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MONSEIGNEUR

IGNACE BOURGET

AND

The Work of the "Providence"

PASTORAL LETTERS, ORDINANCES, PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE, ETC., TOGETHER WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES CONCERNING THE INSTITUTE OF THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY, KNOWN AS THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE.

PROVIDENCE MOTHER HOUSE
—1271 EAST ST. CATHERINE STREET, 1271—
—1918—

BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DU QUÉBEC

Imprimatur

October 30, 1918.

† PAUL, Archbishop of Montreal.

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MONSEIGNEUR

IGNACE BOURGET

AND THE WORK OF THE "PROVIDENCE"

IN MONTREAL

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY NOTES

1799—1840

1799, October 30.—At Levis, the birth of Mgr. Bourget, son of Peter Bourget and Theresa Paradis. He receives the name of Ignatius at Baptism. In 1813, young Bourget begins his studies in the Little Seminary at Quebec. In 1818, he enters the ecclesiastical state. In 1820, he goes to the Seminary at Nicolet. On November 23rd, he comes to Montreal; he is made deacon by Mgr. Lartigue. In 1822, November 30, he receives Holy Orders. In 1836, he is named Vicar General of Mgr. Lartigue. In 1837, March 10, he is proclaimed Bishop of Telmesse by His Holiness, Gregory XVI, then reigning. He becomes Coadjutor to Mgr. Lartigue with right of succession to the episcopal see of Montreal. On July 25, he is consecrated by Mgr. Lartigue, assisted by their Lordships, Bishops Turgeon and Gaulin.

CHAPTER II

MGR. BOURGET, BISHOP OF MONTREAL.— HE TAKES GREAT INTEREST IN THE WORK OF MADAME GAMELIN.

1840

April 19.— Death of Mgr. Lartigue.— April 23, Enthronization of Mgr.. Bourget.

One of the first cares of the new Bishop of Montreal is the comfort and relief of the afflicted.

Since the year 1828, Madame Gamelin had directed a small Hospice located, at first, on the ground floor of a parochial school at St. Lawrence Street. This place soon becoming too restricted for the pressing needs of the aged and infirm women, was transferred a few years later to St. Philip Street, where Madame Gamelin rented two adjoining houses, and there installed her dear protégées. Later on, her family of poor having again outgrown their quarters, Madame Gamelin obtained through the charity of Mr. O. Berthelet, a house at the corner of St. Hubert and St. Catherine Streets. (This last dwelling is designated in the souvenirs of our community as the *Yellow House* on account of its color.) She removed thither on May 3, 1836, accompanied by Mlle Durand and eighty-four old women.

From the very beginning of his episcopacy, Mgr Bourget kindly continues in favor of Madame Gamelin's Refuge, the interest and good-will his predecessor had manifested in her work.

December 19.— The Reverend E. Blyth, curate of Sainte Anne des Plaines, is delegated by Mgr. Bourget to erect the Stations of the Cross at the Asylum of the *Yellow House*, the cradle of our Institute. We subjoin herewith the act of erection.

IGNACE BOURGET, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC.

Owing to the desire expressed to us by Madame Gamelin, to have the devotion of the Way of the Cross erected in the house she now occupies, we have established, in virtue of an Indult of the Sovereign Pontiff, dated the thirty-first day of May, eighteen hundred and forty, and we establish in perpetuity, by the present decree, unless revoked by us or our successors, the devotion of the Way of the Cross in the above named Chapel with all the privileges and indulgences thereto attached, after the Reverend E. Blyth, priest and curate of Sainte Anne des Plaines, shall have approved and blessed the crosses and pictures of the stations placed in said Chapel for said purpose. The inmates, alone, may enjoy the advantages of the said devotion.

The present decree shall be read publicly in the said Chapel the first Sunday after its reception, and shall then be preserved among the papers of the said Madame Gamelin.

Given at Montreal, the nineteenth day of December, eighteen hundred and forty, under our sign and seal and the countersign of our Secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.
By Monseigneur
A. F. Truteau, priest, Secretary.

The twentieth day of December, eighteen hundred and forty, we, the undersigned, priest and curate of Sainte Anne des Plaines, have blessed, in virtue of the powers expressed in the above commission, the crosses and pictures therein mentioned for a Way of the Cross, and we have placed them in the Chapel of the house presently occupied by Madame Gamelin.

Given in the said house of the above-mentioned Madame Gamelin, the day and year as above set forth.

Et. Blyth, priest.

CHAPTER III.

MGR. BOURGET'S FIRST VOYAGE TO EUROPE.— THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL.— ASSOCIATION OF LADIES INCORPORATED.— CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF LADIES.— PASTORAL LETTER TO THE CLERGY AND TO THE FAITHFUL RECOMMENDING THE WORK OF THE AGED AND INFIRM WOMEN.— LETTER AND REGULATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE LADIES OF CHARITY.— WORK OF THE DÉPOTS.

1841

May 3.— Mgr. Bourget leaves Montreal for a voyage to Europe. It was during this voyage, that being one day in Paris, Mgr. Bourget was invited to preach in a house of the Sisters of Charity (probably in the Rue du Bac). In his sermon, Mgr. expressed the desire of having the Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul in Montreal. After the ceremony, several Sisters came and offered themselves to him for a mission in his diocese. As we shall see in his circular of November 8, 1841, Mgr. Bourget then and there took measures to have a small colony of the Daughters of Charity of France sent to Montreal.

September 16.— Mgr. Bourget arrives in Montreal, (return from Europe.)

September 18.— The work of Madame Gamelin is incorporated under the title, *Montreal Asylum for Aged and Infirm Women.* The new Association is composed of twelve members : Mesdames J. B. Gamelin, F. Tavernier, M. Nowlan, P. J. Lacroix, A. Cuvillier, M. Delisle,

D. B. Viger, J. Perreault, E. Fabre, C. S. Delorme, and Mlles. Durand and T. Berthelet.

October 16.— Assembly of the Ladies of the Corporation, presided by Mgr. Bourget. At this first session, ways and means are devised for the establishing of a foundation in Montreal of a house of the Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul for the Work of the Aged and Infirm Women. Madame Gamelin and her co-laborers deliberate upon the opportunity of purchasing land and building an asylum for the expected Sisters.

October 27.— The Ladies of the Corporation, at an assembly presided by Mgr. Bourget, decide upon buying land, and building an Asylum. Acting upon the advice of Madame Nowlan, the future establishment is to be known as: *The Providence Asylum.*

November 6.— Mgr. Bourget canonically erects the Association of the Ladies of Charity, addressing the following circular to Madame Gamelin and her associates.

LETTER OF INSTITUTION

OF THE ASSOCIATION OF THE LADIES OF CHARITY OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC.

If hitherto the Asylum called the House of Providence, when it was yet but the work of a single person, attracted our attention and good will, how much more today when it has become

a common and general Work, should it not be the object of our paternal solicitude and affection? Therefore, my very dear Ladies and Sisters in Jesus Christ, it is with the greatest consolation that we address you this Letter. May it strengthen your courage, while giving you that salutary sanction your piety so ardently desires.

After having considered the great good that may be effected in our dear City of Montreal, and even in our whole Diocese, by the permanence of the Christian Work inaugurated by our faithful Sister, Emelie Gamelin, some time heretofore under the eye of our illustrious predecessor, we now come to confirm and bless it, and we desire that it be a regular and diocesan Institute, in order that, later on, there may be introduced the admirable service of the Sisters of Charity, Daughters of the immortal Vincent de Paul.

With this end in view, and casting a glance upon the charitable establishments already existing in Ville-Marie, we see with consolation, numerous Hospices open to the sick and the infirm, to the aged, and to abandoned childhood; yet, we are forced to acknowledge that all these do not fully answer every need, nor respond to every class of affliction or misfortune. We, therefore, desire most especially, today, to establish among you and by you a permanent and pious foundation,

which will be an assured refuge for all persons afflicted by infirmities or sufferings, by ignorance or poverty, and who will receive at the hands of religion, succor and relief. Aiming at this, our very dear Daughters, and taking as our model similar institutions existing in the hospitable city of Marseilles; and, also knowing your desires and your eagerness, so well manifested in our two preceding reunions, we have resolved to constitute you this very day into a charitable society; and we give you, conformably to your wishes, as the basis of your Institute, the following articles:

1. An Association known as « Asylum of the Ladies of Providence for the Aged and Infirm Women » is established at Ville-Marie, under the auspices of the Catholic Church and in the name of Christian Charity.

2. This Association is composed of single and married women of Montreal, aggregated to this Work in virtue of a bill passed at the last session of the Provincial Parliament, conformably to the regulations of the Association.

3. The end of the Association is to receive in a special house, and there lodge, instruct and care for all indigent women who cannot be admitted into other establishments.

4. The Association is placed under our immediate jurisdiction, and will be governed by

rules given by us. One of our Vicar Generals, or one of the Canons of our Cathedral, will assume the direction and preside at the assemblies in our absence. There shall be a sufficient number of priests, appointed by the Reverend Superior of the Seminary of St. Sulpice of Montreal, to act as chaplains of the Association, and who will take part in all the deliberations, under the title of sub-directors.

5. An administrative council, composed of the married and single women of the society, elected for this purpose by the general Assembly of the Association, shall have the government of all the interests of the Work, and shall watch over the observance of the rules governing the establishment. This council, elected for one year, shall have for members, one or more treasurers, and eight counsellors, each having a deliberative vote with that of the Directress preponderant.

These constitutive articles, having been communicated to you verbally in our preceding assemblies, and having been formally accepted by you, our very dear Daughters, we, now from this moment establish and constitute the Association of the Ladies of Providence for the Asylum of the Aged and Infirm Women. We give you for first patroness our Lady of Compassion whose feast falls on the Friday in Passion Week; and for second St. Eliz-

abeth, widow, whose feast is celebrated on the nineteenth day of November; for your first patron St. Vincent de Paul, confessor, whose feast is on the nineteenth day of July; and, finally, St. Genevieve, virgin, whose feast is commemorated on the third day of January.

