1934

History of the Foundations of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary in North America

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HISTORY OF THE FOUNDATIONS
OF THE
INSTITUTE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
IN NORTH AMERICA

BY

M. ST. WILLIAM GORMALY, I.B.V.M.

A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts
in
Loyola University
1934
VITA

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INTRODUCTION

It has been the endeavor of the compiler of these pages to set forth in as lucid a manner as possible an account of the various North American foundations of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Woven into this historic sketch are some details of the conditions under which each separate mission initiated the influences that were to bear upon soil athirst for the seed of Catholicity. Nor has the labor been in vain, as it is demonstrated by the extent of the field from which the Institute has so far reaped its abundant harvest; for from the vast prairies of Saskatchewan all down the line to the Catholic City of Chicago and east to the teeming Canadian fields there are Loretto pupils whose many voices swell the chorus of the "Ave Maria Loretto" -- the Institute hymn. It is also by the conspicuous loyalty of the Loretto Alumnae to Church and Alma Mater that the Religious are assured of the grateful fact that their labors have been productive of much good. The magnanimous spirit of self-sacrifice, humility and fortitude exemplified in the lives of these
Godly pioneers could not but draw down upon their noble work the signal blessings of the Master whom they so nobly served.

The work has been approached through a study of the manuscript annals, from the original letters of Reverend Mother Teresa Dease and newspaper articles, in the archives of Loretto Abbey, Toronto, Ontario, to which the compiler has had access. The careful examination of the Annals supplied by the individual Convents in the United States and Canada, has been a great aid, contributing, as it did, much valuable information concerning local conditions not recorded in the "Abbey Archives"

The books and magazine articles consulted have been few as very little has been published which concerns in any way the history of the Institute in America. Those books which have been consulted are *The Life of Mary Ward* by Catherine Chambers, *Mary Ward: A Foundress of the 17th Century* by Mother M. Salome I.B.V.M., *Mrs. Ball: A Biography* by Rev. William Hutch D.D., and *The Life and Letters of Reverend Mother Teresa Dease* by a Member of the Community. The greater part of the details surrounding each new venture was obtained from the manuscript Annals in the Archives of the Motherhouse.
and of the individual Missions.

Those who have aided greatly in the compilation of this work and to whom thanks are especially due are:

Mother M. Dorothea Barry, Secretary General of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary in America, for access to the Abbey Archives; to Mother Evarista Page for her helpful criticism; to those who supplied much detailed information in the way of letters and pioneer experiences, especially to Mother M. St. Roque Canty, Mother M. Thomasina Dillon, Mother M. Bernardine Bannon and Mother M. St. Joseph Macklin; and to Mother M. Fabian Beaulieu and Mother M. Pancratius Porter the compiler is also deeply indebted.
CHAPTER I
EARLY BEGINNINGS IN EUROPE

During the days when England sought to establish a state religion persecution swept the land. Perhaps at no time was the influence of the throne exerted so strongly to destroy all traces of allegiance to Rome as when by command of Elizabeth and her immediate successor, James, devastation stalked the countryside and murder -- ruthless bloodshed (1) were rampant. At this period and later England was merciless, brutal and doggedly determined to kill the Faith and to bring ruin to the Church within the Empire. These persecutions were met fearlessly by many loyal subjects of the reigning pontiff, Gregory XIII -- notably the well-known family of Marmaduke Ward of Yorkshire whose immediate household was in constant danger of attack. It was in this district of England that a daughter, Joan was born to Marmaduke Ward and Ursula Wright Ward on January 23, 1585. (2)

Joan, who at the time of her confirmation changed

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her name to Mary, had, in the years of her maidenhood, been afforded many exceptional opportunities to be prominent, successful and even brilliant in the social life of the best circles of England. Nobler aspirations, that sought not their end in worldly fame, flooded her ardent soul, and she felt herself called by God to higher things. Imbued with the faith which her pious mother had fostered, and which had blossomed under the careful guidance of her grandmother, this favored child renounced all earthly wealth and honor to serve the Divine Master in the religious state. To carry out her design she was obliged to repair to the Continent, as religious houses were not tolerated in England. St. Omer and the Convent of Poor Clares welcomed this daughter of Great Britain when she set foot in France. But it was not long before Mary realized that neither the cloister here, nor her own foundation of the Order at Gravelines, satisfied the aspirations of her soul. During the years which elapsed between her return to England (1609) and the founding of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (1619), she spent her days laboring for the salvation of souls, among rich and poor. At length she was visited by a heavenly light which she took as an indication

that her life was to be devoted in the service of God to
the education of girls under the rule of St. Ignatius
insofar as this could be practised by women. Mary's
powers of attraction were beyond the ordinary; therefore
she soon gained a distinguished following -- worthy
daughters of militant English Catholics, imbued with a
generous love of Christ and a burning zeal for the souls of
His deeply wronged children. With these companions she
returned to the Continent and opened Schools for the
daughters of exiled English ladies, with the intention of
eventually returning to her native land to assist her
countrymen who were denied the benefits of a religious ed-
ucation. Her main design was to attend to her own per-
fection and salvation, and that of her neighbor chiefly by
the training and education of girls. The future was not
without its attending hardships. Obstacles that appeared
insurmountable loomed up at every turn. One endowed with
less patience and fortitude would have despaired, where
Mary only hoped, but God-given foresight filled her with

1. Mother Mary Loyola, Mary Ward, op. cit., p. 5.
2. Chambers, Mary C., The Life of Mary Ward, Vol. I,
3. Constitutions of the Institute of the Blessed
Virgin Mary - p.157, Union & Times Press, Buffalo,
N.Y.
determination that knew not failure and thus equipped she pleaded her cause in the face of great ecclesiastical 
(1) opposition. So strong was sentiment against her undertaking in the circles of the clergy that her congregation was suppressed by the issuance of a Bull by Pope Urban VIII. Great pressure had been brought to bear, resulting from a difference of opinion concerning the advisability of the manner of life adopted by Mary Ward. Bishops and priests of the Seventeenth Century deemed that the time was not ripe for Mary's venture which meant the inauguration of a religious Community without enclosure. To her untiring efforts all teaching communities owe their gratitude. Because of her radical departure from the accepted cloister for women, she was imprisoned by local authorities. When news of this development reached the Holy Father he demanded her release and summoned her to appear before him. On this occasion, in audience with His Holiness, she pleaded her cause so convincingly that he granted her petition to open a house of her Institute in Rome in order that he might

2. Ibid., p. 297.
3. Ibid., p. 299.
watch the work which she and her companions were fostering. If then it did not meet with his approval she would willingly abandon the undertaking; but so successful was she in her Roman Foundation, that many others of similar character were established throughout Germany and Bavaria; eventually houses were opened in her loved England, notably that established at York.

It was in this English Convent at York, founded during the heat of persecution against the Church that Mother Frances Ball, Foundress of the Institute in Ireland, entered upon her novitiate, June 11, 1814, to be trained with the end in view of establishing a Convent of this congregation in her native land, in accordance with the suggestion of her counsellor and friend, His Excellency Archbishop Murray of Dublin. Mother Ball possessed talents above the average. Her charming manner quickly won for her the respect and the love of her pupils, and her spiritual life was led so conformably to the regulations of the Institute that she was a source of great admiration to her sisters.

2. Ibid., p. 71.
She had ever before her the great work to be done in Ireland. The ceremony in which she received the holy habit occurred on September 8, 1814, three months after her entrance; and two years later, September 9, 1816, she pronounced her three vows, but not until 1821 did she and her two companions depart for "Rathfarnham Abbey". Her newly established Irish foundation which was ready for occupancy a year later dates its origin from November 5, 1822. The construction of this Abbey, which has become the mother-house of numerous missions in India, Africa, Australia and America, was carried on under the careful supervision of Dr. Murray who aided Mother Ball and her companions in the execution of the noble work these women had undertaken -- the establishment of the Institute in Ireland and in the British Colonies.

1. Ibid., p. 67.
CHAPTER II

NORTH AMERICAN FOUNDATION 1847-1851.

Though Mary Ward possessed remarkable foresight, one may almost safely say that she never entertained the thought that the germ of her Institute would take root and flourish in a Province across the Atlantic which was the heart of bigotry and opposition to everything Catholic, for the notorious "Orangemen" had established themselves in this Protestant Center. It was no easy task for any missioner, however zealous, to break down the animosity these powerful (1) enemies of the Church had created throughout Ontario and especially in its chief city, Toronto. The neighboring province of Quebec famed for its Catholicity inclines one to assume that the same tolerance which the inhabitants of that province enjoyed was also possessed by the Catholics of Ontario, but few were acquainted with the fact that Ontario went to the other extreme and was intolerant of anything Catholic, and it was to Protestant Ontario that Mother Frances Ball, of Rathfarnham Abbey, Ireland sent her


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Sisters. The present province of Ontario, formerly a part of the diocese of Quebec, became a distinct Province in 1826. "The first Bishop of Upper Canada, as it was then called, was that mighty Churchman and Statesman, Alexander MacDonald!" Toronto became the See of the Western section of the Province on the issuance of a Bull of Pope Gregory XVI, dated October 17, 1841. To the cities of Kingston and Ottawa went the honor of the Eastern Sees. These two latter were governed by French-speaking Bishops who were instrumental in bringing French-Canadian Communities to their dioceses. At this time the Irish-Canadian, Right Reverend Michael Power, native of Halifax, Nova Scotia, presided over the See at Toronto. This humble, holy priest did all in his power to escape the dignity, and even implored his Bishop to have this manifestation of esteem placed on worthier shoulders, but his lowly opinion of himself only enhanced his worth. When he assumed his ecclesiastical responsibilities, he found that he was surrounded by problems that seemed beyond solution. Though his flock had been inadequately looked after, he was helpless to supply them with means of fulfilling their duties as Catholics, as

2. Ibid., p.36.
Father Kirwin was the only assistant he had to minister to the three thousand souls under his care. Nuns were sorely needed. The Bishop of this extensive diocese which could not boast of a single religious community of women, was cognisant of the fact that an English-speaking Community which would advance the cause of Catholic Education, was an urgent need. Since the majority of the Catholics in Bishop Power's diocese were from Ireland, it was but natural that he look to Ireland, for his teaching Community. With this purpose uppermost in his plans, the most Reverend Bishop went to Ireland in 1845, and after a profitable visit with Mother Frances Ball, obtained from her a promise of some members to instruct the young girls in his diocese in all branches, then required for higher education. Two years later, he felt that he could accommodate the nuns and dispatched the following letter to Mother Frances at Rathfarnham Abbey:

Toronto, June 25, 1848

Madam:

I have just returned to Toronto, and I feel more convinced than ever that a branch of your Community will succeed admirably here after a short time. I cannot inform you of the number of scholars (boarders) you might have, because you are as likely

to have (after a few months) fifty as twenty. As soon as you are known, the good ladies whom you intend sending out will have as much as they can do. As a matter of course, it will be my business to see, especially in commencing, that they may have no reasonable motive to complain. I shall immediately see where I can find a convenient residence in order that everything may be ready at their arrival, or a few days afterwards, in case that I cannot learn the exact time of their coming. The day school will, I hope, be numerously attended after a few weeks, and the common school filled by a great number. However, I am aware that for a short time there may exist among the Protestants slight prejudice, but when the parents will find that they can obtain a cheaper and better education for their daughters in the Convent than in any other establishment, they will certainly avail themselves of its advantages. By requesting your Chaplain, Reverend M. Farrelly, to inquire of Roche Bros. in Dublin, the day of sailing of the fastest ship of the line, you can engage the passage of the ladies immediately. A clergyman who is going to New York intends speaking to some members of the firm in order to afford you every convenience; but I am sure that following the line I have marked out, you will not meet with the slightest difficulty in sending the good nuns to Liverpool on the Sixth of August. I find now that the boat sails on the first of July, but there are other ships in every respect as good and comfortable as the "Yorkshire" for instance, the "Queen of the West". I should like to know the day the ladies are to sail, and the probable date of their arrival in New York, so as to have someone on the spot to meet them. I shall write also to the Bishop of New York to request one of his priests to watch for the arrival of the ship, in order to avoid any delay or disappointment. You remember that the people (Catholics, mostly Irish or of Irish descent) are not rich. Some families are well able to educate their daughters. I beg of you to write me by the sixteenth of July or the first of August, so that I may be fully prepared to have everything ready. I suppose it would be better not to furnish the house until after the nuns' arrival. If they have those things which are necessary for the celebration of the Mass, so much the better, they can bring with
them in that respect as much as they please. Anything else can be had here as cheap as in Ireland.

I have the honour to remain, with every feeling of respect and regard,
Madam,

Your most obedient and humble servant in J.C.
Michael
Bishop of Toronto--

P.S. I have written under the full impression that His Grace your excellent Archbishop will sanction and recommend the undertaking. I said but a few words to His Grace on the subject, but he gave me to understand that if nothing was wanting but his approbation it would be given.

M. Bp. of T.

Mrs. Ball
Sup. Loretto Abbey (1)
Rathfarnham, near Dublin

In accordance with this engagement, under the care and guidance of Reverend Mother Ignatia Hutchinson as Superior, four Sisters, M. Teresa Dease, later to assume the duties of Chief Superior in the New World, M. Valentine Hutchinson, M. Bonaventure Phelan, daughter of an eminent Dublin physician, and M. Gertrude Fleming left for the West. Two of these, Sister M. Teresa and Sister M. Bonaventure had just made profession of vows at Rathfarnham Abbey, (2) August 3, 1847. Reverend Mother Ignatia, who had changed

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2. Ibid.
her name from Loyola, on coming to Canada, was one of the Community at Dalkey, Ireland, when she volunteered for the foreign missions. On receiving the word that she was to be the Superior she interceded with Reverend Mother Frances, to release her from such a responsibility, of which she felt herself unworthy. In her reluctance to undertake this office Reverend Mother Frances saw fresh reasons for the appointment and sent her a message that no mission would go to Canada unless she consented to be its head. Bravely and courageously she shouldered the cross and endeavoured to carry it, though bending 'neath its weight, but with her eyes ever turned heavenward, she reached the goal to which the Cross always leads. Mother M. Ignatia, a model religious and endowed by nature with an upright, strong, firm will, seemed in every way suited to the extraordinary task before her. With her the voice of duty was imperative, and this gave her courage that was really invincible. Her presence alone in the Community was sufficient to recall the thought of God, as she seemed to hold uninterrupted communion with Him. Faithful in all things she who inspired her young

1. Ibid.
2. Life and Letters of Rev. Mother Teresa Dease, op., cit., p. 56.
charges with the zeal of the Apostles possessed a keen appreciation of duty and was entirely devoid of human respect.

On August 5, 1847, the Feast of Our Lady of the Snows, the heroic group of missionaries, turned their faces to the West, the land that held for them so many secrets. It so chanced that on the same day of departure, funeral ceremonies and national tribute were being conferred on the mortal remains of Ireland's Liberator, Daniel O'Connell, which did not assist in any way in reviving the spirits of these brave nuns, whose hearts must have felt keenly the pain of parting from all they held most dear. After crossing to Liverpool they enjoyed the hospitality of the Sisters of Mercy for five days prior to their sailing on the "S.S. Garrick". As sailors they proved excellent travellers, for the sea did what it could to test the fitness of their vessel, and except for the inclement weather their voyage was uneventful. Though travelling as secular women, these religious performed the spiritual exercises, which were commonly followed in the convents at home.

