstanding what I have done to establish you, you are very far from being securely founded, that my resources are exhausted and that you have heavy debts. Speak of your log house, your accidents, your farmhouse and your loss by fire; of the distress of the country, of the children you are obliged to teach gratis.... I authorize you to make use of this letter as you please. I beg of those among my venerable colleagues who will read it to be favorable to you and to aid you with their prayers and alms.25

Fortified with this letter, Mother Theodore accompanied by Sister Mary Cecilia, an American novice, set out from St. Mary's April 26, 1843.

At first their begging venture seemed destined to failure. They seemed to have chosen a most inauspicious time as most persons of note were away from the cities for the summer. At Paris, however, their prayers were answered. They obtained an audience with Queen Amelia through the efforts of Mlle. Labrouche, governess to the children of Monsieur du Nord, Keeper of the Seals, Minister of Justice and of Religious Worship. Concerning this event Mother Theodore's Journal relates:

At the end of a week an answer came informing us that the Queen would receive us at the Tuilleries at 12:45 that very day. We were there at the appointed hour and immediately ushered into the Queen's presence. She was most gracious, wanted to know everything about our convent in America, what our resources were, what good we could do, what kind of people we met, everything, in fact,

26. Diary, I.
like one who had always known us. She showed special attention to my traveling companion, Sister Mary Cecilia, spoke to her in English, saying beautiful things about the religious life; in fine, having manifested the most tender sympathy for our work she asked what we desired of her. We replied that we would consider it a signal favor to have our passage paid. She immediately answered: "Your passage shall be paid; how many are you?" When we told her that we would be four, two postulants and ourselves, she said: "But that is not enough; you will need something for yourselves when you are in the Woods. I will solicit the King, and my children will contribute; we must help you to save souls." And then with a look of exultation she said: "Ah! Yes, Sisters, let us save souls! There was in her manner, her eyes, but above all in her voice, so intimate a conviction of the price of a soul that my heart was touched by it and is, even yet, upon the recollection of it.27

Among her benefactors at Paris Mother Theodore numbered the editors of the Universe, Messrs. Veuillot and Aubineau, who devoted two articles to her needs and continued to solicit for her cause after she returned to America.

Bishop Forbin-Janson also proved a friend in need. Contrary to his custom of not having anyone of the opposite sex at his table, he invited Mother Theodore and her companion to dine. Speaking to his coadjutor he said laughingly, "My dear, the Sisters of

28. The second Journal of Travel is addressed to these editors.
St. Mary-of-the-Woods are not women, they are angels; that is the reason you see them here." He would not permit them to go on foot in the streets of Paris and paid for their carriage. He, moreover, preached a charity sermon which brought 2,000 francs. Due to the efforts of her friends Mother Theodore had 12,000 francs on leaving France, about half of what she had hoped for; other contributions followed her to America.

One of the reasons for Mother Theodore's journey to France was the need she felt for direction in regard to the government of her community in its relations with Bishop Hailandière. So far he had refused to approve the Rules or give them the deeds to the property, and his interference in the reception of subjects and establishments had many times caused considerable difficulty. Often his protestations of devotion seemed strangely out of harmony with his demands. The uncertainty of their condition made Mother Theodore consider resigning and returning to France, but the Bishop was always offended by such a suggestion. The destitution of the community after the fire of 1842 gave Mother Theodore a good reason for going to France. During this visit it was decided that the Community in Indiana

30. Diary, I, October 25, 1844; Nov. 15, 1844. The contributions which came to America were: 1500 francs from the Minister of the King of France, Oct. 25, 1844; 2400 francs from collection at Paris and 1400 from Orleans, June 9, 1844; 1500 from Guizot, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nov. 15, 1844.
32. Letter of Bishop Hailandière to Mother Theodore, Nov. 22, 1840.
would be separated from Ruillé in all but ties of friendship.

Mother Theodore's stay in France was shortened by the arrival of letters from Sister St. Francis and Sister Basilide which related new encounters with the Bishop who had, during her absence, ordered the Sisters in retreat, deposed Mother Theodore, and held an election at which she was reelected for three years. He had likewise opened two new missions; one at Vincennes, the other at St. Peter's where the Sisters were in dire poverty. Gravely disturbed by these tidings Mother Theodore hastened the day of her departure and set sail for New Orleans where she arrived January 27, 1844. Here a serious illness unfortunately delayed her return to St. Mary's for many weeks. Sister Mary Cecilia and one of the postulants continued the journey to St. Mary's while Mother Theodore and another postulant remained with the Ursuline Sisters who lavished every care upon the stricken Foundress. By early spring Mother Theodore was able to travel, and on March 19 took a steamer for Evansville; from whence she traveled by stage to Vincennes where she received the blessing of the Bishop and then hastened on to her "dear solitaries" at St. Mary's.

We can only imagine the rejoicing upon her return after nearly a year's absence. She returned, moreover, with a lighter heart for the Bishop's gracious welcome at Vincennes had somewhat dispelled her fears. This peace, however, was not for long. On the twelfth of July she received a letter from his Lordship prohibiting her from

33. Letter of Sister St. Francis to Mother Theodore, July 2, 1843.
34. Mother Theodore, Journal of Travel, III, 16.
35. Ibid., 18.
visiting the establishments. This prohibition referred to the two houses established during her absence. These houses the Bishop wanted to exclude from her jurisdiction; the Sisters were to be named by him, were to be responsible to him alone. This virtually meant a division in the Community and Mother Theodore remonstrated on the ground that the prohibition was contrary to the Rule which says: "She (the Superior General) shall visit the various establishments as often as her council and she herself shall judge proper." Further on it adds that this shall be "at least once a year." When Mother Theodore remonstrated the Bishop temporized, but he withdrew his protection from the Community and appointed their chaplain, Father Corbe, as their ecclesiastical superior.

This did not end matters, for the Bishop accused Mother Theodore and the Sisters of calumining him in France, and continued his refusal to sanction their Rules or give them the deeds to the property. As it became imperative to build, the Sisters felt it unsafe to do so unless they owned the property. Many futile trips to Vincennes followed during the year 1845-46, and frequently Mother Theodore was on the point of resigning her superiorship and returning to France. In this she was opposed by all her friends. Father Corbe writing to Father Martin says: "She will probably quit entirely, and then—what will become of St. Mary's? ... a flock of innocents who are no more capable of forming a community than I am of biting the moon."

36. Letter of Bishop Hailandièrè to Father Corbe, Oct. 20, 1843.
37. Letter of Mother Theodore to Bishop Hailandièrè, Nov. 26, 1845.
38. Letter of Father Corbe to Father Martin, May 2, 1845.
As difficulties continued to multiply, the Sisters, with the approval of Bishop Bouvier, began to consider leaving Indiana. Various offers had been made to them elsewhere, but they seriously contemplated the diocese of Detroit where Bishop Lefevre had assured them of a welcome. Before taking this step, however, they drew up a letter to Bishop Hailandière in which they explained that they were now legally qualified to hold property by their Act of Incorporation of Feb. 2, 1846, and that unless he gave in writing, with his signature under his episcopal seal, permission to dwell in the diocese according to their Rules and Constitutions they would take steps to move elsewhere. This document was signed by the members of the council, but as it had little effect it was followed by another even more explicit. The second communication had the desired effect and the Bishop promised all that the Sisters asked. Later, however, he required the Sisters to sign a formula of apology in which they all promised to remain in his diocese. This reached Bishop Hailandière at the Council of Baltimore (May, 1846) from whence he wrote to Father Corbe that he was satisfied and promised to give St. Mary's to the Sisters and to approve their Constitutions in writing.

This should have ended all difficulties, but the deed that the Bishop gave the Sisters to eighty acres of the land proved illegal,

40. Letter of Councillors to Bishop Hailandière, April 6, 1846.
   Appendix 3.
41. Letter Circular, June 25, 1846.
42. Letter of Bishop Hailandière to Father Corbe, May 15, 1846.
as they were not permitted to do the least thing on the land without
the approbation of his Lordship or his heirs. He likewise failed to
approve the Rules.

In May of 1847 Mother Theodore again journeyed to Vincennes
to visit the establishment. On this occasion Bishop Hailandièrè de-
posed her as Superior and forbade her to remain in the diocese, or to
have intercourse, even by letter, with her Community. This event
marked a crisis in the relations of the Bishop with the Community at
St. Mary's. Mother Theodore prepared to leave by the first stage, but
that night she was attacked by pleurisy accompanied by a fever which
brought her to the point of death. In the meantime, Bishop Hailandièrè
had received notice that the Holy See had accepted his resignation.
Soon after the news reached him he informed the Sisters at St. Mary's
that he had nothing more to do with them and would leave them in the
hands of their Ecclesiastical Superior, Father Corbe. Mother Theodore
was immediately recalled by Father Corbe, and as soon as she was
able to travel she set out for St. Mary's. Her return was a triumph.
At her arrival, June 10, at Terre Haute Father Lalumière had the cannon
on the river bank fired. Then, mounted on his white horse, he accom-
panied her carriage and when they reached the big hill in sight of all
at St. Mary's he brandished aloft a white scarf attached to his cane.
It was a flag of truce; a banner of peace.

The difficulties between Mother Theodore and Bishop Hailandièrè

43. Letter of Mother Theodore to Archbishop Eccelston, July 6, 1847.
Appendix 4.
44. Ibid.
45. Annals, Book I, 389.
form one of those unpleasant chapters in American Church history, which if completely revealed might disedify the faithful who are not aware of the controversies that arose among the clergy in early days. Mother Theodore's letters plainly show that she never forgot the respect she owed her Bishop as an ecclesiastic of the Church. They prove that under the most adverse circumstances she remained deferential and humble. Many of the clergy likewise found it difficult to cooperate with Bishop Hailandière. Father Martin, Father Delaume, and others left the diocese; Father Sorin of Notre Dame opened a novitiate for his Brothers in Kentucky. Even Father Corbe contemplated returning to France, and Father Chassé journeyed to Rome in the interest of the Eudist College at Vincennes, whose Superior had been exiled on short notice.

The difficulties of Bishop Hailandière may be attributed to the fact that he strove to dominate rather than to rule. Bishop Alerding says: "He attended to everything personally, and though he had a Vicar-general near him, a Superior of his Seminary, a Superior over the Community at St. Mary's, a rector for his Cathedral, he

46. Letter of Mother Theodore to Father Martin, July 3, 1846.
Letter of Sister Liguori to Mother Theodore, June 15, 1846.
This letter explains that Father Sorin had bought the entire establishment of the Jesuits in Kentucky and intended to have a second house for a novitiate so that he would be at liberty to give his Brothers to the various dioceses which he could not do from his novitiate in Indiana.

47. Letter of Father Bellier to Mother Theodore, Sept. 26, 1847.
Diary, Sept. 25, 1847.
hardly allowed them to do anything. This resulted in general uneasiness which at times grew into real dissatisfaction. Keenly aware of this, Bishop Hailandière twice tendered his resignation to the Holy See. The first time it was refused; the second time (1847) it was accepted. Today we know that the Holy See was well informed of the conditions in the Indiana diocese. Father Martin had gone to Rome in 1845; Father Chassé was in Rome when Father Bazin was appointed to the See of Vincennes.

With the change of Bishops, troubles ceased for the Community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Nothing that came before, nor anything that might come after, could equal the suffering caused by the difficulties with Bishop Hailandière. Ever after the Sisters referred to this period as "the days of our trial," but they were more than that— they were the seed time, the preparation for the growth that was to follow.

49. Ibid.
50. Letter of Bishop Kendrick to Bishop Hailandière, Sept. 2, 1847.
51. Letter of Mother Theodore to Father Martin, July 3, 1846.
CHAPTER III

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

The coming of Bishop Bazin opened a new era for the diocese of Vincennes and for the Sisters of Providence. Everywhere the announcement that the Vicar-General of Mobile was to succeed Monseigneur Hailandière was hailed with joy, but from no one did he receive a more heartfelt welcome than from the Sisters of Providence. Sister St. Francis, who was at Vincennes at the time of his arrival, writes: "Bishop Bazin arrived Thursday afternoon about four o'clock without noise, bells or retinue .... We were the first to welcome him and it seemed to give him great satisfaction." The following day the Bishop-elect visited the Sisters in their convent, and showed himself most kindly disposed toward the Community. On October 24, 1847 Bishop Bazin was consecrated in the cathedral at Vincennes, but Mother Theodore was deprived of presenting herself by another illness. In the month of January, however, Bishop Bazin visited St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and, to the delight of the Sisters, remained with them for a few days. During this time he made some slight changes in the Rule, gave two or three instructions in the chapel, baptized one of the pupils, and gave First Communion to two other girls of the Academy. "He was with us," writes Sister St. Francis, "as a father among his children .... and showed the greatest interest in the health of our

1. Letter of Sister St. Francis to Bishop Martin, Oct. 4, 1847.
2. Annals, I, 403.
3. Diary, Jan. 25 to 30, 1847

-33-
Mother who was quite ill.\(^4\) A few weeks after his departure from St. Mary's he sent the Sisters two beautiful lamps and a barrel of red wine as a token of his esteem. At Vincennes he transferred the Sisters to the vacated Seminary, which was a far more suitable house than the one they were occupying, and his concern for the welfare of the Sisters was made evident by the active part he himself took in moving the furniture and providing whatever was needed for their new home.

Unfortunately, Bishop Bazin's promising career was cut short by death. Six months after his consecration he was taken seriously ill and died at Vincennes, Easter, 1848. Mother Theodore who was present at his bedside during his last hours and received his blessing for the Community, writes to the Sisters:

> Do not think, my dear daughters, that because you were far away he forgot you. No, every day he spoke to me of you, even during his greatest suffering. Some moments after receiving Extreme Unction he called me to his bedside to say among other things: "Assure your dear Sisters that I tenderly love your Congregation. If I had lived longer I would not have spared any sacrifice for its prosperity, spiritual or temporal."\(^6\)

The Bishop had arranged the transfer of the deeds to the property of St. Mary-of-the-Woods to the Sisters shortly before his death,\(^7\) which is a proof of his interest in their welfare.

Bishop Bazin's successor, Monseigneur de St. Palais, needed no introduction to the Sisters of Providence, for on many occasions

6. Letter of Mother Theodore to the Sisters at St. Mary's, Easter, 1848.
during the "years of trial" he had showed himself their devoted friend and protector. It was with grateful hearts, therefore, that the Sisters prepared the vestments for his consecration, and when the poverty of the new Bishop-elect was discovered, Sister Olympiade spent six weeks at Vincennes sewing for him. Father Corbe, Mother Theodore, and Sister Olympiade represented the Community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods at the ceremonies of Bishop St. Palais' consecration which took place on the feast of the Holy Name, January 14, 1849. Writing to Bishop Bouvier of their new Bishop, Mother Theodore says:

We find Bishop St. Palais' administration much resembling your own, which renders him still dearer to us. Far from destroying the Rule, he will help us to keep it exactly, for he is full of piety and has very good judgment. He is so poor, and the diocese is in so destitute a condition, that he has just been obliged to close the Seminary. He could keep only a few students; they are in the Episcopal House. We have two at our own expense. If the Council of the Propagation of the Faith does nothing more for our poor Indiana I do not know what will become of the clergy. 11

Bishop St. Palais paid his first visit to St. Mary-of-the-Woods on April 16, on his way to the Council of Baltimore, and on August 15 he returned to officiate in the chapel for the ceremony of profession and taking of the habit. He also gave Confirmation to five postulants. 12

From this time on he became a frequent visitor at St. Mary's and took great delight in spending his time with the Sisters and postulants at

8. Letter of Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, Dec. 9, 1848.
9. Ibid.
10. Diary.
12. Diary.
the community recreation.

Some months after his consecration Bishop St. Palais thought of moving his see from Vincennes to Madison, then a more flourishing city, and in that event desired that the Sisters of Providence move their motherhouse to Madison where they already had an establishment. Mother Theodore did not seem to dislike the idea. Writing to Bishop Bouvier, she remarks: "The truth is that we are very badly located here. At the present moment we are entirely cut off from the world by the overflow of the Wabash which is higher than any time since 1818. The river is only half a league from the house and so charged with drift that it is impossible to cross it."

The Bishop's plans, however, did not materialize and the Sisters remained at St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

The first mission accepted after the troubles with Bishop Hailandiere was St. Augustine's, Fort Wayne, to which four Sisters were sent August 12, 1847. Two years later, in 1849, a girls' orphanage was opened at Vincennes; and in 1851, at the urgent request of the Bishop, three Sisters also took charge of the boys' asylum. The Bishop used the old college of the Eudists for his boys' orphanage and called it St. Vincent's. This was the first establishment of its kind in Indiana and filled an urgent need of the diocese, for the cholera had taken such a heavy toll in deaths that many children were left homeless. In her enthusiasm for the new work, Sister St. Francis, while on a visit, writes:

13. Letter of Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, Dec. 9, 1848.
You cannot imagine what a pleasure it is for me to be among our orphans. They are of different nationalities, and many of them belonging to Protestant families have already been baptized. It would delight you to hear them say the Litany of Divine Providence: "Providence of God, help of the orphans; Providence of God, which feeds the hungry," etc. And you should see with what appetites they eat what the good Providence provides them. Their appetites fill me with wonder, but now the recollection of it alarms me, for I know the resources this winter are limited.\footnote{15}

The services of the Sisters in the orphan asylums were given gratis, their contribution toward helping the Church care for its homeless little ones. Mother Theodore herself writes: "Ten Sisters are employed in the Asylum, whose inmates increase daily; yet there is no assurance for the future of the Sisters and of the children other than that Divine Providence takes care of the birds of the air and of the grass of the field."

The first school at Terre Haute was opened January 2, 1849. This was at a time when the Wabash had overflowed its banks and flooded the "bottom lands" so that the roads to the city were impassable. In order to reach their destination, the Sisters were obliged to go in a wagon which was driven through the flood. A month after school opened there were fifty pupils, and there was every hope of increasing

\footnote{15. Letter of Sister St. Francis to her father, 1851.}
\footnote{16. Bishop H. Alerding, History of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Vincennes, 618.}
\footnote{17. Letter of Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, July 10, 1851.}
\footnote{18. Diary.}
the number in the spring. 19

In 1849 the cholera, which raged in the towns of southern Indiana, caused great uneasiness to the Community, but it also gave the sisters opportunities of devoting themselves to works of charity. At Vincennes the Bishop published in the papers that the Sisters of Providence would care for the sick who were stricken, and Mother Theodore wrote that it was their intention to do the same in all the cities where they had establishments. Writing to the Sisters at Madison, she says:

If the plague makes great ravages in your city.... arm yourselves with courage and devote yourselves to the care of your stricken brethren. Without distinction of persons do good to all for the love of God, and if you have to die, well, my dear daughters, die for Him Who died for love of you. 21

At Madison the schools were finally closed and Sisters Basilide, Joachim, and Felicity took care of the sick in their homes. At Fort Wayne, in 1854, where the Sisters took care of the sick in an improvised hospital, Sister Lawrence fell a victim to the plague while ministering to the stricken. Providentially the plague in its severest form did not attack St. Mary-of-the-Woods. July 8, 1849 Mother Theodore writes that for several weeks there had been "a sort of discomfort colic, disordered stomach, and heaviness in the head," but the malady was less malignant

22. Necrology, I, 22.
than the real cholera. Fear of the dread disease, however, necessitated
the omission of the commencement exercises, and on July 25, 1849 the
Wabash Courier announced:

There will be no exercises due to the physician's advice because of the epidemic outside. Until now
our boarders have enjoyed excellent health. The school will re-open on the 16th of September.23

The years which witnessed the heroic work of the Sisters during the cholera epidemic also witnessed an increased demand for Sisters on the missions throughout Indiana. In 1849 Mother Theodore writes:

"Our Congregation is everywhere appreciated. Sisters are called for in almost every town of the diocese. I have just written a letter of refusal to a priest of a German congregation near Cincinnati; last week we refused to form an establishment in Indianapolis, the capital of our state, where Protestants wish for us as much as Catholics do;" and again,

"If we had thirty Sisters more ready to go out, we could employ them all."

In her letters to Bishop Bouvier, Mother Theodore continually regrets the scarcity of vocations among American girls. At the beginning of 1849 she writes that it is nearly a year since they received any postulants, and regrets that she finds it necessary to dismiss some who are not suitable. Another letter states:

It is better to have fewer in number but good ones. We keep them about two years, sometimes more than two years, in the Novitiate before giving them the habit, as many are so poorly instructed in their religion when they come, and are far from being all that is implied in the religious life. When our schools will be more numerous...we shall not have the same difficulties. There are a few of our own pupils among the postulants and we see

As the American subjects did not fill the need for Sisters, Mother Theodore earnestly begged for reinforcement from France. "Oh, if Ruille could send us some (subjects)," she writes to Bishop Bouvier in 1851, "Now would be the time to come to our aid." By the next year, however, conditions seem to have bettered, and she hopes that even if Ruille does not send aid the American Community will be able to sustain itself. "It is certain," she writes, "that our novices and postulants are, in general, very nice and give us great consolation, and above all great hope for the future." At the beginning of 1852 there were fifty Sisters and fifteen postulants—a number which Mother Theodore considered very good for this country.

The early death of her most promising Sisters was, to a great extent, the reason for Mother Theodore's feeling so keenly the need of reinforcement from France. Two in whom she had centered great hope died prematurely; Sister Mary Liguori in 1847, and Sister Mary Joseph in 1851. Concerning Sister Mary Liguori, the Necrology states: "She was one who though young in years had lived a long life of good works." Her cheerful acceptance of the greatest privations on the missions where she was Superior and her heroic acceptance of suffering won for her a distinguished place among the first Sisters. The sufferings she endured on the two weeks' journey from Madison to Terre Haute,

25. Ibid., Dec. 18, 1850.
26. Ibid., July 10, 1851.
27. Ibid., Jan. 1, 1852.
when she was brought in a dying condition to St. Mary's, serve as an example of the hardships endured with unflinching courage by the early Sisters. The severity of the season and the rising of the creeks and rivers rendered this journey most painful; she was carried in an armchair over the frozen bottoms of the Wabash after two previous attempts to cross it had been made. Sister Mary Joseph's early death was likewise due to privations and hardships. Her amiable qualities, open disposition, urbanity of manner, and above all, her tender piety made her a power for good with people of the world, as well as within her own Community. She served in several important positions, and her place was difficult to fill.

The death of Sister Angelina, in 1851, also deprived the Community of a valuable member. She had been a Sister of Charity, but left the order when they gave up their school at Vincennes in 1843. Advised by Bishop Hailandiere to join the Sisters of Providence, she came to St. Mary's where she supplied the place of the much needed music teacher. Her death was regretted not only because she was a gifted musician, but also because she was much loved in the Community.

Although the year 1851 to 1852 brought an increase in postulants, the desire for more Sisters from France continued. Sister St. Francis wrote to her family with characteristic zeal of the ripe

30. Ibid., 14-17.
31. Ibid., The Sisters of Charity from Kentucky promised Bishop Bruté to remain until he had Sisters for his own diocese. They remained until 1843 when the Sisters of Providence took over their school.
harvest of souls in Indiana, and hoped and prayed that one of her sisters might be inspired to follow in her footsteps. In 1852 her prayers were answered. Bishop St. Palais returning from France in the fall of that year brought with him her sister, Elvire Le Fer, and three other postulants. One of these, a young English lady, had been educated in Belgium and spoke both English and French fluently. These two young women were a valuable addition to the American community as they had all the requirements Mother Theodore desired, and were besides accomplished musicians. Elvire Le Fer took in religion the esteemed name of Sister Mary Joseph, and her companion became Sister Mary Eudoxie. This addition to the Community at St. Mary's was followed two years later by the arrival from France of two of Mother Theodore's nieces: Sister Mary Theodore, a professed Religious of Ruillé, and her sister, Frances Le Touzé. By this time the number of American subjects had greatly increased and it was possible to accept more missions throughout the state.

Between 1853 and 1856 five more establishments were opened: Assumption school in Evansville, and North Madison, in 1853; Lanesville, and a German school at Fort Wayne, in 1854; and Columbus, Bartholomew County, in 1855. The foundations at Evansville and Lanesville offer a striking study in contrasts. At Evansville the pastor and people had no desire for a Sisters' school, and the establishment was made at the request of the Bishop who realized how much good could be accomplished by the Sisters. The opposition, or at least the indifference

32. Letter of Sister St. Francis to Bishop Martin, Oct. 9, 1852.
34. List of the Establishments, 5.
of the people here, was so great that the Community records state had it not been for the determined character of Mother Theodore the school would never have been founded. Conditions at Lanesville were just the contrary. The people received the Sisters with demonstrations of affection, and Sister St. Francis writes:

We have just established our tenth mission in Indiana. Mother Theodore, who accompanied our Sisters, says the poor people wept for joy. It was the first time religious had been seen at Lanesville.

By 1850 the increase of numbers in the Community necessitated a new Motherhouse, for the original farmhouse convent which had received many additions had long ago been outgrown. On August 31, 1850 Mother Theodore signed the first contract for a new building, but as the process of building in those days, especially in so remote a place, was necessarily slow, it was not until June 13, 1852 that the cornerstone was laid. The building was to cost between fifteen and sixteen thousand dollars, a sum which caused Mother Theodore considerable uneasiness, as she had a detestation for contracting debts. At the end of the summer of 1853 the Sisters moved into the new convent, in spite of the fact that it was not finished. Some months later describing their situation, Mother Theodore writes:

35. Ibid.
36. Clementine de la Corbinière, Life and Letters of Sister St. Francis Xavier, 363
37. Diary, I.
38. Ibid.
We are living in the new house which is very cold this winter. No one apartment is finished except the chapel. The men are making the doors now, but these cannot be placed immediately. The stairs have no balustrades; all the furniture in the house consists of two beds and some tables for writing and ironing; those of the refectory are planks on trestles; the rest of the furniture is in the Academy. Notwithstanding this penury, we are better off than in the old house.

By August of the same year the building was complete, and the Letter Circular calling the Sisters home to retreat invites them to be present at the consecration on August 6th. After the house was finished, Mother Theodore reproached herself that it was "too fine" for "the poor little Sisters of Providence." It was truly fine in comparison with the crude farmhouse which had first sheltered the pioneer Community, but it was in no way extravagant.

The year following the completion of the new Motherhouse was a difficult one for the Community at St. Mary's as well as for the country at large. The beginning of a new system of public schools seriously affected the enrollment in the Catholic schools. Writing to Bishop Bouvier, Mother Theodore explains:

The Protestant ministers continue to do their utmost to destroy our schools. They have obtained a law which orders a general tax for the purpose of educating all the children in the same schools without distinction of sex or fortune. These schools, now in vogue throughout the Union, have closed all the others with very few exceptions. Ours are the only ones which remain open, but the

40. Ibid., Jan. 6, 1853.
41. Letter Circular, 1853.
42. Letter of Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, Jan. 6, 1853.
attendance is smaller than in the preceding years, especially in some localities.  

In the week of November 16, 1854, the Diary records that all the banks in Indiana failed except one. The entry for November 17 states: "Provisions are as dear as gold. Fresh meat is cheaper because there is nothing wherewith to feed the stock. Our hogs have been fattened on acorns and nuts." Flour cost seven dollars and a half a barrel.