Under these happy auspices, may you, our very dear Daughters, make a complete success of your new and sublime ministry, filling with glory for religion all the truly pious conditions which distinguish women devoted by principle to charity and to the relief of the unfortunate.

Acting upon this hope, we most willingly bless you and all your endeavors for good, and we bestow upon you with these presents our pastoral benediction.

Given at Montreal this sixth day of November, 1841, at our Episcopal Palace, under our sign and seal, and the countersign of one of our Canons who is our secretary for this work.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal,
By Monseigneur
J. C. Prince, Canon, Secretary.

November 8.— In a letter herewith subjoined, Mgr. Bourget announces the above named Association to his diocesans, also the expected arrival of the Sisters of Charity from France.

PASTORAL LETTER

OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL TO THE CLERGY AND THE FAITHFUL OF THE CITY AND THE PARISH OF MONTREAL, TO RECOMMEND TO THEIR CHARITY THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM FOR AGED AND INFIRM WOMEN.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To the Clergy and to all the Faithful of our beloved City, greeting and benediction in our Lord:

From the beginning of our episcopacy we have understood, dearly beloved Brethren, that one of our most sacred duties was the care of the poor, and of the widows and the orphans. For, it is especially to Bishops that these words of the Sacred Scriptures are addressed: *You will be the protector of the orphan* and those others: *To him is confided the care of all the unfortunate.* Saint Paul understood this obligation clearly when he reminded the faithful of the city of Galatia that the Apostles St. Peter, St. James and St. John, who were the pillars of the Church, in authorizing his ministry among the infidel nations, had insisted on this important point only; viz, that he should remember the poor: *tantum ut pauperum minores essemus.* Would to God we had accomplished this order as faithfully as did this great friend of the poor, and that we might be

able to say with him: «It is with solicitude that we have acquitted ourselves of this duty so dear to our heart: *quod etiam sollicitus fui hos ipsum facere.*» But the duties of our office imposed upon us so many other obligations that it became impossible for us to enter into all the details required for the paternal care of our poor, the most cherished portion of our flock and the most tender objects of our solicitude. It has, therefore, become indispensably necessary for us to transfer this charge to others, although it has always had the sweetest attraction for us. In doing this, we are acting in conformity with the holy Apostles, who, being unable to combine the service of the poor with the exercise of their sacred ministry, chose from among the faithful, seven deacons to whom they confided the care of feeding the poor of the Church, saying to them by the mouth of St. Peter: «For us, we will work with ardor in prayer and the ministry of preaching; *nos vero orationi et ministerio verbi instantes erimus.*»

We comprehend perfectly, however, that no matter how earnest may be the care your pastors and the religious houses of this Diocese bestow upon the suffering members of Jesus Christ, the obligation of exercising guardianship over all the works of charity rests upon us. If, through our negligence, some poor one should suffer from hunger and nakedness, we personally, would be

responsible to God. We have an example of this in St. Gregory the Great, who considered himself so strictly obliged to provide for the needs of his poor, of whom he had an exact list made, that one day, one of those poor ones having been found dead in the streets of the city of Rome, he considered himself guilty of so great a misfortune; and to punish himself, he abstained several days from celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Profoundly penetrated with the gravity of our obligations in so important a matter, we paid special attention to said works during our travels in Europe. These were undertaken with the sole motive of rendering ourselves as capable as possible for the fulfillment of all the duties attached to our office. Alas! how heavy is the burden we bear for love of you! In order to profit by the experience of others, and to supply what was wanting in ourselves, we made a special effort to visit as many establishments of charity as we could, to gain the experience necessary to direct with some measure of success, the works of mercy recommended to our diocesans. We are well aware, dearly beloved Brethren, that we have the happiness of possessing in our diocese, and particularly in this city, a great number of souls, gifted with perfect charity, who need but the guiding hand of their chief

pastor to make them bring forth all the works of mercy conceived by christian compassion. We examined most minutely the different establishments in France, directed by the Sisters of Charity, the admirable Daughters of the immortal St. Vincent de Paul. Oh! dearly beloved Brethren, how happy are the cities to whom the Lord has made such a gift! Happy the poor who have such compassionate mothers! Happy the rich who have in them such indefatigable dispensers of their alms! Happy the governments who have at their service, for all the public works of mercy, such wise administrators!

Needless for us to dwell at any length on the different works performed by those heroines of charity; they are well known to all of you. What concerns you most is to have in your midst some of those good and tender mothers of the poor. Animated by this desire, we have devised ways and taken measures that our city may, with as little delay as possible, enjoy the beneficent effects of their charity. Knowing as we do, that our principal duty is the care of the poor, and that the blessings and the prayers of the poor can alone render fruitful the labors of our sacred ministry, our first most pressing duty on our return from Europe was to find a suitable habitation for those fervent religious.

Divine Providence had already prepared the way for this work by inspiring some persons in the higher ranks of society with the thought of procuring an Act of Legislature (1) for the incorporation of the establishment of the «Providence» founded, in part, by a wealthy individual of this city, and directed by a virtuous widow who used all her modest patrimony in satisfying the attraction given her by God for the relief of aged and infirm women. This design, having in no way been preconcerted between us and the administrators of the diocese during our absence, we recognized in it the Hand of God, and that the Holy Ghost who had inspired us with the thought of asking for the Daughters of Charity while in Europe, had likewise inspired those whom He had chosen here to be the instruments of His Will, and had provided the means for a solid foundation. You know, dearly beloved Brethren, that the Act of Incorporation authorizes twelve married or single women of this city to hold funds in hand sufficient to produce an income of one thousand pounds annually for the support of the aged and infirm women.

After thanking God for so signal a favor, we

(1) Said act of Corporation was approved only on the eighteenth day of September, that is to say two days after His Lordship's arrival. (See p. 5)

proceeded to carry said law into effect; and for this we have already held several assemblies of the Ladies of said charitable corporation. The happy results of these reunions prove, more and more, that God deigns to bless the work. Suitable ground has been purchased at the cost of twelve hundred pounds. Resolutions have been passed to lay the foundations of a building spacious enough for the Daughters of Charity who are to be in charge, to pursue their different works. These comprise not alone the care of the aged and infirm women of the Providence Asylum, but also the instruction of little girls, the visit of the poor and the sick in their homes; likewise, to carry relief to prisoners, to prepare the dying for death; in fine, to exercise all the spiritual and corporal works of mercy; and all that in the name of the wealthy, who of themselves are unable to attend to such details. Thus, it will be possible, and even easy for us to imitate St. Gregory the Great, who never failed to have large quantities of broth made and distributed to the poor throughout the different parts of Rome. He likewise sent dishes from his own table to the poor that he might truly share his sustenance with Jesus Christ. In reward for his charity our Lord appeared to him one day as he was washing the feet of some poor.

In launching this enterprise, dearly beloved Brethren, we rely entirely upon your co-operation

and your help to assure the success of our work for the greater glory of God and the honor of our city. The inadequacy of our revenue does not permit us to make great sacrifices, but you will make them for us. With the Apostle we rejoice in our poverty, not only because it renders us more like our Lord Jesus Christ, who being *rich made Himself poor for us;* but, also, because it provides us with a precious opportunity of increasing your treasury of good works while it specially favors those we commend to your charity. While in Europe, we might have availed ourselves of the benevolence of certain persons who voluntarily offered to procure abundant help for us. They thought that we should make an appeal — as many Bishops of America have done — to our brothers of the Old World; we declined their well-meant services, assuring them that although the Bishopric of Montreal was young and not yet richly endowed, still the Diocese itself was very promising in resources of all kinds, and that we gladly yielded in favor of others in greater need of assistance than ourselves; also, that we counted upon the generosity of our diocesans for the different projects we had in view for their benefit. We could speak to them in such wise, as your contribution towards our travelling expenses had already proved your great liberality, and you could, with reason, complain of us had we responded differently.

Hence, your Bishop was pleased to verify these splendid proofs of your beneficent charity in his regard by refusing all proffers of assistance from strangers. We, like our illustrious predecessor, have always been so thoroughly convinced of your whole hearted concurrence, that we have never taken steps to reclaim material aid from the Government as so many other Catholic Bishops of the Empire have done. We expect from His Majesty, naught but the protection accorded by right to all faithful and loyal subjects. Our only ambition for what concerns us personally, is to resemble in some small degree the great Apostle, who after having filled the universe with the sound of his preaching, and enriched the whole world with the treasure of the Gospel, declared before the Church that nothing could take from him the glory of being poor with Jesus Christ. Like him we are content, provided we have food and clothing; this the Lord has never refused us and He will continue towards us His bounty.

The only offering we accepted while in Europe was applied in France for the good of the missions, and the propagation of the Faith in Corea and other countries, today bedewed with the blood of martyrs. We can, therefore, say to you as St. Paul said to the Phillipians, that no church has shared with us its riches; that you, alone, have provided for all our needs. We can, also, in imitation

of the great Apostle, recommend you to make collections in favor of the saints, that is the poor, the widows, the orphans, and all the members of Jesus Christ suffering. Such is the exercise of charity to which our well-beloved brother in Christ, the illustrious Bishop of Nancy exhorted you in the touching adieux he made you on the fourth of this month when he urged you to contribute to all the works of benevolence. Without doubt his eloquent voice, animated with the most tender and persuasive accents of charity, made a lasting impression upon you all. We, ourselves, hearkened to those golden words whose loving tones will vibrate forever in our heart.