Their trip, which lasted six weeks indicates the slow

progress made by ocean-going ships when compared with the
service of to-day. We may well imagine that New York, their
first glimpse of America, was a welcome sight to Mother M.
Ignatia and her four pilgrims. From here, after a brief
respite, they continued the journey by way of the pictur-
esque Hudson to Albany; by rail from Albany to Rochester and
then again by steamer, across Lake Ontario to Toronto.
September the 16th, brought the long journey to an end. The
welcome, which one would expect to receive, upon arriving
in a foreign Country (especially since they had come upon
the invitation of the Bishop) was denied them. Strangers in
a strange land they looked in vain for the familiar garb of
the clergy, but neither Bishop Power, nor his representative
was to be seen. Summoning a carriage the nuns instructed
the cabman to convey them to the Bishop's Palace, which
upon reaching, they found was not a palatial mansion, as they
supposed, but a very unpretentious house. Here they were
kindly, but sadly received by the good Bishop. Distress,
plainly visible on his countenance, was a cause of bewilder-
ment to these nuns who had come at his bidding. This,

1. Life and letters of Rev. Mother Teresa Dease, op.,
cit. p. 40
2. Ibid., p. 41
3. Ibid., p. 42

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however, was readily explained when Mother M. Ignatia learned that the priests in the Bishop's residence were stricken with Typhus Fever which raged throughout the city. It was his anxiety for these Irish nuns that caused his great consternation when he greeted them. In a portion of the palace which had been appointed for the nuns, they resumed their religious habit, that had been laid aside for so many weeks. The morning following their arrival the nuns were presented to Venerable Archdeacon Hay, the Bishop's Secretary, to Dean Kirwin, and to the Rev. Messrs. Carroll and Ryan. Archdeacon Hay shared with his Lordship the entire charge of ministering to patients in the fever sheds.

The year 1847 in which the nuns came, was also the year of the great Irish Famine. Three million Irish people were starving; one million died of starvation or of disease resulting from malnutrition; one million emigrated to America. Of those who came to Canada many bore with them the germs of disease. "Canadian official figures show that of 97,950 Irish Emigrants to Canada in 1847, over four thousand died at Sea, over five thousand at Grosse Isle and Quebec,

over three thousand at Montreal and over three thousand nine hundred at various parts of Ontario; and these figures are incomplete. Of all these eight hundred sixty-three died at Toronto. This fever was raging among the immigrants when the nuns arrived.

A glimpse of Toronto in the forties may give an idea of the place to which these missionaries came.

In 1840 Toronto, for the first time, lit its streets with gas and four years later Reform founded its long-time chief organ of Journalism, "The Globe". To this evidence of progress has to be added those connected with improved facilities of communication by land and water, besides the building of churches and founding of schools. This period is also known as that which saw the erection of the Provincial University. (2)

Occasionally progress had its set-backs. Toronto was visited by a great fire in 1849 and the second outbreak of Asiatic cholera took five hundred of its inhabitants. During this same period Toronto made great strides -- notably one in promoting education by establishing a common school system with its higher extension of Secondary Schools leading to the University, and the other, the creation of the municipal system of local government in cities, towns and villages. (3)

After a few days spent in the Bishop's residence the Sisters went to their Convent in Duke Street, which was formally opened on September 24, 1847. When nicely settled in their new home, they received calls from representatives of Canadian society who were members of Bishop Power's flock, notably Mr. Elmsley, a convert, not merely from Protestantism, but from Orangism of the most virulent type. So bigoted had this despiser of Catholicity been, at one period of his life, that he would not even permit Catholics to draw water from his well, lest they might poison it! Yet, like another Saul, he became a 'vessel of election' — the very heart and soul of every Catholic movement in Toronto — and so great was his fervour, that he worked like a common laborer, with pick and shovel, in digging the foundations of St. Michael's Cathedral of that city.

The school opened almost immediately after the nuns took up their abode in Duke Street. Among the first pupils to enroll were the daughters of Mr. Elmsley, Mr. Lynn, and Mrs. De La Haye — all loyal friends of the Community and representative Catholics of Toronto. The sympathy and kind attention thus manifested toward the nuns exercised a somewhat cheerful influence on their depressed spirits, and they

1. Life and Letters of Rev. Mother Teresa Dease, op. cit. p. 46.
3. Annals, Loretto Abbey, op. cit.
were just beginning to enter energetically upon their work, when in a moment their high hopes were shattered. The Bishop, their friend and benefactor, who had become a victim of the Emigrant fever while ministering to the needs of his flock, died. Mother M. Ignatia and her small community felt intensely the grief of their irreparable loss. They realized more than ever their utter dependence on their heavenly Father who had deprived them of their only earthly protector, counsellor and guide. This was only a beginning of the trials which were to visit them and they sorely needed recourse to prayer to sustain them for the future. Sickness visited this band of brave, heroic hearts. Two of the Sisters were afflicted with maladies which proved incurable. After enduring with extraordinary patience the most excruciating sufferings, Sister Bonaventure Phelan died April 11, 1849. Through her the Sisters implored aid from on high and an almost immediate response came when Reverend Mother Frances Ball sent two more Irish Nuns, Sister M. Joachim Murray and Sister M. Ita Cummins, who eagerly set forth upon their journey to foreign lands, to join the

1. Hutch, Wm., D.D. Mrs. Ball, op. cit. p. 321
2. Life and Letters of Rev. Mother Teresa Dease op. cit., p. 45.

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pioneers in Canada. These good nuns endured a most disagreeable voyage of eight weeks, during which time the provisions ran short and the passengers were obliged to subsist on rice, sago and gruel. Finally they disembarked at Quebec, where they were received by the Ursuline nuns of that city with every demonstration of hospitality, and by special desire of the venerable Archbishop, with all the exceptional privileges of distinguished guests. The travellers made the rest of their journey by rail to Toronto, being greeted, June 16, 1849, with unbounded joy by their sisters. Just a month preceding this event the wee Community admitted to its grateful circle Sister M. Joseph McNamara, the first postulant of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary in America. The help which came so opportunely to the struggling Community had not come too soon for shortly after their removal to Simcoe Street, to a Convent of more commodious quarters, death took another member, December 25, 1850, in the person of Sister M. Gertrude Fleming. This good sister had taught in the Poor School

1. Ibid.
3. Hutch, Wm. Mrs. Ball, op. cit., p.325
5. Ibid.
located some distance away; to which day after day she walked uncomplainingly, on her inflamed and gangrened foot to perform her allotted tasks, though this exertion caused her intense pain. Later she was forced to relinquish this work, so dear to her heart, and to remain within the Convent, as the foot became so enlarged that she was unable to stand upon it. When all other remedies failed, the doctors decided to amputate above the ankle. This operation was performed with a rather crude instrument and without an anaesthetic. It has been recorded that the patience and fortitude of this devout soul were a remarkable example to others.

The trials that greeted Mother M. Ignatia at every turn would have disheartened a less courageous and spiritual soul. Heavenly strength supported her in each new cross; first the death of the Bishop, then the death of her two spiritual daughters and now the return of a third to Ireland due to poor health in the person of Sister M. Valentine. For four years this brave Superior struggled for the welfare of her Community and of her pupils, endearing herself to all.

1. Life and Letters of Rev. Mother Teresa Dease - op. cit.  
by her piety, prudence, uprightness and unfailing generosity in God's service. She had taken up the work of extending the kingdom of Christ in the new world, and though on the verge of the grave she endeavoured to be a source of encouragement to her young charges. On March 9, 1851, she expired leaving a heritage to her sorrowing Community in the memory of her saintly life, her zeal in the work entrusted to her care and her nobility of heart which made her like the Great Apostle — "All things to all men". The spiritual ministrations of the two priests of the parish who gave great consolation to the stricken nuns, enabled them, to bear with fortitude and resignation the trials which Providence had been pleased to send them. Father Harkin provided not only for their spiritual wants but interested himself largely in their temporal affairs, especially with their schools. His efforts in bringing the excellence of their system of education before the public were most praiseworthy and fruitful of good results. At his suggestion the nuns first held public examinations at the close of the scholastic term which were followed by pleasing dramatic performances. Both did much to adver-

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.

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tise the school and to increase its membership.

At the time of Mother M. Ignatia's death, the nuns were obliged to close their schools, as the number of Sisters was insufficient to carry on the labours both in the Convent and in the classroom. Due to the continued sickness, and to three deaths in the community since it began its apostolic work in America, the schools had had no opportunity to display their superior work to the inhabitants of Toronto, and to the remaining members fell the task of building up a reputation for their schools.

Of all the foundations of the Institute that of Canada was commenced under the most disheartening circumstances. On leaving their home the heartrending wail of a starving nation followed the Loretto Nuns over the sea and at their landing it had deepened into the "sorrowful cadence of 'requiem'" over the newly made graves of their fugitive Countrymen. Behind lay all that was dear to these gentle and educated ladies. They came as strangers to a strange land, but to a land which was a hospitable and foster-mother to them. It was indeed a fertile soil in which to work, and from a small beginning of five nuns the Institute in America has grown and flourished. The yearnings of many young girls for the spiritual life found its vent here. (2)

CHAPTER III

ADMINISTRATION OF REVEREND MOTHER TERESA DEASE

Doctor Power's successor to the See of Toronto was the venerable Bishop de Charbonnel through whose instrumentality Mother Teresa Dease, so dear to the memory of many in the Community to-day, and only surviving member of the original band, was appointed Superior, April 1851. To appreciate fully the exceptionally difficult position which Mother Teresa had to fill let us keep in mind some incidents following the death of Mother Ignatia Hutchinson. The nuns were indeed few in number — only six; one, a lay Sister, not available for the work of teaching. In this emergency, therefore, the schools had been closed. Bishop de Charbonnel wrote to Archbishop Murray of Dublin, asking for help: "I certainly beg of Your Grace", he writes, "the favor of obtaining from the Mother-house of our venerable sisters whatever you can in their behalf. They are the children of Ireland and a glory to their country; they

2. Ibid.
were your spiritual daughters before becoming mine; they have made the most generous sacrifice -- they have suffered heroically; they are sinking under the hardships of their situation. The result of this appeal was that two young professed nuns, Sisters M. Berchmans Lalor and M. Purification Oulahan were sent from the Irish Mother-house, thus making a total of nine who had come to America since 1847. Canadian aspirants continued to enter and as the Community began to prosper the nuns were prepared to reopen their schools in September 1851, with hopeful hearts. They labored with increasing zeal for the pupils who had been placed under their care in the Poor School and in the Academy to which about one hundred and twenty children flocked daily.

Many calls made upon Reverend Mother Teresa by the Bishop, for new foundations in the smaller towns of his diocese, came first in a request to establish a Convent at Brantford, Ontario in August 1853. The trials which the nuns encountered here were beyond number, but were productive of much good, as the seeds of religious vocations were sown, and

many of the Brantford parents gave their daughters to the service of Almighty God in religion. Another request to open a Convent in London, Ontario was made, and as Reverend Mother saw new and greater opportunities in this center, than in Brantford, the Brantford Community, with the express permission of His Lordship Dr. de Charbonnel, was transferred to London, where the schools were well attended and enjoyed the very highest reputation. Not long did the nuns remain to enjoy the fruits of their labour, as circumstances for which they were not responsible, brought about their removal from this promising locality in the following way:

Bishop de Charbonnel had taken steps to have his extensive diocese divided into three separate dioceses -- an arrangement which was afterwards carried out -- and had fixed upon London and Hamilton as the seats of the new Sees. He had also determined in his own mind that the parochial residence in London should serve as a palace for the future Bishop. Great, therefore, was the displeasure and annoyance of the newly appointed Bishop, Right Reverend Pinsonneault, when he discovered that the Very Reverend Dean Kirwan, the pastor of London, had already made over the parochial residence to the Loretto Community. His Lordship therefore ordered the nuns to leave London.(3)

2. Ibid.
3. Hutch, Wm., Mrs. Ball, op. cit., p. 340
This trouble of which the nuns were unwittingly the cause was but a prelude to a stormy administration for the new Bishop, who after ten years resigned his See. The following letter from Reverend Mother Teresa to the Superior of the London Community refers to the unpleasantness which had occurred:

Toronto, June 3, 1856

My dear M. Berchmans, —

You must wonder at not having a letter from me before this, but I really had not time to write until now.

I saw the Bishop twice since my return. He has no other idea than that you leave London as soon as the will of Dr. Pinsonneault shall be made known to you. I will not say how soon that may be. The united prayers and good works of all our members are now especially called for, in order to propitiate the Almighty that He may give us light, as to what course we are to take for the future. I do not mean with regard to London but to Canada. I wish the Sisters, if health permit, to fast on the eve of St. Anthony of Padua, and to offer their Novena in honour of that Saint for my intention ....... You all require superhuman prudence and discretion; believe me, one slighting word against the Bishop will not tend to the glory of God, or further your interests with Him.... did I not know from experience that some Sisters in London have not been as silent in His Lordship's regard as they should have been when they did not feel called on or inclined to approve of what he had done. Patience, humility and confidence in God's Will do much more to further our ends than useless talking.

............... 

Yours in C.J., (1)

M.J.Teresa

1. Letters, Ms. of Reverend Mother Teresa Dease Loretto Abbey, Toronto.
Bishop Farrell of Hamilton, on the contrary, bade them welcome into his Diocese, and they accordingly moved to Guelph in 1856. This city was founded by Mr. John Galt commissioner of the Canada Company. On April 23, 1827, Bishop McDonald of Kingston, commenced the visitation of his immense diocese, and on reaching Guelph renewed his long time friendship with Mr. Galt who presented His Lordship with sufficient property for the erection of a church. Opposite the beautiful stone edifice which today surmounts the crest of the hill, is a stone structure built by the pioneer Fathers of the mission as a Convent for the nuns who were to aid them in their work for the glory of God. Here then came the little colony from London welcomed alike by the clergy and laity, and here indeed the fields were ripe for the harvest.

The house prepared for the nuns was scarcely finished when they arrived. The good Father Holzer, S. J., who had been instrumental in bringing them to Guelph, had established a school, which was conducted by a secular woman. Besides this there were prospects of a good boarding and day school at the Convent. This worthy Jesuit was a priest well calculated to advance the interests of the Community.

1. Life and Letters of Reverend Mother Terese Dease, op. cit., p. 79.
2. Ibid., p. 80.
For many years the stream of vocations continued to flow to the Institute, and in the early seventies Guelph was looked upon by the Community as the main source of all that was good and beautiful. Here the Convent was opened under the patronage of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, on the tenth of June. The Pastor, the Very Reverend J. Holzer, C.J., showed, by his exceedingly generous cordiality, his pleasure on the arrival of our nuns, and under the spiritual direction of the Jesuit Fathers and the teaching of the Sisters, this community has fostered many vocations. In less than three years, Mother M. Berchmans Lalor saw her little Community increased to thirteen; while there were forty-seven young ladies in the boarding school. Mother M. Berchmans was one of those light-hearted, sanguine characters, whose outlook on life was bright, and who was intensely interested in the spreading of Canadian missions. At her suggestion the Guelph Convent which had received the approbation of the Bishop of Toronto was separated from the Mother-house. Later Bishop Farrell wrote to Reverend Mother Teresa seeking reunion with Toronto, which was effected May 13, 1858.