Another source of trial was the persecution from Protestants. When they arrived at St. Mary's in 1840 anti-Catholic feeling was so strong in Terre Haute that it was more than six months before the Sisters ventured to the city in their religious dress. By 1854 the Know-Nothing movement was in full swing in Indiana, and in many places the Sisters suffered from the intolerance of its adherents. Often they received anonymous letters threatening them with fire and destruction because they were Catholics, and Protestant journals circulated infamous stories that young women were kept by force at St. Mary's. At Madison, in particular, the people were at first bitterly opposed to religious. When the Sisters first took the mission in 1844, they were ceaselessly annoyed. Crowds of men would assemble around their dwelling and cast stones at the house threatening to burn it down and uttering the most horrible oaths. When the Sisters appeared in the streets, they were followed by boys who pelted them with stones and set dogs upon

43. Ibid.
44. Diary, I.
45. Ibid., May 16, 1841.
46. Letter of Sister St. Francis to Father Martin, June 20, 1848.
47. Diary, Nov. 12, 1853.
them. Later some of their most formidable adversaries called together a council of three hundred ministers to devise some means of doing away with the "nuns." The assembly, however, became so ridiculous that it only inclined the people to be more favorable towards the Sisters. Their heroic forbearance at Madison won them the esteem of the respectable citizens and the school began to flourish. In 1854 the enrollment numbered one hundred and eighty children.

The non-Catholic pupils who were educated at St. Mary's did much to dispel anti-Catholic feeling in Indiana. In 1854 Mother Theodore writes that there are eighty-five boarders at the Academy, thirty-seven of whom are Catholics. Three converts received baptism on Easter Sunday of the same year, eight made their First Communion, and eighteen their Paschal Communion. "It is impossible," she writes, "to estimate what a Christian education does for these young people. Brought up among Protestants, they are ignorant of everything that pertains to our holy religion. They scarcely know how to kneel when they come to us. When they leave, they become little missionaries who do an incalculable amount of good to those around them."

Not only were religious changes taking place in Indiana, but life all around was being revolutionized. On October 8, 1854, the silence of the woods was broken for the first time at St. Mary's by the whistling of a steam engine when the trains began to run past St.

49. Letter of Sister St. Francis quoted in Corbinière, Une Femme Apôtre, 313.
50. Letter of Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, April 20, 1854.
No longer need the woodland Community fear isolation from the rest of the world, the trains connected with the important cities nearby. This was naturally conducive to an increase in the enrollment of pupils at St. Mary's. The Diary for July 30, 1855 states: "We had a numerous assembly at the Distribution; they came by cars chartered expressly for the occasion. The trains returned several times in the evening so that everybody could get away." In November, 1855, a railway station was built on the very grounds of St. Mary's. The post office at St. Mary's village dates as far back as Oct. 1, 1846.

The glorious tidings of the declaration of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception reached St. Mary-of-the-Woods January 14, 1855. Father Corbe read the news in the Universe the day previous, but kept it a secret until after the Gospel of the mass the next day when he announced it from the altar. It is not difficult to imagine the rejoicing in the woods dedicated to Our Lady. Sister St. Francis, who was absent because of illness, writes:

I was not present, but a postulant ran with all speed to tell me. Elvire was the second with the news. I kissed them both. How happy Mother Theodore is! If you could know what a pull she gave our bell. All the Sisters except myself hastened to the chapel--then the Te Deum, the organ, the voices of all our Sisters! Besides the statue in the chapel every image of the Blessed Virgin is ornamented, from Our Lady of the Valley to the statue in the kitchen--everywhere tapers,
flowers, and garlands. Then the postulants went singing hymns from place to place, wherever there was a representation of Our Lady. General recreation was given and—at dinner they will talk. 54

The celebrations did not cease with the day. On May 26, at the completion of a Triduum of prayers in honor of the Proclamation, the Sisters and pupils took part in a beautiful procession in honor of Mary Immaculate. The Diary records that all the village assisted with devotion. Devotion to the Immaculate Conception has ever since been propagated at St. Mary's, and Mary Immaculate has not been unmindful of her woodland daughters. Exactly a year after the first celebration the Diary states: "Since we promised to build a chapel in honor of the Immaculate Conception many of our debts have been paid."

The joyous tidings of the Promulgation of the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception were shortly followed by the news of the death of Bishop Bouvier of Le Mans, who died in Rome shortly after hearing the Pope proclaim the Decree of the Immaculate Conception. The Community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods was grief-stricken by the news, for they looked upon Bishop Bouvier as their father. It was he who gave them their Rules and Constitutions; he who sent them forth to the New World; he who gave them counsel in the years of trial. They felt they owed him their very existence. Mother Theodore writes

54. Letter of Sister St. Francis quoted in Corbinieri, Une Femme Apôtre, 478.
55. Diary, June 14, 1855.
56. Ibid., Jan. 14, 1856.
of their grief to Bishop Martin: "We have just sustained a great loss in the death of Bishop Bouvier. That holy prelate was for us in the days of our trial a pillar in the desert, a light and a protection." Previous to his journey to Rome, Bishop Bouvier had sent the Sisters his portrait. This was hung in the Community Room where it became a constant reminder of their esteemed benefactor.

The death of Bishop Bouvier was followed in a year's time by that of Sister St. Francis. Always frail, she continued to be in very delicate health during the winter of 1855. Mother Theodore who was also frequently ill writes, "We are not worth two cents together," yet together they constituted the power behind the Community. Not only did Sister Saint Francis fill the important post of Mistress of Novices, but she was, besides, Mother Theodore's confidante and advisor. To the Sisters and pupils she was a source of never ending inspiration. Her zeal for souls, her ardent love of the Blessed Sacrament, were recognized far and wide. Her charity was all-embracing. Writing to Mme. Le Fer after Sister Saint Francis' death, Mother Theodore says: "The thought of her is like an angel guardian to the Indiana priests. What a veneration they have for her .... I only wish I were able to send you some of the letters I have received during the last three weeks. Even holy Jesuits have experienced a renewal of fervor." Sister Saint Francis died in the

57. Letter of Mother Theodore to Bishop Martin, Feb. 16, 1855.
58. Letter of Mother Theodore to Abbe Sebaux, Nov. 21, 1855
59. Letter of Mother Theodore to Bishop Martin, op. cit.
60. Letter of Mother Theodore to Mme. Le Fer, March 5, 1856.
arms of Sister Mary Joseph, January 31, 1856. The assembled Community knelt at her bedside while Mother Theodore recited the prayers for the dying. Her death was much more than an echo of a beautiful life; it was the revelation of a soul wholly enamored of God. Those who attended her during her illness never forgot the torrents of burning aspirations that came from her lips. In the Circular Letter announcing her death to the Community, Mother Theodore says:

You do not expect me, my dear daughters, to write a eulogy of her whom we have so many reasons to regret; of her whose absence leaves such a void in the Community. Her name alone suffices to bring to mind all that is sweetest, purest, and most effective in virtue. She was to those who knew her the ideal of religious perfection. Not only had we unanimously considered her the saint of our Community, but persons of the world, even those of a different faith, could not behold her angelic countenance without being led to the thought of God.  

The death of Sister St. Francis seemed to be a warning to Mother Theodore that she was soon to follow. She omitted none of her duties, however, but visited the missions enduring the hardships of travel as most of her route was made by stage on very bad roads, or in slow canal boats. On one of these journeys she fell into the water while going from the boat to the skiff that was to take her ashore. This undoubtedly hastened her death, and the summer of 1855 again found her seriously ill, so ill that she was unable to

63. Mother Mary Cecilia, MS, 66 to 67.
attend the exercises of the annual retreat. As so often before, she recovered, but only for a time. On March 17, 1856 she was again confined to bed, and, after an illness of eight weeks, the beloved Foundress of St. Mary-of-the-Woods died on May 14, 1856, at three forty-five in the morning. Sister Mary Cecilia describes the scene at her deathbed:

The room was filled with Sisters who had remained in breathless silence until all was over and now their cries burst forth. Never was sorrow more sincere or heartfelt. It made a scene of grief that was appalling; not that there were any extravagant gestures... for true affection does not show itself that way—but it was so by its intensiveness. Some of the Sisters were kneeling, some stood, while others sat; but each one buried in her own feelings was weeping most sorrowfully.

During her illness Mother Theodore had asked Reverend John B. Chassé to come and sing her requiem mass as she knew Father Corbe would feel her death too much to be able to do so. She was right. He could not officiate and Father Chassé said the mass. Bishop St. Palais was also present and accompanied the remains to the little cemetery near St. Ann's shrine where Mother Theodore was buried at the side of Sister St. Francis.

At Mother Theodore's death, sixteen years after their arrival in Indiana, the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence

64. Diary, I.
65. Ibid.
66. Mother Mary Cecilia, MS, 76 to 77.
67. Ibid.
numbered close to a hundred members, and the Academic Institute was considered one of the finest institutions of its kind in the country. Dr. Ezra Read in an address delivered at the exhibition of the pupils August 1, 1854 said, in speaking of the beauties and benefits of St. Mary-of-the-Woods:

For twelve years I have watched the growth of this Academy and have seen with pleasure its sure and steady advancement from a small beginning until it has assumed the position of the first institution of learning in the country, having all the facilities to impart a thorough and polished education. It is a quiet retreat, quietly secluded from the world and especially inviting for its healthful location .... To you and to the surrounding country and to this great state, it should be a source of pride that this beautiful Academy has sprung up in the wilderness, which will continue to dispense its light unharmed by prejudice, unchecked by monetary depression, unchanged by death. 59

Besides the Academy, fourteen branch schools, with an enrollment of nearly a thousand children, testified to the zeal and progress of the Sisters of Providence during the sixteen years of their existence in Indiana.

68. Letter of Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, April 20, 1854. Appendix 5.
70. Letter of Mother Theodore, op. cit.
CHAPTER IV

TRANSFORMING THE WILDERNESS

The early death of their Foundress was a proof to the growing Community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods that their Order, which had been founded upon the cross, was to grow and flourish in the shadow of the cross. The death of Mother Theodore in the prime of her achievement left the little Community sorely bereft, for it seemed impossible to replace one so widely gifted and so thoroughly grounded in spirituality. Much had been accomplished in the sixteen years of the Community's existence in Indiana, but much more remained to be achieved; the foundation had been laid, but careful building was necessary in order to assure permanent success.

Although it was felt that no one could replace their sainted Foundress, it was not difficult to choose her successor. Those whom Mother Theodore had hoped might succeed her had passed before her into Eternity and it followed naturally that Sister Mary Cecilia, her First Assistant who had been closely associated with the Foundress from the time she accompanied her to France in 1843 until her death, should be elected to take her place. Sister Mary Cecilia, Eleanor Bailly, was the daughter of a French fur trader, an adventurer of Old France who had penetrated the country.
in search of trade, but who was equally interested in carrying forward the cross of his beloved Roman Catholic Church. Their home was an outpost of the Catholic religion in northern Indiana, a place where the Indians were gathered and instructed in the faith.

Besides being blessed with a strong faith, Eleanor Bailly was well educated and accomplished; as a young Sister she had served in the position of Superior of the Academy for a number of years, and she was undoubtedly best fitted to continue the work of Mother Theodore.

Many grave problems confronted the new Superior General upon her assumption of office. The most imperative of these was the need of a new Academy. The original one, begun by Bishop Bruté, finished the summer after the Sisters' arrival and enlarged in 1846, had been completely outgrown and was, moreover, becoming unsafe to live in. The idea of building a new Institute was first considered on August 5, 1857, but the plans did not materialize until January of 1860 when Mother Mary Cecilia presented her plans to the Sisters and the question of the size and elegance of the building was discussed. Father Corbe's advice was to build on a large scale and to furnish the building with every convenience suitable to a high class boarding school. On February 2, Mr. Bohlen, an architect from Indianapolis, came to examine the grounds to see if a firm foundation could be made.

2. Mother Mary Cecilia, Diary.
4. Mother Mary Cecilia, Diary.
At first the verdict was unfavorable and it was not deemed advisable to build on the ground. This difficulty raised the old question of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the location of St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and for the third time the Sisters considered leaving their woodland home. As a result, work on the foundation was immediately suspended until a final decision could be reached. In the meantime, attractive inducements to move to Indianapolis were offered by Reverend A. Bessonies, pastor at Indianapolis, and by James McKernon, principal Catholic gentleman of the city, who offered weighty arguments in favor of the Sisters of Providence settling in the vicinity of the capital of the state. Their arguments impressed the Sisters, for a location in a flourishing city offered a wider field for various works of charity than did their secluded home at St. Mary's. The certainty of obtaining numerous pupils for their Institute, the opportunity of instructing the many poor in a large city, and of caring for the sick made the Councillors view the offer in a favorable light. Ties of sentiment, however, made them cling to the woodland convent for which they had already sacrificed so much.

After grave deliberation, it was finally decided on February 22, 1860 to remain at St. Mary's. The conviction that God Himself had chosen the site for their Community led to this

6. Ibid.
happy conclusion. When its advantages and disadvantages were carefully weighed, the very seclusion came to be viewed as desirable. The opinion of the Superiors is recorded thus:

As it is proven from the experience of ages that communities situated in localities somewhat difficult of access, have preserved unaltered the spirit of their institute, which the world never fails to undermine in time; religious houses established in or near a large city are exposed to unfavorable intercourse with seculars. Finally, even for a boarding school the spirit of the young ladies is better when removed from too much intercourse with relatives and visitors. They can be governed with firmness, and trained with better success . . . . Education in cities, even in schools kept by Religious, is becoming defective in many respects on account of concessions that must be continually made in consideration of parents whose indulgence for children has to be humored . . . . parents whose tenderness for their children does not interfere with their correct ideas of governing them, will sooner or later seek a school removed from the dangers of a city, to confide in it the safe education of a child. St. Mary's it is hoped, will be one of those commendable asylums of youth; the present may not be the time for renown and prosperity, but, unless interior conviction felt is not true, it will after some years flourish and stand high as giving a thorough instruction, imparting a genuine and accomplished education, and withal maintaining perfect discipline. 7

The fulfillment of this prophecy can be seen in the successful continuance of St. Mary-of-the-Woods to the present day, and in the distinctive type of education there imparted.

The architect being again called to examine the ground, he gave as a final decision that with additional expense a foundation could be safely laid. The foundation for the building was begun on the Feast of St. Ignatius, 1860. The following month on the Feast of the Assumption the laying of the cornerstone took place, Bishop St. Palais officiating, assisted by Reverend Bede O'Connor, O.S.B.; Father Corbe, Superior and Chaplain of the Sisters of Providence; Reverend Father Van Hulst, S. J.; Reverend Beckwith, S. J.; Reverend Father Hortsmann, S. J.; and Reverend John B. Chassé. At the close of the ceremonies, Father O'Connor delivered an address from the front entrance of the old Academy. His text, "Wisdom hath built herself a house," was beautifully developed in its application to the building under construction.

Work continued on the building during the following years, and though the Civil War checked its progress, one wing was completed. The entire plan, however, was not executed at once as the building was to be erected in three portions—a center and two wings. Mother Mary Cecilia's building was the western wing, and accommodated more than two hundred pupils. It cost about $28,000; the whole edifice when complete was to come to a hundred thousand dollars. Mother Anastasie completed the eastern wing and connected it on the north with the western wing, thus forming a spacious court in the center of which stood the original Academy which was repaired and

8. Ibid.
9. Mother Mary Cecilia, Diary.
used for visitors' reception rooms. 11

The erection of the new building was a valiant undertaking for the Community which had never before attempted anything so pretentious. The early French Sisters were extremely conservative and had a repugnance for borrowing, so that it was no little cause for concern to borrow large sums at ten per cent interest. Their efforts were well rewarded, however, as the new Academy was everywhere considered one of the finest institutions of its kind.

In connection with the building of the new Institute, the grounds about it were improved and beautified. The north campus was arranged as a playground and adorned with several shrines—Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, the Guardian Angel and St. Agnes. These were gifts of the early pupils who took delight in showing their gratitude to their cherished Alma Mater. It was at this time, also, that the first Grotto of Lourdes was erected in the midst of beech trees on the northern extremity of the playground. It was the gift of Miss Rose Howe, the first graduate of the Institute and niece of Mother Mary Cecilia. The record for July 24, 1879 states: "Our sweet little Grotto of Lourdes was blessed this evening. The procession left the chapel at seven o'clock, singing the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. Immediately after the blessing the Magnificat was intoned; while it was being sung, the procession passed in front of the Grotto, saluting our Lady."

11. Letter of Mother Anastasie to Mrs. Rand, July 21, 1867 and July 26, 1871.
15. Mother Mary Cecilia, Diary.
Although the erection of the Academy had been a drain on the finances of the Community, it became necessary to build a chapel in 1863 as the one in Providence convent had become entirely too small for both Sisters and students. It was, therefore, determined to build a temporary frame chapel and to use the old one as the 16 Sisters' refectory. The Diary for May 28, 1863 announces the beginning of the chapel and states: "It will be the third chapel we have had. The next one that the Sisters of Providence will build will be the last one—a standing monument for endless ages." The new chapel was blessed by Bishop St. Palais on the feast of St. Cecilia, 1863, and from that time the Community "dissolved partnership with the congregation" of the village church where they had been obliged to attend Sunday services for nineteen years. There was great rejoicing over this change, and Mother Mary Cecilia writes in her Diary August 15, 1864:

Retreat closes with the accustomed ceremonies. This is the first time we have the ceremonies of this great feast in our chapel. In past years, having but one small chapel, we always had to attend High Mass and Vespers in the parish church with the people .... Having the whole day to ourselves, the profession of vows took place at early mass this morning, and the taking of the habit at High Mass which began at nine o'clock. Father Van Goocks, S.J. said High Mass and preached on the mystery of the day. Our new chapel presented a beautiful sight; the ceremonies were performed by Father Corbe. Everything was solemn and imposing and finished just at twelve o'clock. 19

17. Mother Mary Cecilia, op. cit.
18. Letter of Mother Anastasie to Mrs. Rand, October 9, 1868.
19. Mother Mary Cecilia, op. cit.
This third chapel, situated on the west side of Providence, served the Community until 1886. By that time it had become unsafe and was so small that the novices were obliged to vacate their places for the Protestant pupils when they attended services on Sunday.

It had been the dream of Mother Theodore to build a beautiful church worthy of being dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, but her premature death left that task to her successors. It was Mother Euphrasie who had the happiness of seeing Mother Theodore's dream come true in the erection of the present Church of the Immaculate Conception. On March 16, 1886 the foundation of the new church was begun, and on September 14 the laying of the cornerstone took place. Every care was taken to erect an edifice worthy of God and His Immaculate Mother in whose honor it was dedicated, and Mother Euphrasie and Sister Mary Cleophas traveled East to visit churches and consult architects. The church was not completed, however, until 1889, and the interior remained undecorated until 1906. The delay in finishing was not only due to a lack of means—the Motherhouse having burned down in 1889—but to a desire to select only the finest marbles for the interior. When it was completed, the new Conventual church dedicated, according to promise, to the Immaculate Conception was a gem of architecture. It was built of bedford stone in the Italian Renaissance style and

22. Mother Mary Cecilia, Diary.
23. Diary.
modeled closely upon the lovely church of the Trinité in Paris. Set against a background of green trees and shrubs, it was a thing of beauty admired by all who visited St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

Though the years after 1860 witnessed a continual program of building, they were not without their shadows. The Panic of 1873 caused serious financial distress at St. Mary's. In the years directly preceding it an amount of property had been purchased in various cities where the Sisters of Providence had establishments. Among the most important business transactions of 1871 were the purchase of Madison Hotel at Madison, Indiana; the building of Providence Hospital, Terre Haute; the purchase of a lot—the Fletcher Property—for a new Infirmary in Indianapolis; the re-purchase of the coal-shaft lease; and other lesser investments. A program of expansion as large as this necessarily placed the Community in considerable debt, and many feared that the Sisters faced financial disaster; but in the light of modern business principles it is clear that the Superiors, who were far-sighted women, realized that if nothing were ventured nothing would be accomplished. The difficulties were merely such as any institution might experience in the course of its growth.

Fortunately, this financial crisis was safely passed, and the sale of the real estate not absolutely necessary to the Community at that time relieved the distress. It is interesting

to note in this regard that Madison Hotel, which had been used as an academy, was sold to the city of Madison; and the Fletcher Property in Indianapolis was purchased by the Little Sisters of the Poor who were just at that time entering the diocese. In 1875 Providence Hospital which had not been a success on account of the difficult times, was changed into a girls' orphanage to which the children from the Vincennes orphanage were transferred.

The years which witnessed the building of the new Institute and the temporary chapel, the financial crisis and its passing, also witnessed a complete transformation of the countryside around St. Mary's. In a letter written to France in 1873 Sister Basilide describes some of these changes:

The agricultural activities have developed here in such an astonishing manner that where one could only with great difficulty pass on horseback one admires today fertile and productive fields, mills, and coal mines. A great number of Irish have come and grouped themselves around us, and have ended by buying almost all the land from the Protestants who by degrees have gone away and left us only Catholics.

We have around us now the railroad station, the post office, and a village of a hundred families, comprising a personnel of four hundred souls. The village consists of a single street bordered by sixty houses on either side. There is also a parish church. As for us, we had when we arrived only one narrow house with 118 acres of land; today we have 147 acres.

One of the greatest material blessings bestowed on the Sisters of Providence was the coal beds discovered on their own property in August, 1867. This portion of their land was leased to Joseph Broadhurst for fifteen years with the understanding that the Community receive a half cent on each bushel of merchantable coal and a bushel of coal for every four mined.

In a letter to one of her former pupils Sister Mary Joseph writes: "Twenty yards from the depot on our own land they have found a beautiful mine of coal. The hole or pit is one hundred feet deep and there are ten feet horizontally of the black stuff. It burns first rate and is prime quality. When you are cold, come to St. Mary's."

For a short time the trade in coal was good, and trains stopped to coal at St. Mary's station. By intriguing and underselling, however, the other mines nearby made the sale of St. Mary's coal unprofitable. Other difficulties with the lease-holders who wanted to make St. Mary's a central point for the coal trade made it necessary to re-purchase the lease of the coal shaft, and from that time the mine was operated only for the benefit of the Community. When St. Mary's and the nearby establishments were supplied, mining ceased for the year. The coal mine was, nevertheless, a

29. Mother Mary Cecilia, Diary, Sept. 15, 1867.
32. Letter of Sister Mary Joseph to Mrs. Rand, Aug. 31, 1867.
33. Verbal Process, 86.
great blessing and became more so as the buildings increased and steam heating systems were installed.

The planting of orchards and vineyards in 1866, and the cultivation of flowers in abundance did much to add to the beauty and fruitfulness of St. Mary's. On her return from a visit to her home in France in 1866, Sister Mary Joseph brought enormous cases of vines and young fruit trees which she planted and tended with assiduous care. Two years later in writing of her experiments in arboriculture she describes her success:

We have almost one hundred and fifty acres of ground under cultivation and our apple and pear trees are wonderfully successful here. Our little vines, which were as long as my finger when we brought them here, have yielded us four beautiful bunches of grapes. We offered the first to our dear Mother Mary Cecilia; the second, we gave to Father Corbe. The vegetation here is admirable. Sister Olympiae's apricot trees, grown from seed brought by Mr. Audran, are five feet high and are bearing fruit.

Flowers of many varieties were cultivated, and a little greenhouse was built to shelter them from the heavy frosts. To the friends and relations who had sent seeds of their most beautiful flowers Sister Mary Joseph writes:

All of your varieties grew—the anemones, zinnias, and the primroses. I should like to send you some of the native flowers of this country, among them a kind of iris which they call

34. Letter of Sister Mary Joseph quoted in L'Indiana, 399 to 400.
the white flag here, but which is much larger than ours at home. Sister Mary Therese is busy much of the time with the greenhouse and the flowers. She has sent some to the exhibition in Terre Haute and has taken two prizes. We are making sacrifices by cutting the beautiful flowers for the chapel; but that is the special aim in cultivating them.35

Another important change in the grounds was the opening of a new cemetery east of the Motherhouse. The removal of the bodies of the Sisters buried near St. Ann's shrine took place on January 13 and 14, 1864. The first day the bodies of Sisters Mary Liguori, Seraphim, Angelina, Josephine and St. Francis were removed; and the whole of the following day was occupied in preparing a vault and removing to it the remains of Mother Theodore. The vault was placed in the center of the cemetery at a point where the arms of the cross made by the gravel walks interest. A simple cross bearing the inscription: "Ego dormio sed cor meum vigilat super hanc domum quam aedificavi" was the only monument erected over the grave.

Other changes made during the years between the Foundress' death and the Golden Jubilee of 1890 caused the wilderness to be transformed until it grew into a thoroughly complete institution so well equipped that it was almost a self-existent community. In 1872 the Visitors' Home on the western edge of the grounds was remodeled so as to offer suitable accommodations for friends of

35. Ibid.
36. Mother Mary Cecilia, Diary.
the Sisters and students. A new shrine to St. Ann, built on the spot where the original log chapel of Mother Theodore's time stood, was blessed on July 25, 1876. In the spring of 1881 a three-story brick Novitiate was completed, and in 1884 a spacious new chaplain's residence was erected. This completed the panorama of buildings which extended from the Visitors' Home on the west to St. Ann's chapel on the east. The installation of steam heat, steam washing machines, and telephones perfected the material development of St. Mary-of-the-Woods before the Golden Jubilee in 1890.

With the completion of the conventual church of the Immaculate Conception at the end of January, 1889 the Community might well feel enough had been achieved, that now there might be a pause in expansion—St. Mary-of-the-Woods was as well equipped and beautiful as any institution of its kind. The lovely church had scarcely been under roof, however, when a tragedy occurred which threatened to destroy it and all of St. Mary's. On February 7, at nine fifteen in the morning, a fire broke out in the two-story frame kitchen attached to Providence. As the morning was raw and cold, and the wind sweeping across the fields seemed to blow from every direction, it appeared that all the buildings must perish. Unfortunately, most of the men employed at the Institute were two miles away cutting ice, and it remained for the Sisters to battle with the flames until the fire de-

37. Diary.
38. Ibid.
40. Ibid., 4
41. Diary, Jan. 10, 1883.
42. Ibid., Sept. 22, 1882.
partment arrived from Terre Haute. The Diary record for the day paints a vivid picture of disaster:

No one can picture our anguish—to see our loved Mother Theodore's house in flames, to see the mad fire wildly devouring our little chapel, to turn only to behold the wash-house on fire, to see the smoke issuing from the Novitiate roof, to turn with a sickening heart only to see smoke issuing from the cloister of the new Church, to hear the firemen shout: "Sister, if the wind does not change the Church and the Academy cannot be saved," to see Sisters, children, and men, the young and the old, carrying furniture and household goods to a place of safety—repeating constantly "Merciful Jesus, save us;"—the poor sick wrapped up in blankets carried to the Institute,—to see the aged and feeble Sisters watching with streaming eyes their burning home, was a scene sufficient to melt a heart of rock, and such was St. Mary's on Thursday.44

Considering the rapidity of the destruction, it was almost incredible that so much was saved. No lives were lost, the Blessed Sacrament and sacred vessels were safely removed, and most of the household goods and all of the Community records were preserved. That the new church and novitiate were not destroyed was due to almost superhuman effort on the part of the firemen, and it

43. Scrap Book, II. Newspaper clipping on cover page.
44. Diary.
45. Letter of Mother Euphrasie to Sisters, Feb. 8, 1889.
was considered by all those who viewed the ruins as little short of a miracle. If the wind had not changed at the critical moment, nothing could have been saved. The loss of property was estimated at more than $60,000 of which only a small part was covered by insurance.