We invite you today, dearly beloved Brethren, to profit of the last advice of that man, mighty in word and deed, and to conform yourselves thereto as to the last depositions of his will and testament in your favor. We exhort you to contribute liberally to the establishment of those charitable hospitallers of the poor, who will be given to us only on condition that we provide them wherewith to carry on their good works. Gladly would we impose upon ourselves the pleasant task of calling upon you personally, in your homes, to encourage you to contribute to an enterprise in every way so worthy of your faith: prevented as we are by our numerous occupations, we shall, as did St. Paul, confide the care of making the collections

he announced to the faithful in favor of the poor, to charitable souls; and the alms he received were afterwards applied to the places and people in the greatest indigence. We therefore announce to you that we have begged the twelve Ladies forming the Corporation of Providence for the *Asylum of the Aged and Infirm Women*, together with whomever they may choose to assist them, to take up a subscription list among all the citizens of this city. In sending them forth to you, dearly beloved Brethren, we again borrow the words of the Apostle and say with him to each one of you: «Help these ladies so entirely devoted to this beautiful work, and who labor with us, so that charity so much recommended in the Gospel, may be practised in its perfection. *Adjuva illas qua mecum laboraverunt in evangelio.* We hope that you will be prepared, when they go to solicit your help and that we shall not have to blush for having sent them in vain. Help them; your greatest interests are at stake; viz, the eternal salvation of your souls, since it is certain that upon the accomplishment of the grand precept of fraternal charity depends either your eternal happiness or your unending woe. We must confess to you, dearly beloved Brethren, that we tremble both for you and for ourselves whenever we recall to mind the terrible sentence the just Judge must pronounce upon the reprobate, because we see clearly that

the punishment for neglecting or omitting the works of mercy is eternal condemnation. Desiring then to assure more and more, our election to everlasting life, we beseech you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to undertake the holy work we recommend to you; if each one contribute according to his means, we can all appear with confidence before the tribunal of the sovereign Judge. By the help we are now endeavoring to secure, we shall have accomplished the works of justice, and we shall merit to hear this favorable sentence: *I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me.*

The excellent Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul have received from heaven the mission and the grace to fulfill with perfection all these good works not only for themselves, but also, in the name of all the faithful who wish by their alms to perform, through them, this important and indispensable duty. It were superfluous to write longer on this ministry of charity which should be exercised toward the saints to you, who have so ardent a desire to be placed on the right hand of Jesus Christ, and who hope to hear those sweet words which will be the reward of your charity: *Come ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom*

prepared for you from the beginning of the world. We know your desire to do promptly what we ask of you, and this was our greatest glory while in Europe.

But it is not enough, dearly beloved Brethren, to invite you to open your hands and pour your alms into the bosom of the poor. We must above all solicit the aid of your prayers that this enterprise may succeed for the greater glory of God and the advantage of the unfortunate. *Adjuvantibus et nobis in orationem pro nobis: ut ex ejus quæ in nobis est donationis per multo gratiæ agantur pro nobis.* « And the prayers which you offer for us will also contribute thereto, in order that the grace we have received in consideration of many, may likewise be acknowledged by the thanksgivings that many will offer for us.» We have so often experienced your credit with God when you prayed for us, that we shall never cease, after the example of the Apostle, to implore for the help so necessary for us.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

The present pastoral letter shall be read the first Sunday after its reception in the religious communities in chapter, and at the sermon of the cathedral and parish churches and other places where the public offices are celebrated.

Given at Montreal, this eighth day of November, eighteen hundred and forty-one, under our sign, the seal of the diocese, and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal,
By Monseigneur,
A. F. Truteau, Canon, Secretary.

December 13.—The holy sacrifice of the Mass is celebrated for the first time in the *yellow house*.

December 21.—In a letter addressed to the Ladies of Charity, Mgr. Bourget congratulates them on the resolutions, taken the evening before, to visit and relieve the poor. He gives them at the same time the regulations of their association. We submit these two precious documents in their entirety.

To the Ladies of Charity at the Providence Asylum, Montreal.

December 21, 1841.

Ladies:

I was greatly consoled and edified yesterday, by the resolutions you adopted to devote yourselves entirely to the poor, by visiting them in their homes, and bringing them whatever help they might require. With a devotedness worthy

of your kind hearts, you determined to undertake a work so painful and repugnant to human nature, proving by this that Montreal has the happiness of possessing generous and compassionate souls, similar to those who so gloriously upheld the charitable designs of St. Vincent de Paul, — that man of grand works for the relief of suffering humanity, — and through him sent forth rivers of mercy over the whole earth. In following the example of those heroines of charity, and by constituting yourselves the servants of the poor, you give proof of possessing treasures of christian charity, and that you have discovered the secret of true happiness for yourselves, by making others happy.

I am fully aware that in binding yourselves to the visitation of the poor, you are taking from your household and family cares, time which is most precious to all. I realize that you are depriving yourselves of the legitimate pleasure, that on many occasions might be yours, such as visiting more frequently those who are connected with you by the ties of kindred or of friendship. But the thought that you have left the company of your dear ones for that of Jesus Christ, will be in itself a great reward, equalling, no doubt, the hundredfold promised in the Gospel to those who leave all things to follow the Good Master. Interior joy, that faithful companion of charity,

will inundate your soul with an unction so sweet as to cause the pleasures of the world to be soon forgotten. The lively faith inspiring you to undertake so beautiful a work, and penetrating you through and through in the performance of the sacred duties you have voluntarily imposed upon yourselves, will enable you to see Jesus suffering in the person of His friends, His confidants, His brethren, — in a word — His own dear poor.

I am sending you today, the Rule I promised you yesterday. It is based upon the one drawn up by St. Vincent de Paul for the many Ladies desiring to be associated with him in his charitable labors, and who performed works exactly similar to those you are now undertaking. I could not propose to myself a more beautiful model nor draw from a better source. The few changes or additions I have made are simply to accommodate myself to our actual needs and existing conditions.

Therefore, Ladies, you receive this Rule, not from my hand, but from that of the great saint, destined by Providence to guide, not only the works of charity of his own time, but also all those that should be accomplished in the onward march of centuries in all the countries of the world.

In giving you this Rule, I believe I am imparting to you the spirit and the heart of that

admirable Saint. It will be easy for you to draw from such a source those lights, which stamped all his works with a divine character; that is to say, with a discretion and a prudence that can come only from above, and the universal charity that made him so compassionate for every human misery.

Guided by his wise direction, and supported by his powerful protection, you may hope that our Lord Himself will preside over the distribution of your alms; that He will bless your generous efforts, and multiply the funds you have collected for His suffering members. Believe me, Ladies, you have taken the most certain and the most efficacious means of ensuring the successful establishment of the Daughters of Charity in our city, by anticipating the inauguration of their works.

Your voluntary service of the poor will be so many eloquent voices announcing the arrival of those good women in our city. Your charitable labors will open all hearts and purses to you, so that you may soon be in a position to erect as rapidly as possible, the magnificent monument you desire to consecrate to the glory of religion and to the honor of our Blessed Mother, the August Patroness of our city.

In taking upon yourselves this beautiful

mission, you will shed a new lustre upon our holy religion, which is alone capable of inspiring such devotion ; you will lighten considerably the burden of your pastors, who will find in you zealous and diligent almoners; you will facilitate for the rich the accomplishment of that duty so strictly imposed upon all those whom God has blessed with worldly goods ; you will greatly contribute to the glory of our city by drawing down upon it the most abundant blessings of heaven ; and, finally, you will be the joy and consolation of your Bishop, who will find in your charitable endeavors, a powerful motive to hope for his own salvation and that of his flock.

With a blessing for your noble enterprise,
I am from my heart, Ladies,
Your very humble and obedient servant.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

THE POOR ARE TAUGHT AND THE SICK CARED FOR.

Rules for the Confraternity of Charity by St. Vincent de Paul. (1)

1. The aim of this charitable confraternity is to give new proof of the divinity of the Catholic Religion since it continues to fulfill the adorable mission of Jesus Christ, who came upon earth to teach the poor and heal the sick, to give sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, etc. For its patroness and guardian, it chooses our Lady of Seven Dolors.

2. Its members, propose to succor all miseries, both corporal and spiritual; and to attain so desirable an end, they willingly subject themselves to all the painful sacrifices necessarily imposed by the exercise of that divine virtue.

3. Before all else, they make it their duty to discover, the spiritual and corporal ills existing among the poor by visiting them and the sick in their homes; and by inviting those whom they know inclined to do good, but who fail in so

(1) This regulation, preserved in the archives of the Institute, is written by the hand of Mgr. Bourget and signed with his name. Although not dated, it has always been considered as being the one accompanying the above letter.

doing because they have not the occasion of knowing the wants of the suffering members of Jesus Christ.

4. But, if they should be so careful in seeking out all the miseries afflicting human nature, they should be even more so in finding means of assisting them with a charity, as ingenious as it is affectionate.

5. That the sick in care of the Confraternity may be properly treated, all patients who have no reason for remaining at home, should be sent to the Hotel Dieu; the principal intention of our pious association being to take care of such sick persons only, as cannot possibly be removed to the hospital.

6. The funds of the association shall be formed and continued, 1. by a collection made by the Ladies every year in all the houses of the parish where it is founded; 2. by bazaars and charity concerts; 3. by monthly contributions, payable at each assembly; 4. by small fines to which the members are subject when they fail in any of the rules and regulations, especially when absent from the ordinary or extraordinary meetings of the association; 5. by voluntary gifts or pious legacies of charitable persons; 6. in fine, by all resources whatever, bestowed upon it in infinite goodness by Divine Providence.

7. There shall be one or more common dépots where medicines, broths, meats, desserts and other things necessary shall be prepared for the poor and the sick. The Association shall have its own Doctors chosen from among those willing to give their services free to the poor.

8. The Confraternity shall be composed of single and married women, zealous for the works of charity, and who have the time to devote themselves properly to such works in conformity with the present regulations.

9. Said Ladies shall elect every two years, on the day after Pentecost, a president who will watch over the faithful observance of the present regulations: a treasurer who will be charged to receive and keep account of the collections, and a mistress of the clothing department who will have charge of the suits, linen and other articles necessary for clothing the poor.