Upon the invitation of Bishop Phelan, Apostolic administrator of Kingston Diocese, Reverend Mother Teresa opened a Convent in Belleville, Ontario in 1859, which served that community for eight years. From 1865 to 1877 the Nuns were withdrawn but they returned in 1877 at the request of very Reverend Father Brennan, when they opened an Academy and a large Separate School. The labours of the Nuns were crowned with success despite the hardships they endured in home conditions. The Children of Mary Sodality was organized in 1879 and so prospered as to be one of the most entertaining activities of the Academy. A change in the closing exercises was made by the Archbishop of Toronto, in 1880. He expressed a desire that musical entertainments and distributions be discontinued, and in their place a public examination of its pupils be held by the Academy. In History, Grammar and Arithmetic, the pupils were examined by the teachers and by strangers from among the audience during which session the pupils acquitted themselves most creditably. The method pursued and the general tone of the school being so favorably expressed, it was thought that this form of exercise would be more productive of good

2. Ibid.
to the school. The numbers in the school increased rapidly until, in 1894, the Bishop and Monseignor Farrelly wished the nuns to build a new Academy; but this they felt would be too great an expense for the Community and for the second and final time, they withdrew from Belleville, to the regret of people, Bishops, Nuns and Reverend Mother Teresa Dease.

On the resignation of the Venerable Bishop de Charbonnel, in 1860, the Diocese of Toronto came under the protection of the illustrious Archbishop, Most Reverend Doctor Lynch.

We must now return to Toronto, to learn how it fared, meanwhile, with the Parent House in that city. The House on Bathurst Street had long become too small for the accommodation of the pupils who were thronging to the Convent Schools; and so, in 1862, the Community moved to a much more spacious residence in Bond Street, the site of which was a gift from the good Bishop, Most Reverend Doctor Lynch. Here everything went on so prosperously that, in a short while, even the new Convent was too small to meet the requirements of the Sisterhood. Pupils increased so rapidly, that the boarders were crowded together in a manner which threatened to prove injurious to their health; and it became a matter of absolute necessity to open a second Convent in Toronto. What a blessed change had come over their fortunes! When Reverend Mother Teresa Dease assumed the reins of government in 1851, the Institute possessed only one house in all Canada that could reckon only five boarders. Within sixteen years from that date, we find four houses flourishing in two different Dioceses and a necessity for a second Convent existing in Toronto. (1)

1. Life and Letters of Reverend Mother Teresa Dease, op. cit., p. 96.

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Reverend Mother Teresa, seeing how the nuns were situated in Toronto (after her trip to Ireland in 1859) in regard to home conditions and classroom facilities, asked permission of His Lordship to go to the United States to collect funds, which were so sorely needed. She asked for an official letter to show his approval of the undertaking. The document was given, but instead of Reverend Mother Teresa travelling in the United States, His Lordship took her to Niagara Falls and presented to her and to the Community a house (hotel) and the surrounding acres of land. This princely donation was announced to Reverend Mother Frances Ball by Reverend Mother Teresa in the following letter:

........I am happy to inform you that our good Bishop has given us six acres of land near the far-famed falls of Niagara. His Lordship wishes to have a Community of regular clergy and another of nuns, there, that, as he says, "The voice of prayer may mingle with sound of many waters." (2)

Sometime previous to this, the Archbishop had negotiated with a Mr. Peter Skinner and obtained possession of the "Canada House", a small tavern adjoining the property of the parish church, and occupying the very spot

1. Annals - Loretto Academy, Niagara Falls, Ont., 1861.

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on the lawn opposite the main entrance of the present convent, where now stands the beautiful bronze statue of the Sacred Heart, the gift of Sister Ligouri's brother, the Reverend Father McInerney. This newly acquired house contained nine small rooms — parlour, living room, bar room, smoking room, kitchen, pantry and three bedrooms — which of necessity had to be remodeled and made conventual. At the direction of the Archbishop, carpenters from Toronto were sent to Niagara Falls, who erected a frame building attached to the west side of the house, containing a dormitory for young ladies and a school room. Sheds which were added to this new building were not plastered (merely boarded) and served as pantry, nuns' refectory and kitchen. We may well imagine that the Sisters who were pioneers in this new undertaking suffered intensely from the cold of the extreme winters.

The first group of nuns to open the mission at Niagara Falls, arrived at Clifton Station, now incorporated in the city of Niagara Falls, in June 1861. With Reverend Mother Teresa there came Mother Joachim Murray, local Superior.

1. Annals, Loretto, Niagara, op. cit.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

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Sisters Elizabeth, Monica, Margaret, Bernardine and a postulant, Sister Bede. They came to put the house in order for those who would take up their abode here in September.

Owing to some misunderstanding the Reverend C.V. Juhel, Pastor of the Church at Clifton, had not expected the nuns on that date and therefore was not at the station to meet them. We who know the neighborhood of Niagara Falls, realize that the distance from Clifton Station to the site of the present convent is not short. It is readily understood then, that it was after much fatigue, that the travellers reached their destination. The location is superb, on the hill some fifty-five feet above and overlooking the world-famous Falls of Niagara.

A look into the homelife of the Sisters of this mission proves interesting. The house was lighted by tallow candles during 1861-1862 and then a few lamps were introduced to light the chapel, parlor and schoolroom, but seldom, if ever, did the nuns bring a light to their cells. During the first four years of residence here, the drinking water was carried three times a day from a spring at the foot of the

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1. Annals - Loretto Academy, Niagara Falls, 1861, op., Cit.
2. Ibid.
hill. Rain water served other purposes, while in the winter, snow was melted by the Superior and a novice, for washing days. This task was so slow that they were often obliged to work until the early hours of the morning to accomplish their purpose. We, of the twentieth Century do not really know hardship!

As the nuns were too poor to keep a man to do the heavy work such as chopping wood, cleaning stoves, whitewashing and putting up stovepipes, it was done by themselves. And indeed a more fatiguing undertaking was the carrying of purchases from Clifton for daily use at the Convent. The nuns followed Portage Avenue, the old Indian trail to Clifton, a lonely walk and a dangerous one. When these purchases were too numerous or too heavy, one may wonder to what ingenious methods the nuns resorted, to overcome the difficulty. If not ingenious, it was at least unique to behold two nuns, seated on the rough boards of a borrowed wagon, driving to town to do all their necessary shopping. Parcels were never delivered in those early days.

Father Juhel worked zealously to make the nuns happy; however they were not to enjoy his benefits for long as he

1. Ibid
contracted a cold in his missionary work and died, January 1862, to the regret of his flock and especially of the Loretto nuns whom he had befriended. A tablet to his memory has been placed in the Church of Our Lady of Peace, Falls View, which adjoins the Convent grounds. Mr. White, a Seminarian soon to be ordained, was sent to the parish for a few weeks to supply for Father Juhel. He preached a sermon on Sunday and said the beads with the nuns and the congregation. This was the extent of Sunday devotions.

February 1862 saw the completion of a Poor School built by the nuns at Niagara and supplied with all necessities, especially fuel, at their expense. Children attended from the parish and from the villages of Chippewa, New Germany and Clifton. By 1863 there were eighty-five pupils in attendance -- the numbers increasing steadily. From the first these pupils were industrious -- many of them older than their Mistress. Mother Aloysius in trying to induce one of her pupils, whom she considered too old to be under her care, to attend his own school in Chippewa, received this reply: "No, Sister, if I cannot come here, I will go to work. I could teach our Master."

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.

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On another occasion a young man called at the Convent to settle his brother's bill which amounted to three dollars. To the Sister he had come to see, he said: "Sister, I have made up my mind, you cannot live on air." With a flourish of his hand he threw down twenty-five cents and repeated: "You cannot live on air." This was the only money in the house and these nuns were glad to possess even twenty-five cents. (1)

Frequently in these early years of the Niagara foundation the nuns were disturbed during the night by travellers seeking admittance, thinking the Convent was still "Canada House." Another type of stranger, who knocked at the door of the Religious Institution, was a bit foreign in language, custom and dress. It was not a novel experience for one of the nuns to open the door to a Gypsy who came to inquire if any of the Sisters wanted her fortune told. (2) (The present hardships were enough to face; the nuns had no desire to look into the future.) Many were the trials and privations these good apostles endured. Sickness visited the small Community and as many as five or six were in the infirmary at one time, leaving all their labours and duties to devolve upon the few remaining who worked against odds with cheerful and hopeful hearts.

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
Mother M. Regis Harris who was appointed Superior of the Niagara Falls Convent in 1864 worked with indefatigable zeal to promote the welfare of the Community and success in the Schools.

Sarah Mary Regis Harris was a daughter of parents much respected and possessing considerable wealth, who had come from Pennsylvania to make their home in Guelph, Canada West, in the beginning of the 19th century. In the early days of the Institute in America, she became a pupil in the Loretto House on Bathurst Street, Toronto. In becoming a member of the I.B.V.M. Mother Regis brought to it a character wholly devoted to the life she had chosen — artistic talent, kindness of heart, broad-mindedness in things spiritual as well as temporal — no ordinary woman, she was endowed with exceptional gifts which she turned to the best advantages for promoting God's honor and glory, as was evidenced in the planning and erecting of the magnificent educational institution known as Loretto Academy Niagara Falls, which stands to-day as a monument to her zeal and a tribute to her memory. Those who met Mother M. Regis for the first time were always impressed by her personality — tall and imposing in appearance, she seemed "born to rule" but with an indescribable charm of simplicity which made even strangers feel at home in her company. In the Community she was always ready to oblige, and to come to the aid of any in difficulty, and from the manner in which she performed kindnesses one would think she was the receiver, not the bestower of them. But the special charm of this valiant woman's many activities lay in her deep-rooted humility. Self had no place in her career of usefulness; God's glory and the welfare of the Institute were the be-all and the end-all of her existence, while her own sanctification and perfection as a member of the Institute and the daughter of our "Heavenly Queen" — her favorite title for our Blessed Mother — seemed ever present to her mind, as shown by her habit of continual ejacula-
tions in the midst of her busy life. In her position as Superior she was beloved by subjects for the motherly care she exercised towards all. She seemed to divine the wants of her spiritual children. Her judgment in things temporal was clear and during her life serious mistakes in financial matters were often averted by the timely intervention of Mother M. Regis' practical knowledge of things of the world.

The close of her useful life, spent in the home which to-day stands a"story in stone" of her great mind, found her dependent to a very great extent on the sisterly charity by which she was surrounded; yet in the midst of her affliction the comfort and happiness of every one was her concern until the call of her heavenly Spouse to receive the "well done" of her apostolic life as a member of the I. B. V. M. (1)

Not satisfied merely with making improvements in the Convent she used all her efforts to secure the deed of the property from Archbishop Lynch who had donated this ideal spot to the Loretto Nuns. During her administration the first wing of the permanent building was erected. This has been added to, until to-day the stone edifice overlooking the Cataract of Niagara commands an unparalleled view of the surrounding country. The second wing of the house was built in 1880. Following its erection, just at a time when the nuns were sorely in need of funds, a period of depression almost depleted the once prosperous school and indeed financial credit amongst the townspeople was so precarious that a pail of lime was refused the

1. Mother M. Clotilde, Memoirs, op. cit.

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nuns. In order to meet the debt incurred by the building of the new wing they were obliged to sell part of the property some fifty or sixty feet from the front of Convent which was purchased during Mother M. Eucharia's term as Superior, by the Michigan Central Railroad, which company promised never to build tracks there. We know to-day, however, how they carried out this agreement! As time went on prospects became brighter, pupils enrolled and the attendance increased in undreamed of numbers, a circumstance which necessitated in 1926, the erection of the third and last section of the Academy. This equipped the school with an up-to-date gymnasium and swimming pool, several private rooms for boarders and an ideal study hall. The prominence given to athletics in the curriculum has been an added attraction to the modern girl, for Loretto Niagara students of to-day enjoy all sports in season.

The nuns have been hostesses to innumerable distinguished visitors. Theirs was the first Convent in Ontario to receive a visit from the Governor General of Canada. For the reception of this prominent official of the English govern-

1. Annals - Loretto Academy, Niagara; Loretto Abbey, Toronto.
2. Ibid.
ment, His Excellency Archbishop Lynch arranged all the details of the function. To commemorate his visit the Governor General Lord Dufferin, founded two medals to be awarded annually to girls excelling in conduct and Domestic Economy. Following this most notable event was the reception given to the Papal Delegate, Doctor Conroy who was accompanied by the Archbishop. Another event to be long remembered was the historic visit of their Royal Highnesses Prince (1) George and Princess Mary of England. His Grace Bishop O'Connor of Toronto, received the royal visitors at the Academy in company with Reverend Mother Ignatia and the Community of Niagara. Each pupil who was dressed in white wore a red maple leaf, the Canadian emblem, with a white rose, the colors suggesting the Houses of Lancaster and York. Other visitors who succeeded the visit from the royalty of England were the Papal Delegate, Msgr. Falconio, later Cardinal; His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons, the renowned Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul, and Archbishop Redwood of Wellington, New Zealand.

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.

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Niagara's first Superior was Mother M. Joachim, who was born in Dublin, in the third decade of the nineteenth century. It was this generous nun, who, on the day she pronounced her vows bade farewell to her native land and set forth for distant America to aid the struggling pioneers who had come before her.

She possessed a spirit so filled with zeal and self-sacrifice that her soul like that of the great Xavier, was filled to overflowing with God and all that concerns His glory. Mother Joachim lost no time in diffusing her cheerful disposition among the religious with whom she lived and worked. The members of the Community, the sick, the poor, the mothers of families, business men -- all sought her advice. (1)

The next mission undertaken by the religious of the Institute was that of Mount Saint Mary, under the patronage of "Later Admirabilis". It was established in the episcopal city of Hamilton on the eve of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 1865. The Bishop, Most Reverend Doctor Farrell had selected the site for the Convent, which the nuns purchased for eight thousand dollars. On this property, there stood a house to which rooms had to be added to accommodate prospective boarders and day pupils. The expense for these improvements was incurred by the Reverend Bishop.

1. Mother M. Clotilde, Sketch of the Life of Mother M. Joachim Murray, unpublished.
2. Hutch, Jr., Mrs. Ball, op. cit., p. 545.
That he was anxious that all precaution be taken for the permanence of the foundation the following letter will show:

Hamilton, 2nd June, 1865.

Reverend Mother Superior, --

In answer to your letter of yesterday, I have no hesitation in consenting to have your houses in this diocese dependent on the Mother-house of Toronto, so that the Superior of the latter house may be enabled to remove or change subjects whenever she may deem it advisable, and that she may receive from the revenues of each establishment all due support for the said Mother-house.

It is, moreover, my intention that the house to be established in Hamilton shall be exempt from attending parochial offices, and shall be provided with daily Mass, weekly Confession, and other opportunities of spiritual advancement usual in your communities, and in conformity with the spirit of the Church.

Faithfully yours in C.J. (1)

John Bishop of Hamilton

To those who are acquainted with the social conditions of Upper Canada, the vicissitudes to which religious commun-

ities have been exposed are no small matter of surprise, when we consider that the population was composed partly of poor Catholics, (with a few exceptions), whose highest aim in coming to this country was to obtain a livelihood, and partly of non-Catholics who received with contempt and distrust everything Catholic, especially Convents. Into Hamilton and eventually into the hearts of its people, the Loretto nuns made an entrance to sow the seed of Christianity. Miracles of grace have been wrought within the walls of their convent and conversions of entire families have followed the entrance of pupils into this Academy. As in the case of other foundations a large separate school was given over to the charge of the nuns.