To the Sisters, however, the greatest and most tragic loss was that of the home they so dearly loved. Mother Euphrasie's Letter Circular telling the missionary Sisters that it would be impossible to call them home for the summer of 1889 expresses the grief so poignantly felt by all:

In the previous Circulars I invited you to the home which our dearly loved Foundress, Mother Theodore, had prepared for us at the price of great labor and sacrifice; but never again shall we meet again within those sacred walls, hallowed by the memory of her and her devoted co-laborers, whose names are held in benediction, and who need no monuments of brick or stone to immortalize them, for their heroic sacrifices, their noble example, and their sublime teachings are of far more value to us than all the passing things of time.47

No sooner had the news of the fire reached the outside world than messages of condolence began to pour into St. Mary's. The evening train brought Bishop Chatard himself who did all in his power to console and assist the stricken Sisters. Mr. Bohlen of Indianapolis, architect of the Academy and church, immediately headed a subscription list with the sum of a thousand dollars. This was followed by another donation of three hundred dollars from Bishop Dwenger of

46. Scrap Book, II, Newspaper clippings on cover page.
47. Mother Euphrasie, Letter Circular, June 20, 1889.
Fort Wayne; thus a building fund was very quickly begun.

The following year, March 2, the foundation of the new building was begun, and on Sept. 8, 1890 the Bishop blessed "New" Providence. That evening the first meal was taken in the new convent, and the Bishop spent the evening recreation with the Sisters. The joy of occupying their new home was followed a few days later by an event of great importance to the entire countryside; namely, the illumination of "New" Providence with electric lights. The fine building illuminated with six hundred lights presented a most unusual sight which many people from Indianapolis and vicinity came to view.

The pupils in a body were permitted to go through the entire building, even to visit the dynamo.

The completion of the new Motherhouse marked an epoch in the history of the Sisters of Providence, for it was followed, on October 22, by the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the establishment of the Community in Indiana. Looking back over the half century, it was evident that wonders had been accomplished by courageous and self-sacrificing religious. The unchartered wilderness of 1840 had been transformed into a garden spot, and the crude buildings of pioneer days had given place to stately structures, beautiful in architectural design and well equipped with modern conveniences.

49. Diary.
50. Souvenir of Golden Jubilee, 143.
51. Ibid.
YEARS OF GROWTH

The years from the death of Mother Theodore up to the fiftieth anniversary of the arrival of the Sisters of Providence in Indiana are not so crowded with colorful events as the years of hardship which preceded them. They are important, rather, for the steady growth and development of the Community; they witness the establishment of customs and traditions and culminate in the final Approbation of the Rules and Constitutions of the Order. There are, of course, outstanding events, but for the most part they are quiet years.

The Civil War which for four years caused so much distress throughout the country affected St. Mary-of-the-Woods far less than one would expect. A few of the Sisters served in the Military Hospital at Indianapolis and in other temporary hospitals throughout the state, but at St. Mary-of-the-Woods itself the rumblings of war scarcely penetrated. It is true, the war interrupted the building of the new Academy, and the Sisters suffered many material privations, but they were long ago inured to hardships and thought little of inconveniences. In a letter to her family in 1863 Sister Mary Joseph writes:

Thus far the war seems to be far away from us. Long ago, however, we said good bye to tea and
coffee which are very highly taxed. We still have a little coffee, mixed with carrots and parsnips, ground and roasted, which is quite as much to my taste as the real article. As for tea, you know I never cared for it, so I do not regret it greatly. Nearly everyone is obliged to be satisfied with buckwheat coffee. Monseigneur de St. Palais, who was here last week, told us that when Jeanne, his cook, came to tell him that there was no more coffee or tea, he replied, "Very well, give me some Lincoln coffee." Thus they have named the buckwheat coffee, because President Lincoln's election is said to have brought about all the troubles of the war.¹

In the early days of the war the Academy felt its effects in the loss of its southern students, but during the war years the enrollment was increased rather than diminished. On May 8, 1861, Mother Mary Cecilia records in her diary: "We send our five scholars from the South. Mr. Dodd comes for them all. They fear that if war is declared communication will be cut off and it will be extremely difficult to get the girls home." The Academy records show that by the end of the war the number of students was larger than ever, two hundred and twenty nine being in attendance at St. Mary-of-the-Woods during 1864. The inevitable results of the conflict, which St. Mary's did not escape, were the suffering and anxiety experienced by those whose loved ones were in the thick of battle. Naturally this had a sobering effect. On her feast, November 22, 1862, Mother Mary Cecilia writes: "The feast of St. Cecilia was not celebrated this year; the state of the country is such that we cannot make merry."²

¹ Letter of Sister Mary Joseph, March, 1863, quoted in L'Indiana, 389.
² Mother Mary Cecilia, Diary.
³ Ibid.
After the Civil War the first event of importance to the Community was the journey of Sister Mary Joseph and Sister Basilide to France in 1866. The purpose of this visit was to bring about a closer union with the Motherhouse in Ruillé, and to learn what changes had been necessitated by the papal approbation of the French Community. In 1862 when the news of the approbation of the Community in France reached St. Mary's Mother Mary Cecilia wrote in a Letter Circular:

I must embrace the opportunity of informing you that our Community in France has been approved at Rome, but to our exclusion; having a different government and different interests is the reason assigned to our being excluded...

Great changes have been made in the Rules and Constitutions, a few of these have been imparted to us by letter. We are anxiously expecting a copy of the revised Constitutions which have been promised to us as soon as the books come from the press. Until we see the new Rules it will be impossible to tell if we can adopt them, and we can form no idea how far our usages and government will be affected by them.\(^4\)

The Sisters of Providence in the United States desired not only to have the same religious spirit as their Sisters in France, but they also wished to follow as much as possible the same traditions and customs. As no copy of the revised Rules became available, it was decided to send Sister Mary Joseph and Sister Basilide to Ruillé to obtain information concerning the changes that had been made. As the American foundation had been early separated from the French Community it would be necessary for St. Mary's to seek a separate ap-

\(^4\) Mother Mary Cecilia, Letter Circular, 1862.
probation, and the Superiors hoped to secure information from their French Sisters to guide them in revising their Rules and customs before presenting them to Rome for papal approbation.

Sister Mary Joseph and Sister Basilide spent two months at Ruillé where the good Superior General, Mother Mary, showered every attention upon them. During her visit Sister Mary Joseph made a copy of a beautiful portrait of the founder of the Sisters of Providence, Abbe Dujarie, as she knew the esteem and veneration with which the Sisters at St. Mary's regarded their sainted founder.

When Sister Mary Joseph and Sister Basilide returned from France they brought with them many useful things - seeds for the kitchen garden, shrubs and fruit trees, medicines for the pharmacy, materials for artificial flowers, colors for palettes, books for the Academy, laurel wreaths for commencement, and many pious articles and objects for Divine worship. Most important of all, however, they returned with the assurance that their mission had been accomplished and that much good would result. Among the treasures which they brought was a copy of the French Ceremonial, and a copy of the letters sent from Ruillé to Rome in the process of obtaining the approbation of the French Rule. In writing to France after the return of the Sisters Mother Mary Cecilia expressed her gratitude to Mother Mary

5. Letter of Mother Mary Cecilia to Mother Mary, July 2, 1866.
for all the kindness shown the Sisters during their stay at Ruille. Undoubtedly this visit did much to strengthen the bond between St. Mary-of-the-Woods and the cradle of the Community in France.

An event of great interest to the Sisters of Providence in 1872 was the visit to St. Mary-of-the-Woods of Mother Mary of the Conception, first assistant general of the Little Sisters of the Poor. As Mother Mary of the Conception proved to be a childhood friend of Sister Mary Joseph with whom she had made her First Communion at Saint Servan, there was great rejoicing on the part of both, and Sister Mary Joseph's interest was enlisted in the establishment of a community of the Little Sisters of the Poor in Indiana. By a fortunate coincidence Bishop St. Palais arrived at St. Mary-of-the-Woods on the same day, the eve of Pentecost, in order to give confirmation on the following day. Sister Mary Joseph championed the cause of the Little Sisters and by clever strategy aroused the Bishop who was at first little disposed to favor their establishment in his diocese. In the end Mother Mary Conception was granted permission to make a foundation in Indianapolis. Upon the arrival of the Little Sisters of the Poor in that city a few months later, they were welcomed by the Sisters of Providence from St. John's Academy, who with their resident pupils accompanied the Little Sisters to their new home, helped prepare their supper, and assisted in arranging their beds of straw. Later Sister Mary Joseph obtained permission from Mother

7. Letter of Mother Mary Cecilia to Mother Mary, November 12, 1866.
8. Diary, May 18, 1872.
Mary Ephrem to give them a heifer and a donkey from St. Mary-of-the-Woods. In 1873 when the Little Sisters of the Poor were seeking property upon which to build, they purchased the Fletcher Property in Indianapolis from the Sisters of Providence, and there has ever been a feeling of mutual gratitude on the part of the Sisters of Providence and the Little Sisters of the Poor.

The saddest event of the decade following the death of the venerated Foundress of St. Mary-of-the-Woods was the death on June 3, 1872 of Father Corbe, the beloved chaplain and Ecclesiastical Superior of the Community. From the time of his arrival at St. Mary-of-the-Woods in 1842 until his death, his life was wholly devoted to the interests of the Sisters. He had shared their sufferings in the "years of trial" and rejoiced with them in the years of achievement. In every way he had been a devoted Father to his spiritual children and his death was the breaking of a cherished link with the past. The grief felt at his passing was heightened by the fact that neither Mother Anastasie, the Superior General, nor the Bishop was present at his death; Mother Anastasie was visiting the missions, and the Bishop arrived too late. The remains of Father Corbe were placed in the community chapel and for two days the Sisters watched and prayed beside their beloved Father. On June 5 the Requiem Mass was sung by Bishop St. Palais who at times could scarcely proceed with the ceremonies because of his great emotion. From the convent
chapel the remains were carried to the community cemetery by the Passionist Society of Terre Haute, where they were buried, as Father Corbe had requested, near the cross which marks Mother Theodore's grave. Concerning this sad day the Diary states: "Everything was as grand and imposing as loving hearts could make it. The Reverend Bede O'Conner, O.S.B. delivered the sermon and twenty three priests were present."

The year following Father Corbe's death was an important one for the Sisters of Providence as through their efforts the entire diocese was consecrated to the Sacred Heart. This much desired favor was secured in an interesting manner. In a letter to her family in 1873 Sister Mary Joseph tells how it was brought about:

Monseigneur had announced his intention of spending his birthday at St. Mary's, the fifteenth of October, the feast of St. Theresa. As this Saint was and is still a great favorite of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we profited by this happy circumstance to make a written petition for our little pupils to present to Monseigneur, asking that our diocese be consecrated to the Sacred Heart.

Our good Father was taken by surprise. Father Maugin to whom our dear Mother had confided the secret, bent over Monseigneur's shoulder urging him to say the desired "yes," and Monseigneur inclined his venerable head in assent. He renewed this promise to the entire Community, and you may well believe it is with true happiness that we await the occasion.

We also learn from this letter that Bishop St. Palais interested the Archbishop of Cincinnati in the devotion, and on the first of January, 14. Ibid. 15. Letter of Sister Mary Joseph, 1873, quoted in L'Indiana.
1873, the nine dioceses which compose the Cincinnati province were consecrated to the Sacred Heart. The propagation of the devotion of the Sacred Heart which had been inaugurated at a retreat given by Father Gleizal, S.J. in 1854 was a great consolation to the Sisters who realized that it would be a barrier against the tides of irreligion that were flooding the country. Sister Mary Joseph writes:

"The Americans are a little cold, but moved by so much love on the part of God they seem to respond to Him."

The consecration of the Community took place after Vespers on New Year's Day 1873. The Diary describes the ceremonies:

About half past two in the afternoon a procession was formed starting from the Study Hall in the Academy and proceeding to the chapel in the following order: First, the banner of the Sacred Heart borne by Mother, with four Sister streamer bearers; then the pupils, beginning with the least and ascending in order; next the postulants, the Novices, and the Sisters, ascending according to rank and age; lastly Father Chassé and his assistants. When the procession reached the cloister next to the chapel, the banner bearer stood still for a few moments and the ranks parted on either side to allow Father Chassé and the Assistans to pass, followed by those who went next - thus exactly reversing the order ... Entering the Chapel, the Banner was deposited in the place prepared for it at the end of the Communion railing. Then followed Vespers, after which the Act of Consecration was recited.

This was memorable day in the history of St. Mary-of-the-Woods, one never to be forgotten by those who tasted its joys.

17. Letter of Sister Mary Joseph, 1873, op. cit.
18. Diary.
The remarkable growth of the Academic Institute during these years can scarcely be separated from the growth of the Community. The history of the two is inseparably bound in Diaries and Records. This is due to the fact that the successful growth of the Academy was the result of the earnest prayers and best efforts of all the Sisters. From far and wide young girls were sent to St. Mary-of-the-Woods Academy to be educated and the crowds that came to attend the Exhibition and Commencement Exercises at the close of each scholastic year testify to its widespread reputation. Newspaper accounts of these events are often quaint and interesting. A Terre Haute paper describes the Commencement of 1877: "When the special train left for St. Mary's there were over five hundred people on board. Nearly the same number had arrived from the west on an earlier train - friends, relatives, and others. They literally swarmed about the buildings." Another item entitled Indiana's Pride states: "The exhibition lasted for hours, and notwithstanding the warm weather, and the fact that many were obliged to stand, not a single person quitted the hall until the close. The deportment of the young ladies was not in the least "stagey," but evidenced careful training of heart and mind."

The distinctive type of education for which St. Mary-of-the-Woods became famous was due not alone to an excellent course of studies, but in particular to a training which aimed to "form the

20. Ibid., 7 to 9.
heart as well as the mind." Great stress was laid upon the training of the young woman in the social graces. "St. Mary-of-the-Woods has the reputation of giving those intrusted to its charge not only a thorough English education, but also of having special success in developing delicacy of feeling and an appreciation of the beautiful, so conducive to forming elegant manners essential to accomplished young ladies."

Booth Tarkington, whose Mother and two aunts attended St. Mary-of-the-Woods, states in a letter to the Indianapolis Star:

Something rare and fine was brought from France to St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and none of those who were students there remained unaffected by it. For lack of a better work, I must call it "distinctive." The visible effect was a manner of simplicity and dignity.

The students were well taught; they were really educated, and they were also given what we once spoke of as "accomplishments," for they "learned the harp, piano, and guitar," and acquired a fine accent in the French language; but what most distinguished the girls of St. Mary-of-the-Woods was the lovely manner they were taught there. And they were taught it so well that it was not a superficial veneer. Indeed it was rather absorbed than learned, and was something that came from within outward. And although my Mother spoke rarely of this, more often dwelling on the affection for the Sisters and the beauty of the place itself, the manner of St. Mary-of-the-Woods is what remains most deeply impressed upon me. It always springs to my mind whenever I delve for the true meaning of "lady."

This tribute of Mr. Tarkington summarizes perfectly the training that

22. Ibid., June, 1890.
the Academic Institute aimed to give.

Refinement of manner was achieved by constant training in behavior and politeness. Notes of conduct were read weekly in the presence of Sisters and pupils, and a report of the deportment and progress of each student was sent to the parents every month. The Diary for December 18, 1873 records; "Class examinations today closed with the reading of 'Head Marks' and 'Good Points'; there were several to receive a ticket for a Hundred Good Points, of which they are laudably proud." 24 At the end of the year a Crown for Excellence of Behavior was awarded at the Commencement just before the Graduate Laurels were bestowed. 25 The stress upon training in the fine arts, and in sewing and fancy needlework aided greatly in preparing the young girls for their place in the world. As one newspaper states: "No pains are spared to render them eminently qualified to fulfill the duties of their station in Society, and even to be its ornaments." 26

It may seem that this training was necessarily formal, but it was far from that; simplicity was the keynote, and a friendly intercourse with their teachers made the pupils feel perfectly at ease. The early pupils of St. Mary's were distinguished by devotion to their teachers and school. Booth Tarkington voices the opinion of many when he says: "I think my Mother's days at "Old St. Mary's were among the happiest of her life. Certainly she always spoke of them

24. Diary.
25. Prospectus.
Appendix 6.
26. Wabash Courier, September 13, 1851, Vol. XX.
with happiness, and the recollection of them was bright and vivid for sixty years afterwards." Referring to the Sisters he writes: "They must have been women of exquisite manner as well as distinguished education. And they must have possessed unusual charm as well to be so adored through the life of their pupils."

The early Sisters whose names are inseparably associated with the Academy were Sister Mary Cecilia, Sister Basilide, Sister Anastasie, Sister Eudoxie, Sister Mary Liguori, Sister Mary Ambrose, Sister Maurice, and Sister Ann Cecilia. Both as superior and teacher Sister Mary Cecilia and Sister Anastasie endeared themselves to the hearts of their pupils, and each in turn became Superior General of the Order. Concerning Mother Mary Cecilia an old pupil writes:

"Her personality was a very impressive one. A wonderfully successful teacher, she was highly respected and loved by all her pupils, and her word was law." Mother Anastasie was the first pupil of the Academy to enter the Community and served as Superior for twenty years. One of the many pupils who paid tribute to her memory writes:

"Strong in mind and body, efficient in every walk of her convent life, we looked upon her as a marvel. Her talents were unnumbered; the daintest stroke of brush and pen were hers; the most difficult problems of Mathematics she mastered with ease; as a linguist she spoke as of native tongue; in music, also, she was proficient." Concerning Sister

29. Margaret Roquet Wheeler.
Basilide who was likewise greatly loved another early pupil writes:

"Sister Basilide also holds a special place in memory: there was something so peculiar, original, and charming in her use of English that it was a never failing source of pleasure to listen to her. She too was an exceptional teacher, and I early grew to prize at its true worth her sterling and unselfish character." Sister Eudoxie was for years head of the music department, and Sister St. Urban is best remembered for the girls' retreats which she conducted the last three days of Holy Week up until 1878 when they began to be given by the clergy. The name of Sister Mary Ambrose is inseparably associated with the early days of the Academy: as she had a power to make friends possessed by few. It is recorded of her that "all without exception paid tribute to her amiable, sympathetic character." Her extensive correspondence during the many years she was in office, and the incomparable charm of her letters made her name one of the most widely known in the Community. Concerning Sister Mary Liguori the Community records state: "The influence of her mild and gentle manner was so often spoken of by the pupils."

Sister Maurice was a genius of an unusual type and her fame remains undimmed as her pictures and mottoes still adorn the halls of St. Mary's. The Community annals relate: "It was impossible to visit her without falling under her pious and scholarly influence which her skill placed in artistic shrines, sacred mottoes, scienti-
fic charts and maps, collections from every department of nature all arranged to show forth the mighty works of God."33 Her warm-hearted energetic nature drew to her all of the pupils with whom she came in contact. Sister Ann Cecilia's name is associated with the Academy in a twofold way: as a pupil in Mother Theodore's time, and later as Superior and teacher. She was a member of a distinguished family, the niece of General Buell of Civil War fame, and the Sister of George Buell who met a heroic death at Custer Massacre in Wyoming. Several years after leaving school she returned to St. Mary's to receive instructions and was received into the Church in 1865, and a year later after her father's death she entered the Community.34 When, after years of long service, her death occurred in 1920 many beautiful tributes were paid to her. One of these aptly characterizes her: "Of brilliant intellect, refined and cultured in manner, devoted to duty, of noble distinguished character, and truly religious, Sister Ann Cecilia as Superior of the Academy, as beloved teacher and friend exerted an up-lifting and wide influence."35

The most important work of these well loved teachers was the training they gave in virtue and religion. Example was a powerful force, but other means were used to instill a deep piety into souls. The celebration of every feast of the Church, the attention given to many pious practices and devotions, aimed to impart a real love for religion in the Catholic pupil, and was frequently the means of

33. Ibid., I, 284.
34. Record of Postulants, II
drawing the non-Catholic students into the Church. In the Diaries continual reference is made to these devotions, May 1, 1869 - "The Catholic girls sang during mass in honor of the sweet month of Mary." And again in 1872:

At nine o'clock the Catholic children had a grand ceremony, crowning the Blessed Mother in the Oratory. It was commenced by a procession of six or seven girls in white, bearing a banner, candle and flowers. Alice Baugh, the recently baptized, performed the coronation; the two little girls who made their First Communion with her held lights ... Many of the Protestant girls joined in the procession which was closed by eighteen or twenty Sisters. Canticles, prayers, and the Act of Consecration concluded the ceremonies. The lilac bushes are fairly bending beneath the weight of their blossoms, which last night's rain called forth as if by magic. We had Benediction this evening.

The feast of St. Catherine, November 25, was always celebrated in a special way: "The Catholic girls of the graduating class received Holy Communion in honor of their patroness of Philosophy," and, "The singing at Mass was in honor of St. Catherine .... this being the eve of the feast. The entertainment for the young lady graduates will take place this evening - instead of on the eve of the feast of St. Thomas as of late years." The astonishing number of conversions and baptisms recorded during these years is a proof that God's blessing rested upon the work of the Sisters.

36. Diary.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., November 25, 1883.
39. Ibid., November 24, 1887.
Another important factor in the religious training of the pupils was the annual retreat. Previous to 1878 this was directed by a Sister, but ever since that year it has been under the direction of the clergy. Father O'Donaghue, Assistant Pastor of St. John's Church, Indianapolis, gave the retreat in 1879 and after that it was always given by a Jesuit, except in 1890 when it was conducted by Bishop Chatard. An interesting Diary record relates: "The children's retreat closed this morning. An excellent one it was counting nineteen old pupils who came for the retreat; there were fifty six in all in retreat... Although it lasted four days the children were not in the least tired and kept silence beautifully." The retreat usually concluded with First Communion and Confirmation.

Yet another vital influence in the spiritual life of the pupils was the Sodality. The society of the Children of Mary, organized by the Foundress in 1854, took the place of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin until 1879 when the latter was established. The minutes of the Children of Mary, one of the most interesting treasures of the archives of St. Mary-of-the-Woods, explain the customs and devotions of the society. From them we learn there were two orders in the association: the first, the Children of Mary, "limited themselves to the imitation of the purity of the Blessed Virgin;" the second,

40. Diary, May 18, 1890.
41. Diary, May 11, 1893.
42. Retreats and Remarkable Occurrences, 45.
43. Two MSS note books: 1854 to 1856; 1854 to 1890.
the Children of Mary of the Temple, practiced, in addition, silence in honor of Our Lady's seclusion in the temple. At the monthly meeting a testimonial card inscribed with the motto "Ecce Mater Tua" was awarded to every Child of the Temple who had not been corrected for violation of silence. The rules of the association state:

We piously believe that a member who can go through the year without failing once, or failing very seldom, will obtain the favor she asks, if not she will have the equivalent in something else, because on account of her age and sex, she really performs great mortification in observing strict silence and acquires great merit by joining her silence to that of the Blessed Virgin....

Though the rule awards a testimonial to everyone who has not had a mark in the schoolroom, yet the Children of the Temple are advised not to present themselves for a testimonial if they are conscious of having wilfully broken silence, though unperceived by the teacher.44

At the end of the year the pupil who presented the greatest number of testimonials received a book as a reward of her fidelity. The Superior of the Institute was the Directress of the society and the other officers, Secretary, Chorister, and Oratorian, were chosen from the Children of the Temple. At the monthly meeting an instruction was given to the members followed by the recitation of the rosary and the Litany of Loretto; the Our Father and Hail Mary were recited for the absent members. The meeting always closed with the singing of a hymn in honor of the Blessed Virgin.

44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
In 1877, in the midst of the Commencement rejoicing a great sorrow came to St. Mary-of-the-Woods in the sudden death of Bishop St. Palais. The Bishop who had been present at the commencement exercises on June 27 suffered a stroke the following morning at five o'clock while walking in the rectory garden reciting his Breviary preparatory to saying the Community mass. The Diary records the sorrow felt by all at St. Mary's: "Our grief is heart rending - sorrow fills our souls to see our Father leaving us; and, oh, to see his intense suffering and not to be able to relieve him." And the next day: "Our good Father Bishop's little room is draped in black, and he reposes there as calmly as if he were sleeping." Mother Mary Ephrem, Sister Basilide, Mother Anastasie, Sister Joachim, and Sister Maurice accompanied the remains of their cherished Father on "his last silent journey to Vincennes." At Terre Haute the coffin was opened and the little orphans looked for the last time upon their beloved protector. At Vincennes his remains rested in the Sisters' chapel at St. Rose Academy, where he was surrounded by a guard of honor composed of the orphaned little ones he had loved so tenderly. He was buried on July 3, in the crypt beneath the sanctuary in the Vincennes Cathedral between two of his predecessors, Bishop Bruté and Bishop Bazin.

46. Diary, June 28, 1877.
47. Ibid., June 29, 1877.
48. Ibid.
49. Clementine Corbinière, L'Indiana, 416 - 419.
Although the memory of Bishop St. Palais was to be cherished forever at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, the Sisters prepared with eager expectation for the first visit of his successor, the Right Reverend Francis Silas Chatard. After his consecration in Rome, where he had been Rector of the American College, Bishop Chatard returned to the United States and reached his diocese in August of 1878. He went first to Vincennes and then to St. Mary-of-the-Woods to preside at the ceremonies for the Feast of the Assumption. Every effort was made to give the new Bishop a welcome befitting a Prince of the Church. When his carriage drew near St. Mary's guns were fired and bells were rung until the Bishop and clergy entered the house. Above the doorway of the Church was inscribed in gold and green moss, "Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini," and everywhere banners and triumphal arches expressed the joy that filled every heart. On the day after his arrival, the Feast of the Assumption, the Bishop presided at the ceremony of reception and at the profession of a large number of Novices, and by his kind and gentle manner towards all softened the regret at the loss of his beloved predecessor.

Like Bishop St. Palais, Bishop Chatard also became a frequent visitor at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Soon after his arrival in Indiana he moved the seat of the diocese to Indianapolis, the capital city of the state, because it was more centrally located, and easier of access; this brought him in closer touch with St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

52. Diary, August 14, 1878.
53. Ibid., August 15.
Woods. Bishop Chatard who was preeminently an educator evidenced a keen interest in the training of the Sisters and in the progress of the pupils of the Academy. On one or two occasions he presided in person at the Summer Institutes of the Sisters: he drew up a set of Rules for the Improvement of Teachers, and in every way showed a personal interest in the advancement of the Sisters, especially of the postulants and novices. When he visited St. Mary's he frequently attended classes at the Academy and sometimes came purposely to preside at examinations. An interesting Diary entry states: "At the Bishop's suggestion the Graduates are cooking dinner— it is quite a frolic for them. Each young lady puts her name on the dish she prepares. The Bishop did this to make the young ladies appreciate the art of house-keeping."

The history of every Community is made up of light and shadows: the joy that the Sisters of Providence experienced in the ever increasing interest and kindness of their new Bishop was dimmed by the illness and death of Sister Mary Joseph. On the feast of the Immaculate Conception 1879 she was taken seriously ill, and her health declined visibly until her death, December 12, 1881. Every effort had been made to spare her and she had been relieved of the difficult post of Mistress of Novices, and made First Assistant to Mother Euphrasie. For her, however, the change of office did not

55. Diary, December 11, 1880.
mean a lessening of labor, and her zeal never relaxed during the two years she held that important post. Her death was a supreme sorrow to every member of the Community, and her passing was the breaking of another precious link with the past.

As the Community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods drew near to its Golden Jubilee, efforts were begun to obtain Papal approbation for the Rules and Constitutions. In 1870 Pope Pius IX, at the request of Bishop St. Palais, issued a Pontifical Decree granting the Sisters of Providence in the United States the same privileges and favors enjoyed by the Community at Ruillé according to the Papal Indult of 1843. In 1880 preliminary measures were begun by the clergy in the United States who were interested in the Sisters of Providence and who sent letters recommending the Order to Rome. Bishop Chatard then went to Rome to confer with the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda. As progress was exceedingly slow Rev. E. Higgins, S.J. journeyed to Rome in 1886 in behalf of the Sisters of Providence. He proved an ardent worker for the cause and obtained assurance from Cardinal Mazzella, a Jesuit, that the approbation was forthcoming. His letter from Rome, September 24, 1886 explains that the Congregation of the Propaganda was overburdened with business and "several years behind with American affairs," but assures the Sisters that their Rules are already under consideration. On May 28 of the following year the Holy Father gave his formal approbation of the Rules and ordered the issuing of the Decree of Approbation. The news reached St.