10. They may elect, if they deem it necessary, one or more procurators to assist in wisely administering whatever concerns the temporal affairs of the poor.

11. They shall unite, if possible, with some Community consecrated to the works of charity, and they shall have an understanding with the Sisters given them for associates, in order to secure more harmony in their operations.

12. They shall assemble the first Monday or Tuesday of each month and they shall assist at the Mass which will be offered for them at the most convenient hour, or at a Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. They shall also listen to the words of encouragement which the priest will address them in exhorting them to acquit themselves faithfully of the duties they assumed on entering the Association.

13. They shall divide the works of the Confraternity among themselves. Some will take charge of the aged and infirm women, others of the orphans. Others again will have the care of the Deaf-Mutes, while others will have the poor children of the schools. A certain number shall be charged with the visit of the sick and the poor in their respective districts, while others shall visit the prisoners. The same method shall be followed for all the good works the Confraternity may judge proper to undertake.

14. During said monthly assemblies, the members shall make known the needs of their different departments, so that measures for relief may be devised by common consent.

15. The Association shall take under its immediate protection the work of St. Blandine, whose special end is the formation of good servant girls.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

The same day, December 21, Mgr. Bourget inaugurated the dépot for the poor, and decided that distributions should be made every Monday.

N. B. These Monday Assemblies were invested with a certain solemnity: Mgr. Bourget, or one of his priests came and said the Mass at which the poor and the Ladies of Charity assisted; the Mass was followed by a sermon, then the distribution of provisions, clothing etc., took place. The alms were furnished mostly by the Seminary; the Ladies of the Association brought the proceeds of the weekly collections made by them for the support of the depot. Bread, potatoes, meat, fish, onions, oatmeal, peas, and all sorts of clothing and footwear were distributed.

Mgr. Bourget founded at the same time the Association known as the Ladies of Providence, to assist Madame Gamelin in distributing alms and carrying them to the poor.

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CHAPTER IV.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CHARITY. — ARRIVAL OF MLLE. CARON. — BLESSING OF THE FIRST STONE OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM. — BAZAAR FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE ASYLUM. — VISIT OF REV. FATHER TIMON. — PASTORAL LETTER OF MGR. BOURGET ANNOUNCING THAT HE WILL TAKE UP A COLLECTION IN AID OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.

1842

January 25.—Mgr. Bourget establishes throughout his diocese the Association of Charity. (1)

March 15.— Mlle. Emilie Caron arrives at the *yellow house* to take care of the poor. (2)

May 10.— Blessing of the first stone of the Providence Asylum. Mgr. Power celebrates Mass at the Cathedral. (3) In the sanctuary were present: the Right Reverend Bishops Ignace Bourget of Montreal; Remi Gaulin of Kingston, Peter Flavien Turgeon of Sydime; besides a large number

(1) See Pastoral Letter of the Bishop of Montreal to the faithful of his diocese. (January 25, 1842). See also second paragraph on page 89.

(2) She leaves the house in the month of May. The following month of March 1843, she presents herself again and is admitted to the taking of the Holy Habit. See Life of Mother Caron by Abbé Elie J. Auclair.

(3) Bishop of Toronto, consecrated at Laprairie, May 8, 1842; enthroned the following June 26th; died of typhus on October 1, 1847.

of priests of the city and surrounding country. The Reverend P. L. Bilaudèle, Director of the Grand Seminary, after Mass, delivered a sermon on the Work of the "Providence". He took for his text the words of the Sacred Scripture: *The work which the Lord has begun, He will finish.* A procession was then formed, while the clergy sang the hymn, "O douce Providence". The collection amounted to $400.00.

May 16. — At the Hotel Rasco, a bazaar is held for the benefit of the Providence Asylum, netting the sum of $2000.00. The directresses of said bazaar are Mesdames J. B. Gamelin, Joseph Gauvin, Theodore Serre dit Saint-Jean, Antoine Lévêque, Louis Boyer, Pierre Moreau, Louis Hippolyte La Fontaine.

June 18.— Arrival at Montreal of the Reverend Father Timon, (1) Superior of the Lazarists of Missouri, U. S. A. This worthy prelate comes on the part of his Superior General of Paris, and also of the Superior of the Daughters of Charity, to visit the Providence Asylum. Father Timon appears perfectly satisfied with the building destined for the Daughters of St. Vincent. (2)

(1) The Rev. John P. Timon born in Missouri, elected first Bishop of Buffalo October 17, 1847, died April 16, 1867.

(2) The construction of the Asylum was under the direction of a commitee composed of Messrs. John Ostell, Paul Joseph de Lacroix, Augustin Tullock, Oliver Berthelet and Francis Tavernier, all benefactors of the Work.

PASTORAL LETTER

OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL TO THE CLERGY AND FAITHFUL OF THE CITY AND PARISH OF MONTREAL, RECOMMENDING TO THEIR CHARITY THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM FOR AGED AND INFIRM WOMEN.

IGNACE BOURGET BY THE MERCY OF GOD, AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To the Clergy and the Faithful of our beloved City, greeting and blessing in our Lord.

On the eighth day of November last year, we addressed you, dearly beloved Brethren, a pastoral letter, making known to you the project we had in view of establishing in this City a House of Providence, under the care of the charitable Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul. For the commencement of so precious an establishment, we made an appeal to your generous charity. This appeal was heard by your hearts always so tender and compassionate. The monument rising heavenward today, will prove to all generations that *Mary's City* is entirely devoted to good works, and that if God, in His bounty, showers His choicest blessings, both spiritual and temporal, on its favored inhabitants, they know, in return, that they receive all things from His liberal Hand, and they fail not to render Him homage in sharing their goods with His suffering members, the poor.

This public monument is another proof that your religion is not vain or empty, consisting only in sundry exterior practices of devotion; but, that it is truly what St. James desires it should be: *a religion, pure and undefiled before God the Father*, since it urges and inclines you *to visit the fatherless and the widows in their tribulations.* (1) By this conduct, so christian and so worthy of making your holy religion honored, you spare yourselves, dearly beloved Brethren, the horrors of that frightful day, when as the holy Apostle testifies, it will be said to those who have abused the goods of this world: *Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries, which shall come upon you.... You have stored up to yourselves wrath against the last days.* (2) Contrariwise, as alms delivers from death, in purifying the soul from the stains of sin, you will find awaiting you at the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge, all the treasures you have hidden in the bosom of the poor, and you will experience with an ineffable joy that, in truth, *neither the rust nor the moth doth consume*, (3) the treasures you have laid up to yourselves in heaven, where thieves break not in nor steal.

Finally, not only in the next world does God intend to reward your good works; the hundredfold you know, is promised to those here below who

(1) James I., 27. (2) James V. 1, 2. (3) Matt. VI. 19, 20.

give up all they have to imitate and follow Jesus Christ...

That priceless hundredfold of the Gospel is for those who labor for the glory of God and the relief of their poorer brethren. How often dearly beloved Brethren, we see, families the most charitable become, in time, the most wealthy. This led a celebrated preacher to say that gambling and debauchery had ruined thousands of families, while charity had never impoverished any. On the contrary, alms, like a golden flood, spreads abundance everywhere, and draws the blessings of heaven on the givers. Without mentioning here the benedictions the Lord has been pleased to lavish upon individuals devoting themselves to the exercise of good works, can we fail to recognize the finger of God in the events that have so fortunately changed the face of our country? Is it not since so many charitable associations have sprung into life in the different parts of our land for the relief of the unfortunate, the visiting of the sick, and the building of asylums for the outcast, that the Lord has broken the bonds of our captivity, and changed the weeds of our mourning into garments of glory and honor?

Everything should encourage you, therefore, dearly beloved Brethren, to follow with ardor an enterprise, at once so holy and so advantageous.

What you so cheerfully undertook to do in times of hardship and dire distress, you will now complete with satisfaction; and you will show the world how much the spirit of charity can accomplish, once it has taken firm root in the heart of a city.

When we exhorted you last year to contribute generously to this establishment for the worthy Daughters of Charity, so soon to be an ornament to our city, we could speak to you only from a distance, owing to the multiplicity of affairs awaiting us on our arrival from Europe. We were even prevented from going among you personally, to implore you to do all in your power, for the success of an enterprise in every way so worthy of you. We depended upon the Ladies whose charity is too well known to be commented upon. We should fear to wound their modesty were we to publish what their right hands have done unknown to their left, according to the precept of the Divine Master. You have assisted those Ladies in their work, so that the charity so strongly recommended in the Gospel might be practised in all its perfection; nor have we cause to blush for the appeal we made you through their instrumentality.

Having placed *the greatest confidence in you*, we could, after the example of the Apostle, *glorify ourselves greatly in you.* Oh! yes, dearly beloved

Brethren, *we are filled with comfort; we exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulations* (1), seeing you so zealously devoted to all those *good works* which *assure* more and more *your calling and election to eternal life.* (2).

We now feel at liberty to undertake the visit of all the Catholics composing this parish; and the present letter is to announce that we have decided to begin our visitation on the twenty-first day of the current month. (a) Here are the principal reasons which determine us to call upon you in your own homes. Firstly, that you may have the opportunity of performing a new act of charity, in subscribing again for the completion of the House of Providence, — a work all your own. In imitation of the Apostle, we exhort you to prepare in advance the alms you are willing to give, recalling to mind what is written: *If you have much, give much; if you have little give little but with a good heart.* (3). The duty of a shepherd being, above all, to know his sheep, and enter as much as possible into all their needs, we undertake the general visitation of this city with the full confidence that the Lord will make it useful for the salvation of each member of our flock. As we are under obligation to all, the

(1) 2 Cor. VII, 4. (2) 2 Pe. I, 10. (3) 1 Cor. XVI, 2.