Reverend Mother Teresa's next undertaking in Toronto was the purchase of suitable property and more spacious quarters for the accommodation of the steadily increasing community and boarding school. Her supplications were answered in a most unusual manner and more magnanimously than she had hoped.

While riding in one of the street cars, Reverend John Walsh, later Archbishop of Toronto, overheard someone remark:

1. *Annals* - Loretto Academy, Hamilton (1900)
"Mrs. Widder's mansion is for sale; I think it would suit the Loretto nuns." He informed Reverend Mother Teresa almost immediately and the residence was sold at a chancery sale and obtained for the nuns through their agents for sixteen thousand dollars. It was one of the most desirable residences in Toronto at that time, fronting the Bay. The most beautiful room in the house, a magnificent reception room, was selected for the chapel, and here on September 8, 1867, Bishop Lynch celebrated Mass. On this site Loretto Abbey was established. It served as the Mother-house of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary in America from 1877 when the Novitiate was transferred here from Bond Street until 1930; then the nuns were obliged to seek a better locality. In 1871 a new chapel was dedicated to the Holy Family; at the same time a Recreation and an Examination Hall were erected.

The next mission which Reverend Mother opened was at Lindsay, Ontario, in 1874, on the invitation of the very Reverend Father Stafford. The Convent awaiting them was simply provided with all the requirements of a first class educational establishment, due to the great work to which

Father Stafford had devoted so much energy. This seat of academic learning continued with ever increasing success, for some years after his demise, until a great fire on April 24, 1884 completely destroyed the edifice, which he had erected with such anxious care. The morning following the fire when Reverend Mother arrived on the scene of disaster there remained only the walls and chimneys of the main building.

Protestants and Catholics vied with one another in extending unstinted hospitality and kindness to the nuns in their distress. The priests put their rectory at their disposal until other accommodations should be made and suitable arrangements planned to carry on class work until the close of the scholastic year, thereby avoiding any inconvenience to parents and children. The nuns remained in Lindsay until a new house was built. Shortly after this they were recalled to Toronto. It is significant that at the time our nuns gave up the work in Lindsay the three who were chiefly instrumental in its foundation, namely Archbishop Lynch, Father Stafford, and Reverend Mother Teresa Dease had gone to their eternal reward.

Following this foundation in Lindsay another and profitable house of the Institute was opened at Stratford, Ontario,
on the 8th of August 1878, under the auspices of the most Reverend Bishop Walsh. The first five nuns who were sent to this new mission were met in Berlin (now Kitchener) by the Reverend Doctor Kilroy who accompanied them to Stratford. They were conducted by the Reverend John Ronan and several of the prominent citizens to the beautiful home of Jarvis Corcoran, where they were graciously received and given generous hospitality until preparations in the Convent were completed.

On September 2, the Separate School which offered rather poor accommodations, was opened with an attendance of one hundred six girls and seventy boys, and just a week later the classes in the Academy commenced with a registration of twenty-seven pupils which number gradually increased as the nuns demonstrated to the people the quality of their work. In 1892, the boys, attending a school known as "Old Trinity School", taught by Masters, were also placed under the jurisdiction of the nuns. Until these boys (ninety in number) could be accommodated in the Separate School two Sisters taught in "Old Trinity School".

The curriculum of studies in the Academy to-day comprises the High School and Commercial Courses as prescribed by the Department of Education for the Province of Ontario. The Music Department is affiliated with the Toronto Conservatory of Music.

Through the religious training of the Loretto nuns, under whose influence practically every Catholic in Stratford has come since 1878, there have gone forth noble souls to swell the ranks of various religious orders, notably Loretto, Saint Joseph, The Immaculate Heart of Mary, The Ursulines, Adorers of the Precious Blood, Basilian Fathers, Paulist Fathers, Fathers of the Holy Cross and the Christian Brothers. Others, as secular clergy, are distinguishing themselves as zealous pastors and directors of great Catholic activities in many dioceses throughout the Continent.

From a foreign land new requests were made of Reverend Mother Teresa and her community. This time the call for missionaries came from Joliet, Illinois. In response to the invitation of the Reverend W. H. Power, Reverend Mother accompanied by Mother Gonzaga as Superior, Mother Dosithea and Sister Ludwina left Toronto August 29, 1880, arriving in

Joliet, Illinois, the following day. The little Convent which had been occupied by the Sisters of the Holy Cross was devoid of furnishings, and because of this, our nuns were obliged to accept the hospitality of Father Power for a week while preparations were being made. One of the rooms of the Convent was selected to serve the purpose of a chapel. Into this wee sanctuary the Most Blessed Sacrament was brought on September 15th to be the abiding Presence, the nuns feeling more secure and more at home once they were under the same roof that housed their Creator and Lord. Many a hearty laugh was enjoyed over the discomforts and contrivances in the refectory and sleeping apartments. Poverty was conspicuous everywhere.

September the 8th, the day on which the nuns took possession of their little Nazareth saw also the opening of the Academy with eight young ladies in attendance. A few days previous to this the parochial school opened in the hall beneath St. Patrick's Church, with an enrollment of twenty-five children. It was not long before the one hundred mark was passed and more teachers were needed. Sisters M. Agnes McKenna and M. Bathilde McBrady joined the pioneer heroic

1. Annals, Joliet, 1880-1900
2. Ibid.
band on September 9, to help in the school, and one week later Sister Mary of the Angels and Sister M. Amelia completed the Joliet Community.

The first winter which the Loretto nuns passed under the "Stars and Stripes", they suffered intensely from extreme cold. It became necessary, however, for them to incur debt and thereby make the purchases of warm clothing and bedding to enable them to resist sickness. According to records of the weather bureau the winter of 1881-1882 was more severe than any experienced by the settlers in twenty-five years. Owing to the great snowdrifts the people were obliged to use ladders, which reached to the second story of their homes, as a means of entrance and exit. Then followed the protracted thaw, during which the people might easily have been deluded with the idea that they were living in Venice, as they were compelled to use boats in order to be conveyed from one place to another, particularly in the lower parts of the city.

There was much to discourage the young Community in the first year of the foundation in Joliet. The parish priest

1. Annals, Joliet, 1880-1900

2. Ibid.

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had thought the nuns were well-to-do, when he realized their dire poverty, and how impossible it would be for them to build to suit his plans he did not hesitate to acquaint them with his disappointment. As a result, at the close of the school year, they accepted an offer to take charge of the school in St. Mary's Parish. Indeed there was disappointment on all sides and had not kind Providence intervened the poor nuns would have succumbed under their trying position. However, Archbishop Feehan, who had come to Joliet for the purpose of conferring the Sacrament of Confirmation upon the pupils of St. Patrick's, said that the Catholic population of St. Mary's Parish was larger and a Community was badly needed there to care for the little ones. But their embarrassment was painful on their removal to the Rev. Father Burke's Parish. Though he had just erected a new Church, and was heavily in debt, with his magnanimous generosity and sympathetic spirit they were most graciously welcomed to his parish and school. Not only did he provide living quarters for them, until they should be able to build a convent, but by his continued care and solicitude proved himself the loyal friend of "Loretto". Many of the costly articles used for the divine service were gifts of his bounty.

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
Ground, for the erection of the Academy, was broken in the spring of 1882 and in September of the same year, the Academy opened with an enrollment of seventy girls, but the numbers increased in such an amazing manner that the new building was filled to capacity and the nuns were obliged to share their refectory with the boarders — an emergency unheard of in the annals of any community. When classes were resumed in September 1883, after the dedication ceremonies of August, there was a membership exceeding two hundred.

That the nuns sowed the seed of vocations was early evidenced by the fact that Mary Maguire, now Mother Emiliana, entered the community as a postulant on July 28, 1882, and since then many others have followed her example. By 1885, the nuns had sufficiently established themselves in the hearts of the people and the friendly esteem of the priests that Father Burke opened the Sacred Heart School and placed it under their care. To this new establishment of elementary education, three hundred forty children flocked on the opening day and were taken care of by our beloved nuns, Mothers M. Evangelista, M. Catherine, M. Georgina, M. Veronica and M. Beatrice. But the necessity for more teachers became urgent and Sister M. Bernadette in January, 1886 and Sister
M. Isabelle in September of the same year proffered their assistance. This reflects great credit on the good pastor, Father Burke, who left nothing undone to promote the welfare and happiness of his children in Joliet until his promotion to the Episcopacy in St. Joseph, Missouri. Under his successors the Academy flourished for many years and in this center numerous vocations were fostered, but due to misunderstandings which occur where the best intentions exist, we withdrew from Joliet in 1919.

Death took from our midst our revered and lovable Mother General in 1889. Perhaps the words of Miss Katherine Barry best express the inheritance this noble woman has left to the new world.

To Mother Teresa Dease is accorded the unique privilege of experiencing periods of new effort and violent change, interspersed with disappointment, a life of bodily penance of hardship, toil, fasting and prayer.

Let Canada not forget, when she reckons up the number of her public benefactors, to write in rubric characters the lustrous and immortal name of Mother Teresa Dease, whose colossal labors in the important sphere of female culture and instruction are the glory of our Western province of to-day. (3)

2. Ibid.
3. Catholic Woman's League Magazine
CHAPTER IV

ADMINISTRATION OF REVEREND MOTHER IGNATIA LYNN

Three years after Reverend Mother Ignatia Lynn became Chief Superior of the Institute in America, a request to open a Convent and to conduct a grammar and a high school in Saint Bernard's parish, Chicago, Illinois, was made by the Reverend Bernard T. Murray, Pastor. Accordingly, Mother Christina, accompanied by Sisters M. St. Roque and M. Aldegonde, arrived in Chicago to found the first mission of the I.E.V.M. in that city on Monday, September 5, 1892. Father Murray, who ever proved the sincerity of his good wishes, extended a cordial welcome to his new Community and escorted them to their little home, a frame house, which he rented for their use, at 6556 Stewart Avenue. It could scarcely be called commodious as it contained but seven rooms; a kitchen, dining-room and parlor, downstairs, with four sleeping rooms above. To their dismay the nuns found it would be impossible to have a chapel in their wee home, and all other deprivations paled into insignificance. As the parlour was

1. Annals, Loretto Convent Englewood, 1892-1900.
2. Ibid.
used as a sort of oratory, many a time prayers were interrupted by the ringing of the doorbell when there followed a general scatteration. The home contained no such luxury as a heating plant, but a small stove in the dining room sufficed for the down stairs, while a somewhat larger 'Burner', in the upper hall, was lighted each evening, to give a semblance of comfort at bed-time. Many a night, during that first winter, Mother Christina McCausland, the superior, sat up till long after midnight, to keep the old stove going. Lamps were used for illumination. Yes, it was primitive, but as one of the pioneers remarked they were all so young and happy, that inconveniences were really enjoyed. There was no foundation under the house. It was just boarded up. The Pastor insisted on carpeting the rooms; and wisely so, for many a time the wind actually blew up the carpets. What would have been the result had there been no carpets? The house was supplied with some furniture; a kitchen stove, six chairs, three of which were used for a dining table, and five beds (minus the bedding). Until the bare necessities had been provided, the nuns accepted the unstinted hospital-

1. Mother M. St. Roque Canty - Letters
2. Ibid.

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of Mrs. P. F. Barry, 6613 Stewart Avenue. The day following
their arrival September 6, 1892 the Mass of the Holy Ghost
was sung at nine o'clock in the Parish Church at which Father
Murray addressed the parents and pupils who had assembled to
invoke the blessings of God on the new undertaking. The
first school, which enrolled one hundred eighty-six pupils
on the opening day, was on the ground floor of a small two
storied red brick structure — a combination church and
school. The nuns had wretched accommodations — or rather
none at all. (Not even the services of a competent janitor.
For many days following the opening they were obliged to
sweep the classrooms, in order to make them habitable.) Lat­
er as the school grew, and the four original classrooms did
not suffice to hold the increasing numbers, Father Murray de­
cided to add to the building; and while the new rooms were
in process of erection, some of the teachers taught in the
vacated old Church, while one "held forth" in Father Murray's
barn during the months of September and October. Another
teacher was added to the Community when Sister M. Bertha,
from Belleville, Ontario, arrived to relieve the overburdened

teachers of some of their pupils. At this early date the streets which were not paved, were lighted by gas lamps — one at the corner of each block. There were a few cement walks, but the prevailing fashion in '92 was board walks. The transportation facilities were scarcely what, at the present time would be called "up-to-date". There was a horsecar on 63rd Street, which, connecting with a cable line at 61st and State, gave the nuns a splendid service to the "city". The trip to the Loop was made in a little over an hour, for the munificent sum of five cents, and an unlimited number of transfers.

The winter of 1892-1893 was probably the coldest ever experienced in Chicago. During this season the nuns were obliged to attend Mass in the Church, which necessitated going out before daylight and before the snowplow had gone its rounds.

The number of music pupils, that availed themselves of the opportunity to study piano, was small, seventeen only during the first year. In September, 1893, when Sister M. Loretto Ivers was replaced by Sister M. Angelica in the music

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department, the prospect was anything but encouraging. Despite the apparent hopelessness of the undertaking, Sister M. Angelica set to work with a will, and soon saw the numbers enrolled in the music department double the previous year's.

Realizing that the Convent was inadequate, for the increasing number of nuns, Father Murray purchased a larger house for them, in May, 1893, at 6520 Stewart Avenue. This house contained nine rooms, and afforded besides a tiny Chapel, a Sanctuary which, by means of doors, was separated from the Community Room, but when the adjoining doors were opened, it made quite a respectable chapel. The fact that the nuns had the Divine Presence in their midst made them supremely happy. Gifts unnumbered were bestowed on this new foundation: Mrs. Warnock presented a beautiful altar for the Chapel; the stations of the Cross were donated by the Community of Niagara Falls; Miss Mary Cooper, of Toronto, gave the statues to adorn the Chapel.

The summer of 1893 was one that will long be remembered by the little Englewood Community. It was the time of the "World's Columbian Exposition". Reverend Mother M. Ignatia wished as many of the teachers of the Institute as possible to avail themselves of the opportunity to visit the greatest
of all expositions. As a result, the homelike Convent on Stewart Avenue opened its doors to our visiting nuns. The number to be accommodated exceeded accommodations, so parlor and halls -- every available space was converted at night into sleeping apartments. Mother M. Christina, local Superior, did all in her power to care for the comfort of her visitors, and indeed this was no small task, for often, as many as twenty-four nuns were tucked away in this tiny nine-room house. This kind and sympathetic Superior, who was born in London, Ontario, in 1840 and who died in Toronto 1914, was a tall, strong, fine-looking woman of sound common sense and good judgment. Her rugged constitution coupled with an excellent business head fitted her for the work of planning and supervising the building of three of our large Convents, namely "Bond Street", "The Sault" and "Englewood". Because of her high standards, her high ideals and her exceptional congeniality she was loved and respected by her community, by priests and laity. Truly in the death of this spiritual and humble religious, the Institute, though gaining an intercessor before the heavenly Throne, lost on earth one of its most valued and esteemed members.