56. Diary, June 22, 1870.
57. Letters of Bishop Dwenger of Fort Wayne, and Father De mening, S.J. in Community Archives.
Mary-of-the-Woods on June 27, and the following day Mother Euphrasie sent a Letter Circular to all the houses of the order. She writes: "A high mass of thanksgiving will be celebrated here July 1, as it was on the First Friday of June while fervent prayers were being offered to Our Lord exposed upon the altar, that the Decree of Approval was issued."

In 1889 the shadow of death again fell upon the Community. After years of heroic suffering Mother Euphrasie, while still in office, died August 28. Her life was singularly beautiful, and her memory is revered in the Community. As a pupil at St. Augustine's Academy, Fort Wayne, she became a convert and entered the Community in 1864. She was elected Superior General in 1883 and served in that capacity until her death. Although her last years were spent upon a bed of pain, she never relinquished the administration of her office and in the last months of her life took an active interest in planning the new Motherhouse which was to replace the one recently destroyed by fire. She had the happiness of seeing the beautiful Church of the Immaculate Conception approaching completion, but she did not live to see the blessing of "New" Providence. Bishop Chatard in the funeral sermon said to the Sisters: "Her life is known to you - her deep piety, her strong faith, the latter being exceptional, rarely seen in one who comes to the fold by means of conversion. Her beautiful

59. Letter of Mother Euphrasie to Sisters, June 28, 1887.
60. Necrology.
simplicity, humility, and zeal for God's glory were remarkable. She
presided over the interests of a large Community with unerring tact,
and spread a salutary influence that will be lasting."

The year following Mother Euphrasie's death marks the
fiftieth anniversary of the coming of the Sisters of Providence to
Indiana. Preparations for the Golden Jubilee were almost wholly
spiritual. The gratitude to God, which overflowed in the hearts of
the Sisters, for his numberless blessings was expressed in fervent
prayer rather than in external ceremonies. On the eve of the Jubilee
the Community assembled in the Novitiate recreation room for a pro-
gram in which the life of the holy Foundress and the early Sisters
was reviewed; and on the feast itself, October 22, a High Mass was
celebrated in "New Providence." Much of the rejoicing on this
occasion was centered around Sister Olympiade and Sister Mary Xavier,
the only two remaining companions of Mother Theodore.

61. Souviner of the Golden Jubilee, 118
62. Diary.
CHAPTER VI

The Apostolate of Charity

An especially interesting phase of the work of the Sisters of Providence during the first two decades of their apostolate in Indiana was the care of the sick. Mother Theodore and her band of valiant Sisters left France confident that they would find in America abundant opportunities for exercising their zeal in the care of the poor, the sick, and the destitute. Theirs was to be an apostolate of charity as well as of education and they came prepared to fulfill those points of their Rule which enjoined upon them the care of the sick in their homes and in hospitals.

La fin secondaire que se propose la Congregation par rapport au prochain, est l'assistance et le soulagement des malades pauvres. Les soeurs rempliront cet office dans un grand esprit de charité et devoûlement, redoublant de soins et de tendresse pour ceux qui paraîtront le plus abandonnés, leur distribuant ou leur procurant, autant qu'elles le pourront, les secours dont ils auront besoin, tels que remèdes, bouillons, linge, consolations en tout genre. 

Elles auront une pharmacie dans chaque établissement, donneront les remèdes gratuitement aux pauvres, les vendront à prix modique aux riches, et avec les bénéfices qu'elles en retireront, entretiennent la pharmacie.¹

In France this Rule was carried out so generally that the Sisters were often called Sisters of Charity, and in the original Rule they are re-

¹. Constitutions et Règles des Soeurs de la Providence (1853), 55.
ferred to as "Soeurs de Charité de la Providence." The six missionary Sisters received a surprising recognition of this when the Doctor who came on board their boat to examine the passengers before their landing at New York greeted them with joy because, as he said, he knew their work in the hospitals of France and rejoiced that they had come to America.

Mother Theodore was exceptionally qualified to render services to the sick as she had studied medicine for four years under Dr. Lecacheur, a noted French physician. In her life of the Foundress Mother Mary Cecilia remarks that she was able "both to discern the nature of the disease, and to apply proper remedies. She could prescribe for ordinary ailments as well as any physician, and even in severe attacks she could, in case of necessity, supply the absence of a Doctor." When returning from her trip to France in 1843, Mother Theodore saved the life of the captain by skillful bleeding, and probably saved the lives of all on board as he was the only one accustomed to guide the ship through the treacherous reefs of the West Indies.

One of Mother Theodore's companions, Sister Olympiade, who as a novice had spent a year in hospital work at Orleans, came to America with the express purpose of aiding the Foundress in the care of the sick. She became pharmacist of the Community in Indiana and under Mother Theodore's direction prepared medicine for the Sisters,

2. Ibid., 61
5. Mother Mary Cecilia, op. cit., 19.
pupils, and people of the surrounding country who came to seek her advice and obtain her remedies. Years after, many an old settler recalled Sister Olympiade "traveling on bad roads and in bad weather to visit the sick and bring them remedies." 7

Many stories are told concerning the zeal of the early Sisters in ministering to the sick of the neighborhood. It is related that once in the middle of the night, when an urgent request came for Father Corbe to attend a man who had been crushed by a fallen tree, Mother Theodore in the absence of the chaplain mounted a horse, and with Sister Olympiade riding behind her, followed the messenger through the dark woods to the home of the injured man. After doing everything possible to relieve his sufferings, she prepared his soul to meet its Maker, and remained with him until daybreak when Father Corbe arrived and administered the sacraments, soon after which the man died.

Sister St. Francis relates many interesting incidents in her letters concerning the dispensation of remedies at St. Mary's. Sister St. Francis herself had no knowledge of medicine and on one occasion, when the Sister-pharmacist was absent, she herself prepared a potion lest she offend a poor woman who had come to obtain a remedy for her sick husband. Taking two pieces of lump sugar and as much gum-arabic she gave it to the woman saying: "Dissolve this in a quantity of fresh water and give your husband a half glassful morning and evening.

8. Tradition in the Community.
This will do him good." The woman went off delighted, and a few days afterward returned to ask work for her husband whose fever had been checked by Sister St. Francis' potion. This cure may be attributed to the power of suggestion or to the sanctity of Sister St. Francis; whatever, the cause, the story illustrates the implicit trust the people placed in the Sisters' remedies.

The work of caring for the sick was carried on not only at St. Mary's but on the missions as well. At the request of Bishop Bazin a pharmacy for the poor was set up at Vincennes with Sister Joachim in charge and when the plague raged in Indiana in 1849 the Sisters devoted themselves to its victims. In a letter to Bishop Bouvier Mother Theodore writes:

The epidemic is terrible all around us. The last news by telegram informs us that within twenty-four hours on the third of July one hundred and sixty died at St. Louis, one hundred and twenty seven at Cincinnati, and about the same proportion in other cities of the West. At Madison our schools are closed and Sisters Basilide, Joachim, and Felicity are employed in taking care of the sick in their homes. The people speak of making a hospital of the Sisters' house temporarily; if they do we shall send them help....

At Fort Wayne where the cholera appeared for the third time, Sister Lawrence died a martyr of charity, having contracted the disease while ministering to the plague stricken. As establishments multiplied work for the sick continued and the letters and memoirs of the early Sisters refer constantly to the fact that they spent the hours after school visiting the sick in their homes. Later, when educational

10. Mother Theodore, Diary.
demands became too pressing, this type of charitable work was discontinued, but it was in practice as late as 1881 when Sister de Chantal was killed in Indianapolis. She was thrown from the little carriage in which she was accustomed to visit the sick and died almost immediately. The community records state that her death was "a bitter loss to the poor and sick of Indianapolis whom she visited and aided for some years past."

The care of the sick in hospitals was another field of charitable endeavor which the early Sisters desired to undertake. This was an important part of the work of the Community in France and the Sisters in Indiana hoped to carry on this noble apostolate.

When they learned in 1849 that the people of Terre Haute were contemplating building a hospital, and that they hoped to have Sisters in charge of it, Mother Theodore wrote to Bishop Bouvier:

Some time ago I heard that the people of Terre Haute intend to build a hospital and that they hope to have our Sisters in charge of it. If this news is true it could be the most precious occasion of doing good. It is impossible to say how much good we might do in fulfilling this portion of our Holy Rules, but it would be absolutely out of the question to undertake this work unless our dear Superiors of Ruille would furnish us with the means. We should require two or three Sisters formed by Sister Athanasius or by some one who understands how to run a hospital. It seems to me that it would be easier for our good Mother to find us a person thus qualified than persons to teach. I am confident that if you ask for this we should obtain it.14

13. Diary, February 9, 1881.
The request was not granted, and it was years before the plans for a hospital in Terre Haute were carried into effect. In 1856 Father Bessonies, pastor of St. John's, Indianapolis, was desirous that the Sisters of Providence purchase the Ray House, a hotel building, and convert it into a hospital. The price of $20,000, however, was too high, and, much as they desired to have a hospital, the Sisters found it "impossible to pay for it and make such an expensive beginning." 15

It was not until 1860 that another opportunity of this kind presented itself. At this time some of the most influential citizens of Indianapolis advised Mother Mary Cecilia to apply for a newly erected and unoccupied hospital building and they promised to use every influence to obtain it for her. Concerning the deliberation of this question the Community records read:

The question was, shall we apply for the building? Are we prepared to commence works of mercy in this field of our vocation? If we make the attempt we must begin with nothing, trusting Providence entirely .... The Sisters were informed that the Bishop gave his consent ... To conduct a hospital somewhere has been a desideratum with the Community for many years, and the Councillors caught the feeble prospect for having one with the eagerness of long desire. 17

The Sisters applied for the vacant hospital, but were disappointed, as the City Council gave it to a group of ladies of the city who had made their application at the same time. It was turned into a refuge for abandoned women. In the same year there was thought of establish-

17. Ibid.
ing a hospital in Vincennes in the "old" College or Seminary, but this also failed to materialize because the Bishop and Dr. Baty felt it could not be supported; "there would be many poor, but not enough rich to pay for it."

When the Civil War broke out the following year the opportunity finally arrived to care for the sick in the hospitals. The Sisters of Providence were not called upon to serve on the field of battle, but they were asked to take charge of the City Hospital in Indianapolis which had been turned into a military hospital. On May 15, 1861 Mother Mary Cecilia records in her Diary; "I go to Indianapolis to see about the offer we have to take care of the soldiers in the hospital." Two days later she again writes: "I return from Indianapolis. The hospital is put under our charge. The wretched condition of the soldiers is such that the authorities are most anxious to see the Sisters arrive to take care of the sick."

This hospital which the Sisters were urgently requested to take was the same one which had been refused them the year before. A month after the Sisters took charge the Indianapolis Daily Journal in an editorial, June 18, 1861, states:

Providence sometimes turns our most foolish acts into real blessings, as it often confounds our wisest into follies. Our City Hospital is a striking illustration. When it was commenced there was no need of it. By the time it was completed it was abandoned .... It seemed likely to turn out a nuisance so gross as to justify its destruction and make it necessary to spend a few hundred dollars to tear down what it cost $30,000

18. Ibid., 42.
19. Mother Mary Cecilia, Diary.
to erect. But the war came and with it the gathering of forces and its accompanying evils and sickness. There were but very inadequate accommodations in the camp for the sick; none, in fact, at the time. The City Hospital seemed a special providence, sent in the very nick of time. It was exactly what was most needed. The frail, damp structures of the camp could protect the sick but little better than tents; and the dry, clean, airy bed chambers that cure far better than medicine, were out of the question. The City Hospital could supply all, and was of the best construction.

The breaking out of measles in the State encampment was the first demonstration of its necessity. The surgeons of that encampment, Drs. Kitchen and Jameson speedily prepared for use and organized a hospital force under the supervision of the Sisters of Providence, Terre Haute, who gave their invaluable services, as those associations always do, without pay, purely in discharge of high Christian duty. An appeal to our ladies of the city supplied it with an abundance of excellent bed-clothing, towels, and other necessary articles. The Sisters took charge of the cooking, cleaning, washing, and general housekeeping of the establishment, and most admirably have they performed their unpleasant but noble duty. Now it is as complete in its arrangement, clean, well ventilated, well provided, and comfortable as any hospital in the country ....

There are now about sixty patients the greater part down with the measles, and not at all seriously sick. Two or three have pneumonia, supervening on measles, and are quite sick, and a few other have typhoid but are improving. Not more than two are considered dangerous. There have not been less than fifty patients in the hospital since it has been organized, and sometimes there were nearly one hundred. Altogether about three hundred have been treated since the hospital opened. All the work of the hospital is done under the care of the Sisters .... There is no waste, no dirt, no
useless hands about the establishment. Everything is substantial, clean, orderly, and complete. We doubt if the splendid hospitals of eastern cities can show a more perfect arrangement for the sick than the hastily organized hospital here.20

The Sisters themselves rejoiced greatly at the many opportunities for doing good the military hospital offered them. Here they found occasion of serving both body and soul. Sister Mary Joseph wrote to France in 1863 concerning the new work:

For souls I think the war is good. It reanimates the faith of our young men, and I cannot tell you how many of them have prepared themselves for the combat as true Christians. We have charge of another hospital in Indiana; a hundred poor patients were crowded into a large hall, and the ladies of the vicinity went from time to time to see them. But the poor patients were so badly cared for, and had become so indifferent and so hardened, that the convalescents joked and sang while their companions were dying around them.21

Two years later she again writes:

I passed four days in Indianapolis, to the great joy of a number of novices who are there on mission. The superior of the hospital is one of my novices -- how did that make me feel! With her I visited the wards. There were two hundred patients and they expect fifty more. One of our Sisters at the hospital thought they had baptized and converted sixty soldiers.22

The Sisters who served in the Military Hospital and whose devotedness won them so much praise were: Sister Athanasius (Fogarty), Sister Eugenia (Gorman), Sister Mary Francis (Guthneck), Sister Mary

22. Ibid., 1865.
Rose (Donaghue), and Sister Mathilda (Swimley). The generous, cheerfulness with which they sacrificed themselves for the soldiers called forth reiterated praise from Drs. Kitchen and Jameson who were in charge of the hospital. In one glowing tribute the Sisters are referred to as "those meek and worthy women - the Sisters of Providence;" and years later, when applications for pensions were being made at Washington, these grateful doctors gave the highest recommendation possible concerning the work of the Sisters.

Many of the people of Indianapolis who learned of the splendid work of the Sisters through the columns of the daily papers interested themselves in their needs. The ladies of the city purchased furniture for their apartments, and when it was known that the Sisters had to go into the city to St. John's Academy to attend Mass an appeal was made to the citizens to provide them with a horse and buggy. This appeal appeared in the form of an open letter in the editorial page of the Indianapolis Sentinel, February 25, 1862.

Editor Sentinel:
I consider it a fact worthy of notice that the Sisters of Providence, who have charge of the Military Hospital, are not furnished with a conveyance to and from the city. A carriage is furnished them on Sundays, it is true, but the religious duties of the Sisters make it necessary that they should come into town every day, and it is a crying shame that they should be allowed to walk. I can safely say that the greater part of the way to the hospital the mud is knee deep.

23. Indianapolis Daily Journal, August 16, 1861, Vol. XI.
A small one horse spring wagon would be of infinite use; and where so much money is spent, why not a little be invested for this good purpose? The Sisters are uncomplaining, and for that reason, their comfort should be more carefully looked after. I would be glad if you would call attention to the matter through the columns of the Sentinel.

Respectfully,

L. D. 25

The most widely known among the Sisters who served at the Military Hospital was the Superior, Sister Athanasius. Her name, it is said, became a household word in Indianapolis and is inseparably linked with the success of the hospital. So great was her zeal and so indefatigable her labor, that she accomplished as much as two or three others. Her nights as well as her days were spent in labor, and the attending physicians never ceased singing her praises. Besides serving in the hospital Sister Athanasius frequently visited the contagious cases that were housed in flat-boats on the river. These trips were usually made at night and were extremely dangerous as she could reach the boat only by passing over a plank placed on logs. It is related that on one occasion a poor victim was so glad to see her that he offered to shake hands. Without hesitating she grasped the scaly hand, afterward declaring that she would rather have been stricken herself than refuse that comfort to a dying soldier. On returning from one of these trips she was always careful to remove any cause of exposure in a little "fumigating camp" which she had improvised for herself.

26. Geography, 1, 263
27. Literature in the Community.
Another outlet for her zeal was the care of the sick among the Confederate prisoners at Indianapolis. On the occasion of a visit to the prison the following dialogue took place.

"Sister, don't you know that we are rebels? See the gray."
Sister smiled. "You're a wounded soldier, and a Christian, I hope."
"What is a Christian, Sister?"
"One who believes in Christ, the Son of God. You believe in Him, do you not?"
"Why, - er - do you, Sister?"
"Of course I do."
"Well, then, if you do, I do too." - He was growing faint.
Sister said, "Have you ever been baptized?"
He did not know, but he wished to be a Christian, and insisted that he would be a "mighty good one" when he "got out." Sister lost no time in giving him baptism, as his life was ebbing fast. He then fixed his eyes upon her with a bright smile and said, "Good-bye, good friend. I must obey orders. I guess it - is - this way - out."

This is but one of the many stories which are told of the devotedness and heroism of Sister Athanasius.

Besides the Military Hospital at Indianapolis, the Sisters of Providence also took charge of a temporary hospital at Vincennes. The Community annals relate that at the camp formed near Vincennes to receive recruits, some of the men fell sick of the most virulent contagious diseases, which made it necessary to care for them apart, and that the Bishop asked for two Sisters to take charge of the stricken soldiers. For this purpose Sister St. Felix (Buchanan) and Sister

28. Tradition in the Community.
Sophy (Glenn) were called from their respective establishments to be employed according to the request of the Bishop. The Indianapolis Daily Journal of July 23, 1861 makes the comment:

"We learn that the Sisters of Charity Sisters of Providence with a kindness characteristic of their order, have offered their commodious building as a hospital for the Vincennes regiment. They also volunteer their services as nurses. Such conduct will be remembered and appreciated by the soldiers."30

The Emergency Hospital was opened about the middle of April and closed at the end of July. Here the Sisters worked under the most unfavorable and even dangerous conditions because the citizens of Vincennes for a long time were so terrorized by fear of contagion that they left the Sisters absolutely alone, and it became difficult for them to get supplies and almost impossible to get help of any kind. After the first terror somewhat subsided, the people of Vincennes became more courageous and gradually came to the relief of the Sisters heroines.

At the close of the Civil War when the Sisters were released from service at the Military Hospital they decided to continue their works of charity in Indianapolis by opening a home for invalids and homeless soldiers. An institution of this kind had long been desired by the Catholic people of the city. The Community chronicler relates:

For two years the Rev. Augustine Bessonies, pastor of St. John's church, has asked the Sisters to begin a charitable institution in Indianapolis where sick persons who have no homes could be received as single men, girls who live out, and all

such persons who board and have no regular homes. When these are taken sick they are truly destitute, even if they have lodgings they have none to give them the attention of a nurse. The frequent applications that the Reverend Father receives from such persons made him wish the Sisters of Providence would undertake the Infirmary on the plan of a hospital, like those kept by other Communities in other cities. 31

The annals of the Community state that there was little deliberation over the matter "since all were so eager to take up this work of mercy." The new institution made its humble beginning in an old frame house located near the church which the citizens furnished after the Community had it repaired. Sister Athanasius was placed in charge of the new Infirmary which was known as St. John's Home for Invalids. 34

When the Sisters opened the Infirmary they hoped the house would take in sufficient income so that they could shelter gratis those who were entirely destitute. All were not to pay alike; the means of each one was to be taken into consideration, and charges were to be made accordingly. Unfortunately, the hopes for the success of the Infirmary were not realized. It did not support itself, and by 1868 a new house was badly needed. In 1869 the Infirmary was closed, but there were so many appeals from the clergy and people that the Sisters took a house belonging to the bishop and opened it for a temporary Infirmary on condition that they would be aided in

32. Ibid., 118.
33. List of the Establishments, 20.
34. Ibid., 22.
35. Acts op. cit.
financing the necessary repairs and in maintaining it. As those whose judgment and wishes the Sisters respected continued to urge the importance of this undertaking, the Superiors began to look for a building site and to make plans for a new Infirmary. It was the opinion of Bishop St. Palais that charitable works should be supported by alms. The Sisters, therefore, began an adventure of begging, and three months later they purchased the Fletcher Property consisting of three acres for $26,500. There was much debate over the property and the price, but it seemed more suitable than any other available. Succeeding events, however, made it impossible to build and in 1873 the Little Sisters of the Poor purchased the Fletcher Property.

When Mother AnastASie began her soliciting in Terre Haute for this Infirmary she met with unexpected success. The first day she obtained $1,500 in three hours and the Diary relates: "Many of our friends seemed particularly pleased that we were 'Sisters of Charity;' they had thought of us previously only as devoted to the interests of education and were not aware that the more apparent works of charity came within our sphere." But when the citizens of Terre Haute reflected that their donations were to be used for an Infirmary in Indianapolis, they urged upon Mother Anastasie their desire to have a hospital for their own city. Mr. Rose who had already

36. Ibid. 154.
37. Ibid. 163.
38. Diary, March 20, 1873.
39. Ibid. April 3, 1869.
40. Ibid.
subscribed $1,000 promised to give $12,000 and five lots on condition that the money be used for a hospital in Terre Haute. The others who had already signed subscriptions promised to double or triple the amount on the same conditions. After careful deliberation the proposal was accepted and preparations were begun for a hospital in Terre Haute. On April 9, 1869 Mother Anastasie presented her plan for a hospital and on September 20, the laying of the cornerstone took place. It is described in the Diary:

The ceremony commenced about two in the afternoon; processions were formed by the different associations, also by the pupils of the Catholic schools who marched from St. Joseph's church to the site of the hospital, pausing a little while before the house of Mr. Rose, while the band played as a slight manifestation of gratitude due to this most liberal benefactor of the hospital.

From this time until the completion of the hospital in 1872 generous efforts were headed by the friends of the institution to raise funds for it. Fairs and sales were held not only in Terre Haute but in the nearby towns, for these people looked upon the hospital as an important civic enterprise and when the blessing of the hospital took place on June 30, 1872, crowds came from Indianapolis and the surrounding country to attend the ceremony. A month later on July 19, the hospital was formally opened to the public.

42. Ibid.
43. Diary.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
The first months in the new hospital were busy ones for the Sisters who opened it. The Diary for Christmas Eve 1872 reads: "The Sisters at the Hospital have their hands too full of work to leave their posts even for a few days." Little, however, is recorded in detail concerning the occupations of the hospital Sisters other than they cared for many poor and destitute patients. The hospital Register gives the names, nationality, occupation, and disease, etc. of each patient and indicates that the great majority of sick were from the middle or poorer classes of society.

In the panic of 1873 the Community as well as those who had pledged support to the hospital suffered financial embarrassment and when the maintenance of the institution with its large number of charity cases fell entirely upon the Community it became too great a liability to meet. Various plans for changing the use of the building were considered, including that of using it as an industrial training school for the older orphan girls of the diocese, and in 1875 Bishop St. Palais having found another use for the girls' orphanage in Vincennes, decided to remove all the orphan girls to Terre Haute. Providence Hospital was thus converted into an orphanage and existed as such until 1917.

The transfer of the orphans to Terre Haute was an important event in the history of the city. Writing to one of her sisters, Sister

46. Register of Invalids at Providence Hospital.
Mary Joseph depicts the touching scene:

The Bishop had asked the Franciscans Fathers to announce the coming of the children and procure them provisions for a week. The train was due at two o'clock. I went to the depot with Sister Natalie, a little French Sister greatly loved at Terre Haute, where she is Superior. The procession composed of the parochial school children, the sodalities preceded by their banners, a band with drums and horns arrived a quarter of an hour in advance. The waiting crowd was dense but silent. At last the train came — two long cars each containing seats for a hundred persons, from which looked forth at the spectators numbers of little heads with quilted bonnets of brown merino. The oldest was not fourteen, and there were some only two and three years.

Three omnibuses were waiting for the babies. The others were to take their places in the procession and march to their new abode. Suddenly I saw one of our workmen who is large and strong carrying a little girl in each arm; quickly a gentleman followed his example. Then the ladies seeing there was no objection carried each a child to the omnibuses. One of our friends, a banker, with a whip in his hand kept back the crowd. Eyes were wet, and I saw tears flowing down the cheeks of many, the men wiping them away with the backs of their hands.

....

Arrived at the asylum, we found Sister Basilide, Sister Joachim, and some fifty persons awaiting us on the balcony. The most respectable ladies of the city were there, among them many non-Catholics. Two cartloads of provisions had already arrived, and a third came after dinner. The ladies had laid covers and served the tables. Turkey, chicken, hams, and sausages had been sent. A smoking roast lamb for the little lambs of the flock was the gift of Mrs. Hulman, and were cheese, biscuits, pies, spongecakes, almonds, canned oysters, an orange, and also a cornucopia
of gilt paper filled with sugar plums for each little orphan. How happy they were! God often makes His Will known through events, and in the circumstances attending the failure of their institutional charities the Sisters of Providence discerned the Divine Will directing their labors wholly towards the apostolate of education. It became more and more evident that the paramount need of the time was for religious teachers as pastors everywhere were begging for Sisters to take charge of their schools. Therefore, when Bishop Chatard in 1880 proposed to the Community that it take charge of the hospital he was opening in Indianapolis the Sisters felt obliged to decline. It was not without regret, however, that they relinquished the hope of fulfilling those points of their Rule which provide for hospital work; but the Will of God appeared to them clear - the work of the Sisters of Providence was to be an apostolate of education.

CHAPTER VII

THE APOSTOLATE OF EDUCATION

Almost from the first moment of their arrival in Indiana the Sisters of Providence sought to take up their work as religious teachers. When they arrived at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, October 22, 1840, and saw the dense forest and the complete isolation of their situation they wondered how they were going to begin the apostolate of education for which they had come so far. They came expecting to find a school and children to teach, and they were dismayed to find nothing but a wilderness miles removed from the centers of civilization. Their coming, however, fitted into the plans of an All-Wise Providence for their woodland convent was to become the cradle of scores of foundations throughout Indiana and other states. Only a few months after their arrival the Sisters were able to open a boarding school which became one of the finest institutions of its kind, and a year later they began their first mission at Jasper, Indiana.

Fourteen foundations throughout Indiana, including two orphanages, were made before the death of the venerated Foundress in 1856.

The Sisters of Providence were pioneers in the field of organized and systematized education in Indiana. At the time of their coming there was only one Catholic school taught by religious in Indiana, and this was

1. Mother Mary Cecilia, MS, 44 - 45
2. Letter of Mother Theodore to Father Kundeck, Dec.9, 1841.
3. Clementine de la Corbinère, Une Femme Apôtre, 247.
conducted at Vincennes by the Sisters of Charity of Emmitsburg, who promised Bishop Brute they would remain only until he obtained his own sisters for his diocese. Their school at Vincennes was given over to the Sisters of Providence in 1843. From France the Sisters of Providence brought with them a definite system of education, and Mother Theodore, who was a recognized educator having been awarded a medal by the French Academy while she was teaching at Soulaines in 1839, laid an excellent foundation for the schools in Indiana. The two decades after her death witness an important period of expansion. In 1846 the Foundress obtained a Charter which gave legal status to the Academic Institute at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and empowered the Community "to ordain, establish ... as they deemed necessary for the welfare of the Seminary; and to do all other acts for the welfare of said Seminary." This clause has often been interpreted as giving the early Academy the right to confer degrees but, whether this is true or not, is not of great importance as the original Charter was amended in 1873 so that there was no question of the power to grant collegiate degrees.