(a) Mgr. Bourget was unable to make his proposed visit before the months of January and February, 1843.

poor as well as the rich, ... we shall visit all without distinction, calling to mind the example of the Sovereign Pastor of whom it is written that *He did not regard the person of men.* (1) We shall call upon the rich to plead for the poor; and we shall call upon the poor to console them by the hope we shall give them of being succored by those whom the Lord has appointed to be their stewards. Thirdly, we wish by this visit to render ourselves better able to direct all the good works of this city, by the knowledge we hope to acquire of all its existing spiritual and corporal miseries.

We are aware that the task is more or less painful, and that it will cost much valuable time. But we know, too, that all we have and are belongs to you; also, that we should always be in the same disposition as St. Paul when he said to the faithful of his time: *But I most gladly will spend and be spent myself for your souls.* (2) Besides, the pleasure and advantage of knowing each and every one of you personally, and of being able to call you by name, will amply repay us for all our trouble and fatigue.

In conclusion, we exhort you, dearly beloved Brethren, to open your hearts to charity, remembering that the distinctive mark of the elect is a

(1) Matt. XXII, 16. (2) 2 Cor. XII, 15.

tender compassion for the poor. By the exercise of this first of all virtues, each one of you will be able to render testimony to himself as did the holy man Job: *I comforted the heart of the widow; I put on the garment of the works of justice; .... I was the eye of the blind and the foot of the lame; I was the father of the poor, and I took the greatest care to seek for the truth of those things of which I knew not the justice.* (1) Be faithful to the advice the Lord gives you by the mouth of His prophet: *Share your bread with him who is hungry; and bring into your house the poor and those who have nowhere to go. When you see a man naked, clothe him and despise not your own flesh.* (2)

For your encouragement in the practice of these holy works, listen to the words of our Savior by the same prophet: *If you help the poor with good heart, and if you fill with consolation the soul of the afflicted, your light will shine in darkness, and your darkness will become like the noon-day. The Lord will keep you always in repose; He will fill your soul with His splendors, and He will fatten your bones; you will become like a garden always well watered, and like a fountain whose waters will never run dry.* These are the temporal and spiritual goods the Lord promises

(1) Job 29. (2) Isaias LVIII, 7.

you, dearly beloved Brethren, if you will but assist His suffering members. We desire these gifts for you, and we shall never cease imploring them for you with all the sincerity of our soul. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My charity be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.* (1)

The present pastoral letter shall be read at the sermon of our Cathedral and at that of the parish church of this city, the first Sunday after its reception.

Given at Montreal this eleventh day of November, eighteen hundred and forty-two, under our sign and seal and the countersign of our subsecretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

By Monseigneur,

Louis L. Pominville, Acol. S. Secretary.

(1) 1 Cor. XVI, 23, 24.

CHAPTER V.

MGR. BOURGET MAKES A COLLECTION FOR THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.— HE IS INFORMED THAT, FOR THE TIME BEING, THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY OF PARIS CAN NOT COME TO MONTREAL.—HE DECIDES UPON FORMING A COMMUNITY OF CHARITY.— THE FIRST POSTULANTS.— TAKING OF THE HABIT.— MONTH OF MARY, LETTER TO THE NOVICES.—DEFINITE REFUSAL OF THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY.— A SMALL BAZAAR.— THE PERSONNEL OF THE HOSPICE IS INSTALLED IN THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM. — DEPARTURE OF A NOVICE. — CHAPLETS OF OUR LADY OF SEVEN DOLORS.— CONSECRATION OF MGR. PHELAN.— BLESSING OF THE CHAPEL.— AN ENTRY TO THE NOVITIATE.— STATUE OF OUR LADY OF SEVEN DOLORS.— LETTER OF MGR. BOURGET TO MADAME GAMELIN ON THE OCCASION OF A JOURNEY SHE IS TO MAKE IN THE UNITED STATES. — MADAME GAMELIN ENTERS THE NOVITIATE.

1843.

Mgr Bourget devotes the greater part of the months of January and February, 1843, to making the collection announced in his pastoral of the preceding November. We shall see later on, how the venerable Bishop encouraged the Sisters to overcome generously whatever repugnances they might feel in begging for the poor, making allusion to the tour here spoken of, and saying to them :

«I remember with great happiness that I received an insult at the first house where I presented myself. The good gentlemen accompanying me were quite indignant ; but, for myself, I was pleased with this good fortune.»

The proceeds of this collection ($4000.00) surpassed even the expectations of Mgr. Bourget; there still remained to the charitable Bishop, however, a very difficult problem to solve. During the course of the winter, the Reverend Father Timon had written to Mgr. Bourget, informing him that the foundation of two new houses of the Daughters of the Charity in Rome and Algeria, placed their congregation in the impossibility, for the time being, of opening an establishment in Montreal. Disappointed in his hopes, the worthy Bishop endeavored to obtain that, at least, two Daughters of Charity be sent to Montreal to form the Canadian novices. The reply to this request left him in great doubt. Meanwhile the new Asylum was in desperate need of Hospitallers, and it may readily be imagined how disastrous any further delay would be to the work. The heroic prelate, trusting as always in Divine Providence, formed the wonderful resolution of founding a diocesan community with the design of placing it later under the direction of the Daughters of Charity, should they consent to come. Very soon, thereafter, five young girls responded to his call. They were the Mlles. Margaret Thibodeau and Agathe Séné of Montreal; Emélie Caron of the Rivière du Loup; Victoire Larocque of Chambly, and Delphine Payement of St. Genevieve. Mademoiselle Durand, the devoted companion of Mother Gamelin, joined the five above named.

March 14.— Mlles. Séné, Durand, Thibodeau, Caron, Payement and Larocque, under the direction of Reverend Father Ginguet, a French priest, residing at the Bishopric, begin the exercises of a novena preparatory to the taking of the habit. The three last days are spent in retreat preached by the Very Reverend Canon Prince.(1)

(1) Life of Mother Gamelin.

During the novena, a seventh aspirant, Mlle. Justine Michon, presents herself for admission. She had come to Montreal to visit a relative. Through Mlle. Larocque she had already learned about the new foundation and the plans of Mgr. Bourget. She petitions, and she is enrolled in the ranks of the future novices.

March 25.— Our Mother Foundresses take the habit. Mgr. Bourget presides at the ceremony and addresses them these remarkable words :

«As the archangel Gabriel announced to Mary the mystery of the Incarnation, so do I announce to you on the part of the Church that you are called to take care of the poor, to be their mothers. As the angel also said to Mary, « Fear not. » I, likewise say to you : « Fear not, little flock, grace will never fail you. You will have crosses, you must expect them. You have no Mistress of Novices, so I place you under the care of the Blessed Virgin. She will deign, I hope, to become your Mistress. Go to that good Mother in all your troubles, weariness and sorrows ; I have no fear in leaving you to the care of your August Mistress. »

March 26.— Mgr Bourget comes to the *yellow house* and gives the Novices their order of the day.

May 1.-- The Ladies of Charity request permission of Mgr. Bourget to have the exercises of the Month of Mary in the chapel of the Providence. His Lordship makes the opening with great solemnity. The morning of May

first, Monseigneur goes to the chapel of the *yellow house*, accompanied by the Very Reverend Vicar General Hudon, the Very Reverend Canon Prince and several members of the clergy. After chanting the *Veni Creator*, Monseigneur makes a short, but most touching address to the assembly. He tells them the great delight he feels in coming to inaugurate in this humble chapel the exercises of the Month of Mary.

« Scarcely a year ago, » said Monseigneur, « we saw nothing about us here but a garden; now there arises a house that will be the Providence of the poor. »

His Lordship then proceeded to enumerate all the benefits of Providence in behalf of the new Asylum. Referring to the feast of the Apostles Sts. Philip and James celebrated that day, Monseigneur added :

« I look upon this as a very happy coincidence. As Sts. Philip and James saw our Savior mercifully multiplying five barley loaves and two fishes to feed five thousand people who had followed Him into the desert, so shall we see in this Asylum, alms of all kinds multiplying according to need for the relief of every human misery. »

Speaking then of St. James, His Lordship continued :

« Every day this Apostle remained for many long hours absorbed in prayer; and thus will it be with a great number of souls admitted to this House of Providence. Imitating the example of

St. James, the incense of their ardent supplications will unceasingly mount heavenward.

Mgr. Bourget concluded by giving some words of advice on how to spend the Month of May profitably. He then announced, that by virtue of an Indult from the Holy See, he would celebrate Mass before the blessing of the chapel. The solemn blessing would be postponed to the day when the altar, now in process of building, should be ready for consecration.

May 6.— Mgr. Bourget addresses the following letter to the Novices at the Providence:

PASTORAL LETTER

ADDRESSED TO THE SEVEN FIRST NOVICES.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL.

To our very dear Daughters, the Novices of the House of Providence, greeting and benediction in our Lord.

While we were in Rome, we besought our Most Holy Father, the Pope, to deign to cast a look of bounty upon the different communities of this diocese, and to grant them some special favors for their greater encouragement to labor ardently in acquiring the perfection of their holy state by the faithful accomplishment of their rules and constitutions. Our Holy Father always so good, graciously acceded to our request; and, we

now make known to you the favors he has permitted us to bestow upon you. In virtue of an Indult dated July 26, 1841, we grant in perpetuity to the Novices of the House of Providence, one hundred days' indulgence for each and every exercise prescribed by rule, and which they shall have faithfully observed. They may, besides, every evening gain an indulgence of three hundred days, if after having examined themselves a few moments on the faults committed during the day against their holy rule, they firmly purpose not to fail again, and they perform some penance, as for instance to kiss the floor, humiliating themselves for so many faults daily committed: to strike their breast: to make the sign of the cross with lively sorrow for having contributed to the death of our Savior; and for the accomplishment of other acts of piety inspired by the Holy Ghost.

We desire, our very dear Daughters, to make you share in a signal favor as a reward for the zeal wherewith you acquit yourselves in the performance of your holy duties, and as an inducement for you to persevere to the end. In order to make you better understand and appreciate this favor, we shall enter into a few details, which will doubtless prove interesting.