The teaching staff of St. Bernard's had an increase in September, 1894, when Mother M. Evarista Page arrived to assist in the school, but not until the Fall of 1895 was there an extra division made in the grades, when Mother M. Olivia joined the Englewood pioneers. Her health prevented her from remaining long at work and soon she was confined to the convent, then returned to Toronto. So that she might enjoy every comfort in her sleeping apartment, the two others who had shared the room with her now occupied cots which they carried into the tiny parlor each night, and brought out to a summer house each morning, to be stored for the day.

With the appointment, in 1895, of the Reverend J. P. Aylward as Assistant Priest, the nuns enjoyed the privilege of a regular chaplain. Until the time of his arrival, the Mass had been celebrated in the Convent only when it was necessary to change the Sacred Host. Exceedingly great was the kindness and fatherly interest which he manifested in his new charge. Though the work in hand was new, his friendship for the nuns was of long standing. As a student at Guelph, Ontario, where there is a Convent of ours, he had made the acquaintance of the Community and loud was he in his praise of the Loretto nuns, who had done much for him in earlier days. If, in his youth, "Loretto" was kind to him, he certainly proved, as soon
as it lay within his power, that gratitude was one of the admirable qualities of his nature. He died in Kankakee, Illinois, pastor of St. Patrick's Church lamented by all.

In August, 1896, the site at 6541 Stewart Avenue was purchased for the present Loretto Convent. This caused no small concern to the non-Catholic neighbors, who strongly opposed the building of a Convent in their vicinity. Mr. A. J. Hughes made plans for the new structure, which with the grounds, was worth $22,000. In the erection of the Convent, the front was built of Georgia marble in compliance with Father Murray's request that the building correspond with the new St. Bernard's Church. To defray the expense entailed by substituting marble for the intended stone front he gave the Community $300.00 annually for five years. No end of trouble and annoyance was experienced by Mother Christina during its erection. First, a plumber's strike, and then a steam fitters' strike, followed by inability to borrow money, retarded the progress of the work. Her great trust in God and continual recourse to prayer brought peace out of chaos, and ere

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
long the beloved, homelike Loretto Convent, dear to the hearts of its alumnae was a reality. It served a noble purpose as school and convent for years.

The inadequacy, however, of this Convent to meet the demands which progress in education was making, was soon felt and a new High School was begun in the summer of 1926. It was erected on property adjoining the present Convent. In style, the new building represents the Italian Renaissance and to its architectural beauty it unites a complete equipment to satisfy the requirements of modern education. The curriculum includes everything helpful to a sound and thorough education. It prepares the student for college, Normal School, or the commercial world, and adequate opportunity is afforded the young ladies to compete for scholarships to higher education. The domestic science course, with its well-equipped kitchen, gives ample training in the care and maintenance of the home. The Commercial Course embraces all requirements for a business education; nor is the musical training neglected. This department, which had made such a struggling start in 1892 furnishes a complete course in all branches of music. The development of character and person-

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.

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ality are particularly stressed — the heart and will being especially trained, and the finest ideals of Catholic womanhood held up for imitation.

St. Bernard's elementary school, which is also under the supervision of the Religious of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, has undergone a great change since the first one hundred and eighty-six pupils registered forty years ago. The old school which was torn down in 1926 had outgrown its usefulness, and the present three-story school was opened in 1927 representing, as it does, the best in modern educational structures. The exterior is of Bedford Stone and pressed stone, and in planning the interior every modern device for the health and comfort of the child was considered. At present over seven hundred are enrolled.

Four happy years of successful endeavor had passed in this beloved mission when an invitation to open a house in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, situated some five hundred thirty miles north of Chicago, was tendered by the Reverend Father Devine, S. J. Consequently Reverend Mother M. Ignatia Lynn with Mother M. Loyola Byron, as companion went to the "Land

1. Dedication Program - 1927 (Pub. for St. Bernard's Church)
of Hiawatha" to look over this section of the North country (1) as a possible field of labor for her zealous missionaries. The "Soo" was, at that time, a prosperous lumbering town, government construction on the Locks offering another means of employment. There existed a strong racial feeling between the Irish and the French who settled here, and so strong was their spirit of rivalry that they carried their sentiment even into religion, each Sunday separate masses being scheduled for the French and the Irish. As a result of Reverend Mother's visit, Mothers Gonzaga Gallivan and M. Stanislaus Liddy went as missionaries in July 1896 to this very promising foundation, stayed at the "Saratoga House" for a period of three weeks and then accepted the gracious invitation of Mrs. Dawson, to reside with her while awaiting permanent arrangements. They were reinforced a month later by Mother (3) M. St. Michael Murphy and Sister M. Germana Opelt, taking up their residence temporarily at 133 Spruce Street. September saw the welcome arrival of Mother M. Agnes Ulm whose advent was marked by a disastrous fire which wrought the destruction of many large buildings, including the Post

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

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Two days later Mothers M. Isabel Devlin, M. Frances Corcoran and M. Sebastian Ede, the last contingent of the teaching staff, were greeted with an outburst of joy by the "Loretto Saultites".

The kindnesses showered on these strangers in a strange land, were an indication that they were not without friends; some evidence being the attention received from Miss Clara Riordan who during the weeks which elapsed before any of the others had arrived, accompanied Mother M. Stanislaus to six o'clock Mass every morning in St. Mary's Church. Due to poor health Mother M. Gonzaga was soon recalled to Toronto and Mother M. Stanislaus then assumed the responsibilities of Superior. The parochial school, which prior to our taking it over had been conducted by the Sisters of St. Joseph and afterwards by the Miss Nardenes, was opened on Wednesday September 2, 1896, with none of the difficulties of organization, to contend with. On this opening day more than two hundred children assembled and within the first month the enrollment passed the three hundred mark.

A residence which had served Bishop Baraga's needs still

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
adjoined the school on Portage Avenue. This was made ready for the reception of the nuns who moved from the home on Spruce Street and commenced a new life in the tiny cottage. The first floor boasted of a chapel and parlor to the right of the front door; and on the left were a music room and a dining room, and at the back a kitchen and pantries. Two rooms on the second floor were utilized as a Community Room and a Superior's cell, the remaining space on this floor being converted into children's dormitories. Above this, the attic was the crowning glory of the abode. It contained four small cots, and dressers made of packing boxes painted red, or covered with wall paper. The plumbing equipment was very primitive, water being heated in the old fashioned style on a stove. The house was heated by means of three stoves, one in the kitchen, a self-feeder coal stove, and one in the music room. On the second floor a drum was used. There was but one refectory where the boarders dined first and then the nuns. In the chapel there were two prie-dicux -- one for the Superior, the other for the sacristan. The other nuns carried in kneeling benches for all the services. Holy Mass was celebrated for the first time by Reverend J. Connolly, S.J.

on October 8, 1896. Indescribable was the joy of the nuns upon this occasion which brought to their midst Him, for whom their hearts longed.

After considerable indecision concerning our permanent residence in Sault Ste. Marie, Reverend Mother gave her permission in 1898 for the building of a suitable Convent. The sum of $8000.00 was to be the limit of their expenditures. When the first plans were drawn up they had to be modified to keep within the bounds specified. By a Fair organized for the purpose of aiding the nuns in raising the amount needed, $1100.00 was realized. Estimates showed that an additional $1700.00 was needed if the building were to be erected as had been planned. Father Connolly very generously came to the rescue, and went about asking subscriptions of the townspeople, in one day receiving $500.00 from Mrs. Dawson, $50.00 from Doctor Ennis and $50.00 from Captain Greenough. Another donation received about this time was $200.00 from Bishop Vertin. In spite of cold and snow, ground was broken November 7, 1898, and excavations for the boiler-room etc., were made, but progress, impeded by the delay in signing contracts, was entirely stopped

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
when the intense cold of the winter set in. Finally after many vicissitudes, by September 1899, on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the nuns occupied their new residence on Armory Place, beautifully situated, overlooking St. Mary's River. It was blessed on September the 17th by the Very Reverend Bishop Frederick Eis of Marquette, who was in the city at the time to administer Confirmation. Though the nuns had Mass celebrated every day, the Blessed Sacrament was not left in the house until September 29, due to the fact that work was still going on in the building. Two wings were later added to the main structure to enlarge the school and to provide proper sleeping apartments for nuns and boarders, the latter having greatly increased in numbers.

During the three years preceding the opening of the twentieth century, our nuns, especially those in our Academy at Englewood had been praying very earnestly for another Academy in Chicago. As if in direct answer to their appeal in 1900 Father Cyril Kehoe, O.Carm. invited Mother M. Seraphina to build in St. Cyril's Parish - Woodlawn, Chicago, and pointed out a spot near the Carmelite College as a good

1. Ibid.
site. This news was conveyed to Mother M. Ignatia who found it necessary to refuse the offer as neither sufficient means could be obtained nor were there nuns available for the undertaking. A very good friend who came to our assistance, Mr. Merle (whose daughter had been educated under Mother M. Seraphina as Mistress of Schools, at Niagara Falls) wrote to Reverend Mother, and promised to be responsible during the first few years, for any deficit in the interest on the debt that would be incurred. This generous benefactor (1) loyally kept his promise. Permission was granted for the loan, His Grace Archbishop Quigley signing the note for the money which was obtained from the Massachusetts Mutual Company. The property (210' X 125') was purchased from a Mr. White for the sum of $15,750 in June 1904. The first sod was turned on the feast of the Annunciation, March 25, 1905, the Reverend Bernard P. Murray officiating on this solemn occasion, at which the following were present: The Reverend Cyril Kehoe, O.Carm., the Reverend Father Feehan, O.Carm., and the Reverend Father Quille, Mother M. Seraphina, Mother (2) M. Irenea, and Mother M. Emiliana. At the suggestion of

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.

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Father Murray, the sod was removed in the form of a cross. Some small boys who stood around viewing the procedure wondered what the religious were doing on a prairie, and afterwards ran over to see what had been buried there.

When the building was begun, difficulties cropped up from the most unexpected quarters. It was almost impossible to obtain a second loan from a Chicago bank, as the nuns were unknown, but divine aid came to them again through the Carmelite Fathers and Mr. Doerr, whose daughter was educated at Niagara Falls. These men used their influence and finally one bank consented to loan the money required to pay wages to workmen and builders and the erection proceeded. The roof was on the Convent but the negotiations pertaining to the loan were still unfinished and no money had been forthcoming. In answer to prayer, a friend loaned $15,000, which helped in part to defray the expenses. The land had been bought and the Convent built without money. Saint Ignatius says, "He who forgets himself and his own interests for the service of the Lord may rest assured that God will provide for him better than he could have done himself."

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
The cornerstone was laid in May, 1905, and the first Mass celebrated in December of the same year. For this event, so eagerly longed-for, an improvised altar was built by placing a board across the back of two chairs. On a chair at the right was placed the water and wine, and at the left flowers bought by Mrs. Maguire (Mother M. Emiliana's mother). The congregation consisted of Mothers M. Seraphina, M. Emiliana, M. Augusta, Mrs. Maguire and her two daughters, Mr. Doerr and his daughter. Who can say the extent of the blessings of that first holy sacrifice in that secluded spot -- or the joy that thrilled the heart of our holy foundress -- Mary Ward. Father Kehoe, who celebrated the Mass, was invited to stay for breakfast, but the cook announced that there was no food in the house. The good priest appreciated the invitation, relished the touch of poverty and promised to send bread and butter from the Carmelite Monastery.

The new academy was opened on December 8, 1905 with Mothers M. Seraphina, Superior, M. Augusta, M. De Sales, M. Theodosia, M. Aquinas, M. Scholastica, M. Fidelis and M. Rita forming the first community in Woodlawn. Classes were begun in January, 1906 and needless to say, the attendance

2. Ibid.
was small, but each year saw a steady increase in the number of boarders and day pupils, until to-day, Loretto Academy stands out as one of the leading educational centers for secondary learning in Chicago. It enjoys the privileges of recognition, as does the High School in Englewood, by the University of Illinois, the two Catholic Universities in Chicago, Loyola and De Paul, and is accredited to the North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges. Its graduates are equipped with academic training that will enable them to hold a high place in institutions of higher learning. Nor is it to be found wanting in athletic activities for it has one of the finest and largest gymnasiums for girls in Chicago. Its students, who take an active interest in sports have excelled in volleyball and basketball especially. For trophies which adorn their school, the girls competed with the best players in the Catholic High Schools and Academies in the city. Besides interscholastic games, they have been victors several times in Cook County tournaments which are open to all.

As no foundation is without its trials, so "Loretto" Woodlawn did not escape. One of the greatest was the intense
suffering endured by Sister M. Hermes, who was very seriously burnt in 1906, by a gas stove. She was removed to Hotel Dieu Hospital and when all hope of recovery was gone, the infinite care and patience lavished upon the dear sufferer by the kind Sisters -- Hospitallers of St. Joseph -- carried her through her worst sufferings, and after three months in the hospital she returned to the Academy.

Sickness, death, and ever present debts have followed the nuns throughout the twenty-eight years of their residence in Woodlawn. Truly they know what poverty is! In ways almost miraculous, however, has money come at times to tide them over difficult paths.
CHAPTER V.

ADMINISTRATION OF REVEREND MOTHER VICTORINE HARRIS

AND

ADMINISTRATION OF REVEREND MOTHER STANISLAUS LIDDY

Divine Providence in His Infinite Goodness relieved Mother Victorine Harris by death, of the tremendous responsibilities connected with her office, within a year after she assumed them. Shortly after an emergency operation she died. Her administration was short and uneventful.

December 28, 1911, witnessed the election of Reverend Mother Stanislaus Liddy to the Office of Mother General.

From every point of view, she seemed capable of filling the important position in which she was placed, and perhaps the most promising acquisition was experience. She had been appointed to most of the responsible duties in community life and had been Superior in nearly all our Convents: therefore she knew the Institute thoroughly and its members knew her. Although she was sixty-nine years of age -- rather late in life to shoulder the burden of authority -- she was young in heart, and no fears were entertained about physical inability to fulfill her onerous duties. Intellectually, Reverend Mother Stanislaus was well
endowed, and thus admirably suited to govern an educational institute. She had a keen understanding of the necessary progress to be made by every conscientious teacher and gave sympathetic encouragement to earnest study and the fitting of religious teachers to the work assigned them.

Characteristically, Reverend Mother Stanislaus was delightfully adapted to her new role. She had always been highly esteemed for her straightforwardness, her beautiful community spirit, her exemplary following of common life, and her cheerful temperament, offset by a pleasant sense of humor which added considerably to the enjoyment of the community recreations. Her deep rooted humility and her practical love of poverty were always noticeable. She allowed no distinctions to be made in her favor, and being an expert with her needle, as a true valiant woman, she exhibited her skill in patching and mending to the close of her career. (1)

It was during the administration of this noble religious that we were able to establish a College to be the Catholic Woman's College of Saint Michael's and affiliated with the University of Toronto. For this purpose a suitable building was erected at 387 Brunswick Avenue, called Loretto Abbey College and School.

Through the untiring labors and zeal of Mother M. Agatha O'Neill, and due almost entirely to her foresight, results were achieved which had been long desired. She had advocated university study for many of our members,

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and when these nuns were fully qualified, we were in a position to open Loretto College.