The said Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods under the provisions of this section and of the acts to which this is an amendment shall have the power to provide for and maintain schools, and to confer academic honors and collegiate and academic degrees in all such schools; and to provide and maintain schools and asylums for the care and support of orphans; and hospitals for the wants of the sick and such other charities as may be deemed proper.

Letters of Sister St. Francis to Mother Theodore in France, July 1843.
6. Community Archives.
Although the original Charter showed the foresightedness of Mother Theodore in visioning the growth of the Academic Institute, the amended Charter was of greater importance because it legalized the establishment of new schools throughout the state.

When the Sisters came to Indiana in 1840 it was still a pioneer state, but by the time of the Foundress' death, in 1856, an era of progress had set in. Steam boats and railroads began to connect important centers, and many of the little towns of the state grew to be cities of importance. The entire West was being transformed; the age of pioneering gave place to an age of industry. Many religious changes also took place, and one of the most important of these was the awakening of interest in Catholic education. Before 1856 few parishes had schools. This was frequently due to poverty but more often it was the result of the idea then prevalent that the public school was sufficient. It took the preaching of missionaries such as Father Arnold Damen, S.J. to awaken the pastors and the Catholics of the West to a sense of the danger that would result to the Faith if schools without religion would prevail.

Father A. Damen, S.J. wrote numerous letters to the Superiors of St. Mary-of-the-Woods begging them to accept schools in places where he had just finished giving a mission. His interest in the Sisters of Providence dated from the time he gave a retreat to the Sisters at St. Mary-of-the-Woods in 1852. Upon his recommendation several schools were opened, but

8. Letters of Rev. A. Damen, S.J. in drawer of Archives marked "Letters from Clergy".
9. Mother Mary Cecilia, Diary.
many had to be refused because of lack of Sisters. From Lockport, Ill. he wrote to Mother Euphrasie September 24, 1880:

I am giving a mission in this place and there is no Catholic school here. I have persuaded the pastor, Rev. Dr. McGovern, to make an offer to your Community and he has agreed to give you his house, which is 40 feet front and 80 feet deep and two stories high - too large for himself. He will also give you the old church which can easily be converted into a school; he will also leave you his furniture. This place is 38 miles from Chicago, 4 miles from Joliet on the Alton and Chicago Road; the inhabitants are well to do people and the farmers around are well off so that I do not doubt but that you will have a very flourishing school here. Even the Protestants are liberal; I have no doubt they will send their children to your school. You will have to take both boys and girls, have music, etc. - three Sisters would do at the beginning.... I would advise you by all means to take this offer.10

Again in 1884 the zealous missionary pleads the cause of two other pastors:

I have just concluded a mission in Savana and Elizabeth, Ill. These missions were very successful and I exhorted the people very strongly to get Catholic schools, the more so as the pastor told me that your Community has promised to accept the place if the people would build a house and school, so they will commence at once to build, and I hope by next spring you will be able to send Sisters to these two places. The pastor, Father Autel, is a good pious priest who will do all for the comfort of the Sisters.11

Father Damen's zeal was often contagious and on more than one occasion a mission which had been refused was taken because of his persuasive powers.

This was the case with Valparaiso, Indiana, which was refused in 1869 and accepted in 1872. The Diary relates: "The opinion expressed by Father

Damen, S.J. concerning Valparaiso and its worthy pastor, as well as the advantages he foresaw for the Community in having a good establishment in this locality, caused the former decision to be reversed. On some occasions he announced the coming of the Sisters even before they had acceded to his request. Concerning the mission of Lockport he wrote:

"I have announced to the congregation that you are coming and some young ladies who were going to South Bend have given up the idea and will wait for you." Father Damen was indefatigable in his efforts to further the work of the parochial schools, and whenever it was possible his requests were compiled with by the Sisters of Providence.

During Mother Theodore's time and for many years after, the educational work of the Sisters of Providence was confined to Indiana as Bishop Hailandiere felt he had brought the Sisters from France to serve his own diocese and he strenuously opposed their going elsewhere. His successor, Bishop St. Palais, was of the same mind and the Sisters found it impossible to oppose his wishes. As early as 1844, when the diocese of Chicago was erected, the school at St. Francisville was abandoned at the express wish of the Bishop because it was outside the Vincennes diocese. It had been established but a year and was just beginning to flourish when it had to be closed.

Often the Community found it exceedingly painful to refuse a request for an establishment, as was the case in regard to Bishop Martin who

12. Diary.
repeatedly requested Sisters of Providence for his new diocese of Natchitoches. He had been such a staunch friend of the Community in the "days of trial", and his letters pleaded his cause in such a touching way that Mother Theodore found it difficult to refuse him. The letter written shortly after his consecration shows his great esteem for the Sisters of Providence and reveals the heart of a true Shepherd. He writes:

My first need is for priests .... my second need is one and the same thing, the education of youth .... I wish to place a Christian education within the reach of all; I wish to multiply Christian schools within my diocese for the salvation of the lambs of my numerous flock, for the salvation of the poor little creatures born in error. I shall have Jesuits, I shall have Brothers for the boys even if I have to go to Rome; but, the poor little girls, who will have pity on their souls? Who will snatch them from the detestable public schools where a premature corruption stifles in them the first germs of faith? During my retreat before consecration, and on the day of my consecration, it was you that I thought of, my dear daughter, to have a healthy and strong branch of that tree which you have planted, which has grown up amidst tribulation, and which God has so much blessed.15

Naturally it was painful to refuse such a request. Writing to Bishop Bouvier of Le Mans, in the hope that Sisters might be sent from Ruille to Bishop Martin, Mother Theodore says: "The Bishop of Vincennes does not like to see us leave his diocese; however, he has left us free to do as we wish for Bishop Martin."16 On another occasion she writes: "There is no prospect of going elsewhere; His Lordship is deaf in that ear."17

16. Letter of Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, April 20, 1854.
17. Ibid., Jan. 1, 1852.
After Mother Theodore's death applications for Sisters became more numerous, but there was no thought of going outside of the diocese as long as religious teachers were needed in Indiana. In 1866 Mother Mary Cecilia writing a refusal to Bishop Elder says: "Besides, we are obliged to refuse applications in our own diocese, and as long as we can find locations within our own limits we will not go to distant places, for, as our houses must be visited yearly the inconvenience of travel for religious makes one prefer a nearer location."\(^{18}\) In 1857 the division of the diocese of Vincennes automatically placed many of the first and most important schools of the Sisters of Providence in Indiana in the Fort Wayne diocese. It was impossible to raise any objection to this, but the idea that the Sisters of Providence should not go far afield persisted for many years longer. The first foundation outside of the state was not made until 1875 when a school was opened in Saginaw City, Michigan.\(^{19}\) This, however, did not mean a change of policy. As late as October 17, 1883 the Diary states: "We consulted the Bishop about making a foundation at Lincoln, Nebraska .... The Bishop does not think it advisable to send Sisters such a distance so long as our Rules are not approved by Rome. Hence we decline."\(^{20}\)

During the years from the Foundress' death in 1856 until the celebration of the Community's Golden Jubilee in 1890, the Sisters at St. Mary-of-the-Woods received requests for Sisters from all parts of the

19. List of the Establishments
Appendix. 9.
20. Diary
United States as well as from Canada and England. The records of the Community are a proof that this was the great period of Catholic awakening to educational needs. Sometimes as many as four applications for foundations were received in one week.21 These requests came from all directions from Kentucky, from Texas, from California, from New York, and from Canada. The most unusual appeal came from West Granstead, Horsham, Sussex, England. The priest, Rev. J. M. Denis, explains that he is a missionary priest in England, a native of Brittany, and he is anxious to have American Sisters of Providence because they speak English. He asks for a "colony of Sisters" to take charge of a parish school, an orphanage, and to visit the sick.22 Needless to say, the request could not be granted. The applications which were hardest to refuse were those which came from nearby places. A scarcity of Sisters was the usual reason for a refusal; often, however, the pastor was promised Sisters for the following year. The record for September 1, 1881 states:

We are again compelled to disappoint Rev. H. Pier, who came to St. Mary's a few days ago to engage our services for the present scholastic year. The earnestness of his request and his generosity in proposing to vacate his own dwelling, made it all the more painful to disappoint the Reverend Father and his good people who are so well disposed to make every sacrifice to have their children placed under the care of the Sisters to receive a religious education .... We promised Sisters for September, 1882, if he could wait.23

This illustrates the attitude of the Community toward the many requests which came for Sisters to take charge of parochial schools which were being

22. Circulars and Important Letters, I
23. Acts, op.cit., 10
opened in every part of the country.

During the years 1856 to 1890 the Sisters of Providence opened thirty-one schools in Indiana and twenty schools in other states.\(^{24}\) The first establishment accepted after the Foundress' death was a German mission at New Alsace, Indiana, which was taken at great inconvenience after the mission assignments had been made at the annual retreat in August, 1856, because the pastor, Father Pickers, begged for Sisters in the hope that they might be the means of uniting the factions in his congregation. Two years after the school was opened it had to be closed because of the "incorrigible wickedness" of the people who were placed under an interdict by the Bishop. The pastor was obliged to leave the congregation in order to punish the people, and, though the people expressed regret at their going, the Sisters likewise had to abandon them.\(^{25}\)

The year following Mother Theodore's death, 1857, the schools at Washington and New Albany, Indiana were opened. In both these places the religious instruction of the children had been almost entirely neglected and the Sisters were happy to take schools where there was so much opportunity of doing good. The establishment at Washington was taken to fulfill a promise made by Mother Theodore to Father Chassé who wanted Sisters to open a school where boarders of the poorer class could be taken so that the girls who wished to come and live with the Sisters until they made their First Communion could do so, and parents who could not afford to send their children to the more expensive Academies would have a Catholic boarding

\(^{24}\) List of the Establishments. Appendix 9.

\(^{25}\) Acts, op.cit., I, 4.
school for their daughters. When the school opened there were ninety-four pupils including two boarders, and in the lower grades the boys as well as the girls were taught. The zealous pastor did not reside at Washington but came every Sunday and twice a week, on Monday and Thursday to say Mass for the special benefit of the Sisters. As in all the early schools, the sisters had many privations both spiritual and temporal, but they rejoiced in the place because it offered a splendid field for their zeal and an excellent occasion to fulfill that important duty of contributing to the sanctification of the neighbor. Although the school flourished it was necessary to close the mission from 1869 to 1871 because of the wretched condition in which the Sisters had to live. In 1881 the Community erected a new convent and from that time on until the present the school at Washington has prospered.

Concerning New Albany the records state: "The exposed condition of the Catholic children in the free school was a powerful inducement for the council to accept." The school here was opened for both the American and German congregation and consisted of four distinct divisions: two for girls and two for boys, one American and one German each. Six Sisters were sent to open this establishment and "the higher branches and accomplishments were to be taught" as well as the ordinary subjects.

For many years the school at New Albany was one of the best in the diocese.

28. Ibid. 8.
29. List of the Establishments, 9.
In the spring of 1858 the school at Cannelton was opened, and in August of the same year, another was taken at Lafayette. Although the people at Cannelton were very poor a good school was opened, and besides their regular school work the Sisters taught reading, writing, and Catechism to the factory girls during their evening recreation twice a week. At Lafayette the Sisters were greatly desired by both Catholics and Protestants due to the fact that a number of the most important ladies of the town had been educated at the Academic Institute at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. The common school opened on August 27, 1858, with one hundred children, and the high school made its beginning in the Sisters' parlor. If there had been more room there would have been a large high school at the outset, but the Sisters could receive only as many as they could accommodate. Bishop Leurs of the Fort Wayne diocese was greatly interested in Lafayette and two years after the first school was opened he insisted that the Sisters of Providence erect a larger building. The Community records state:

The Council met to consider the request of Bishop Leurs to build in Lafayette. It is a year since he insisted that we build on a lot near where the new Church is to be erected. He promises to deed the lot to the Community. We have refused repeatedly because we are not prepared to go to the expense of putting up a building. The Bishop came himself to St. Mary's to give all his reasons why it is necessary to build now. He gives his word that we will not be asked to contribute from here; all he asks is that we consent to sell our house in Lafayette, the proceeds to be applied to the

30. Ibid., 11.
new building .... He offers to give all the old material from the old Seminary (once a Protestant school-house) that stands on the lot and is to be demolished. He says the bricks are good nearly all the lumber is still good, which if not put to use will be damaged by lying waste. This time it seems impossible to refuse the Bishop without rupture with him and the people of Lafayette.31

In conformity with Bishop Leur's wishes a plan was formulated whereby money would be raised to finance the new building. Mr. Owen Ball, a pioneer of Lafayette, was appointed by the Bishop to take care of the matter. By soliciting subscriptions from generous and interested citizens, by selling scholarships, and holding fairs and other benefits, sufficient money was raised to begin the new school.32 When completed it became one of the finest boarding schools of the Community in which the daughters of many old families of Lafayette and the adjoining country received the cultural education for which the Sisters of Providence were noted.

St. John's Indianapolis, was the only establishment opened in 1859. It was very important, however, because it became one of the largest schools in the diocese and was the first school of the Sisters of Providence in the capital of the state. Through the columns of the Daily State Sentinel and interesting welcome was extended to the Sisters by one of the prominent ladies of the city.

Mr. Editor:- In a few days we will have among us a branch of the order of Sisters of Providence, and if you will permit, I would be glad to express through your columns, the heartfelt welcome that awaits them. They have now established missions

in all the principal towns in the state, and though Indianapolis is the last to welcome them, I feel sure she will not be the least in appreciation of their worth. Some four or five years ago your correspondent had the happiness of being a pupil at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and though the time she spent there was short, she will ever look back to it as the brightest spot in her memory. 33

The pastor of St. John's parish, Rev. Augustine Bessonies, who for years had begged for Sisters, had erected a substantial building for a school and convent, but the Community provided the furniture. Two separate schools were opened: a common school where only the Catholic children were taught, and an Academy for Protestants and Catholics who would not send their children to mix with the poor in the common schools. 34 School opened at St. John's on the first Monday of September with eighty pupils but in a few days the enrollment was increased to a hundred. At the very beginning a number of boarding pupils entered and by the end of the year the number had so greatly increased that it was necessary to enlarge the building. Before the end of the second year two spacious apartments, which opened into one another by folding doors so that they could be used as a recital hall, were added.

The years of the Civil War were interesting ones at St. John's. The location of the school in the heart of the town caused it to be used as a stopping off station for the Sisters who were delayed in Indianapolis en route to a distant hospital or battlefield. On one occasion when Father Bessonies could not prevail upon a party of thirty Sisters of Charity to

33. Scrap Book I, p. C.
34. List of the Establishments, 13 - 14.
venture through the crowded streets to the school, he hurried to St. Johns and with characteristic ardor said to the Sisters: "Quick! Quick! take supper to thirty Sisters of Charity who are waiting at the depot." In the shortest time possible the meal was ready, and two of the Sisters, aided by some of the resident students, joyfully carried it and served the thirty Sisters who were waiting in the little old station not far from the school. The presence of eight thousand volunteer troops, who were stationed at Indianapolis, added much to the excitement of the times. It is related that whenever a parade or drill passed the school the pupils marched outside in perfect order to view the demonstration, and after it returned in perfect order to their school-rooms. Thus lessons in patriotism and discipline were simultaneously imparted.

By the end of the war the enrollment had so increased to such an extent that a new building was greatly needed, and in 1870 the Sisters of Providence erected a fine spacious Academy on Meridian Street with accommodations for seventy-five resident students besides a large number of day students. This Academy was the elite school of post-Civil War Indianapolis and was attended by the daughters of the city's best families. Here the same course of studies was followed as at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and the same distinguished education was imparted. A newspaper of the time states:

This Academy of the Sisters of Providence has now two hundred and sixty pupils, but if the usual average

35. Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee, booklet in drawer of Archives marked "Community History".
36. Ibid., 11.
37. Scrap Book, Article in Indianapolis Star, I, 93.
keeps up, in the spring the Sisters will have over three hundred scholars .... Sister Ann Cecilia is deserving of great credit and praise for her energy and tact in managing and augmenting this school, which is a credit to her and the holy church she represents.38

Besides their teaching at St. John's the Sisters were active in many other works of zeal in the parish. They organized the Children of Mary and the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin and gave instructions after Vespers every Sunday. Before High Mass they taught Catechism to a class of parish boys who assembled in the old school-house near the church. Even in the evening they devoted an hour to some of the working girls who wished to improve themselves in reading and writing.39

No new establishments were opened during 1880, and only three schools were opened in Indiana during the Civil War: Ferdinand and Logootee in 1862, and Holy Trinity, Evansville, in 1863.40 Both at Ferdinand and Logootee, where conditions were very similar, the Sisters were cordially welcomed by the Catholic population. Ferdinand, the Community records state, was so thoroughly Catholic that it was almost old world in its outlook. The establishment here is remembered in particular for its "sewing school of ornamental needlework" which was very popular "as some hardly knew how to hold the needle for plain sewing." After five successful years the school at Ferdinand was given over to the Benedictine Sisters who had established their Motherhouse in that place in 1867. 41

40. List of the Establishments, 12.
41. Ibid., 18.
The school at Logootee continues to the present day.

At the end of the Civil War St. Rose Academy, Vincennes, a secondary boarding school, was opened at the request of Bishop St. Palais who was anxious to have a school where the duties of housekeeping would be taught along with the regular subjects. According to the Bishop's plan, the time of the young girl would be divided between her studies and practical work -- she would help with the cooking, washing, and all the minor employments of the house. The Prospectus issued at the time thus states the purpose of the Academy:

The design of this Institution is, to accommodate Catholic parents who desire to have their daughters well instructed in the principles of religion, and who wish to give them a good English education, in connection with habits of industry by which they will acquire a practical knowledge of the various employments that make up the occupation of females within the home circle. 42

The Bishop believed that an institution of this kind would be beneficial to girls who would later have to work in a family. Only the insistence of their good Bishop caused the Sisters to undertake this school and the Community records state: "In a country where equality of rank is the foundation of society, a school as this secondary one was not very certain of success." 43 Although this boarding school at St. Rose was not a success, the contrary was true of the high school for day students which was kept in the same building. Here the regular course of studies was

42. Drawer of Archives marked "Community History". Appendix 10.
43. Lists of the Establishments, 18 - 21.
followed and all the accomplishments of the time were taught. It, too, was one of the first rank schools of the Community.

At the time St. Rose Academy was opened a school in the German parish was also started with one Sister who went every morning from St. Rose and returned there every evening. At this time, too, the boys' school in Vincennes was taken over by the Sisters of Providence. 44

Besides the schools in Vincennes only two other schools were opened in the years immediately following the Civil War: Aurora in 1866, and Jeffersonville in 1869. Both these missions were very poor. At Aurora, which was twenty-four miles from Cincinnati, the Catholic population was entirely composed of the working class, and as a great part of the population at Jeffersonville was black the Sisters opened, besides their regular school, a class for negroes on Sundays and taught them reading, writing, and religion - "their success was their recompense". 45

The decade from 1870 to 1890 witnessed a great expansion in the schools of the Sisters of Providence. Twenty schools were opened in Indiana, and during this period the Community began to spread into other states. During these years four new schools were opened in the nearby city of Terre Haute, three in Indianapolis, and the remainder in the more distant towns: Chesterton, Richmond, Valparaiso, Seymour, Connersville, Peru, Delphi, Columbus (re-opened), Hammond, Greencastle, Frenchtown; Assumption, Evansville; and St. Ann, Lafayette. 46 The school at Seymour,

44. Acts, op. cit. I
45. List of Establishments, 25-27
46. Ibid. Appendix. 9.
which was opened in 1873, flourished under many difficulties. The town was exceedingly bigoted and in the early 90's was infested with A.P.A.'s who frequently exposed the Sisters to much ridicule. In 1875 the Superior wrote in a letter to St. Mary's: "The Trustees of the free school go to each individual whom they think likely to send their children to us and offer every inducement to send them to the free school telling them what fine teachers they have so that those who intended coming to us have all gone to the free school." In spite of persecution, the school at Seymour continued and much good was accomplished in the vicinity. Green castle was another town in which prejudice and bigotry had to be combated because of the number of Protestants and also because the town had been for years the seat of De Pauw University, one of the most famous in Indiana. Notwithstanding the strong Protestant element the school at Greencastle opened in 1887 with one hundred and seventy pupils of whom twenty-eight advanced pupils formed a remarkably good high school.

When the Sisters of Providence returned to Columbus, Indiana, in 1878 after an absence of twenty years their work received the grateful appreciation of both pastor and people. Father Schnell, the pastor, writes: "Our school today is one month old and doing right well. The number of scholars is at present one hundred and thirty and still they continue to come. The school is indeed building itself on its own merits .... I am grateful to God for this success." After two years he again writes:

48. Letter, October 19, 1875
49. List of the Establishments, 58.
50. Letter of Father Schnell to the Superior-General at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, October 1, 1878.
"Dec Gratias! the school is not only doing well, but very well. With few exceptions we have all the Catholic children in attendance with a fair number of Protestants." In December of the same year he writes again: "Our school is a veritable blessing to our congregation. The Sisters are truly beloved by the children and no less honored and respected by their parents." The school at Columbus serves as a good example of most of the schools opened during this period. The Sisters easily won the hearts of the children and through them their parents so that in all directions immense good was accomplished.

Two other schools deserving of special attention are Frenchtown and St. Joseph's Training School, Indianapolis. Frenchtown was composed entirely of poor French settlers and the school was opened as a work of charity. St. Joseph's Training School differed from the other common and high schools in that its purpose was to provide industrial training for girls when they left the orphanage, which was usually after their First Communion. It also offered other young girls of poor families an inexpensive school in which to learn dressmaking, typewriting, shorthand, etc.

In 1875 the first establishment outside of Indiana was opened at Saginaw, Michigan. This was followed by six others in the state: Kalamazoo, in 1875; Marshall, in 1876; East Saginaw, in 1878; Fort Huron, in 1880; Ypsilanti, in 1883; and Centreline, in 1886. The pastor at

51. Ibid.
52. Ibid. December 13, 1878.
53. List of the Establishments. 63
54. Ibid., 63.
Saginaw wrote to ask for Sisters of Providence for his new school at the suggestion of Father A. Damen, S.J. The same was true of Marshall and Port Huron. In the case of each of these establishments Bishop C. H. Borges expressed great pleasure in granting the permission for the Sisters of Providence to open a school. In a reply to Rev. R. Van der Heyden, pastor of Saginaw, he wrote:

I hasten to give you my cordial approval of inviting the good Sisters of Providence to Saginaw City and congratulate you and St. Andrew's congregation upon the desire prospect of having the children of the parish under the care of such excellent religious.

The Sisters of Providence were really pioneers in the educational field in Michigan, for up to the time of their coming there were few Catholic schools in the state and the people were unaccustomed to having Sisters among them. This is perhaps the reason why the people everywhere gave them a most enthusiastic welcome. After the Community had agreed to accept the school at Port Huron the grateful pastor wrote: "Our school-house is to be finished in two weeks. The anxiety of the people to see the Sisters in their midst runs high. I hope you will pray for the success of this most necessary undertaking during your retreat."

The population in this part of Michigan was composed of Irish, German, Dutch, and Belgian Catholics; the two latter predominating. In East Saginaw even the leading Protestants of high standing showed their appreciation of having the

55. Ibid., 36 - 50
56. Letter of Bishop Borges to Father Van Der Heyden, October 9, 1874.
Sisters by enrolling their daughters in the Catholic school. 58 When, through some misunderstanding, the convent for the Sisters at Port Huron had not been furnished when the Sisters arrived the people of the city, when they learned of conditions, did everything possible to make up for the neglect. The Community records state:

Among the pupils there were many Protestants of the highest social standing who gave most gratifying tributes to the Sisters. Later, as the destitute condition of the Sisters' dwelling became known, the Catholic gentlemen of the congregation manifested their appreciation of the school by presenting large donations in cash, and presents of furniture and necessaries until the house was completely furnished. 59

When, in 1880, it became necessary to give up the school at Marshall because of warring factions in the parish, the people expressed deep regret to see the Sisters leave.

The Sisters of Marshall left July 10, 1880 and when it was known that they were not to return the good people of the place were deeply grieved as testified by the fact that a delegation of about a hundred and fifty members of the Congregation met at the Sisters' house on the eve of their departure to give their expressions of regret and assure them of a welcome if they should return. 60

The Sisters themselves were reluctant to leave the mission, but conditions made it advisable to do so. Two years after, in 1882, the people pleaded to have the Sisters back, but it was not deemed possible to have them return. 61

58. List of the Establishments, 36
59. Ibid., 46
61. Ibid., II, 13 - 14.
From the outset the Michigan schools prospered because the pastors and people took an active interest in the school work. There were three hundred children in the school at Saginaw, three hundred and seventy-five at Port Huron, and one hundred at Ypsilanti. Centreline was a small town ten miles from Detroit and the school there was given up after a few years because of the isolated situation of the school and convent. In all the schools the music and painting classes were particularly well attended. The interest of the parents in the advancement of their children is illustrated in a letter of the Superior of East Saginaw in which she describes the weekly assembly.

Every other Friday the children assemble in the music room; we begin with music, then follows a lesson from the baby room; next a song, and then alternately recitation and music until a class from each division has been heard. The music class is also divided; those who play one Friday do not appear again until all the other music pupils have had their turn. It works very well. We generally close by having the "Echo" read. The young ladies of the two highest divisions take turns as editor. Last week I was really astonished to note the improvement they are making in composition. On one occasion we invited Father Van der Bom and he was so pleased that at the end he rose up and congratulated both Sisters and pupils. Since, he has not failed to be present. About three weeks ago we were surprised to see some of the children's mothers coming up the stairs just as it was time to begin, and last Friday there were as many as forty ladies present, without invitation. They were delighted with the children and thanked us over and over again for the pains we are taking.

An assembly of this type resembles very much the modern school assembly.

which is so much advocated by educators today, and the fact that the young ladies were editing a school paper in 1878, also indicates advanced ideas in education.