During our trip in Europe, on June 12, 1841, we visited the celebrated cathedral church of our

Lady of Chartres, (1) one of the most famous shrines of France.

We shall not speak to you of the consolations we experienced the day we spent in that hallowed sanctuary, — only a word concerning the subject of this present letter.

In that superb temple there is preserved with religious care the tunic or veil worn by the Blessed Virgin when she gave birth to her God and Savior in the Stable of Bethlehem. After venerating that precious relic, we were shown the archives of the ancient sanctuary. Imagine our surprise on beholding two shell necklaces presented to our Lady of Chartres by the Indians of Canada, newly converted to the Faith! On one of those ornaments are inscribed the words: *Virgini parituræ*, (2) and on the other *Ecce ancilla Domini.*

(1) Mgr. Bourget was descended from Claude Bourget, of the parish of Saint Sauveur, Blois, in the Bishopric of Chartres. Claude Bourget came to establish himself in Canada during the last half of the seventeenth century. It is related of him that before taking his departure for the New World, he made a pilgrimage to the Cathedral of Chartres to beg the blessing of God upon his voyage, and that he engraved his name on the marble floor of the church.

(2) The Cathedral of Chartres is built over a celebrated grotto which contains a chapel dedicated to *Notre-Dame sous terre.* A very ancient tradition is connected with the chapel. Long before the birth of our Savior, the Druids of Gaul honored in this place an unknown virgin who should give birth (virgini parituræ) to the

We saw the very spot, where according to the authentic statement, the early Christians of Canada were consecrated to the Blessed Virgin, honored in the olden times by Druid priests in that temple. Desiring to renew so holy an alliance, we made a complete oblation of our diocese to the Holy Virgin, imploring our good Mother to bring it forth in Jesus Christ. To prevent distance from ever weakening the chains which shall henceforth bind us to that renowned Basilica, we have named the Reverend M. Pie, with the title of honorary Canon, (1) as our special delegate to our sovereign Lady and Mistress in her thrice hallowed sanctuary of Chartres. The Very Reverend Canon has kindly promised to pray daily for the diocese of Montreal, and more especially on the twelfth day of June each year, will he perform that duty of charity. You must not fail to unite your prayers with his. We asked for a copy of the priceless documents attesting to the piety and confidence of the wild children of our forests for the August Mother of God. We send you this copy that you may read it yourselves, and be edified by the touching and simple narrative of what those fervent neophytes

Savior of the nations. Those pagan priests even had a wooden statue representing the virgin holding her child in her arms.

(1) Since that time there has always been an honorary Canon of Montreal at Chartres, and one of Chartres at Montreal.

did for the honor of the Most Blessed Virgin. You will read therein how the Canons of Chartres sent the new clients of Mary a very precious relic : namely, a piece of the veil which covered the person of their Sovereign Lady and Mistress. You will also see how the Lady Ursulines and the Hospitaller Sisters of Quebec begged, as a favor to keep said priceless relic a whole day, in order to render their respectful homage to the Blessed Virgin, and to sing a Benediction before the sacred reliquary.

In token of our alliance, renewed in that ancient church, we had the happiness of obtaining a like relic wherewith to enrich our Cathedral. We intend to deposit it on the altar of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary. Before doing so, however, we wish you to share in the happiness of the fervent nuns of Quebec; like them, you shall have in your possession for a whole day, the precious reliquary, containing a small piece of the holy tunic of the glorious Virgin whose power destroys the errors reigning in the world; a tiny particle of the skull of St. Anne, the mother of the incomparable Virgin ; and the relics of the two saints honored at Chartres; — that is a portion of the bones of St. Cheron and a shred of the clothing of St. Pion.

We permit this reliquary to be exposed a

whole day, either on one of the altars of your chapel, or on the oratory in your community; in the evening, a benediction may be sung in honor of the holy relic of the Blessed Virgin, and all that was done in Quebec may be repeated in Montreal. Among other hymns sung at said benediction, you must not fail to sing the *Ave Maris Stella* and the *Inviolata*. We accord three hundred days' indulgence to the Novices who assist at this benediction, and one hundred days for each visit they may make to the holy relic during the day.

This, our very dear Daughters, is the favor, which it is our pleasant duty to bestow upon you. It will be highly appreciated, I am certain, by hearts as religious as yours. You will profit of this occasion to consecrate anew to your amiable Queen, your Community and all belonging to it. You will ask her with lively faith, the grace of being always faithful to your vocation. You will pray for the Bishop and the Chapter of Chartres who granted us the privilege of admitting us into their holy and honorable society and union of prayers. Nor must you fail to pray for the new diocese of Montreal which you shall place deep in the Heart of our most powerful protectress. She who has brought so many infidel nations to Jesus Christ, will again turn her eyes of mercy towards the heretic and infidel people in our midst. You will pray, too, for us; we rely upon

your good works and your fervent prayers to obtain from the Father of Light the grace to be able, while working out our own sanctification, to save the many souls confided to our care.

And now, we give you our blessing, beseeching the Lord to shower upon you all the riches of His grace and of His love.

We sign and forward this letter on this sixth day of May, 1843, because on this day, the the Church honors St. John the Evangelist. Being the first child adopted by the Blessed Virgin, in the place of her beloved Son dying on the cross for love of us, he will aid you to honor worthily the Mother of the whole Church, the Queen of all virgin souls.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

N. B. At about this date, Mgr. Bourget had to renounce forever the hope of securing French Sisters for the direction of his work. Friends, recently arrived from Europe, had already informed him of the failure of his project. The news was confirmed by a letter which the Venerable Mother Carrère, Superior General of the Sisters of Charity wrote him on the nineteenth of April, 1843.

May 12.— Four little girls: Alida Bourret, aged nine years; Elinor Simpson, seven; Mathilda Virginia Roy, nine; and Mary Louise Leprohon, eight years, gave Mgr. Bourget the sum of forty-one dollars, the proceeds of a charity sale held by these children the previous evening. After the exam-

ple of their elders they thought they, too, *should come to the assistance of the Bishop*, by devoting themselves for the Providence Asylum. Armed with the consent, and with the help of their charitable mothers, those dear children worked three whole weeks to organize a miniature bazaar, which was held in the parlors of Madame Alexis Bourret. It was a sight, as touching as it was charming, to see those *gracious little Ladies of Charity* standing bravely by a booth laden with dresses, aprons, hats, bonnets and caps,— in fine, a number of complete outfits.... for dolls! An ample supply of dainty refreshments was in evidence, and for sale.

Master Michael Bourret, aged thirteen, son of the Lady Mayoress, patroness of the bazaar, held the office of porter and treasurer. Very conscious of his dignity and importance, he, however, thought he should stretch the rules of etiquette in the financial interests of the poor; so, every small visitor was forced to pay him a fee of five cents before being admitted to the sales room! Everything went off admirably! The mothers were in jubilation, the little ones enchanted! The young organizers most of all! Mgr. Bourget on his part, was delighted to hear the eldest of the *little ladies* say to him demurely: "Monseigneur, we have held a grand bazaar, and we bring you the proceeds. Please give them to the Providence Asylum you are building for the poor of Madame Gamelin." His Lordship thanked and blessed the dear children, encouraging them to be always charitable and helpful.

May 18.— Mgr. Bourget blesses the ward for women in the new Asylum.

May 19.— The Very Reverend Canon Prince is delegated by Mgr. Bourget to erect the Way of the Cross in the women's ward.

May 24.— Madame Gamelin with the seven Novices and her poor, leave the *yellow house* to come and live in the Providence Asylum. The building includes the church and two wings.

July 8.— Departure of a Novice,— Delphine Payement. Madame Gamelin decides, about this time, to enter the Novitiate.

Some time during this period, Mgr. Bourget gives Madame Gamelin and the Novices the rosaries of our Lady of Seven Dolors which he had received in a somewhat singular manner while in Europe. One day, while he was praying in a certain church, an elderly woman approached and offered him the said rosaries. By a happy coincidence there were just seven ! so, Monseigneur had the pleasure of giving one to each of the seven Foundresses of the new Community whose principal devotion is that of our Lady of Seven Dolors.

August 20.— Mgr. Patrick Phelan, whom Pope Gregory XVI, has recently named Bishop of Carrha and Coadjutor of Kingston, is consecrated under said title by Mgr. Bourget in the Parish Church of Montreal. (1)

August 21.— Blessing of the Chapel and consecration of the altar. The ceremony is performed by Mgr. Phelan, Coadjutor of Mgr. Gaulin. Their Lordships, the Bishops Bourget of Montreal, Signay of Quebec, Gaulin of Kingston and Power of Toronto were present in the sanctuary. The Very Reverend Vicar General Hudon delivered the sermon of the day. By a remarkable coincidence, a newly consecrated prelate, Mgr. Power, blessed the first stone of the Providence Asylum on the tenth of May, 1842 ; and now,

(1) Mgr Phelan became Bishop of Kingston, May 3, 1857 ; he died the sixteenth of June following at the age of sixty-two.

another new prelate consecrates the Church of the same Asylum.

August 23.— Installation of the Blessed Sacrament in the Church of the Providence. On this occasion, Mgr. Bourget said to the Novices :

«Our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament will be your Director. In your prayers, your doubts and your difficulties, you will come hither to draw from this Source of all Grace, the help you need.»

Towards the end of August, the Very Reverend Canon Hudon, Vicar General, then in Europe sends a statue of our Lady of Seven Dolors to Madame Gamelin. It is placed in the niche above the main altar.

September 5.— A Mass of thanksgiving is offered at the Providence Asylum for all the graces accorded to the Hospice. Mgr. Bourget assists thereat and gives an instruction on charity.