As early as 1881 an interesting plan which was to have far reaching consequences was worked out between Saint Michael's the leading Catholic College for men in the Province of Ontario, and the University of Toronto, by which the former, while strictly preserving its identity and its Catholic character, especially through a distinct system of philosophy and the teaching of the major part of the subjects, could obtain for its students the benefit of the scientific equipment. These students would also have the advantage of receiving degrees from the University of Toronto.

About the year 1907-1908, Mother M. Agatha with the encouragement or possibly the suggestion of a very good friend, Doctor Cassidy, member of the University Senate, entertained the idea of obtaining the status of an affiliated college for Loretto Abbey similar and parallel to that enjoyed by Saint Michael's from the year 1881, and some preliminary steps were being taken to secure it. Meanwhile, however, the University Federation Act, inspired by earlier arrangement with Saint Michael's had been passed in 1887 to enable independent universities, which found the financial burden too heavy, to merge their other faculties with those of the Provincial University of Toronto and thus participate in the government grant to that institution, while maintaining their Arts Colleges. These universities though remaining distinct, would together constitute the Faculty of Arts of the University of Toronto. Victoria College entered the Federation in the 90's while Trinity did not do so until 1906. Saint Michael's had been a member of the Federation from the first but did not take full advantage of its prerogative or develop a full Arts Faculty until 1910. There were now four Arts Colleges constituting the Art Faculty of the University of Toronto; University College, the original non-sectarian college of the University; Victoria College which was Methodist (now United Church); Trinity which was Anglican; Saint Michael's which was Catholic. The
three former were co-educational, while as yet the Catholic women had no part in the system. The need of a provision for the women was evident, but on account of the new form the University system had now taken, Mother Agatha's and Doctor Cassidy's scheme of separate affiliation was not feasible. Instead, Loretto Abbey College became the women's part of Saint Michael's in 1911, on the analogy of the other colleges with this extremely important difference, that while co-education prevails in other colleges, the Catholic tradition of separate education for men and women is upheld at Saint Michael's and Loretto, the latter having a complete Arts Faculty and corporate life of its own, while enjoying in addition the opportunities afforded by the almost unrivalled philosophy staff of Saint Michael's College and the Institute of Medieval Studies. The Federation scheme and its development have thus solved the question of university education for the Catholic minority in Ontario. (1)

The first students of Loretto Abbey College — registered at University of Toronto, September 29, 1911 — were Miss Teresa Coughlin and Miss Gertrude Ryan. The following year when the students had increased to ten, the college began to take shape with courses in Honour Moderns and Honour English as well as Pass or General Course. At the final examination in June 1914 (uniform for all colleges), among the seven taking first class honours in moderns in the entire university, the two Loretto Abbey College students were included. In 1915 our first graduates were four in number, which number has steadily increased and the total number of

graduates in 1933 was one hundred, sixty-nine. Scholarships, fellowships, prizes and other distinctions have frequently been won, including twice the obtaining of the Sir Bertram Windle gold medal for fourth year honour English, in St. Michael's College; first by Miss Helena McGrath, secondly by Miss Mollie Hopkins.

At its foundation Loretto Abbey College was established in the historic building of Loretto Abbey, Wellington Street, but in 1918, upon the completion of the new building at 587 Brunswick Avenue, the college was removed thence, as more commodious lecture rooms and accommodations for resident students could be provided. The future generation will little realize that to the efforts of Mother Agatha O'Neill, we owe our present advancement in learning. For more than sixty years she devoted her talents unsparingly to placing the Institute she loved so well, in the foremost ranks as a seat of learning, not only in Toronto, but throughout the country. Earnestness in her work as a religious teacher, together with the wholesouled endeavour to reach that perfection attained by many of the early members of the Institute was the outstanding quality which characterized this

1. Ibid.
modern educator.

As to University Affiliation let us point to an article by "The Catholic Register" (date unknown) printed in Toronto. It reads as follows:

There is no Catholic university in Ontario. There never will be one; the project is an impossibility. Any time spent discussing ways and means for one is worse than wasted. There will never be an endowment large enough to found a Catholic university.

The entire province of Ontario from public and private funds combined, has not yet been able to provide an adequate endowment for the Provincial University. No Catholic University should be contemplated which cannot favorably compete with the Provincial University. Its standing and its reputation must be nothing less; otherwise it is doomed to failure from the outset.

For over forty years the Province of Ontario has pledged itself to support one university only. Each successive government, during that time, has struggled to build up that one university. Still the funds at its disposal were far from being sufficient for its needs. Meanwhile, Victoria and Trinity, and for a time, McMaster, gave up their charters and merged their interests with it. The government of Sir James Whitney, on coming into power in 1904, announced a policy of unlimited generosity to the Provincial University. They have given all the Treasury Department could afford, and the University is still in need of large funds to carry on its work.

A Catholic University in Ontario, therefore, is an impossibility. But, as the druggist's clerk says, "We haven't it but we have something just as good — in fact better." It is a fact most likely unknown even to many in Toronto, that the great problem, "How shall Catholics obtain the advantages offered by State University with absolutely no danger to their faith," has been solved, for the first time in history, in the University of Toronto. This very extraordinary state-

1. Ibid. - 78 -
statement, most likely too extraordinary to be accepted, challenges scrutiny. It is a pity that such careful scrutiny has not been made by everyone interested. The Catholics of every non-Catholic country in the world have had this difficulty to face. All of them would be slow to realize that a solution was possible. The possibility of such a solution will be quite apparent to anyone who studied the Constitution of the University of Toronto in its relations to denominational colleges in federation.

The principle, in brief, is this: Each federated college supports the departments of languages, literature, history and philosophy. These are the subjects which every Catholic should study in a Catholic Institution. Happily, they are also the subjects which can be handled at the least expense. The immense expense of keeping up the departments of science, physics, and so on, are the burden of a university. Three-fourths of the endowment of every university goes to these departments, and in the University of Toronto, all this burden is borne by the Province. The Catholic student, therefore, has only to register in a Catholic college in federation to be entitled to free instruction from the University in all departments of science. Thus, while he lives in his own college and receives his literary training from Catholic professors, he enjoys without expense all the advantages which the immense endowment of a Government University can offer to any of its students.

A Catholic father who wished his son to have access to a complete equipment in the department of science would no doubt inquire which one of the Catholic universities in America or Europe offered the greatest advantages in this respect. Like the good conscientious Catholic that he was he decided first of all that his son must attend a Catholic institution. In what city of the world could his son (or daughter) find this best equipment under such conditions? Our readers may be surprised to hear that the answer is: "In the city of Toronto." Strange as this may sound, neither do the Catholic universities of Ireland nor the historic Louvain, nor the world-famed Catholic
universities of Italy and Spain possess an outfit in the way of scientific apparatus equal to that of the University of Toronto. Now all the above describes the advantages held out to St. Michael's college in federation with the Provincial University. (And likewise to Loretto Abbey College). (1)

Time had wrought so great a change in the neighborhood of Loretto Abbey, that it was deemed advisable to build a day-school in a more attractive and more convenient part of the city. Industrial Toronto had developed and spread its factories throughout what had once been a very attractive residential section, but if we were to hold our pupils we had no alternative but to build. It was a tremendous adventure, of course, and the consequent debt incurred was one of the burdens which Mother General naturally felt most keenly. The weight of the cross pressed more heavily as the years progressed. The next one came when we were obliged to close our Bond Street Convent in 1913. The Archbishop desired to use the property for diocesan purposes. Here again, the location had become impossible from the modern standpoint, but the hallowed associations of "Bond Street" cared for neither vicinity nor modern improvements.

Administration problems were particularly difficult to solve in the summer of 1917 and because Mother General

1. The Catholic Register, "As to University Affiliation", date unknown.
Stanislaus felt unable to cope with them any longer she appealed to Rome to be allowed to resign. The decision was left to the Archbishop, the most Reverend Neil McNeil, who, when he learned of the disapproval of the Council, decided not to grant her release. The blow fell with crushing severity.

The two years which followed were a slow martyrdom; a crucifixion of the mind as well as a slow ebbing away of life. In the Autumn of 1918, the removal of the College to Brunswick Avenue was felt intensely by Mother General. She did not relish what seemed a breaking away from the Abbey, although she realized the necessity of the change. The gradual growth of the college demanded more accommodation than the Abbey could afford, and the new building on Brunswick Avenue was more fitted in every way for College environment. (1)

In the summer of 1919 Mother General availed herself of a very timely opportunity to visit Ireland, her native land. This utter freedom from responsibility, together with the ocean voyage it was thought would restore somewhat her failing health, merely revived her spirits for a time. On the morning of August 28, during Mass, at Rathfarnham Abbey, she fainted and was carried to her room, and on September 5, peacefully and calmly commended her beautiful soul to the Master she had served so loyally,

1. Ibid.
and was buried in Rathfarnham Cemetery. To enumerate her admirable traits lies beyond the purpose of this work.

The Mother Vicar (Mother M. Loretto Ivers) carried on the work of administration until the next General Chapter convened in December 1919, when Mother M. Pulcheria Farrelly was elected chief superior.

Her work had been so exclusively academic, that the transplanting from the class room to administration was a severe shock. Only through obedience did she accept the office, and then with the greatest reticence. It was not long, however, before her sterling qualities made themselves felt and the Institute at large realized that she was the right person in the right place. Her scholarship enabled her to grapple with intellectual problems on a broad scale.

Mother Pulcheria's spiritual life had ever been in epitome, "the one thing necessary", and consequently her first consideration at all times. She was but in the early fifties with a hopeful outlook on life. Possessed of no small personal attractions, she was by nature dignified in gait and manner, and though gracious and genial, the dignity never relaxed. Her conception of "the eternal fitness of things" was soon impressed on the Institute, and she had plenty of scope for carrying out her desires, to have everything as it ought to be. Mother General Pulcheria's administration may best be judged by the outstanding events of her twelve years tenure of office. (1)

CHAPTER VI

ADMINISTRATION OF REVEREND MOTHER PULCHERIA FARRELLY

For some years the parochial school of St. Bride situated on Coles Avenue at 78th Street in Chicago, had been under the care of the Religious of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As early as 1909 classes were formed and what later came to be known as the Young Men's Club had served the Community as St. Bride's School. The nuns had come at the request of Reverend M. Sullivan, Pastor, and on September 12, of that year, the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, the formal opening of the school took place, after the Mass of the Holy Ghost had been celebrated by a Jesuit Father who was engaged in conducting a mission in the parish at the time.

The Sisters placed in charge of this undertaking were Mother M. Hildegarde McCormick, M. Aquinas Dunne, M.

Josephine Farrelly and M. Linda Connors.

During the early days they did not enjoy the comforts of a convent located in the parish, but lived some three miles away at Loretto Academy, Woodlawn, and went out each morning to take up their school duties in the sparsely settled South Shore district known as Windsor Park. With the rapidly increasing population in this area the number of teachers became inadequate to cope with the demands made by the over-crowded quarters. During Mother Pulcheria's administration there was placed at their disposal a three-story apartment building on South Shore Drive purchased for them by their esteemed Pastor, the Reverend William J. Lynch. For almost a year after they took possession of their new home, the second floor of the apartment was occupied by tenants whose lease had not yet expired, and who could not be induced to vacate the flat, even by Father Lynch's offer to reimburse them. The nuns lived on the first and third floors and in order to go upstairs or down were obliged to go out doors before they could enter the other part of their convent. When the lease expired this difficulty was removed by alterations made within the house,

allowing the nuns free access to all parts of the convent. Later as the teaching staff increased, Father Lynch, as he is affectionately remembered by all who knew him, had an addition of four rooms built on the convent, and did everything within his power to insure the comfort of "his" nuns.

The convent opened October 4, 1920, with a community of twelve, and Mother M. Rodriguez Conlon as local Superior. Other pioneers in this foundation were Mother M. St. Roque Canty, who as bursar furnished the house most generously and efficiently; Mothers M. Ancilla Hagarty, M. Hildegarde McCormick, M. Mary of the Cross Drohn, M. St. Patrick O'Connor, M. Imelda Wall, M. Gabriel English, M. Pancratius Porter, M. Lucia Altenburg, M. Euphrasia Mullaly and M. Redempta O'Brien. For weeks before they took up their abode in their new home Mother M. Rodriguez could be found on the first floor of the school, hemming and stitching linen to be used in the convent.

The first Mass was celebrated by Father Lynch on October 25, 1920; Father having previously blessed all the house and brought what was required for Holy Mass, sung (1) by Mothers M. Imelda, M. Pancratius and M. Lucia.

Truly the generous spirit of the Pastor was reflected in his people, as donations, beyond number, poured in on these sisters who had come to live in their midst. No one who has ever lived in that happy St. Bride’s Convent can forget the unbounded generosity of its parishioners and benefactors. The nuns’ welfare seemed to be their chief concern as it was their beloved Pastor’s.

When Almighty God saw fit in His inscrutable designs to call our beloved friend, Father Lynch, to his eternal reward in April 1933, not only the people of St. Bride’s parish, but the entire Community of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary lost one of its most loyal and generous benefactors; the recollection of whose name fills the hearts of all who knew him with a deep reverence, and an undying gratitude to this self-forgetting Christlike priest of God who sought first his own sanctification and then the happiness of his nuns and his beloved flock, and who by his exemplary devotion to Our Blessed Mother made of his spiritual children ardent lovers of the Mother of God.

St. Bride’s School, which opened with a teaching staff of four in 1909 has grown into a veritable young village, with an enrollment of boys and girls reaching the six
hundred mark, and a staff of twelve nuns who devote their untiring energies to the advancement of the children's welfare. A Boys' Choir, a School Band, Sodalities, Boy Scouts and a Circulating Library are some of the means provided to encourage the children to appreciate extra curricular activities.

From as far West as the Province of Saskatchewan came the next entreaty to the Mother-house in Toronto, to send some of its members to teach the Gospel and to instruct in a Catholic School the children of the Western settlers, who belong to a hardy German stock. After due consideration, the Council decided to accept this invitation on which the following letter regarding the opening of a Convent in Sedley, Saskatchewan, was dispatched to all the Mission houses of the Institute, in America.

Loretto Abbey
Toronto

Dear Mother--

The many urgent requests to make foundations in Saskatchewan have called for prayers of all the members of our loved Institute. We have been told that in the great Northwest, Protestant sects are working indefatigably not only to spread their false doctrines but also to pervert baptized Catholics. Thousands of
dollars are spent annually to pay just ordinary men and women, not ministers, to carry on this proselytizing campaign. Zealous laborers in the Lord's vineyard tell us that the fate of Catholicity now depends on Catholics, especially on religious, who are more responsible than others for the spread of the Kingdom of Christ on earth.

Knowing well that rare courage and a great spirit of sacrifice are requisite for this work, and feeling confident that these qualifications are to be found in abundance in our Institute, we, after weighty consideration and fervent prayer, have recently come to a final decision regarding Sedley, a town but an hour's ride by train from Regina, a splendid city with every modern advantage.

As it is my wish that all the houses receive this news authentically, I take much pleasure in giving the points of interest.

Sedley being a Catholic town, there is no need of a separate school, so three of our nuns will take charge of the public school there in September, D.V., with the salary of $1500.00 for the Principal and $1200.00 for the other two teachers. The Community will reside near the Church in a comfortable corner house which is placed at their disposal and furnished by the parish. They will have their own chapel and Archbishop Mathieu wishes them to enjoy all possible spiritual advantages. When we are ready to build a Convent there, we have waiting for us forty acres of fertile land and fifteen thousand dollars, the gift of the parish. It is likely that we shall also in the near future build a convent at Shaunavon, a town in which the people are clamoring for religious teachers for their children. Protestants as well as Catholics want us in this town. Here, they say we can easily have one hundred boarders as soon as we can accommodate them.