The entrance of the Sisters of Providence into the Chicago diocese in 1879 marked an important milestone in the history of the Community. Here, as everywhere, the Catholics had been awakened to the need for religious teachers, and pastors begged for Sisters to take their schools. After a mission given by Father Damen, S. J., the pastor of Savana, Illinois, wrote to St. Mary’s: "The school question is now the topic of the day in Savana," 63 and the following year, after Sisters had been promised to him, he again writes: "The children are now-a-days little martyrs in the free school and have to suffer for their faith on account of the coming of the Sisters to open the Catholic school. The school question has now been sufficiently discussed during the Forty Hours Devotion so that the parents are more anxious than ever to have a Catholic school." 64 At Galesburg, the first establishment of the Sisters of Providence in Illinois, hundreds of Catholic children were in the public schools. At Lockport, where the children were destitute of religious instruction, the Sisters were looked upon as a "God send", 65 and on their first Sunday at Lemont the Sisters were given a general reception by the people who could not sufficiently express their gratitude at having them come among them. 66 At Chatsworth the Sisters of Providence opened the

63. Letter of Rev. F. J. Aute, September 8, 1884.
64. Ibid., April 22, 1885.
65. List of the Establishments, 48.
66. Ibid., 52.
first school in Livingston County, in 1884. The opening of this establishment was made very impressive by the presence of Bishop Spalding who presided at the blessing of the Sisters' house, and afterwards preached a sermon on the benefits of Catholic education. 67

The school at Galesburg opened in 1879 is deserving of special mention for two reasons: it marked the entrance of the Sisters of Providence into the Diocese of Chicago, and it serves as an example of the type of school everywhere being opened at that time. St. Joseph's Academy situated on the corner of Knox and Academy Streets was erected during the years 1878 to 1879 under the direction of Reverend Joseph Costa who was pastor of the only Catholic church in the city. Father Costa had been sent to Galesburg by Bishop Spalding with the express purpose of undertaking the erection of a parochial school. 68 He faced a herculean task for the Catholic population of the city was comparatively small, the people were poor, and the rectory was mortgaged. Relying solely upon the Providence of God, Father Costa financed the erection of a three story brick school in which classes were opened in the fall of 1879 by nine Sisters from St. Mary-of-the-Woods. 69 As there was no convent for the Sisters it had been arranged to rent a small cottage on the school grounds as a residence for the Sisters. Unfortunately when the time came for the tenants to vacate they refused; consequently, the Sisters upon their

67. Account of the foundation in drawer of Archives marked "History of the Community."
68. The Souvenir, booklet in Archives in drawer of Archives marked "Galesburg", 21.
69. List of the Establishments, 43 - 44.
arrival were without lodging until the Hickey family came to their assistance and offered the Sisters hospitality until the cottage on the school grounds was in readiness. This cottage served as a convent for the Sisters and as a boarding school for the nine resident students who arrived the first year. A year or two later a three story brick convent was built adjoining the school. The new section included, not only accommodations for the Sisters, but also a Chapel and entertainment hall where the annual commencements were thereafter held. From the first the school at Galesburg prospered, not so much in increase of numbers, for the enrollment of three to four hundred never varied greatly, but in the influence it exerted upon the children and youth of the city. The devotedness of the people to the Sisters "which at first sight might seem to have been the result of novelty and change, has become more stabilized with the passing years until now the devotedness of the Catholics of Galesburg to the Sisters is proverbial." 71

Two schools were opened in Chicago before the Sisters of Providence celebrated the Golden Jubilee of their Community. Their late arrival in this important city of the middle west was due to the fact that they were not permitted to leave their own diocese at the time when the first schools were being opened in Chicago. Father Damen, S.J. early expressed his desire to see the Sisters of Providence in Chicago, but it was impossible

70. The Souvenir, op.cit., 23.
71. Ibid., 24.
for them to go out of Indiana until all its needs were supplied. In 1886, upon the recommendation of Father Damen, they accepted St. Philip's school in the Servite parish at the city limits near Central Park. When the Sisters arrived at St. Philip's the school building was not complete and the school opened under many difficulties. Their inconveniences "together with the opposition of the neighboring public schools were regarded as the Cross, which always stamps the great works of God, and foretells their success." 72 In spite of the neighboring public schools, St. Philip's parochial school in a very short time numbered two hundred and ten pupils. A good music class was also formed which was "patronized by many Protestant young ladies". 73

In the same year as St. Philip's, a second school was opened in Chicago in the Servite parish of Our Lady of Sorrows on the corner of Van Buren Street and Albany Avenue. The two Sisters who taught this school during the first months rode back and forth daily from St. Philip's. Before December of the same year the growing enrollment of the school required two additional Sisters to be sent, and before the end of the year the school numbered more than two hundred children. The following year the Servite Fathers fitted up a part of the school for a convent and Our Lady of Sorrows's school was opened, in 1887, with eight Sisters, as a separate establishment "much to the satisfaction of Father Morini, Superior of the Servites, and of the parishioners". 74 Both schools, St. Philip's 75

72. List of the Establishments, 54.
73. List of the Establishments, 54.
74. Ibid., 56.
75. St. Philip's is today St. Mel's.
and Our Lady of Sorrow's grew rapidly and exist today, two of the finest parochial schools in the city of Chicago; they were likewise the fore-runners of twenty other schools of the Sisters of Providence in that city.

During the decade of out-state expansion a large day school was opened in South Omaha, Nebraska, in 1888, and the following year eight Sisters opened an establishment in Kansas City, Missouri. The school in South Omaha offered a very favorable opening. In a letter asking for Sisters the pastor, Rev. D. W. Morarity writes:

I am about to build a large church and school which will be the principal one of the city and the one from which other parishes of the city will be supplied later on .... I have no hesitation in saying that St. Agnes' will be the largest parish in the diocese in a few years and that South Omaha will have at least five churches in about as many years .... If you come here you will be sure of all the parochial schools as they are established in the city, and, I think also, of many others throughout the state, which are even now in want of Sisters. 76

The Sisters of Providence opened school in South Omaha with one hundred and fifty children, and true to the pastor's prophecy, before the close of the scholastic year the school was considered one of the best in the diocese. At Kansas City the pastor, Rev. O'Dwyer built a large four story brick academy and had it partly furnished before the Sisters of Providence accepted his offer. Writing to the Superior preparatory to the Sisters' arrival he says:

The school rooms are supplied, or partly so, with desks. I have one hundred single desks and fifty double desks, also four teacher's desks. You can

make arrangements for at least seven school halls, two music rooms, a playhall, and studio. The rooms you must divide yourselves; any arrangement that will suit you will suit me .... You are coming into the most flourishing parish in the city, any priest will tell you the same.

The Catholic schools in the city are not what they should be and I know some who are discontented are waiting to see what our school will be. You will have here perhaps the finest house and certainly the best location for a great school. 77

The year 1889 witnessed the opening of the first establishment of the Sisters of Providence in the New England states. In response to the invitation of Rev. J. McGlew of St. Rose Church, Chelsea, Massachusetts, fifteen Sisters left St. Mary-of-the-Woods in August 1889 for the East. The school opened on the first Tuesday of September with seven hundred children, two hundred of whom were boys. When St. Rose's school was accepted the Superiors at St. Mary's were not informed that the Sisters were to teach the boys. It was contrary to the custom of the Community to teach the boys after their First Communion, but, in this instance, it was unavoidable and they complied with the desire of the generous pastor and taught the boys in the parochial school. 78 St. Rose's school grew rapidly and became the forerunner of a number of other schools of the Sisters of Providence in Massachusetts. In 1890 in a letter to Mother Mary Cleophas after her return from the East Father McGlew wrote: "You saw our children at Mass, ten or eleven hundred, and you did not see all. I expect a large increase—we will have a grand school. The best, I hope, in the diocese." 79

77. Letter of Rev. O'Dwyer, December 20, 1888.
79. Ibid., May 28, 1890.
In considering the many foundations of the Sisters of Providence during the years preceding the Golden Jubilee, one must take into consideration the difficulties and hardships entailed in founding schools. No great work has ever been accomplished without surmounting obstacles, and the Sisters of Providence experienced a generous share of these in carrying out their apostolate of education. The poverty of their convents, and factions among the people often caused great suffering. The mission of Connersville, established in 1873, serves as an example of the destitution frequently experienced in founding the early schools. Often even the bare necessities were wanting.

Their house was without furniture of any kind, not even a stand on which to place the articles necessary to bless the house; to provide for this two trunks were placed on top of each other, and covered with sheets; on them was placed the two candlesticks and a tumbler of holy water which was sprinkled by means of thick grass gathered from the yard. The furniture which was absolutely necessary was sent from Indianapolis and paid for by the Community. The people are reserved and distant, but kind, and would be more so if they knew the privations the Sisters suffered. 80

In many instances when a school was just beginning the Sisters had to go long distances each day to reach the school. This was the case with St. Joseph's Indianapolis, which was taught the first year by Sister Eloi, who came there daily from St. John's Academy bringing her cold lunch with her. 81 Lack of understanding on the part of the pastors, even very zealous ones, also caused much suffering. In one instance the pastor in-

80. List of the Establishments, 33.
81. Ibid.
sisted in having a room in the convent until his own house was built. When this was refused, he was deeply hurt and felt the Sisters were not grateful for all he was trying to do for them. These sufferings, resulting from privations and misunderstandings, were, however, compensated by the good that was everywhere being accomplished.

The schools opened by the Sisters of Providence during the first fifty years were of two kind: the parochial school, known in the early days as the common school; and the Academy, or high school. The parochial school comprised the first eight grades and was divided into primary and intermediate departments. The Academies were either private or diocesan, that is under the complete control of the Community, or with restrictions placed by the Bishop. Concerning the system of schools the Petition for Tax Exemption states:

Their schools are divided into High Schools and Common Schools, the former are the pay schools, but the latter are not strictly so, they are open free of charge to such parents as are not able to pay for the schooling of their families, in consequence of which many children throughout the state receive education gratis from the Sisters.82

Many of the early schools were boarding schools as well as day schools. This was due to the need for schools to which Catholic parents who lived at a distance from the city could send their daughters in order to have them prepare for their First Communion. Often, too, the boarding school offered the only solution for giving the children of country people a complete education. Lack of easy methods of transportation made it impossible to come a distance to school, and, at that time, the country school

82. Circulars and Important Letters, 110.
did not exist, or was entirely inadequate. Today the era of boarding schools is past, but in the mid-nineteenth century the Catholic boarding school supplied a real need and did an incalculable amount of good.

By the end of their first fifty years in the United States, the Sisters of Providence were recognized as accomplished teachers and their many schools throughout the land were a testimony of their zeal in the cause of Catholic education. Had Mother Theodore lived to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of her Community she would have seen how the seed she had sown amidst every hardship had grown into a stately tree whose outstretching branches reached far and wide. In the many schools of her religious daughters throughout the United States she would have witnessed the fulfillment of her dearest hopes and ambitions. By 1890 Bishop Brûlé's dream had also come true. On a trip through his vast diocese in 1839 he had written, "I dream of Sisters here!" And in 1890 his diocese which had embraced parts of Illinois as well as Indiana, was well provided with schools taught by the Sisters of Providence who labored to carry on his work for souls. The history of the first fifty years of the Sisters of Providence in the United States tells only half the story of their educational achievements. The years following the Golden Jubilee of 1890 are marked with even greater success, but that story will be told in the future in a complete history of the Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

83. Letter of Bishop Brûlé, August 30, 1838, quoted in Burns, Catholic School System in United States, 357.
The following article appeared in *Signal* of April, 1895, and was reprinted in *Aurora*, May, 1905. V. 35. As source material the article is invaluable.

**Reminiscences of an Old St. Mary's Girl**, by Mrs. Mary Anne (Brown) Browning

Fifty years ago—September, 1843, I was sent by my parents from Indianapolis to St. Mary-of-the-Woods. I went in charge of a Methodist minister, who with his family, was moving to Terre Haute.

To save a night's ride in the stage coach, we travelled the first day in a carriage, stopping over night at Putnamville. The next morning we took the stage for the rest of the journey and arrived at Terre Haute in the evening. I stayed that night at the house of our friends, the Griswolds, and the next day Mr. Griswold took me in a carriage over to St. Mary-of-the-Woods. We crossed the Wabash River in a ferry boat. As it was my first experience in crossing a large body of water at all, I was frightened speechless. Mr. Griswold held the horse's head and I sat in the carriage expecting every moment that the horse would back me off into the water. But we reached the other side in safety, and after a long drive of four miles through the woods, Mr. Griswold left me with the good Sisters.

Everything was strange to me. I had never before seen a Sister, but had been told by one who had read the "Book of
Martyrs" that the nuns were dreadful persons, would put gravel in my shoes and compel me to do penance in many cruel ways. I soon became accustomed to the peculiar dress and kind rules, my fears vanished, and I felt myself one of a happy family.

The Academy building was of brick, two stories with basement and attic. Each floor opened on a wide porch in the rear, and there were two rooms on each floor, with a wide hall between. To the left as you entered was the large drawing room; on the right the school room. This school room was used for study and recitations. There were two large dormitories above, with a washroom in the hall. The refectory and kitchen were in the basement, also a small room where every Saturday we blacked our shoes—school being dismissed at four o'clock on this day to give time to prepare for Sunday.

Sister Basilide and Sister Cecilia taught French and English; Sister St. Francis, drawing; and Sister Angeline, music. There was a professor of music, an exile from Hungary, who taught for a short time. He lived near the Academy, but died soon after I went there, and then his wife gave lessons.

There was only one piano—that in the drawing room. Sister Therese had charge of the kitchen and Sister Ann looked after our clothes, which were kept in closets on the first platform of the basement stairs, one deep shelf being allotted to each girl. Our
wardrobes were very simple—three dark calico dresses, plainly made, for week days, and one wool dress for Sundays.

Our meals were served regularly, the food plain but always good. For dinner we had soup, meat, vegetables and some simple dessert. At four o'clock recess we had a large slice of bread spread with butter, molasses or apple sauce. I remember to this day how good it tasted.

Thursday afternoons, we had no lessons, except embroidery, tapestry, and plain sewing—being taught to mend our own clothes. At five o'clock a walk to dear old Providence was a delightful treat in summer and fall, and we were allowed perfect freedom in garden and orchard, also to visit Sister Olympiade—how we all loved her! The apples we used to appropriate, filling with them the crowns of our sun-bonnets and thanks to the fashion, our full bishop sleeves!

At six o'clock we attended Benediction in the Sisters' chapel. The new church was used for services, but was at the time yet unplastered, there were no pews, and it was not completed during my stay. Father Corbe's house was a small brick dwelling, half way between the Academy and Providence. These four buildings were all.

The heavy forest behind and east of the school building gave shade on that side. The large lawn in front had neither tree, nor shrub, but it made a fine play ground, where we enjoyed our games
and played battle dore and shuttle cock, graces and marbles.

Public examination exercises were held in the open air in July or August. This was not called Commencement, for as yet there were no graduates. A large platform for scholars, with seats in front for parents and friends, was arranged in the edge of the woods, with the thick spreading branches for a canopy. We were examined in all branches of study as far as each class had gone, by Colonel Richard Thompson and Mr. Thomas Dowling of Terre Haute. There were also dialogues in French and English, and musical numbers of course. Then the girls' work in drawing, painting, and with the needle was shown in the drawing room. All of which took up the better part of the day.

After a year and a half at St. Mary's I left school in April, 1845, my father having received an appointment under President Polk.

This letter to Queen Amelia was written by Mother Theodore shortly after her return to Indiana to acknowledge the portrait of the Queen which she received at the boat before leaving France.

TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF THE FRENCH

St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana
April 28, 1844

Madam and most dear Mother

Before leaving my beloved country I wished to tell you the pleasure it gave me to receive the portrait of your Majesty.

I was writing to you when the Commissary General came to say that
the ship was waiting for us. I was thus obliged to hasten to em­
bark, as the Nashville was already under sail. In a few minutes
we had left France.

The voyage was long and perilous. On the 22d of December,
beginning at two o'clock in the morning, there was a frightful temp­
est. At one time the ship was turned on end by the angry waves. In
this moment of danger, after the example of one of our Kings, we in­
voked the God of the Queen. We asked Him sadly why He let us find
favor with her, if we were to perish now. He heard our supplications
and reversed the ship to natural position in a manner quite miracu­
lous.

Having arrived at New Orleans I was attacked by a grave
malady, which kept me seven weeks longer away from my dear forest.
It is only a few days since this moment of pure happiness. I needed
their assistance to express my thanks to God. With tearful eyes,
and hearts full of the deepest gratitude, we were but one heart and
one soul. We went to the Chapel to beseech Our Lord to pour abundant
ly blessings upon your Majesty, upon the King, and upon her Highness,
Madame Adelaide; indeed, upon all the members of your august family.

This did not satisfy our hearts; we have therefore ordered
a special prayer to be said daily for this intention. Moreover, to
perpetuate the remembrance of your great goodness to us, we shall
inscribe on the first page of the register of this nascent Congre­
gation, what you have done for us. Your portrait, which is our
dearest treasure, shall be put in the most conspicuous place, so that we may have continually before our eyes the picture of her who is truly our mother. The sight of it will recall your tender piety, your ardent zeal for the salvation of souls; it will be to us what the glance of the prince's eye is to the soldier in battle, and it will encourage us in our trials and privations.

Notwithstanding my desire to speak of you to the inhabitants of the New World, I was not the first to proclaim your admirable virtues. Their lustre has shone beyond the sea to confound impiety and to console the dear Americans, of whom your royal spouse has such tender recollections.

The holy Bishop Flaget, more than any one else, never tires speaking of his Majesty, the King. The Right Reverend de la Hailandière, our Bishop, was also deeply touched at the interest you have taken in our little Congregation. He admits your august family to a share in his prayers and apostolic labors, thus to give the tribute of thanks which he feels are due to you. In fine, I can say, Madame, you reign here over all hearts. Strangers envy our happiness in having you for our Sovereign. The old French of Louisiana and Vincennes take pride in being your subjects. But I will not let it be said that even in France there is a heart more sincerely and gratefully yours than that of her who is, with the most profound veneration,

Madame

Of Your Majesty
The most humble and obedient servant,

Sister St. Theodore

In this letter to Bishop Hailandière the Sisters explain their position in regard to the property and the approbation of the Rules. It gives an insight into the difficulties with Bishop Hailandière.

St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana

April 6, 1846

To Right Reverend C. de la Hailandière
Bishop of Vincennes

Monseigneur:

Deign to be persuaded that it costs us less to acknowledge our faults than to treat of the painful matters which have occupied us for so long a time. We are going to prove it to you by replying the best we possibly can to the letter you addressed to us last week.

Art. I--Our Congregation, not having been incorporated until the month of January last, it is clear that it could not hold property as a body before that time; until then, the American Sisters only had the right to possess individually, those from France
not yet being naturalized. We do not think we have either said or written the contrary. If we are mistaken, we declare that it was the result of error and we disavow it.

Art. II--We thought we explained ourselves sufficiently in our preceding letter, but if we did not, we now declare formally that we have asked the approbation of our Rules and Constitutions only that we may be settled in Indiana in a final manner. Until we have obtained said approbation from another Bishop we shall regard ourselves as still subject to the Bishop of Le Mans, and we shall be, in reality, a branch of the House of France. But as it is recognized that such a state of things cannot continue long, and as you yourself oppose it, we have consented to the separation. We have insisted with your Lordship to obtain this approval (even, it may be, to importunity), only because we consider it, as it really is, the foundation of our Congregation in America. We declare that as soon as you will have given us this approval we shall acknowledge ourselves to be your daughters, and shall recognize in you, without any exception, all the rights of Monseigneur, the Bishop of Le Mans over our Congregation in France. These are and always have been, our dispositions. It is surprising that they have not been understood, for, if we may ever have overstepped the rules of politeness and perhaps, even those of respect for episcopal authority (which would grieve us very much), we can say that we have never infringed those of uprightness and candor; so we are
astonished at finding ourselves accused of deceit.

Art. III--If the state of our Congregation, yet in its infancy, does not permit us to fulfil all our Rules in their perfection, very willingly we admit that the observance has been more difficult for you and for us at the beginning.

It is with our whole soul, it is even a consolation for our heart, not only to ask your pardon and offer our apologies for anything in our conduct, in our intercourse, and for anything in our letters which may have escaped us contrary to the respect that we owe to your Lordship, for whom we wish to preserve the most profound veneration; but we would all wish to be at your feet to ask pardon most humbly, and we would not rise until you had said: Go, I pardon and bless you. These are the sentiments of all the Sisters of Providence, and especially of those who are, with the deepest respect, my Lord, of your Lordship, the most humble and obedient servants

Signed: Sister St. Theodore Sister St. Vincent
   Sister St. Francis Xavier Sister Mary Cecilia

The signatures of the other Councillors who signed a previous letter of March 8 are missing here because the Sisters were not at St. Mary's and their sentiments were known to be the same as of those who signed. The next communication shows that the Sisters' "declaration" must have produced the desired effect.
This very valuable letter to Archbishop Eccleston explains the climax of the difficulties with Bishop Hailandière.

St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana

July 6, 1847

To the Most Reverend Samuel Eccleston,

Archbishop of Baltimore.

Monseigneur:

The interest that your benevolent charity causes you to take in our Congregation, makes me think that you will receive with goodness some details concerning the late events that have taken place here since Sister St. Francis took the liberty to write to your Grace.

You learned from her that the Bishop of Vincennes, dissatisfied with my administration, had deposed me as Superior and forbidden me to remain in his diocese or to have any intercourse whatever, even by letter, with the Community. I received this order the twentieth of May at seven o'clock in the evening, and prepared at once to obey by taking the first stage. But that very night I was attacked by pleurisy accompanied by a fever so violent that I was soon on the brink of the grave.

Ignorant of everything that was going on around me, I was occupied only in preparing myself for death which I believed was not far away. But I deceived myself. I must still live and be engaged again with business. Without doubt I was not ripe for heaven. I recovered slowly, too deeply concerned about a Community which I was forced to abandon under circumstances so critical.
During these days of anguish Monseigneur received a letter from his brother who was in Rome telling him he had learned that the Holy Father had accepted his (the Bishop's) resignation and had appointed his successor. As soon as Monseigneur received this news he wrote to the Community that he would have nothing more to do with us, that he left us entirely in the hands of our Superior. He added that what he (Father Corbe) could not do alone he would have to regulate with his successor who would not delay coming to Vincennes.

Having read this letter, I considered that I should yield to the wishes of the Community and to the order of the Superior, who recalled me to St. Mary's. I returned as soon as I was able to travel, and I now await in peace whatever it shall please Our Lord to ordain for the future of our institution.

Deign to give us the assistance of your prayers, and to bestow your paternal blessing upon her who is,

My Lord, of your Lordship,

The very humble and very obedient servant

Sister St. Theodore,

Sup're.

St. Mary's, July 6, 1847.

P. S. Sister St. Francis Xavier has received the letter with which your Grace has honored her. She thanks you most humbly and offers you her profound respects.

Sister St. Theodore.
This letter, one of the last to Bishop Bouvier of Le Mans, is typical of the long letters full of interesting details concerning the growth of the Community which Mother Theodore made a practice of sending to her revered spiritual father in France.

To Right Reverend J. B. Bouvier, Bishop of Le Mans

J. M. J. St. Mary's, April 20, 1854

I cannot longer defer writing to you to express the gratitude of all your daughters of St. Mary's, and my own in particular, for the precious gift you had the kindness to promise us. Never have I received a present that gave me so much pleasure as this one will give, and everybody here has the same feeling. The day on which the dear portrait arrives will be a festive day at St. Mary's. Your very good letter, so long awaited, came to hand only on Holy Thursday. If it would be possible to enclose the portrait in a tin box, it would be preserved from many dangers and arrive in good condition. It is not necessary to prepay it. Have the kindness to address it to Mr. Edward Bayer (Brooklyn, New York), who will forward it to us, but I beg of you do not send it by freight. If my niece, Sister Mary Theodore, comes to us from Ruille, she could take charge of it. She would be certain then to be received with open arms. Must we now give up all hope of ever seeing you in our forest home, my good and beloved Father? Before saying no to our pleadings let me call the attention of your Lordship to the difference there is in travel now compared to the time when we
came to America or returned. The first time we were sixty days crossing the ocean. Now a steamboat which has just been built at New York goes from that city to Havre in eight or ten days. Once we were three weeks coming from New York, and now we make the trip in forty-six hours. America is truly a wonderful country for "improvement", an English word which will soon be received into our language, if it has not been already. You will see from an oil painting which we intend sending you next summer, how much we have "improved" St. Mary's where, fourteen years ago, we were received through charity into a small frame house, the picture of which you have. You will perceive a great change already in the little sketch enclosed with this letter. The exterior changes are not, however, the most important ones. When you sent your six daughters to St. Mary-of-the-Woods, you thought they were going to lay the foundation of an establishment which, later on, would be of service to religion; but with the means you made use of—these persons, so poor in every respect, strangers to the country, the customs, and the language of the New World—you never expected to see the fruits of your zeal crowned with so much success. Today we are eighty-five persons in our house, sixty-four wearing the religious habit, twelve novices, and sixteen postulants. There are nearly a thousand children in our schools, eighty-five boarders here at the Academy, thirty-seven of whom are Catholics. Three converts received Baptism on Easter Sunday. On the same day eight of these dear pupils made their First
Communion, and eighteen their Paschal Communion. They had been prepared long before, and prepared themselves more immediately by a retreat which they made during the last days of Holy Week. It is impossible to estimate what a Christian education does for these young people. Brought up among Protestants, they are ignorant of everything relating to our holy religion; they scarcely know how to kneel down when they come to us. But when they leave, they become little missionaries and do an incalculable amount of good to those around them.

The priest of Lafayette, a considerable town of Indiana, told me lately that the only school he had in his town was kept by two of our little pupils, converts of last year, who are now fervent Catholics and show admirable zeal for instructing the little Catholics of that congregation. Two others, converts of the preceding years, have entered the novitiate. One is full of piety and has an excellent disposition, but not marked ability; the other has strong passion, though she is a good child, and is endowed with a superior mind; both have been a long time at the Academy and have a very good education. There are among our young professed and novices, able subjects who are being gradually formed for the more important services they will later on render to the Community. Until now God has made use of nothing with which to do His work, but it seems that for the future He wishes to make use of something. I think you will soon have the visit of Bishop Martin, who has been lately appointed
to the See of Natchitoches in the north of Louisiana. At one time he was Vicar General in the diocese of Vincennes. We have told you about him as being a very devoted friend of our Congregation. This good Bishop was scarcely consecrated when he wrote a very pressing letter begging us to give him Sisters for his diocese. We reflected long on the proposal; finally, notwithstanding the pain it cost us to refuse good Bishop Martin, we decided not to send Sisters so far away. We are not certain whether His Lordship wanted Sisters to form a new Mother House, or simply an establishment. The letter does not clearly say which, but it matters little; for in the first case, we are too young to cut off a branch from the tree, and in the second case, it would be very difficult in winter to have communication with our Sisters or to visit them. Besides, we do not think that an establishment depending on another Bishop would suit Bishop Martin. If he asks for Sisters from Ruillé, and you consent to give them, we could give him one or two Sisters to teach his Sisters English, and also music, since music must be taught in this country, if we wish to have pupils.

Bishop Martin is very pious, full of zeal and enthusiasm and ardor. Some people think that his ardor and zeal are not always directed by prudence—I say this for yourself alone so you may know that with him matters must be treated in accordance with this disposition. I believe he likes our Rules very much and would leave our Sisters free to follow them. He is also very scholarly and considered an excellent writer and preacher.
You will excuse me, my Father, for entering into these details which may be perfectly useless, if Bishop Martin should not ask for Sisters. He was to have come this way (returning from Europe) expecting to get our Sisters; but having received our letters, he wrote to Father Corbe that he would not come. I fear he is offended. This would cause us much pain; still we do not think we can make any change in our decisions, unless you disapprove of them, in which case we should not adhere to them. The Bishop of Vincennes (Monseigneur St. Palais) does not like to see us leave his diocese; however, he has left us free to do as we wish for Bishop Martin.

At last they have finished painting our house. The painters are here in my room now, interrupting with their questions. I find the house too fine; it gives me great uneasiness about my vow of poverty; it looks more like a castle than the house of the poor little Sisters of Providence. I think it might have been built cheaper and less elegant. I wanted only simplicity, and I do not know how elegance has come in, in spite of myself. How unhappy I should be if, through my example, extravagance should be introduced among us! This thought takes away from me much of the pleasure I have in seeing my Sisters well lodged and their house finished .... But we have the consolation of seeing our Lord more suitably cared for in our chapel, which is pretty and well ornamented for our Woods. The chapel does not give me scruple as the rest does. This house will cost between fifteen and sixteen thousand dollars, about eighty
thousand francs, of which more than sixty thousand are paid. You see, my Father, your prayers for us to God have been heard.