September 8.— Entrance to the Novitiate of the Misses Theotiste Gigon of St. Eustache ; Edesse Marchesseault of St. Antoine ; Emelie Séné of Montreal ; Clemence Robert of St. Philip; Ursule Leblanc of the Cote-des-Neiges, and Bibiane Vaillant of L'Assumption. They are the first aspirants admitted to the Novitiate since the taking of the habit by the Foundresses. (1)

(1) Only four of this number persevered : viz., the Sisters Edesse Marchesseault, (Sister Genevieve) ; Emelie Séné (Sister Emmelie) : Clemence Robert (Sister La Nativite) ; Ursule LeBlanc (Sister Mary of the Crucifix).

September 10.— Mgr. Bourget writes the following letter to Madame Gamelin who is to leave the next day for a trip to the States.

To Madame John Baptist Gamelin.

Madame:

As you are about to start on a journey whose sole object is the welfare of the Providence Asylum, which the good God has given you the grace to found so successfully, I feel it my duty to furnish you, by these presents, with a few rules for your guidance.

First and foremost, you should propose to yourself the glory of God alone, during the course of your long journey, and to seek in that glory naught but the interests of religion, and the spiritual and temporal welfare of His poor. You must be particularly upon your guard against the distractions which beset travellers. Hence, you must avoid all and any gratification of mere curiosity, keeping constantly before your mind that your journey is not one of pleasure, but a holy and sanctifying pilgrimage for yourself, and for those in whose interests it is made. You should follow the example of St. Anthony, Patron of Solitaries,

while visiting all that may be to the interests of charity in the places where you are going: so that you may put into practice and render your work, — already crowned with so many graces, — still more perfect. Many more benefits will be bestowed upon those works provided you do not throw obstacles in the way. Perform, as far as possible, with due regard to proprieties, your ordinary exercises of piety; your confessions, your communions, spiritual readings, rosaries, that your life may be as regular as if you were at home. Above all make the practice of the presence of God perpetual. Keep constantly before your eyes, the different journeys of the Holy Family, the circumstances, the objects and the aims of which are well known to you. Let the worthy gentleman, (1) who is to be your protector during this journey, remind you of St. Joseph who, guided by the angels, always led the Holy Family whither it was needful to go, in conformity with the decrees of Divine Providenee. Let your venerable travelling companions be to you as the sacred person of the Blessed Virgin. (2) Bear in mind that your angel guardian, as well as the angels of the House of Providence will be with you, and that they will arrange with the

(1) Paul Joseph Lacroix, devoted benefactor of the Providence Asylum.

(2) Mesdames Nowlan and Gauvin.

tutelary angels of the houses you are to visit, all the affairs you must necessarily transact. Finally, pray to our Lord in all confidence and humility that He may make known to you His adorable Will and give you grace to accomplish it in all things.

2. Visit with the utmost minuteness, the establishments of the Sisters of Charity wherever you may find them. Endeavor, if possible, to see the Sisters at their work and do you try to work with them. Enter into the smallest detail, without, however, violating the rules of discretion. Secure information concerning their schools, their poor, their orphans, etc. Remark carefully the different divisions of their establishments, the dimensions of the wards and other apartments, the number of Sisters in each house, etc. Ask, as a favor, for a copy of their Rules, Constitutions and Customs. Try above all to secure the Rule of St. Vincent to his Daughters of Charity; beg for it as a loan, if they will neither give nor sell it to you. Procure such books as are used by those good Sisters in striving after the perfection of their holy state; or make out a list that may be purchased elsewhere. Ask for a short history of each of their foundations. Dress dolls in the postulants, novices and professed Sisters' habit. Keep written notes of everything of importance you may observe so that nothing may escape your

memory during your journey. Visit, if you may, some prisons, penitentiaries, hospitals, Houses of Refuge, etc., and, if you have the opportunity, make some house to house visitations with the Sisters. It would be advisable to establish a union of prayer with those holy women by agreeing to say some prayer daily, such as an Our Father and Hail Mary, or to hear a Mass occasionnally for one another.

3. Should you chance to remark in any of the various Communities you visit, customs foreign to the usages of our own Communities, do not be scandalized thereby, remembering always that different countries have different laws. I need not recommend you to practice discretion, so that your travelling companions may be kept in ignorance of any little existing miseries, such as may be found even in the most fervent Communities. Refrain, as much as possible, from speaking of the House of Providence. The rules of modesty forbid us to speak of the little we may have accomplished for the glory of God.

I pray our Heavenly Father to send His holy angels to accompany you everywhere. May your own faithful guardian angel conduct and guide you and bestow his choicest care upon you, even as did the Angel Raphael upon Tobias. Your little Community, your good old women, and we, ourselves,

will all unite in prayer until your return, that it may please the Lord to take you under his holy protection. In whatever place you may be, we shall always be with you in union of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

I am, Madame, most sincerely,
Your humble and obedient Servant,
Ignace, Bishop of Montreal.

LETTER ACCOMPANYING THE PRECEDING.

Bishopric of Montreal,
September 10, 1843.

Madame:

Besides the recommendations common to both you and your worthy companion, I feel it my duty to address you personally. The good God has willed that you should become the Foundress of the House of Providence in Montreal; hence, more than any one else, you have a greater interest in promoting its spiritual and temporal welfare. For this reason you must enter into more minute details than your travelling companions

when visiting the various Asylums that christian charity offers to human misery in the United States. You will, consequently, require a special recommendation to the Bishops and their Vicar Generals. I am fully convinced that on the presentation of this letter, you will be assured of their indulgent kindness and of all the protection you may require.

I am, Madame, very sincerely,
Your most humble and obedient Servant,
† Ignace, Bishop of Montreal.

October 7.— Return of Madame Gamelin after visiting several houses of the Sisters of Charity in Baltimore and New York.

October 8.— Madame Gamelin, although a secular, had kept the direction of her Hospice until this date ; she now takes her rank among the Novices.

November 15.— First retreat of the Ladies of Charity at the House of Providence. At the end of this year— 1843— the Novices begin the work of visiting the sick in their homes ; going among the poor to assist them ; and among the wealthy to make appeals to their charity in favor of the needy.

CHAPTER VI.

TRAINING OF THE NOVICES. — FIRST PROFESSION. — CANONICAL ERECTION OF THE INSTITUTE OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF MONTREAL. — ACCEPTANCE OF THE RULES OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL. — DISTRIBUTION OF THE OFFICES. — FIRST REGULAR ELECTION.

1844.

February and March. — Mgr. Bourget shares more actively with the Very Reverend Canon Prince, the delicate task of training the Novices in the spirit of their state. He personally presides at their meditations and spiritual readings, and explains to them the Rule of St. Vincent de Paul which is henceforth to be the Rule of their Community. He also gives them frequent spiritual conferences.

March 25. — The seven first Novices enter into retreat preparatory to their Religious Profession. This retreat is preached by Mgr. Bourget.

March 29. — The Profession of our Foundress Mothers takes place at six-thirty in the morning on Friday of Passion Week, feast of the Compassion of the Most Holy Virgin. Before they take their final engagements, Mgr. Bourget canonically erects the Community by a special mandate which is read publicly by the Very Reverend Canon Prince, Chaplain of the Asylum. Following is the text :

MANDATE

OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF MONTREAL

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE FAVOR OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC.

To our dear Daughters, Sisters Emmelie Gamelin, Madeleine Durand, Emélie Caron, Agathe Séné, Marguerite Thibodeau, Justine Michon and Victoire Larocque, Novices of the House of Providence of this city, health and benediction in our Lord.

It has always been understood, our very dear Daughters, that upon the charity of Pastors devolves the care of widows and orphans, while exercising great compassion for all other public and private misfortunes. This, therefore, is regarded by all Pastors as one of the most binding duties of their charge which is all charity. They must be, as holy Job assures us, *an eye to the blind, a foot to the lame and the father of the poor.*

Wishing therefore, our very dear Daughters, to multiply as far as in our power, the works of charity in our city, we instituted on the sixth of November, eighteen hundred and forty-one, the Association of the Ladies of Charity at the Providence Asylum. Never can we praise and thank

the Lord enough for the abundant blessings He has showered upon their fruitful work. In said mandate, we announced that later on, we should introduce the *Sisters of Charity, Daughters of the immortal St. Vincent the Paul*, for the care of the poor and the sick. It was our intention at that time to bring hither the Sisters of Charity from Paris; we had even made special arrangements with the procurator general for those admirable heroines of charity. Divine Providence, however, having decided otherwise, we humbly adore its designs; yet, without considering ourselves exempt from the promise we made the generous women enrolled in our Association of Charity. They hoped one day to have as their assistants in the exercise of good works, Sisters specially consecrated to God to be together with them the *servants of the poor*.

Left to our own resources for the projected establishment, courage never failed us, so fully convinced were we that the work being God's own, He would draw from the treasury of His Wisdom other means for its successful existence. He, indeed, inspired us to make an appeal to the charity and devotedness of the young women of our diocese for the accomplishment of our plans, and to throw open the doors of this asylum to those who should choose by a special vocation to undertake and carry on the good work.

But, as the innumerable duties attendant upon this dread office do not permit the Pastor to enter into all the details demanded by so sacred and so consoling a charge, it is imperative that he delegate a part of his indispensable labor to compassionate and charitable souls.

Already have we done this, our very dear Daughters,when under the patronage of the glorious Mother of God, on the happy feast of her Annunciation, we permitted you, who have decided to consecrate yourselves to God, to band together for the better testing of your vocation.