For these intentions as well as for the Sedley
Foundation, your earnest prayers are again requested. Union of prayer will accomplish great things for God's glory. We expect several aspirants to enter the Novitiate on the Second of February. Keep up your good prayers for this intention, as we can do little if we have not laborers to send out into the Vineyard. How true it is that we shall never do the apostolic work Our Lord desires unless we realize fully our personal and immediate responsibility for the saving of souls.

With fondest love and good wishes for the new year to you, dear Mother, and all our members,

I am,

Yours ever in J. C.

M. J. Pulcheria, (1)

(signed)

I.B.V.M.

Immediately following this letter, Mother General Pulcheria Farrelly, who was at Sault Ste. Marie on visitation, sent word to His Grace, Archbishop O.E. Mathieu, C.M.G., that she and Mother Dorothea Barry, Secretary General would arrive in Regina that evening. He in turn notified the Reverend Father Anthony Janssen, Pastor at Sedley, a town forty-five (2) miles from Regina, to arrange to be in Regina to meet the nuns. This dear priest who had prayed to Our Lady for eight long years to obtain Sisters for his neglected flock, felt that this at last was an answer to his fervent supplications.

In accepting the invitation of Father Janssen to visit

Sedley, Mother General and Mother Dorothea availed themselves of the very promising opportunity to become personally acquainted with the conditions in Sedley as well as in some of the neighboring towns. This enabled them to know fully in what circumstances a convent of "ours" would be established in the far West. After due reflection, prayer and discussion at headquarters, the glad word was sent to the Mission houses announcing our latest venture. "Sedley" became the by-word at Community recreations and conjectures of possible "Sedleyites" were sources of much amusement during the ensuing months.

To Mother Ernestine Peirce was accorded the privilege of being chosen to take the lead in this pioneer work. She had been serving the Community in the office of local Superior at Stratford when she was summoned to Toronto to have greater responsibilities placed upon her shoulders. With Mother Ernestine, four sisters were to make up the little Community -- Mothers M. St. Joseph Macklin, M. Immaculata Leacock, M. St. Wilifred Hammell and M. Leonarda Yantha. Close upon the June examinations in the schools, followed the preparations for departure. Nuns were busy making ready the wardrobes of the missionaries to Western Canada. Into trunks went rubber boots, galoshes, klondykes, shawls, mitts, books,
pictures, altar linens, jars of fruit, candles, dusters, 
dish towels -- everything useful and packable being stowed away.

On July 12, 1921, Mother Ernestine and Mother Immaculata left Stratford for the Abbey, where they spent a day and a half, during which they called on His Grace Archbishop McNeil of Toronto to receive his priestly blessing. He encouraged the Sisters in their noble enterprise, assured them of his prayers and wished them Godspeed. July 14, was the day set aside for final farewells. These two brave souls, fortified with the Church's special blessings for her missionaries, left for Regina, where on July 17, they were met at the depot by two Sisters of the Mission, who escorted the nuns to the Archbishop's residence. They were cordially received by Msgr. Grandbois, the Archbishop's representative. During the day the Reverend Father Janssen to whose parish "ours" had been assigned, called for the sisters and drove them to Sedley. Once at their destination they lost no time in repairing to the Church of Our Lady of Grace to place themselves and their work in the Hands of Him who had called them hither. As in so many similar instances, the nuns ac-

1. Ibid.  

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cepted the hospitality of the parish priest until a Convent was made ready for them, which was accomplished by the fifth of August, when a house consisting of four rooms furnished with the barest necessities was in readiness. A detailed description of this spacious mansion provides interesting reading. The first floor boasted of two rooms, a kitchen into which a front and a side door opened, and a parlor. The kitchen served as a refectory at meal time, as a community room at recreation time, and as a kitchen at all other times. Annexed to this, but separated by a thin wall, was the parlor, at the end of which an unavoidably small section was set apart for a sanctuary by means of folding doors, which were opened for Mass — prie-dieux being brought in for the nuns — but which were shut and the prie-dieux removed when the parlor resumed its secondary "role" of parlor and music room in one. A narrow enclosed staircase of fifteen steps led to two rooms similar to those downstairs, which served as nuns' sleeping apartments. Five cots, five chairs and five neat little dressers adorned these rooms — and here the tired teachers were to rest after the labors of the busy day!

1. Ibid.
One may wonder, in this modern age, that such a necessity as plumbing was denied these early missionaries. The drinking water was peddled by a man who came every other day to the convent to sell water at ten cents a pail. The indispensable rain barrel was kept filled in the rainy season to meet the many washing problems, and in winter it was filled with snow which, when melted, was used for all ordinary purposes. A peddler also sold ice every other day, which was chipped and put into large cans for the purpose of cooling and making barely drinkable at best the water that had been standing for nearly two days. Fastidiousness had no place among these valiant soldiers of Christ. Farmers peddled vegetables, meat and eggs in the same way as they peddled water. Surely Sedley was unique in its peculiarities in those never to be forgotten days. As for lighting, the nuns enjoyed the luxury of kerosene lamps on the first floor; but one candle upstairs served for the illumination of the two rooms, and in the face of these privations they were all as happy as kings.

The second group to labor for the Master in Western

2. Ibid.
Canada comprised Mother M. St. Joseph, M. St. Winifred and M. Leonarda who left Loretto Abbey August 4. As their journey drew to an end, vast stretches of prairie greeted their view, and the typical straggling villages of the West as they flashed by did not tend to raise their tired spirits. Sunday morning still found these travellers speeding westward until Regina was reached sometime in the afternoon. Here they were met by the Sisters of the Missions who brought them to their convent. The travellers had fasted until two P.M., to receive Him whom they sought to serve in this remote corner of His vineyard, and in the little chapel of the Sisters whose hospitality they enjoyed, they were rewarded and filled with holy courage.

It was Father Janssen again, who called for the nuns to drive them to Sedley.

Through the vast expense of ripening grain they sped. Now and then there appeared a small house or cluster of farm buildings and far in the distance a tall, shadowy elevator. How the elevators marked the country! North, South, East and West they stand like great sentinels, by the railways guarding the small cluster of tiny frame buildings that make up a Western town.

Away in the distance against the far horizon loomed up an all important spot — almost a city — boasting four elevators and a fine brick church. This was Sedley. To the Church Father Janssen brought the Sisters where


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the "Te Deum" was said in thanksgiving for the safe arrival.

There was a queer thrill of expectancy as the first arrivals led the way through the long grass by the fence and into the tiny house. (1)

So August 9, found the last group at their destination.

Until November, when a small altar arrived, the nuns attended daily Mass in the Church and each evening found them again before the Tabernacle, saying their night prayers. There was not the modern comfort of electric lighting in this Church; each night a nun held a lighted candle beside the one who read the prayers. It was evident that they had not performed their devotions unnoticed, for one night and on all subsequent occasions, there was found a small lamp placed for their convenience by their devoted and thoughtful Pastor, who always (2) and in every way attended to their needs.

These good missionaries had not long to wait to make their acquaintance with Saskatchewan mud. Rain visiting them in no ungenerous fashion on the second night in their new home the next morning brought the revelation that it is deep and black and sticky, that it clings like glue to the clothes and shoes (3) and holds rubbers unmercifully fast! But on the other hand it produces the best wheat in the world.

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
No street in Sedley possessed the extravagance of two sidewalks except Broadway, so the Convent Street was no exception and the path which the nuns had to follow from the Church to the School brought them through plenty of extremely tenacious mud; however, it was not long before a sidewalk was built by the appreciative people in front of the convent of the "good Sisters".

This little town is the proud possessor of a town hall, a bank, a hardware store, two general stores, a butcher shop conducted by a Chinese, a hotel, a doctor and about ninety houses whose owners are all retired farmers. The people though mostly German have among them a few of French and English descent.

The Sisters first taught about a quarter of a mile from the convent, in a two-room frame public school which is governed by the Board of Education in Regina. A third classroom in which Mother Immaculata taught was in the town hall, and one must not be distressed at the information that the thin partition between her classroom and the room adjoining served to separate her and her charges from the town jail. Rarely is the jail used, for these Sedley settlers are a

peace-loving and law abiding people. Most of the children who attend school come from the country in wagons or autos, sleighs being used in winter. Because of the inefficiency of teachers prior to the arrival of the nuns, only one child had passed examinations which gave him High School standing. In order to induce the children to continue in school, the High School was begun the second year the nuns were in Sedley, and before the opening of the third year a convent and school were built and another teacher added to the staff in the person of Mother Loyola Street. To-day a stranger visiting in the Sedley school would find an unusual spectacle. Where he should expect to see nuns conducting their classes, in religious garb, he would find religious, 'tis true, but religious clothed in secular garments. This very trying ordeal, to which the nuns have generously submitted, is due to the bigoted legislation enacted in Saskatchewan, which forbids nuns in religious habits to teach in public schools; so these religious of the Institute dress as women of the world during the day, and as nuns in the cloister, when their teaching day is ended.

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
Failure in the crops of the western farms has made itself severely felt in the schools, where attendance has fallen off. Farmers, many of them in distress, have been compelled to sell out their stock; but the generosity of these people of the plains knows no bounds -- they give, and give with the bigness and openness of the vast prairie lands of which they are a part.

Most of the village children had made the acquaintance of the nuns that first year before school opened. There were those who smiled but were too bashful to talk, and there were those who were too bashful to stay even to smile, but who handed in milk and buns and vegetables daily "from our mother". The dear Lord who is never outdone in generosity has repaid these good mothers a hundredfold by claiming several of their unspoiled children for His personal friends in the cloister. In twelve years from this settlement, rich in religious vocations, fifteen young ladies have entered the ranks of the Institute as Postulants.

Mother Ernestine Peirce, the first Superior of the Sedley foundation, was admirably suited by grace, nature and experience, to cope with the primitive conditions and arduous labours that awaited the pioneer Loretto Community in Saskatchewan. She was a woman of strong faith, broadened and deepened by long years

1. Ibid.
of exact religious observance in the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary; a teacher who had proved her ability and worth in various grades, positions and circumstances in Ontario.

It has been said that a new foundation needs the Grace of God, and a sense of humour, two qualifications that marked the crowded days, and wind-swept career of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on the prairies.

A kind, sensible, motherly Superior, Mother Ernestine watched over and cared for the well-being of her spiritual children, seeing that nothing was lacking that might fit them for the all-important work of salvaging souls. At the same time and always, her unassuming simplicity, humility and prayerfulness, were an unfaltering reminder of the need of personal sanctification. Principal of a Public School, teacher of classes preparing for Departmental Examinations, coping with new programs, courses of study, conflicting religious beliefs and nationalities, she had to steer a safe and cautious course. How admirably she succeeded has been attested by Government records, Inspectors’ criticisms and successful examination results.

Above and beyond Mother Ernestine's work as Superior in her Community and Principal of her school, she blazed the path for a broad and sympathetic leadership in the municipality. That this multiplicity of duties, that might well have over-taxed a less practical intellect, had not exhausted her strength and ability, was soon to be proven. The erection of the new convent and school buildings with all the distractions entailed, found her as ever quiet, capable and gracious. Her nine years of fruitful administration left the "foundation" well and deeply laid. She has a permanent place in the hearts of the people, in the gratitude of the children, and in the gracious appreciation of the former pastor. (1)

Between the years 1921 and 1926 numerous petitions were

received at the Mother-house in Toronto, requesting our nuns to open convents in different parts of the country, but for various reasons we were not then in a position to accept them. One promising field, however, was offered in the Northwestern part of Ontario to which Mother General and her Council sent nuns. This was Sioux Lookout, a small town in the archdiocese of St. Boniface, on the Canadian National Railway some two hundred and fifty miles northwest of Fort William and two hundred miles east of Winnipeg. In the days of the Indians there was a "lookout" on an elevation above Lake Pelican, where the Sioux Indians watched for their enemy, the Cree. When the town was first laid out in the wilderness, for railway purposes, it was called Graham, but later, the old name of Sioux Lookout was revived. On the tenth day of February, 1926, Reverend Father Brodeur, parish priest of this northern town went to Toronto, seeking Sisters for his proposed Catholic School. This zealous priest represented to Mother General Pulcheria the conditions existing in his parish: that more than one hundred Catholic children were actually attending the public school, that these children were sorely in need of religious

2. Ibid.
instruction, and that he had every confidence in the Sacred Heart that she would not refuse teachers for his flock.

Mother General laid many fears and objections before the good priest, but to each of these he offered a ready solution. His first offer was an assurance of daily Mass and Holy Communion for the Sisters, and second, a warm, furnished house with free fuel, light, heat and water all to be near the proposed school. To the objection of nine hundred miles distance for so small a community from the Mother-house, the good Father showed that there was direct communication, daily, between Toronto and Sioux Lookout, taking but forty-seven hours by train. To the objection that a Sister might fall seriously ill where there was no Catholic hospital, Father said he had already made provision for free hospital service in the Sisters' hospital at St. Boniface, which could be reached in a five hour train journey. Besides all these considerations, a liberal remuneration was offered by the school board, of which Father Brodeur was secretary. The thought of so many souls to be benefited, especially among the children, of whom many were of foreign birth, moved Mother General to promise three teachers and a music teacher for the following September. (1) Praising the Master for this grateful triumph Father Brodeur returned to his parish, and joyfully commenced the building of his school, for which he and his curate drew the plans and did much of the hard work themselves in order to hasten the construction. When the Sisters arrived in September, they found ready for them a beautiful, gray brick, four-roomed school, with all the modern appointments usually found in large centres. A few extra days of vacation gave time for the placing of desks and blackboards and the whole was complete, and over one hundred children left the public school and registered in the new Sacred Heart School. (2)

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
On arriving at Sioux Lookout the Sisters had been taken to the Church where the Te Deum was said in thanksgiving. The little Community, of whom Mother Eustelle was superior, were conducted to their residence, where they found a neat little chapel, with the dear Master, already there awaiting them, a parlour, a dining room, and a kitchen on the first floor and sleeping rooms upstairs. It was soon learned that this had been the priests' residence which they had so generously given over to them reserving for themselves a few rooms elsewhere in town. This house is dedicated to Christ, the King, whose statue surmounts its tiny altar. Not only was the house furnished, heated and lighted but Father Brodeur left nothing undone to add to the comfort of the Sisters. Supplies of bread, meat, vegetables, groceries, candles, vigil lights — everything and anything that might be of use was secured in the person of good Mrs. Wood, who kept house for months for the Sisters, but who would accept no salary for her gracious and motherly services. (1)

Generosity was not confined to the Reverend Pastor alone nor to his assistants; the ladies of the parish called with many gifts, such as jam, pickles, lace for the chapel and curtains for the windows; whatever they had they were willing and ready to share. At Christmas eiderdown quilts came from the warm-hearted pastor, while the parishioners sent fruit and flowers and fowl — fruit and flowers being very expensive, as they must be transported from Winnipeg in heated cars.