Our Sisters are very well; they have truly a good spirit. I beg of you pray for them, pray above all for the most miserable one who is, nevertheless, of your Lordship, the most submissive daughter,

Sister St. Theodore.

The following excerpts are taken from the Prospectus of St. Mary's Academic Institute. 1888-1889.

St. Mary's Academic Institute is about four miles west of Terre Haute, on the Indianapolis & St. Louis Railroad. Persons arriving at Terre Haute by other railroads must have their trunks, etc., transferred to the depot of the Indianapolis & St. Louis Railroad.

The situation of this Institute is healthy and pleasant; the grounds are ample and retired, presenting every inducement for physical exercise; and the pupils may engage in the various sports which health and taste require, without danger of intrusion. The building is fitted up with every accommodation necessary and desirable for the health, comfort and convenience of the young ladies. The Railroad Station at St. Mary's belongs to the Community, and is kept up at its expense. The keeper has orders to see that the trunks of the pupils are safely delivered at the Institute.
The scholastic year consists of two sessions, each comprising a period of five months. The first session begins the first Monday of September and ends January 31; the second begins the first of February and terminates the last Wednesday of June with the exercises of Commencement Day. To be admitted into the hall where the exercises take place it is necessary to present a ticket of admission to the door-keeper; such tickets are forwarded to parents and guardians in due time. Should any of those invited not come, the ticket may be used by another member of the family.

**Prize of Order**

To cultivate habits of neatness, a Prize of Order is awarded to those who distinguish themselves by this indispensable qualification of a female in the sphere of home duties.

**Crown for Excellence of Behavior**

To excite a laudable emulation among the young ladies for irreproachable conduct, a crown for excellence of behavior is awarded to the one judged most deserving of it; or, if there be several of equal merit, they draw for it, and chance decides whose brow will be decorated with the insignia of success in the school of virtue.

**Honors Graduate**

A diploma with laureate wreath is conferred on the graduating student.

**Honors Post Graduate**

Young lady graduates who spend six months at their Alma Mater for the purpose of perfecting themselves in any of the Arts or
Sciences are entitled to the Gold Medal.

Commencement Day

The exercises of Commencement Day consist of musical performances, prepared illustrations of the studies, either read or spoken, as extracts on the different sciences, compositions in French and German essays, etc. Except music, all the above are not presented every year; a selection is made to suit the time and to diversify from one year to another.

FINALE—Awarding the Prizes for Order, for Success in Studies and the Crown for Excellence of Behavior, and investing the Graduates with the Laurels of a Literary Athlete, conclude the exercises.

Moral Character

The principle that animates the mode of instruction tends to form the heart to virtue, as well as to cultivate the mind. The Preceptresses of St. Mary's direct their teachings to establish the well-being of their pupils on the basis of moral and mental culture closely united. Their discipline, their regulations and their entire government all serve to accomplish this end. The education received by the young ladies under their tuition is both useful and ornamental; the training given to their dispositions and feelings is designed to form a character that will qualify them to fill happily, and with justice to themselves and others, the position in society
designed for them by Divine Providence.

In admitting pupils it is required that they be from parents of respectable standing, morally considered. If among those admitted any be found to have bad habits that originate from vice, they are dismissed if they prove incorrigible; bad influence or moral contagion will never be suffered to tarnish the innocence of the children intrusted to the charge of the Sisters.

It is required that the pupils show at all times a respectable deference to their teachers, and a polite amiability toward their companions. They must carefully avoid the use of rude language and coarse expressions, seeking to cultivate in every way that refinement of mind, ease and propriety of deportment which distinguish the true lady. During recitation they must endeavor to cultivate fluency and elegance of language.

Regulations

Pupils are received at all times during the year, but not for a shorter period than one session; charges are made from the date of entrance. No deduction, however, will be made for absence after entering, or for any delay in returning at the beginning of the session, except in case of protracted illness. The same rule will be enforced for those who may be withdrawn before the expiration of a session.

Strangers placing pupils at the Academy are requested to
be furnished with letters of recommendation from respectable and reliable sources.

Parents and Guardians are requested to inform the Sister Superior of their wishes regarding their daughters or wards; such instruction transmitted through pupils, has an evil tendency.

Epistolary correspondence must be authorized by parents in writing and sanctioned by the Institution. Letters written to the young ladies, or by them, are subject to the inspection of the Directress.

As the members of the institution profess the Catholic religion, the exercises of religious worship are Catholic; but as members of all denominations are received, it is only required that they assist with propriety at the services of religion.

The Institute is open to visitors on Thursday only. No visits are permitted, except those of parents or guardians, or persons bringing with them a written request, given by parent or guardians. Visitors on Sunday are not received; calls on Sunday are an intrusion that allows of no exception but in favor of sickness or urgent business.*

Boxes and packages sent to the pupils by express should always be prepaid; otherwise they will be liable to be detained at the express office.

Pupils are not permitted to receive boxes or sweetmeats or other eatables except at Christmas and Easter. This limitation
is made to prevent disrelish for wholesome and substantial food.

*Notice--The Institute being upon to visitors on Thursday, parents and other visitors are requested to call on that day only. Visitors coming on class days, interrupt the lessons; this is not only a drawback to the pupils taken out of school, but to the whole class to which they belong.

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Terms of Admission

Entrance fee, to be paid only once. $5.00

Tuition in the Entire English Course, Latin, Vocal Music in Class, Useful and Ornamental Needlework, Board, Bedding and Washing, per Session of five months .......... 90.00

Text Books, Stationery (exclusive of letter paper and postage stamps) and use of Library ................. 8.00

Medical attendance at Physician's Charges.

Extra Charges per Session

Piano, with use of Instrument, Music Primer, Instructor, etc. $25.00

Guitar, " " " " " " 25.00

Organ, " " " " " " 25.00

Harp, " " " " " " 30.00

Vocal Music, Private Lessons .................. 25.00

French, with the use of Books ................. 10.00

German, " " " " ................. 10.00

Italian, " " " " ................. 10.00
Bookkeeping Blanks, Expenses in Drawing and Painting, and Oil Painting are charged as each one is supplied.

When Books, Tapestry Patterns and Drawing Patterns are abused by carelessness, a charge is made according to the extent of damages.

When a pupil leaves before the expiration of a term, or when she goes and comes between the beginning and the close of a term, drayage is charged for trunks to and from the Railroad station.

If a pupil leave before the end of a term a charge is made for marking clothes.

All the charges in common, and those that are extra and incidental, have been carefully specified that those who wish to patronize the school may be able to calculate within a small figure what is the entire cost of educating a young lady at St. Mary's Institute.

Payments should be made in advance for each session. In all cases bills are settled by note if a cash payment cannot be made. When at a final settlement an overpayment remains, though its amount be small, it is remitted without fail.

Pupils are not received a second year if they have unsettled accounts at the Institute, unless previous arrangements have been made.

Pupils who remain at the Institute during the summer
vacation are charged $30.00 for board and washing.

When parents or guardians wish to have their children or wards sent home, they must give timely notice to the Sister Superior, settle all accounts and forward necessary traveling expenses.

Bills are issued at the end of each session, giving a full statement of charges and receipts; these bills are sent even when an advance in full has been made, that parents and guardians may see the exact state of their accounts with the Institute.

In making articles of any kind of needlework, the materials furnished consist of various stuffs, and generally in small pieces of each kind. It is not possible to give a detailed account of the different parcels—the whole is estimated in the aggregate value and charged as Needlework Expenses.

When anything is broken that is followed by expense to have it replaced, an equivalent charge is made to the one who caused the destruction.

No charge is made for the use of musical instruments in taking lessons, nor for the practicing according to the time allowed by the usage of the Institute. But when a request is made for a young lady to have more practice than the usual time, a charge is made for the use of the instrument.

Wardrobe

A plentiful supply of good clothes is all that is necessary. The young ladies are not permitted to wear white skirts, white
aprons nor very light colored dresses; there is never an occasion for finery or articles of elegant attire. The uniform hat for Sunday is to be procured at the Institute. In addition to a supply of underclothing, pocket-handkerchiefs, shoes and stockings, the pupil should be provided with one dark felt and two flannel underskirts for winter and two ticking skirts for summer; six towels, six table napkins, a knife and fork, a tablespoon, a teaspoon, a coarse comb and a fine comb, a tooth brush and a nail brush, toilet soap and tooth powder, pins and shoe laces, a work box furnished with sewing cotton, needles, darning yarn and cotton, with darning needles, a thimble and a pair of scissors. To keep clothes in repair it is necessary to be provided with tape, buttons, pieces of muslin and pieces of goods like the dresses.

Everything should be marked with the full name of the owner.

As no jewelry can be worn, except small, plain ear-rings, pin and one finger ring, it is recommended to leave all valuable and showy jewelry at home, as the Sisters are unwilling to take charge of it.

The young ladies should be provided from home with whatever they may want in the course of the year. The managers of the school prefer not to enter "Bill of Goods" on the bill of tuition. However, if it oblige any one, they will purchase for a pupil what she needs, provided a sufficient sum be placed in their hands;
this condition is considered indispensable, and it will always be required.

Regulations for Commencement Outfit

To obviate all elaborate and expensive costumes at the Distribution, the present one has been adopted.

All taking part in the Exercises will be required to have a pure white suit of Lawn, or India Linen, plainly and neatly made with a simple trimming of lace, or embroidered edging; high in the neck; waist and sleeves lined; the latter should reach the wrist. A sash, or overskirt, if desired, but no train. No other jewelry than a simple pin, ear-rings, and one finger ring.

Board

The food served to the pupils is good, wholesome and abundant, such as they have a right to expect. It is the fate of Boarding Schools to bear the name of having miserable fare—children are apt to report to their parents that they have nothing to eat. Those who have at home, a table set with a variety of choice dishes, must undoubtedly, find a fare meagre which, though good and sufficient, suffers by comparison with that to which they have been accustomed. But considered in itself, the fare of the pupils of St. Mary's is good in the strict sense of the word.

Conclusion

For Preceptresses to succeed in the duty of educating the young, the cooperation of parents is absolutely needed. The most
approved discipline, the best moral government and the labor of
the ablest teachers, are rendered null if the indulgence of
parents interfere with the course that must be pursued, to rear
youth in knowledge and virtue. As already said, the Instructresses
of St. Mary's Institute have in view but the welfare of their
pupils; every regulation has been judged necessary to insure its
attainment. In receiving pupils, they expect and solicit the co-
operation of parents, that, acting in concert with them, and both
directing their influences to the same end—the anxious hopes of
fond parents may be realized in seeing their daughters leave their
ALMA MATER fully benefited by the teachings that have been given
them faithfully and conscientiously.

The following excerpts from the Indianapolis Daily
Journal give interesting and detailed information concerning the
Military Hospital which the Sisters of Providence took in charge
during the Civil War.

Indianapolis Daily Journal,
Friday morning, August 16, 1861.

REPORT OF THE SURGEONS OF THE MILITARY HOSPITAL

The following interesting report is published at the request
of Inspector-General Murphy:

To Miles Murphy, Inspector-General:
Dear Sir: In obedience to your request, we cheerfully furnish, for your disposal, the following brief report of the number of patients treated at the City (Military) Hospital, Indianapolis, with the results.

The Hospital was secured for the exclusive use of sick soldiers on the 29th day of April last, since which time the names of six hundred and forty have been entered on the register, in connection with the diseases named below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varioloid</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermittent Fever</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remittent Fever</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilious Fever</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typhoid Fever</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catarrhal Fever</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronchitis</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleurisy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congestion of the Brain</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholera Morbus</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dysentery</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstinate Diarrhea</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delirium Tremens</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflammation of the Liver</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acute Rheumatism</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disease</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumps</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuralgia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflammation of the Tonsils</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad Rupture</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun Stroke</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyrsipelas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burn</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Debility</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases of the Eye</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Diseases</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fracture of the Thigh</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun shot wounds and other injuries</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of these cases five hundred and ninety-three have recovered and been discharged, thirteen have died, and thirty-four remain under treatment, all of whom are likely to recover, save one.

When it is remembered that a large number of cases, less violent, were treated at the different camp dispensaries, and only the most severe ones sent to the Hospital, the ratio of mortality, only about two per cent, will appear small. It is proper to mention, also, that of those who died two were in a hopeless condition from delirium tremens when received, and two others died in consequence of surfeiting with cherries when convalescent after measles.

We furnish, in this connection, the names of those who died, together with the company and Regiment to which each belonged:

C. J. Overman, Company K, 8th Regiment.

John W. Lyon, Company H, 9th Regiment.

David Easler, Company B, 12th Regiment.

Henry L. Sibbard, Capt. Bracken's Cavalry.

Jacob Bowman, Company F, 15th Regiment.


John Raper, Company K, 14th Regiment.

John Jackson, Capt. Jacob's Company, 19th Regiment.


John B. Jackson, Company D, 14th Regiment.

Henry Brown, Company B, 17th Regiment.

William F. Atville, a Virginian.

The case of varioloid was discovered in Camp Sullivan, early in May, and was managed with the greatest possible secrecy, in order to prevent the troops from becoming panic-stricken.

In order to save the great cost of erecting and furnishing suitable quarters for the sick of the different regiments, and providing the necessary cooks and nurses, it was arranged by you, in the month of June, that all the very sick should be sent to the City Hospital. This, owing to a severe epidemic of the measles, made additional accommodation indispensable, and a long but cheap building was constructed near the rear of the Hospital, which answered a most excellent purpose. This building is now used for a summer kitchen, dining room and wash-house, while the basement of the main building is being thoroughly cleansed and white-washed.
The house, owing to the kindness of generous citizens, is now very well supplied with sheets, pillow-cases, bed-spreads, blankets, window curtains, etc.

For some time all these things, together with the personal linen of the patients, have been washed and ironed in the houses, at an expense of only about four dollars per week, and this when we, for a long time, had over a hundred patients to care for daily.

Cleanliness, as conducive to health, has been carefully attended to, but occasionally with not as much success as was desired, the fault being with the men themselves.

During the month of July an account was kept of provisions, including such luxuries as ice, milk, oranges, lemons, berries, and other things of the kind, and the average daily expense for each inmate was found to be within a fraction of eleven cents, while about seven cents a day was the average cost per patient for cooking, nursing, washing, cleaning, etc. It is but fair to state, however, that many delicacies sent in by kind friends reduced expenses somewhat, and that some of the most valuable help was rendered free of charge.

We take pleasure in acknowledging valuable aid from Drs. Bobbs and Edgerly, who were associated with us in the conduct of the Hospital prior to June 22; and also in certifying to the faithfulness of all employees, particularly John A. Reaume, steward, and William Moriarity, one of the Ward Masters.

In conclusion, we feel that we have performed only a plain
straight-forward duty, and that whatever success may have attended
the management of the Hospital is due in a great degree to the noble
and self-sacrificing efforts of those meek and worthy women—the
Sisters of Providence.

Indianapolis Daily Journal
July 22, 1864.

HOSPITAL ROUTINE

The business of the day begins at five o'clock. At that
hour the nurses busy themselves in cleaning the spittoons, washing
the faces and arms of the patients, sweeping the wards and making
everything tidy. Meanwhile the dressers are at work, cleaning and
bandaging the wounds, causing intense pain by the necessary probings,
pressures, plasterings, etc., and a great deal of comfort by their
generally cheerful reports to the patient of the improvement percep-
tible.

If they do not always tell the truth they are pardonable,
for it would be very cruel to reveal every bad symptom, so long as
there is hope of ultimate recovery. By seven o'clock everything is
ready for breakfast, which is of three classes—regular, which is
for the mass of the patients, well enough to eat heartily; special,
which is for those whose wounds or health requires more delicate
food; and extra for those (generally officers) who pay their dollar
a day for subsistence. Each class of food is substantial and ex-
cellent, well cooked and neatly served. The stomach would be very
delicate which would revolt at any of it.

After breakfast there is more sweeping, mopping, bed-changing, etc., and two or three times a week a general scrubbing. At regular intervals through the day there is a distribution of milk, punch, beef-tea, stimulants of various kinds, medicines, etc., according to the direction of the day, placed at the head of the bed of each patient. Dinner at twelve, supper at six, and retirement of the day nurses and the extinction of the lights at nine. Then come the night-watchers and silence. For hours together, sometimes, there is the stillness of death when you can hear the tread of a mouse; and yet, amid this stillness there is a vast deal of pain, quietly and uncomplainingly borne by the noble fellows who have suffered in battle. God bless them for their heroism in the field, and for their equal heroism on their weary couches! A grateful country will remember them and reward them. Throughout the night, at fixed hours, there is the distribution of medicines and stimulants, the wetting of the bandages, and such other attentions as are required for the comfort of the patients. And so wear away the long, weary hours of the night.

This interesting letter, written on the official stationery of the University of France, is preserved in the Archives of the Sisters of Providence at St. Mary-of-the-Woods.
Angers, le 15 avril,
1840.

Ma chère Soeur,

J'ai l'honneur de vous informer que sur la proposition du conseil académique, le ministre vous décerne une médaille de bronze, dont la remise vous sera faite ultérieurement. Recevez en mes bien sincères félicitations et croyez que je suis heureux d'avoir été chargé de vous annoncer cette décision, à laquelle je vous prie d'être persuadée que je prends part.

Agréez, je vous prie, ma chère Soeur, l'hommage de mon respect.

(Signed) L'Inspt des écoles,

Néro - Degouy

officier de l'Université

Je prie soeur St. Edmond de recevoir mes affectueuses salutations.
ESTABLISHMENTS

of the

Sisters of Providence

1840 to 1890

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Establishment</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1840--October 22</td>
<td>St. Mary-of-the-Woods Mother House</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>1841--July 4</td>
<td>St. Mary's Academic Institute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>St. Mary's Village School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>1842--March 19</td>
<td>Jasper, Indiana - Closed July, 1857</td>
<td>Re-opened Feb. 22, 1858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>1842--September</td>
<td>St. Francisville, Illinois</td>
<td>Closed November, 1843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>1843--October 27</td>
<td>Cathedral School and Orphanage</td>
<td>Vincennes, Indiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>1843--</td>
<td>St. Peter's (later Montgomery, Indiana</td>
<td>Closed 1847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>1844--September</td>
<td>Madison, Indiana</td>
<td>Closed, 1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>1846--August</td>
<td>St. Augustine's, Fort Wayne, Indiana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>1849--January</td>
<td>St. Joseph's, Terre Haute, Indiana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>1849--August</td>
<td>St. Mary's Asylum, Vincennes</td>
<td>Name changed to St. Ann's in 1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Removed to Terre Haute in 1876</td>
<td>Closed January 20, 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>1851--August</td>
<td>St. Vincent's Asylum, Vincennes, Indiana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. 1853--August  
Assumption, Evansville, Indiana  
Closed in 1863, re-opened in 1880  
Kept as branch in the meantime

13. 1853--August  
North Madison, Indiana  
Closed 1879; re-opened 1883;  
Closed 1889.

14. 1854--September  
Lanesville, Indiana  
Closed, July, 1863

15. 1854--August  
St. Mary's, Fort Wayne, Indiana  
Closed, June, 1864

16. 1855--September  
Columbus, Indiana  
Closed, June 1858; reopened Sept. 1878;  
Closed, June, 1919.

17. 1856--September  
New Alsace, Indiana  
Closed, July, 1858

18. 1857--July 26  
Washington, Indiana

19. 1857--November  
New Albany, Indiana

20. 1858--April 6  
Carmelton, Indiana  
Closed, July, 1862

21. 1858--August 27  
St. Ignatius, Lafayette, Indiana

22. 1859--August 30  
St. John's, Indianapolis

23. 1861--May 18  
City Hospital, Indianapolis  
Closed 1865

24. 1861--June  
Military Hospital, Vincennes  
Closed in three months

25. 1862--September  
Ferdinand, Indiana  
Closed, 1869

26. 1862--September  
Loogootee, Indiana

27. 1863--September  
Holy Trinity, Evansville, Indiana

28. 1864--September  
St. Rose Academy, Vincennes

29. 1865--September  
St. John's Home for Invalids  
Closed, August, 1871
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>August 24</td>
<td>Aurora, Indiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Closed, July, 1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>1869</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>Jeffersonville, Indiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>1869</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>Calumet, Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>Chesterton, Indiana</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>Richmond, Indiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Closed, 1871; re-opened 1873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>Providence Hospital, Terre Haute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Closed in 1875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>August 27</td>
<td>Valparaiso, Indiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Closed, June, 1901</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>1873</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>Seymour, Indiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Closed, June, 1917</td>
</tr>
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<td>38</td>
<td>1873</td>
<td>August 26</td>
<td>Connersville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>1874</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>Peru, Indiana</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>Saginaw, Michigan</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Closed, June, 1910</td>
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<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>Kalamazoo, Michigan</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Closed, June, 1878</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>1876</td>
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<td>St. Patrick's, Indianapolis</td>
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<td>44</td>
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<td>Delphi, Indiana</td>
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<td>Ironton, Ohio</td>
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<td>East Saginaw, Michigan</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>1879</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>St. Joseph's, Indianapolis</td>
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<td>1879</td>
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<td>Galesburg, Illinois</td>
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| 49. | 1880--August | Port Huron, Michigan  
Closed, June, 1904 |
| 50. | 1881--August | Lockport, Illinois |
| 51. | 1882--August | St. Benedict's, Terre Haute |
| 52. | 1882--August | St. Patrick's, Terre Haute |
| 53. | 1882--August | St. Augustine, Illinois  
Closed, June, 1885 |
| 54. | 1883--August | Ypsilanti, Michigan  
Closed, June, 1896 |
| 55. | 1884--September | Chatsworth, Illinois  
Closed, June, 1899 |
| 56. | 1884--September | Lemont, Illinois  
Closed, October 2, 1888 |
| 57. | 1885--June | St. Augustine, Illinois |
| 58. | 1885--June | Savannah, Illinois  
Closed, June, 1902 |
| 59. | 1886--June 27 | St. Joseph's, Hammond, Indiana |
| 60. | 1886--June | St. Ann's, Lafayette, Indiana |
| 61. | 1886--June | Centerline, Michigan  
Closed, June, 1892 |
| 62. | 1887--June | St. Philip's (Central Park) Chicago, Ill.  
Branch, Seven Dolors |
| 63. | 1887--June | Our Lady of Sorrows, Chicago, Illinois |
| 64. | 1887--June | Greencastle, Indiana  
Closed, 1903; re-opened, 1915 |
| 65. | 1889--January 9 | Kansas City, Missouri  
Closed, June, 1894 |
| 66. | 1889--August | Chelsea, Massachusetts |
| 67. | 1889--August | South Omaha, Nebraska  
Closed, June, 1907 |
68. 1890--August  St. Joseph's Training School
               Indianapolis, Indiana

69. 1890--August  Frenchtown, Indiana
               Closed, June, 1899

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A10-p.127  This prospectus of St. Rose's Boarding School,
Vincennes, explains the special training that the school aimed to
give.

ST. ROSE'S BOARDING SCHOOL

Under the direction of the Sisters of Providence

At Vincennes, Knox County, Indiana

CONDUCTED ON PRINCIPLES OF HOME EDUCATION

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The building appropriated for the establishment of St.
Rose, occupies a fine lot on Church Street; it has a pleasant
location and a good neighborhood. Since upward of twenty years,
the house has been used for educational purposes, and having been
improved, from time to time, it has now the extent and conven-
iences that adapt it well to its present destination. The de-
sign of this Institution is, to accommodate Catholic parents, who
desire to have their daughters well instructed in the principles
of religion, and who wish to give them a good English education,
in connection with habits of industry, by which they will acquire
a practical knowledge of the various employments that make up the
The boarders will assist, by turn, in the daily task of housekeeping; in which they will be directed by a Sister, with whom they will do the work. The order of this domestic education will be so arranged, as not to interfere with the time allotted to study, nor to over-task any child; every one will do only as much as will be judged necessary to instruct her in household duties, and to habituate her to perform them with facility.

The studies will comprise Orthography, Reading, Writing, Grammar, Arithmetic, United States History, Letter-Writing, and Christian Doctrine. Useful Needlework will be taught with great care.

Though the school is established chiefly for the benefit of Catholic children, if young girls of other denominations should apply for admittance, they will be received.

The year consists of one Session, comprising ten months. The Session will commence the first of September and close on the thirtieth of June. A boarder can be received for half a Session and charged only half the price stated. No deduction will be made after a term is commenced, except in case of sickness, or of expulsion from school.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

I - PRIMARY SOURCES

A-UNPRINTED SOURCE MATERIAL

Acts of the Particular Council, 2 Volumes.


These two volumes contain all the acts of the Particular Council from shortly after Mother Theodore's death until 1914; they constitute one of the most detailed sources of information obtainable and supplement the Diaries which are briefer. In them all the important events in the history of the Sisters of Providence between 1856 and 1914 are carefully recorded with the purpose of preserving them for posterity. These two volumes are without question one of the most valuable treasures of the archives of St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

Account Books, 2 Volumes.

Vol. I--1843 to 1846.
Vol. II--1841 to 1848.

These note books contain the first accounts of the Academic Institute. They are written in a fine hand, and although the ink is faded the writing is legible. The itemized accounts give a good idea of the meager expenditure of the young lady of the '40's. The month and day are given for each entry and many accounts are marked "Paid" in Mother Theodore's hand.
Annals, or, Translations. 3 Volumes.

These volumes contain translations of important documents and letters concerning the early years of the Sisters of Providence in Indiana. The most important of these are the Diary kept by Sister St. Francis during Mother Theodore's absence in 1843, and the Letter of Obedience of Mother Mary of Ruille to Mother Theodore.


This short manuscript by one of Mother Theodore's companions gives a brief outline of the first years of the Academic Institute. It is evidently a compilation from Mother Theodore's Diary, but it is valuable because it presents collected data on the Academy. It is written in English in Sister Basilide's hand.

Benoit, Rev. J. Letters. 1874 to 1882.

Most of these letters are addressed to Sister Euphrasie, later Mother Euphrasie, who was the spiritual daughter of Father Benoit. She entered the Church as a pupil of the Academy at Fort Wayne where Father Benoit was pastor. Father Benoit was a great benefactor of the Community and his tender, beautiful letters to his spiritual daughter reveal not only his fatherly devotion to her but also to the Sisters of Providence. Though these letters are to a great extent spiritual, they also give much interesting information concerning the history of the Community.
Cecilia, Mother Mary. Diary. 1856-1868.

This is a continuation of the first community Diary kept by Mother Theodore. On the day of the Foundress' death Mother Cecilia makes her first entry: May 14, 1856--"Mother dies at a quarter after three--the life and all of the Community". This second Diary gives a complete history of the twelve years in which Mother Mary Cecilia was in office.

Cecilia, Mother Mary. Life of Mother Theodore--Foundress of the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence in America. 1873. 115p.

Written in Mother Mary Cecilia's own hand this manuscript is a consecutive account of the life of Mother Theodore and of the early days of the Sisters of Providence from their foundation in Indiana in 1840 to the death of Mother Theodore in 1856. The first chapters give the early life of the Foundress and three chapters deal with her virtues and characteristics. This manuscript serves as a source for many of the incidents in Mother Theodore's life as the writer relates them as they were told to her by the Foundress herself. The style of the manuscript is characteristic of the period, and the biography is evidently written by one who was deeply in love with her Community and with her Superior Foundress. Mother Mary Cecilia was better than anyone else qualified to write this first life of the Foundress of St. Mary-of-the-Woods as she was closely associated with Mother Theodore from the time of her entrance into the Community until the Foundress' death.
As a novice she accompanied Mother Theodore to France in 1843, and later she was her companion on many journeys through Indiana.