During the third year after our coming to Sioux Lookout, Father Brodeur, to the sorrow of all, was transferred to a distant parish in the archdiocese but his place is ably filled by a capable, energetic and kindly successor, in the person of Reverend Father Bellevance, who carries out all the arrangements made by his predecessor. (2)

It was with pleasure and thanksgiving that the Sisters witnessed the erection of a priests' house, a modest cottage, built by the priests themselves,

1. Ibid.
2. Letters of Mother M. Thomasina, 1933, op. cit.

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and fervent was the Te Deum that reached the great white Throne, when the priests were no longer housed in rented rooms on their account. During the building of this house an unusual circumstance occurred. On the site for the building was a protruding corner of bed rock which could not be removed, yet they continued the structure and prayed. The rock lowered — yes, actually lowered — sufficiently to allow the house to be built above it. And why should it not? Cannot faith move mountains? These were men of faith. (1) They had asked only for the boulder to be lowered — not moved. The space allows for a furnace as well as a small laundry.

Seven years have passed, but thank God, no one has yet been obliged to return in haste to the Mother-house nor to go to the hospital. Though the climate is severe, it is invigorating and seems to buoy up instead of injuring the health. The children who are very bright and ambitious and a joy to their teachers are regular in their attendance at school even when the weather registers 40 or 50 degrees below zero and they run the risk of having hands and faces frozen. The custom of bringing whole truck-loads of children to school in bad weather prevails, and might be a good one for our eastern neighbours to adopt. No one enjoys it more than the children, and no one appreciates it more than the teachers, who do not like teaching a present minority with an absent majority. (2)

And now a little about the children of the school will not be out of place — the children for whose sake Mother General made the foundation — supplying teachers when many other places were demanding the same. No wonder Father Brodeur had urged his plea for religious teachers. Fifty per cent of the parishioners were and are Ukrainians, who rarely enter the church. One is sorry for them, when one considers how foreign to them is our Latin rite and how dear to them is their own, of which they are deprived on account of scarcity of Ukrainian priests. Their children, however, receive Catholic instruction

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
in the school and attend the Latin rite Mass, where their devotions are again under the Sisters' supervision. They join the children of other nationalities in singing the hymns of the season, as well as High Mass. If they happen to have the opportunity later in their lives to attend the rite so dear to their parents, that rite will be quite unintelligible to them. They are children of Mother Church and faithful members in a country where the Latin rite is likely to dominate for centuries. (1) Our hope is centred in them, for there is need of strong, vigorous faith among these guileless children, as, sad to relate, Red propaganda is rampant among them, their very homes serving as meeting places for the Communistic sowers of evil doctrines and for the spread of pernicious red literature.

It was a coincidence that Mother Eustelle Weiss should be chosen as Superior for the Mission at Sioux Lookout, Northern Ontario. A native of Shakespeare, she learned to know the Loretto nuns while at school in Stratford; but before she was to follow her vocation, she spent a year or two at the Canadian Sault, where she began to appreciate the need of religious teaching in these out-lying districts. After years of training and teaching in the Institute, with a ripened experience she returned, even beyond her first field of labour. To all who know Mother Eustelle, zeal -- zeal for the Missions, must stand out, as the hallmark of religious endeavour among the children. The C.C.S.M.G. was active, alive, teeming with interest wherever she taught. Her classes knew the missions, recognized their needs, and with parliamentary precision learned to discuss, and to plan to help in the salvation of souls. These former pupils, who in small groups, in several Ontario cities, still carry on, on broader lines, gladly sent spiritual and material aid, when their beloved teacher actually became a missionary.

When a small town lies near a gold vein, and the world rushes in with all the present day extremes and

1. Ibid.
vices, and there is only a Junior Catholic School, the Eighth Grade graduate is a vital problem. Mother Eustelle enlisted the help of her crusaders from afar, and she herself organized a "club", a sewing and reading circle that helped to save older children, and to draw them back to Catholic influence. The new Separate School was well stocked with Catholic literature, lantern slides and many devices to more than compensate for the withdrawal from the Public School, when the Sisters were solicited as teachers in Sioux Lookout. The local Mission in her school made their little sacrifices and were able to bear the expenses of a missionary priest for the gathering in of fallen away foreigners in the district.

In the small Community, this zealous Superior was ever an inspiration. She was always the centre of activity when work was in progress, the moving spirit when happy recreations followed. After six fruitful, successful years, she left the small Mission well established, and on its way to do great things for God. (1)

A different type of foundation, and one which was indeed novel in the Institute in America, was the opening of a Branch Novitiate in Chicago. Application for this much coveted venture was made to Rome, and the approval of the Sacred Congregation came through His Eminence George Cardinal Mundelein in whose diocese we wished to found a house for the reception of candidates. Coincident with this was the problem of securing a suitable site — a matter of no little concern. To comply with the Cardinal's wish the nuns travelled the countryside far and wide, visiting such places as Wheaton, Mayslake, Hinsdale, Deerfield, Northbrook, Elgin and Elmhurst. Factors which had to be considered were:


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proximity to spiritual ministration, transportation facilities, gas, electricity, etc. Transportation was essential to accommodate prospective boarders, for the revenue was counted on to defray the expenses of the house, and the school to afford the Novices an opportunity to teach. (1)

A location near the Fathers of the Divine Word at Techny, was decided upon as desirable. A small house surrounded by twelve acres of land was to be ours as soon as the deed was signed. Plans of sub-division were made out to prevent a street from ever going through the property; however, the owners held off when they heard that nuns were to be the purchasers and thereafter mystery seems to have surrounded the entire proceedings. What we were told was that the owner's wife refused to sign the deed. Father Bruno of Techny wrote to Woodlawn inquiring about the delay, showing his sincerity in wanting the nuns in his vicinity, but negotiations were dropped. (2)

Had it not been for the unbounded generosity of our loyal friend, the Very Reverend Monsignor John Ryan, Pastor of St. Bernard's Church, the nuns would have had to abandon the idea of opening a novitiate at that time. He very generously placed at the Sisters' disposal a beautiful residence located at 6550 Harvard Avenue which belonged to the parish, and which

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1. Letters - Mother M. Bernardine, 1933.
2. Ibid.
adjoined the parochial residence and the school property.

With this problem thus admirably solved for the time being, a glimpse into the Abbey Reception Room, on Friday, August 26, 1927, would have revealed beyond a doubt that preparations for a journey had culminated in the severing of strong and holy ties, for here were assembled the novices and the entire professed community to bid farewell to Mother St. Teresa Finnigan -- beloved Novice-Mistress for the past ten years -- and three of her novices: Sister M. Xavier Cullinan, Sister M. Thecla Flynn, and Sister M. Sheila McDonald; and to speed them on their way to open the Branch Novitiate in the beautiful Catholic city of Chicago. As the adieux were still trembling in the tense air, someone, somewhere in the throng intoned the "Salve Regina" which was immediately and fervently taken up by all, and the tension gave place to heartfelt prayer for the Master's special blessing on the dear missionaries' responsible undertaking. At this juncture the car that was to convey them to the train very opportunely rounded the bend and amid smiles and tears and blessings they departed with hearts ready for any and every emergency. In Chicago the nuns were met at the train by a loyal friend of "Loretto" -- Mary Maher. A royal welcome was extended to them by Mother M. Marcelline O'Connor and her Englewood Community who had.
improvised a novitiate in their Convent to be used until the residence on Harvard Avenue was in readiness. August 28, marked the arrival of the first postulants. To Agnes Labelle, now Sister M. Catalda and to Helen Ryan, Sister M. Lillian, is accorded the honor of being the first applicants to the American Novitiate. Another Junior Professed Sister from Toronto, Sister M. Hildegarde Fischer completed the little community. A few days later, a High Mass was offered in thanksgiving for God's signal favors in connection with this godly project.

On October 12, the nuns occupied their beautiful novitiate. The first floor consists of two parlours, a library, a dining room, a scullery and a kitchen. On the second floor are the chapel, four bedrooms, and one large workroom which serves as the novitiate. The third floor contains two bedrooms, and a ball room which is used as a dormitory. The house was placed under the patronage of St. Michael and his picture (taken from the cover of the Messenger of the Sacred Heart) was hung over the front door -- a custom observed in all the houses of the Institute in Europe, Asia, Africa and America.

An account of the first religious ceremony appeared as follows, in the "The New World" published in Chicago, August 17, 1928:
A ceremony of unusual significance took place in St. Bernard's Church Stewart Avenue, Chicago, on Tuesday morning, August 14, the first ceremony of reception into the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of candidates from Loretto Branch Novitiate recently established at 6550 Harvard Avenue. The officiant was the Very Reverend F.J. Magner, Ph.D. assisted by Reverend W. Cousins, and in the sanctuary were Rt. Reverend Msgr. John F. Ryan, Rt. Rev. Msgr. D. J. Dunne, Rev. W. J. Lynch, Rev. F. Wachendorfer, C.P.P.S., Rev. J. J. Garrity, Rev. L. McNamara, Rev. J. Wagner and Rev. J. Gallery.

At half past nine o'clock, from the organ pealed forth a jubilant march as the three candidates entered in bridal garb, followed by Mother General and the Novice Mistress. After the "Veni Creator" sung by the choir, the sermon was preached by Father Magner with a preface to the large congregation, in explanation of the event.

The Sermon was followed by the reception ceremony according to the ritual of the Institute. After declaring their desire to be admitted as members of the Institute the aspirants left the Church to divest themselves of their worldly attire and returned in the habit and white veil of Loretto novices. Further details of the ceremony were carried out: bestowal of the cincture and beads, and the designation of their religious names. Miss Agnes LaBelle of Chicago received the name of Sister M. Catalda; Miss Helen Ryan, Chicago, Sister M. Lillian; Miss Jeannett Mullen, Lima, Ohio, Sister M. Leah. The usual promises were made by which the candidates were formally admitted into the novitiate for two years' probation before pronouncing their first vows. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered during which the choir sang appropriate hymns and the chanting of the Te Deum closed the impressive ceremony.

The Loretto Branch Novitiate is a United States affiliation of the Toronto central Novitiate for aspirants who prefer entering in Chicago to taking the initial step in Canada. The Mother-house of the I.B.V.M. in America is the new Loretto Abbey, recently erected on Armour Heights, a beautiful suburb of Toronto, Ontario; the Institute in its widest range is spread throughout the world. Founded in the 17th Century by Mother Mary Ward, whose cause for beatification is being considered, the Institute in America devotes itself exclusively to teaching. Its range extends from kindergarten to graduation with arts degrees from the
University of Toronto through St. Michael's Federated College, of which Loretto Abbey College is the Women's department. Members otherwise adapted to Community life, however, can make themselves efficient in various ways.

An Institute of such broad culture with a background of three centuries and a universal reputation for excellence in the training of young girls should make a very forceful appeal to those who are called to the high vocation of instructing others unto justice.

The newest mission undertaken by Loretto was opened in Regina, Saskatchewan, August 15, 1932, six months after the installation of Mother St. Teresa Finnigan as Chief Superior of the Institute in America.

This exemplary and noble religious was born in Toronto and educated from earliest childhood at Loretto. She entered the Institute at the age of seventeen on the day after the death of Reverend Mother Teresa Dease in 1889. From the beginning she was characterized by a high ideal of the life of sacrifice and her happy fidelity has never weakened. Specially gifted in music, she spent the early years of her religious life teaching and assisting in the schools. In 1912 she was appointed Superior of Loretto Convent, Guelph and in 1916 of Loretto College School, Toronto. In 1919 she was chosen as Mistress of Novices which post she continued to hold at the Mother House and later at the Branch Novitiate in Chicago until her election as Chief Superior.(1)

The decision to open another mission in Western Canada devolved upon Mother General St. Teresa and her Council. Owing to the innumerable kindnesses of the Right Reverend Msgr. Anthony Janssen, we accepted his invitation to assist in the parochial school of St. Augustine in Regina. This school, staffed by seven lay teachers accommodates at present four hundred chil-

1. Letters, Mother Margarita, I.B.V.M.
children, of German, Hungarian, and a few of Irish descent. To this group of teachers already engaged by the Board of Education of Regina, were added two Loretto nuns, Mothers M. Adelaide and M. Beatrice who though greeted cordially by Mr. Daley, the principal were made to feel that they were not welcomed by the staff. The children, however, in whose grades the nuns taught were eager to attend their classes and at the close of the first year, the lay teachers fully aware of the influence for good which the nuns exerted over the pupils, realized the need of religious teachers in a Catholic school.

The people of Regina, were, as a whole prejudiced against nuns, but gradually the barrier of unfriendliness was broken down and now the families of the parish in which the nuns work, cooperate in all the activities sponsored by them for the welfare of the souls of their children.

The Convent was blessed by His Excellency Archbishop McGuigan and Holy Mass was celebrated for the first time on Sunday, August 23, 1932 by the Right Reverend Msgr. Janssen.

The present status of the Institute in America may be briefly described as follows: The new palatial Abbey opened in North Toronto in 1929 is both the Mother-house and an Academy. Whether viewed from a religious, intellectual or material standpoint it ranks amongst the first Convent-Academ-
mies in Canada. The Loretto Abbey College on Brunswick Avenue, Toronto, affiliated to Toronto University through St. Michael's College provides Catholic women with an Arts Course in Catholic surroundings and at the same time with a degree from one of the "greatest secular universities in the "Empire". Twelve separate schools are conducted by the Loretto Nuns in Toronto. After Toronto come next in age, the Academies in Guelph (1856) Niagara Falls (1861) Hamilton (1865) and Stratford (1878), all of which lie in the original territory of Bishop Power's diocese. In the United States the Religious of the I.B.V.M. conduct academies and parochial schools in Chicago and Sault Ste. Marie. In the Canadian West, they have schools at Sioux Lookout in St. Boniface diocese, at Sedley and at Regina in the Regina diocese.

Summarized: the Loretto Nuns in America, looking to Toronto as their Mother-house, work, in eight dioceses and conduct one college, eleven academies, and twenty-four schools, in which they teach some ten thousand pupils.
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II. Secondary Sources
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   B. Articles

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From the numerous Letters of Reverend Mother Teresa Dease in the original, only here and there can a sentence or two be extracted which throws any light on some missions. On the other hand occasionally one entire letter may be devoted to all the details surrounding a new venture.

Annals obtained from the individual houses of the Institute in America supplied invaluable information, enumerated they are: of Loretto Academy, Joliet 1880-1900; 1916 good details, of Loretto Academy Englewood, Chicago 1892-1920, beginnings given in full; Loretto Academy Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan 1896-1902, excellent description of
living conditions; Loretto Academy Woodlawn, Chicago 1905-1912, brief records, difficulties many, fortitude of nuns. St. Bride's Convent Chicago 1920-1933, reflects spirit of pastor and people, wonderful faith; Loretto Convent Sedley 1921-1930. Best records here recount hardships, lives of people, conditions under which they lived, many vocations; Loretto Academy Niagara Falls Ontario 1860-1880; 1920-1930, excellent detailed account of beginnings, hardships, virtue and perseverance; manner of life and nature of schools; Loretto Academy Hamilton Ontario 1865-1900. Extraordinary story of overcoming Protestant antagonism, successes, conversions. Loretto Branch Novitiate Chicago 1927-1933, brief account kept in form of diary. Few details. These were supplied by eye witness. Loretto Academy Stratford 1878-1895; 1925-1933; Loretto Convent Sioux Lookout 1926-1933. Very good.

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Rev. Joseph Roubik, S.J.       April 10, 1934
Rev. Eneas B. Goodwin         April 10, 1934