Catalogue of the Pupils of the Institute. 1840-1892.

In this interesting ledger the pupils of the Academic Institute are recorded according to the date of entrance, each year being given separate entry. Twelve pupils are listed for the opening year, 1841; ninety-one are entered for the year of Mother Theodore's death, 1856; and two hundred and twenty-nine are registered for 1846—the largest enrollment up to 1890. Commencements and graduations are also recorded; the first graduate was Rose Howe in 1860. It is in this book we find the names of many noted pupils among them Booth Tarkington's mother and her two sisters.

Children of Mary. MS. 1854-1891.

The rules, prayers, customs, and purposes of the society of the Children of Mary are given in this MS note book. From it we learn that Mother Theodore established the Children of Mary at the Academy on February 2, 1854.

Constitutions et Règles des Soeurs de la Providence. Le Mans, France: 1835.

This is a copy of the original French Rule of the Sisters of Providence, and contains a short sketch of the founding of the order by Father Dujarie. The original constitutions are divided into three parts: the first treats of the government of
the Congregation; the second, of the methods used to form subjects to sanctity; the third, deals with particular duties of Superiors and teachers. This book is interesting and valuable for a comparative study.


In 1861 the Rules of the Sisters of Providence in France received Papal approbation. This is a prayer-book size copy of the approved Rules. In the front of the book are copies of the various Pontifical Decrees: 1843, 1859, and 1861.


This is a first copy of the English Rules. It contains a brief history of the Congregation and Rules of the Sisters of Providence; also the Pontifical Decree accorded both the French and American Rules, together with the formal approbation of Bishop St. Palais given in 1871.


The American Rules were given the formal approbation of the Holy See in 1887. This leather bound copy was printed under the supervision of Bishop Chatard for the Sacred Congregation. The archives of St. Mary-of-the-Woods contain the Bishop's own copy inscribed with his name.

All the letters written in obtaining the approbation of the French Rule are given in this valuable French manuscript. The second part is a copy of the ceremonial for elections, profession of vows, etc. The manuscript is beautifully written on ledger-size paper and is bound in heavy blue paper. The letters and ceremonial were copied in France for the benefit of the American Community as a guide in establishing forms and customs. Sister Mary Joseph brought these with her on her return from France in 1866.


Father Corbe was the chaplain and Ecclesiastical Superior of the Sisters of Providence from 1842 until his death in 1872. His letters to Mother Theodore, to the Sisters, and to many of his priest friends in the diocese are an invaluable source of information for the early history of the Sisters of Providence. The letters are frank and often humorous; they give interesting side lights on important events.


The archives of the Sisters of Providence contain an interesting series of letters from Reverend A. Damen, S. J. to the Superiors of the Community which are valuable for the information they give concerning the schools established between 1856 and 1890. From the time he gave a retreat to the Community
Community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods in 1852, Father Damen evidenced an interest in the Sisters of Providence and recommended them to pastors in all parts of the country. In her Diary Mother Mary Cecilia writes, December 3, 1859: "Father Damen, S. J. visits St. Mary's; he gave a retreat here in 1852 and conceived a great esteem for Mother Theodore and her Community."
The establishments made at Lockport, Savannah, and Lemont, Illinois; at Saginaw City, Port Huron, and Marshall, Michigan; and the first school in Chicago, St. Philip's, now St. Mel's, were accepted upon the recommendation of Father Damen.

Diary. 5 Volumes.
Vol. VI--1882-1887 382 p.

The first two volumes of the Diaries have specific authorship and are therefore given under the writer's name. The five volumes here listed are the regular Community Diary kept by the Secretary. Although most of the entries are brief, the Diaries give much valuable information; in fact, they are indispensable in getting the chronological order of events. On occasion they give generous details as exemplified in the account of the fire in 1889, and the death of Bishop St. Palais.
Hailandière, Bishop Celestine de la. Letters. 1840-1846.

Most of the letters of Bishop de la Hailandière are addressed to Mother Theodore. In all there are one hundred and twenty-eight letters, dating from March 29, 1840 to May 15, 1846. The first letter was written to Mother Theodore while she was in France preparing to come to America. All the early letters are filled with affectionate concern for the spiritual and temporal welfare of his spiritual daughters, but the letters after 1843 show a marked change. The later letters cover the difficulties between Mother Theodore and the Bishop and clearly reveal the character of the Bishop of Vincennes. They are invaluable material; unfortunately most of Mother Theodore's replies were not preserved.


The archives of St. Mary-of-the-Woods contain a few interesting letters of Father Higgens, S. J. in regard to the approbation of the Rules. He went to Rome in behalf of the approbation and through his influence with the Jesuit Cardinal, Mazzella, the formal approbation of the Rules was hastened. His letters from Rome are especially interesting.

Important Letters and Circulars. 2 Volumes.


Vol. II--1883 to the present.

Two large volumes are filled with copies of important
letters. The first volume begins with the letters of Mother Theodore, many of which are written in French; the second volume begins with 1883 and continues to the present day. The letters cover a variety of subjects; many concern the schools, others relate to legal matters, to tax exemptions, etc. The Circulars are written to the Sisters calling them home to the annual retreat, or announcing some event of importance such as the approbation of the Rules, or the fire in 1889.

Liguori, Sister Mary. Letters.

This collection contains twenty-three letters written from the missions of St. Francisville, St. Peters, and Madison. They cover a period from June 27, 1843 to November, 1846. Some of the letters give only matters of a personal nature; others give valuable information about conditions of the first missions, especially of Madison.

Martin, Bishop A. Letters. 1840-1855.

There are in all fifteen letters of Bishop Martin, beginning December 21, 1840 and ending January 13, 1855. As Vicar of the Vincennes diocese Father Martin gave two retreats to the Sisters at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. After this he interested himself in sending postulants and a number of the first letters deal with the subjects he is sending. The letter of December 15, 1853, written shortly after his consecration, is a testimonial of his wonderful zeal and piety; in it he pleads for Sisters for his
new diocese. The last letter concerns the two nieces of Mother Theodore whom he conducted from France to New Orleans. The letters in this collection are all to Mother Theodore; Sister St. Francis also corresponded with Bishop Martin.

Necrology of the Sisters of Providence. 2 Volumes.

Vol. II--1892 up to the present. 401 p.

Volume one of the Necrology records the deaths of the first fifty-five years, and contains 290 pages of finely written script. The first necrologies were written by Mother Theodore herself and there is a tenderness and a simplicity about them that is charming. Much interesting and valuable material concerning the lives of the early Sisters was obtained from the first of these two volumes.


This arithmetic text is one of the treasures of the Rare Book Collection at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College. It belonged to Elvire Le Fer, Sister Mary Joseph, and has her own notes in the front and back. From it one can learn something about the subject matter taught in the first schools.


This manuscript explains in detail the first organized effort in teacher training on the part of the Community. It
gives the minutes of the summer sessions of the Teachers' Institute begun by Bishop Chatard in 1888 and is valuable because it is practically the only source for this phase of the Community's work in education.

Rand, Mrs. G. Letters.

The letters contained in this collection were sent to a convert pupil, Sallie McGaughey, by her devoted teachers and friends at St. Mary's. There are letters of Mother Anastasie, Sister Mary Joseph, Sister Eudoxie, Sister Maurice, and Sister St. Urban. Their letters are charming and affectionate and reveal the beautiful bond which existed between the Sisters and their pupils. The earliest of these is dated December 16, 1863.

Record of the Establishments--A Brief Account of the Beginnings of Each Establishment. 78 p.

This book contains a short account of each foundation and the "Obedience List", or mission assignment, from 1842 to 1905.

The account of the foundations begins with Jasper, Indiana, and closes with St. Andrew's, Chicago.

Record of the Children of Mary. 1854-1856. 36 p.

All the minutes of the meetings of the sodality of the Children of Mary from its organization February 2, 1854 to July 29, 1856 are recorded in this manuscript. It is valuable for the information it gives concerning the spiritual activities of the Academy in the time of Mother Theodore.
Record of Postulants. 4 Volumes. 1840-1891

Brief data concerning each postulant is contained in these books. The accounts are too short to give much information, but they serve as records for verification of dates and names.

Register of Invalids at Providence Hospital, Terre Haute, Ind. 81 p.

Besides registration of patients this ledger gives the rules and regulations of the hospital. The name, nationality, residence, occupation, state of life, and disease of each patient is given with the date of entrance and departure. There is likewise included a list of the donors to the Providence Hospital Fund. The account of the occupations of the patients indicates that most of them were of the middle or poor class. There were many indigent sick. The volume throws some light on the causes of the financial failure of the hospital.

Register of Invalids. (St. John's Home for Invalids, Indianapolis)

This volume is similar to the preceding one. It gives the complete records from the opening of the Infirmary in 1865, to November, 1870. It lists many indigent sick who were cared for gratis.

Retreats and Remarkable Occurrences at St. Mary's Academic Institute. 64 p.

This manuscript gives interesting information concerning the spiritual life of the pupils at the Academy. Previous to 1878 the students' retreats were directed by a Sister on the last three days of Holy Week. The first retreat given by the
clergy was held in 1878 under the direction of Father Donaghue, of Indianapolis; from 1879, with one exception, they were given by a Jesuit. This MS gives the names of the pupils who made the retreat each year; the names of those who made their First Communion and were confirmed at the end of retreat, as was the custom; the names of the Sister in charge; and the name of the Jesuit who conducted the retreat. Besides the pupils many former students and acquaintances of the Sisters attended the exercises. The book contains also accounts of noteworthy conversions and occurrences of a spiritual nature. The manuscript closes with the account of the retreat of 1890 given by Bishop Chatard.

Saint Francis, Sister. Letters.

This collection contains forty letters of Sister St. Francis to Bishop Martin, dating from July 9, 1840 to August 22, 1855. Father Martin was a personal friend of the Le Fer family who lived near his home in France. The first letters were written from France to Father Martin at Vincennes; the later ones, written after he became Bishop of Natchitoches, are from St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Although some of the letters relate to personal matters, as a whole they contain a mine of information concerning the first years of the Sisters at St. Mary's, especially of the difficulties with Bishop de la Hailandièrè.
Saint Francis, Sister. Sketch Book and Drawings.

The history of the Sisters of Providence is told in picture as well as in records. Sister St. Francis, who was a clever artist, sketched the people and places she saw on her long journey from New York to St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and after her arrival made drawings and water color sketches of the building and interesting scenes at St. Mary's which give us a better idea than any written words of the size, structure, and location of the first convent and Academy, the log chapel, pharmacy, coal mine, etc. Many of these drawings were copied by Sister Maurice and have been used over and over again for illustrations of the early days at St. Mary's.

Scrap Books. 4 Volumes. 554 p.

The Scrap Books are marked Notices and Events at St. Mary's and Elsewhere. They contain a variety of material—newspaper clippings, commencement addresses, programs, pictures, etc. Of these the newspaper clippings are the best source of information.

Theodore, Mother. Diary. 1840-1856.

The Diary of the Foundress of St. Mary of the Woods, written in French, and begun on the day of her arrival, Oct. 22, 1840, is a priceless treasure of the archives of the Sisters of Providence. Mother Theodore wrote in the book even during her last illness, and while she was in France in 1843, Sister St.
Francis kept the accounts most carefully. This manuscript gives details concerning the daily life of the Sisters and relates interesting events which can be found nowhere else. Although none of the entries are long, the history of the first sixteen years is completely told in the Diary. Along with the daily record Mother Theodore also kept an account of letters received and written. The translation from the French was made by Sister Eudoxie (Marshall) who came to Indiana with Sister Mary Joseph, and who was proficient in both English and French.

Theodore, Mother. Journal of Travel. 3 Volumes.

The first Journal of Travel begins with the moment Mother Theodore and her companions set out from their convent in France on their missionary career, and gives a detailed account of the three months until their arrival in the forests of Indiana. It is addressed to her "dear ones at home" and was intended for all those who were interested in her missionary venture. The narrative is most colorful, revealing the Foundress of St. Mary-of-the-Woods as a keen observer of life fully able to appreciate the experiences encountered on her travels. Her trip from New York to St. Mary's gives a delightful picture of the United States in the '40's; with a graphic pen the Foundress describes modes of travel and paints pen sketches of such notable figures as Bishop Dubois of New York, Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati, Father Badin, pioneer missionary of
Indiana, and many others. For its remarkable observations of manners and customs the Journal is of interest to people of the world as well as to Mother Theodore's religious daughters.

The second Journal gives an account of Mother Theodore's trip to France in 1843 when she returned to her native land to solicit funds for her struggling Community. In this Journal she dwells in particular on her soliciting expeditions especially in Paris where she had the good fortune to be received by Queen Amelia who gave her, besides the warmest interest, substantial pecuniary aid.

The third Journal describes the return from France and is especially noted for the description of the storm at sea. The voyage was one of unexampled terrors. This Journal was addressed to the editors of the Universe, the paper which was the organ of the strong Catholic party headed by Montalambert. Louis Veuillot, who became the editor of the Universe in 1839, was called the "incomparable journalist" and was one of the greatest Catholic writers of the nineteenth century. With him was associated a young man, Leon Aubineau, who became acquainted with Mother Theodore while she was seeking help in France, and introduced her to Veuillot. Thereafter the columns of the Universe championed the cause of Mother Theodore and Leon Aubineau wrote a lengthy account of the Indiana mission which first appeared in the Universe and afterwards in the book form. From the sale of this book he was able to send contributions
to Mother Theodore. Mother Theodore's third Journal, together with her letters, supplied the data for many of the articles which appeared in the Universe.

Mother Theodore's letters, as recorded in her Diary, number nearly five thousand but comparatively few are preserved. The first letters written from St. Mary-of-the-Woods were to the Sisters in France, to Bishop Bouvier, and to the friends who so generously assisted the Indiana mission. The letters to the Bishop of Vincennes seem not to have been kept; only those of which Mother Theodore made copies are extant. The many long letters to Bishop Bouvier of Le Mans are filled with detailed accounts of the progress of the pioneer Community, and contain valuable source material which explains better than anything else the hardships, trials and accomplishments of the first years. The letters written to the Sisters on the missions give information concerning the early schools and the privations endured by the Sisters. The style of the letters is easy and familiar. Mother Theodore knew how to express herself and she is not lacking in a sense of humor. Her insight into human nature is remarkable, and the wide range of subjects which the letters cover tell of a cultivated as well as a practical mind. The letters reveal better than any of her other writings the character of the saintly foundress of St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

The author of this volume was one of Mother Theodore's friends and benefactors in France. As associate editor of the *Universe* he was able to do much to bring her cause before the public. He was well informed by the *Journal* and letters of Mother Theodore of conditions on the Indiana mission at St. Mary-of-the-Woods and was therefore prepared to write at considerable length concerning Mother Theodore and her foundation in the new world. Part VII of his book is devoted to "Sainte Marie des Bois"; it is a charming, sympathetic account, and shows a surprising knowledge of early Indiana history.


The first part of this book contains a sketch of Bishop Bruté's life written almost entirely in the first person from the Bishop's notes and Diary. The second part is made up of the pioneer Bishop's notes on the French Revolution, as he himself witnessed it as a young man. The book is almost pure source material. It also contains the complete account of his first trip through his diocese as written to the Leopoldine Association
of Vienna in return for some financial assistance given to him. The Bruté Mss were given by Bishop Hailandièrè to Archbishop Hughes of New York who later gave them to Bishop Bayley of Newark as a basis for this work.


This book, written by the sister of Sister St. Francis and Sister Mary Joseph, is one of the best printed sources on the foundation of St. Mary-of-the-Woods. The first half of the book contains an account of Bishop Bruté, the history of the Sisters of Providence in France, and the story of the acceptance of the Indiana mission. It explains the choice of Mother Theodore as Superior of the missionary band, and describes in touching words their departure for their mission field. Many letters of Mother Theodore to her Ecclesiastical Superior, Bishop Bouvier of Le Mans, were included in the first part.

The second half of the book deals with the life of Sister Mary Joseph (Elvire le Fer de la Motte), and is composed of her letters to her family in France. This second part of the book is most valuable for the history of the Community from the death of Mother Theodore to Sister Mary Joseph's death in 1881.


In this biography of her Sister, Madame Corbinière pre-
serves for us the intimate and detailed correspondence between Sister St. Francis Xavier and the members of her family. It is valuable for the detailed information it gives concerning the most ordinary events in the lives of the pioneer French Sisters at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. More than any other source consulted, this volume gives a clear insight into the progress of the foundation at St. Mary's during the first fifteen years, and reveals the zeal which animated Sister St. Francis and her religious Sisters. There are very few copies of this French life extant today, but the book has been translated and published by B. Herder, St. Louis, under the title, The Life and Letters of Sister St. Francis Xavier of the Sisters of Providence. Much of the charm of the letters is lost in translation; therefore the writer has mainly consulted the French work. The introduction to Une Femme Apôtre was written by the zealous editor of the Universe, Léon Aubineau, and the book is dedicated to "Monseigneur Chatard Évêque de Vincennes."


The Sisters of Holy Cross came to Indiana just three years after Mother Theodore established her Community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and, because Bishop Hailandière felt that the diocese could support only one Motherhouse, they established their first
Motherhouse at Bertrand, Michigan. When Mother Cenacle, Superior of the Holy Cross Sisters died in 1848 at St. Augustine's, Fort Wayne, in the convent of the Sisters of Providence, Mother Theodore and a Sister companion spent a week at Bertrand and Notre Dame consoling and directing the grief stricken Sisters of Holy Cross. Sister Mary Eleanore gives a very complete account of her order; she describes its humble beginnings in France in 1838, and traces its successive stages up to the present when St. Mary's, Notre Dame stands out as one of the finest institutions in the country. The chapters dealing with the pioneer days and early foundations are interesting, especially by way of comparison, for the Community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods and at Bertrand experienced similar hardships in laying the foundation for their institutions.

Former Pupil, Souvenir of the Fiftieth Anniversary or Golden Jubilee of St. Mary's Academic Institute, St. Mary of the Woods. New York: Benziger Brothers. 1891. 288 p.

This book of reminiscences, which was written by a devoted pupil and published for the Golden Jubilee of the Academy, contains many pictures made from the drawings of Sister St. Francis and Sister Maurice. The author of this jubilee volume is brimming over with enthusiasm for her loved alma mater and pictures in glowing terms the beauties and benefits of St. Mary-of-the-Woods. The style of the sketch is ornate, but this does not detract from the value of the book as source material. One is
grateful to the author for the detailed descriptions of Mother Mary Cecilia's Academy, for the vivid accounts of school work and school activities, and for the character glimpses of her well-loved teachers and Superiors. There is much interesting information in the book not found elsewhere. The memoir, however, covers only half the book; the second part is a collection of essays by the young lady graduates and does not add to the value of the book.


This historical sketch, compiled from letters and written excerpts, was published for the use of the Community in France. It tells the story of the foundation of the Community of the Sisters of Providence by Abbe Dujarié, it describes the first "Little Providence" with its cramped quarters and attic bedrooms, and relates at length the development under Mother Mary, the second Superior General, who presided over the Community from the death of the Foundress in 1822 until her own death in 1873. The third part of the book has to do with the foundation of St. Mary-of-the-Woods.


This early Almanac contains a complete list of the diocese of the United States and the institutions in each, a list of the clergy, and a summary of the history of the Catholic Church.
in the United States. The Sisters of Providence are listed as having: 1 Female Religious Institution, 5 Female Academies, 1 Charitable Institution (the Orphan Asylum at Vincennes).

The five Academies under the direction of the Sisters of Providence are: Academy and Free School at St. Mary-of-the-Woods; Jasper, Fort Wayne, Madison, and St. Mary's Female Academy at Vincennes. In the Community of the Sisters of Providence there were 26 Professed Sisters, 10 Novices and 10 Postulants.


In the Life of Mother Theodore Guerin, the first published work concerning the Foundress and her Community, we have an example of historical biography for the letters, Diary and Journal of the venerated Foundress are generously quoted. The author, Sister Mary Theodosia (Mugg), is an authority on the early history of the Sisters of Providence and has carefully organized the mass of material relative to the Foundress and the early days of her Community. Cardinal Gibbons in the Introduction to the book says: "Sacred literature now receives a valuable contribution in the life of Mother Theodore Guerin; this little has hitherto been known of magnificent institution; its early history, therefore, will undoubtedly claim a large number of interested readers. Apart from the historical value of such a work, it is most praiseworthy action on the part of
the spiritual daughters of their venerated Mother Theodore to have collected and published her letters and sayings." This biography is considered by all as authoritative for the early history of the Sisters of Providence. It represents a splendid piece of work.

**Prospectus, St. Mary of the Woods. 1882-1906.**

This is a bound volume of the prospectuses which were issued yearly from 1881 on. From these we learn the course of study followed at the Academic Institute, the tuition and cost of "extras" in the fine arts, and the rules and regulations of the Institution.

**PERIODICALS**

**Aurora, St. Mary of the Woods, Indiana. College Library. Vol.XXV,XLV 1905-1915.**

**Indianapolis Daily Journal. Indianapolis Public Library. Vol.X and XI June 18, to August 16, 1861.**


**New York Catholic Register. Archives, St. Mary of the Woods, Vol.II. Sept. 16, 1840.**


**The Western Sun. Indiana State Library, Indianapolis 1809-1827.**
II. - SECONDARY SOURCES


This book is divided into four parts: Tradition and History, Bishop of Vincennes, The Priests and Congregations, Institutions of the Diocese. It is the most frequently quoted source on the history of the Vincennes Diocese. There is a history of every mission station, church, and parish; the name of each successive pastor is given with an account of the building of the church and school. The book offers valuable history because the author gathered most of his material from parish records. It is not complete, however, and not always accurate in giving dates. The author goes back as far as 1860 when LaSalle established stockades in Indiana on his passage through that territory. The growth of the diocese under the various Bishops is told in detail. When Bishop Brute took possession of his See it included all of Indiana and eastern Illinois; in 1844 Illinois was erected into a separate diocese, and in 1857 the northern part of Indiana became the diocese of Fort Wayne. The history of St. Mary-of-the-Woods and other educational institutions is told at length. For general background, and for verifying historical data concerning the Diocese of Vincennes the book is invaluable.

This book gives a short preliminary history of the Church in the United States before it takes up in detail the history of Indiana. It is similar to Bishop Alerding's history in that it gives the lives of all the Bishops of Vincennes and the history of each parish. In the section devoted to higher education, St. Mary-of-the-Woods is prominent. The author speaks highly of the work of the Sisters of Providence in Indiana. It is a book that can scarcely be omitted from the study of the growth of the Church in Indiana.


Father Burns gives a comprehensive history of the Catholic school movement in the United States from the earliest times down to about 1840. A special section is devoted to the diocese of Vincennes, which makes the book particularly valuable in a study of the educational condition at the time the Sisters of Providence came to Indiana.

Conway, J. P. Rev. S.J., Arnold Damen, S.J.


This very well written biography is of interest in connection with this thesis because the subject of the biography was one of the earliest friends of the Community at St. Mary-of-the-
Woods. From the time of his first visit to St. Mary-of-the-Woods, when he gave a retreat to the Sisters in 1852, Father Damen manifested an active interest in the Sisters of Providence. The archives of the Community contain many letters written by Father Damen in behalf of parishes where he was giving a mission, and to which he asked the Community to send Sisters to open a school. The chapters which discuss the educational needs of his time, and the beginnings of the parochial schools covers the period during which the Sisters of Providence were opening new schools in Indiana and beginning to expand into other states.

Dunn, Jacob Piatt, Greater Indianapolis--The History, the Industries, the Institutions, and the people of a City of Homes. Two Volumes. Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1910.

In his first volume Jacob Piatt Dunn, Secretary of the Indiana Historical Society, gives a very complete history of the capital of his state. He begins with the arrival of Rogers Clarke in 1778 and traces the growth of the city to the beginnings of the twentieth century. As the title indicates, the book lays great stress upon the social and economic aspects of the City's history, and the author gives just credit to Catholic educational and charitable works. In the chapter on the Civil War the Sisters of Providence receive generous praise for their services in the Military Hospital. A picture of the hospital is given on page 550. The second volume is entirely biographical and was not consulted.
Dye, Charity, Some Torch Bearers in Indiana.
In this book Mother Theodore is described as the "Torch Bearer of Higher Education of Women along the Wabash in Indiana."
The sketch of St. Mary-of-the-Woods given by the author though short is interesting and accurate.

Jolly, Ellen Ryan, Nuns of the Battlefield.
Although the Sisters of Providence did not serve on the battlefields during the Civil War, Mrs. Jolly includes them in her book because of the service they rendered at the Military Hospital at Indianapolis and Vincennes. In her research in the offices of the War Department the author found the names of the Sisters of Providence and became so interested in the story of their service that she obtained from the archives of St. Mary-of-the-Woods all the extant information concerning them. Her chapter on the work of the Sisters of Providence is therefore based on accurate source material. As this material is rather meager, the chapter is not lengthy, but Mrs. Jolly's interest and enthusiasm for her subject render it doubly valuable.


The twenty-six chapters of this book give the history of the hierarchy in the United States, and the growth of the Church, especially in the phases of its missionary endeavor. A chapter is devoted to the teaching Sisterhoods, another to the teaching Brotherhoods, and other chapters tell the story of the outstanding Catholic colleges in the United States.


In this historical sketch of St. Rose Parish prepared for its Diamond Jubilee, the story of the coming of the Sisters of Providence is briefly told. Father McGlew who brought the Sisters to Chelsea was a pioneer educator, and his schools were among the finest in the East. The pictures of the first parochial school and convent are an interesting and valuable feature of the book.

This well documented and standard work on Catholic Church History in the United States is indispensable for any work dealing with the development of the Church in this country. The author has conveniently arranged his material according to the various dioceses, thus greatly assisting the student in the search for specific data.
The Archives of St. Mary-of-the-Woods

The manuscript sources described in this Bibliography are contained in the Archives of the Sisters of Providence at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana. Besides the listed sources the writer consulted specifically marked drawers and compartments relative to the history of the Community. Three drawers marked History of the Community contain valuable material in clippings, souvenirs, booklets, programs, etc; another marked Documents and Deeds contains important papers connected with the purchase and exchange of property; another marked Charters contains the original charter and others. The letters and documents relative to the approbation of the Rules are contained in two specially marked compartments. Each establishment opened by the Sisters of Providence has a separate drawer in which letters and other important documents concerning the missions are filed. A special section is arranged in alphabetic compartments in which valuable letters not otherwise filed are kept. The Archives of the Sisters of Providence have never been completely organized so that letters are sometimes scattered, or filed in unexpected places; but, on the whole the matter was easily accessible, especially the sources found in Diaries, Journals, Records, and collections of important Letters and Documents. This brief explanation together with the description of the manuscript sources listed in the preceding pages will give the reader some insight into the amount of original source material used by the writer in her research. Due to the rich amount of material at the disposal of the writer, this thesis is based almost en-
tirely upon manuscript sources many of which have never before been available. The Archives of the Sisters of Providence contain a store of interesting information sufficient to furnish material for two or three volumes of history.
The thesis, "A History of the First Fifty Years of the Sisters of Providence in the United States," written by Sister Lawrence Gonner, has been accepted by the Graduate School of Loyola University, with reference to form, and by the readers whose names appear below, with reference to content. It is, therefore, accepted as a partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree conferred.

Rev. Joseph Roubik, S.J. December 11, 1933

Paul Kiniery, Ph.D. December 20, 1933