More than a year has been spent in exercising yourselves in the practice of the duties of the religious life. The trials and sufferings of an existence so exceedingly painful to nature, which you have firmly decided to lead, have not been hidden from you. You have, as we believe, passed through all the trials our Lord imposes upon those whom He wills should consecrate themselves to His service. You have not allowed those trials to intimidate you, our very dear Sisters, and the graces for which you pleaded so earnestly, have sustained your courage in the numberless temptations that have assailed you from the beginning. By the mercy of God you have been fortified in your chosen state, and today, you ask us to confirm you in it irrevocably and forever. Yes! it is for your whole

life that you wish to renounce the world with all its joys, to become the Spouses of Jesus Christ and the Servants of His poor. Nor have you blindly made this choice. You have learned by your own personal experience that henceforward, you will no longer be in the world to assist at its festivals or witness its sights. You shall have to listen, instead, to the lamentations of the unfortunate, to dry the tears of the widow and the orphan; to feed the hungry, to wait on the sick, to receive the last sigh of the dying, to bury the dead,— in a word, to perform all the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

Such is the sublime vocation to which you feel yourselves called, and which by the grace of God you desire to follow. Firmly confident of doing the will of God in offering yourselves to His Divine Majesty to become the Servants of the Poor, you ask us to give you the blessings the Church usually bestows upon virgins who are the chosen portion of the flock of our Lord Jesus Christ. As our office obliges us to further by every means in our power, whatever may contribute to the glory of God and the salvation of our neighbor, we have approved, and do warmly approve of your pious design. Not only do we approve of it, but we wish furthermore to confirm and consecrate it in the Name of Our Lord and of Holy Church.

For these reasons, the name of God invoking, and by the advice of Our Venerable Brothers, the Canons of Our Cathedral, we have enacted, decreed and ordained, enacting, decreeing and ordaining that which follows:

I. We canonically erect the Asylum of Montreal for Aged and Infirm Women founded in the House of Providence, and already recognized by a statute of the Provincial Parliament, dated September 18, 1841. We also establish canonically, the Sisters of Charity, Servants of the Poor, to be its administrators, to take care of the said aged and infirm women, and at the same time to visit and care for the sick in their homes, and to perform other works of charity as it may please God to inspire them.

II. We permit the above mentioned Novices, and all whom God may call to imitate their state of life, to make for their lifetime, the simple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and to serve the poor.

III. We give to the new Community for its good government: firstly, the *common rules of the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor and Sick*, instituted in France by St. Vincent de Paul; secondly, the special constitutions which in our judgment may contribute to the greater good of the new Institute; thirdly, a ceremonial for the

different offices and ceremonies proper to a secular congregation.

IV. We establish them under our entire dependence and jurisdiction; and they shall be parishioners in all places wherever they have houses.

V. We give for titular to the chapel of the said Sisters of Charity, the Feast of the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin, which is celebrated there as in the rest of the diocese, on Friday in Passion Week, but under the double rite of first class. We wish St. Vincent de Paul to be the first patron of the said *Sisters of Charity*, and that his feast be for the said Sisters and their Chaplains, of the first class and celebrated with octave. St Elizabeth, Queen of Hungary, whose feast is celebrated on November nineteenth, shall be the patroness of the *Aged and Infirm Women*; St. Genevieve, virgin, whose feast is on January third, shall be the patroness of the Orphans confided to the care of the Sisters of Charity.

VI. We ordain that the said House of Providence shall be the center of the Diocesan Association of Charity, established the twenty-fifth day of January, eighteen hundred and forty-two; and by virtue of an Indult of the Sovereign Pontiff, dated the eleventh day of July, eighteen hundred and forty-one, we grant a plenary indul-

gence to the said Sisters of Charity, as also to all those belonging to the Association under their care and direction, on the four above-named feasts of the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin, of St. Vincent de Paul, of St.Elizabeth and of St. Genevieve, provided that the said Sisters and their associates confess their sins with true sorrow, receive Holy Communion, visit the said Chapel of Providence, and there pray for the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff.

Each one may, moreover, gain an indulgence of one hundred days for each work of charity performed with proper dispositions.

Such, our very dear Daughters, are the dispositions we have thought proper to make that your consecration to God may be stable and permanent. May our Lord Jesus Christ, who became poor that He might enrich us, accept as agreeable in His sight, the sacrifice you are ready to make of your persons and your possessions. May He bless the generous design you have formed and which you wish to execute today at the foot of His altar. May He grant you grace to accomplish it faithfully, despite the innumerable trials awaiting you. May He give you all a mother's heart for the poor, and may your distinguishing characteristic be compassion for every human misery. May your joy increase on seeing your family—the

great family of the poor— multiply. May the Lord open to you the treasures of His Providence to respond to their numerous and varied needs. May He send generous companions, courageously leaving the world and its pleasures to find, like you, their happiness in being the humble servants of the poor. Finally, may God the All-Good and All-Merciful protect and guard you amidst the many perils besetting your pathway; and may He grant you to hear at the end of your days those consoling words of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ: *Come ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; naked and you covered me; sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me.*

Given at Montreal, this twenty-ninth day of March, eighteen hundred and forty-four, under our sign and seal and the countersign of one of our Canons, who is for this work our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

For His Lordship,

J. C. Prince, Canon, Secretary.

March 30.— Mgr. Bourget, accompanied by the Very Reverend Canons Prince and Plamondon, assembles the newly-professed. Canon Prince has them sign the act of acceptance of the Rules of St. Vincent de Paul; afterwards, our devoted Founder having read to them the Rule concerning the nomination of a Superior, and given them the necessary dispensations, proceeds to the election of officers.

May 1.— The Mistress of Novices, (Sister Thibodeau) assumes the duties of her office. Foundation of the work, care of the Orphan Girls. At its very beginning, twelve children are admitted to the Orphanage.

May 26.— At the Cathedral, blessing of the bell, gift of M. Louis de Lagrave, for the Asylum.

September 18.— Second annual retreat of the Ladies of Charity and of the poor of the Providence Asylum. Mgr. Bourget gives at this date the regulation for the retreat.

October 1.—First regular election. Mgr. Bourget decrees during the session that the elections shall be made every seven years.

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CHAPTER VII.

MGR. BOURGET ANNOUNCES HIS FIRST PASTORAL VISIT BY A CIRCULAR LETTER. IN HIS MANDATE AT THE CLOSE OF THIS VISIT, HIS LORDSHIP ESTABLISHES THE DEVOTION TO OUR LADY OF SEVEN DOLORS IN THE CHURCH OF THE PROVIDENCE. CONSECRATION OF MGR. PRINCE, COADJUTOR OF MONTREAL. INAUGURATION OF THE WORK OF THE INSANE.

1845.

March 28.— Mgr Bourget announces as follows, his first pastoral visit to our Community.

MANDATE

OF THE VISIT OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To our very dear Daughters, the Sisters of Charity, Directresses of the Providence Asylum, greeting and blessing in our Lord.

Barely a year has passed since you were canonically instituted, our very dear Daughters, to be the *Servants of the Poor*; and already, our Lord, always so rich in mercy, has showered upon you abundant blessings. By this He proves that

He never refuses the hundredfold promised in the Gospel to those who leave all for His sake. In consecrating yourselves to the works of charity, you have become the objects of our lively solicitude; neither have we spared anything to procure for you all the help you have the right to expect from our ministry, after the generous sacrifices you have made to become the *true Servants of the Poor*. This is why we shall make the pastoral visit in your Community; and following are some of the principal reasons prompting us to visit you in our quality of first Pastor.

1. We wish to imitate the Sovereign Pastor as closely as possible. To make us understand the obligation we are under to know all the needs of our sheep, He says to us in His tender solicitude for His flock: *I am the Good Shepherd; I know my sheep, and my sheep know me .... and they hearken to my voice.* According to the example set us by this vigilant Pastor, we shall go to you, the chosen portion of our fold, to know you still better, and to assure ourselves whether you are animated, as you should be, by a true spirit of charity; whether you love the poor, care for the sick, assist the dying, lay out the dead; whether you willingly receive the widows and orphans; in a word, whether, *your distinctive characteristic is compassion for all the unfortunate.* For such is your vocation: and such should be the duties proper to your holy

state. How we shall bless the Lord, if we find among you the *good spirit* which the Heavenly Father never refuses to those who ask for it; the spirit of charity, — the spirit proper to your Institute. And, oh! how much we shall lament and weep, should we find you devoid of that spirit; since, without it you will be but the ghost of a community, — naught but sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.

2. We shall visit you in the Name of the Lord to strengthen you in your holy vocation, and to console you in your interior trials. *For we long to see you that we may impart to you some spiritual grace, to strengthen you* (1), for which you have need in acquiring the religious spirit, *and that you may have life, and may have it more abundantly* (2).

We do not ignore the severe trials our Lord has been pleased to make you undergo, our very dear Sisters, nor did we seek to hide them from you when we accepted your sacrifice. Furthermore, your institution founded on the very day consecrated to honor the sufferings of Mary, your conception in the heart of that afflicted Mother, your birth on Calvary at the feet of a God dying of love, your mission which has for its object to spread devotion to our Lady of Seven Dolors; all,

(1) Rom. 1, 11. (2) John. 10, 10.

all foreshadowed the crosses and trials that were in store for you, and the Lord, ever adorable in His designs, has in no way spared you. Now, we shall say to you with the Divine Consoler: *Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will comfort you.*

3. At this visit we shall put the finishing touch to the rules and Constitutions given you in our Mandate of Institution. Up to the present you have observed them tentatively, so that experience might make known to you what was more practical and better able to contribute to your sanctification. It would be very detrimental to your Community now, to remain longer without fixed and determined rules; hence, this shall have our first attention. We shall also examine very seriously all your Rules to assure ourselves of those most conducive to the holiness of your state.

These are some of the principal reasons prompting us, our very dear Daughters, to make you a pastoral visit. Animated with a lively faith, you will receive us as the representative of our Lord Jesus Christ, or rather, as you would receive Jesus Christ Himself, were He to come in person to visit your Community, even as He deigned during His mortal life to visit the home of Martha and Mary. Like those two admirable sisters, you

will unite prayer to good works in order to receive worthily that incomparable Master. *Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet Him.* (1)Forget not to fill your lamps with the sacred oil of your works of charity which do honor to your virginity; else, you would resemble the foolish virgins in the Gospel who failed to procure for themselves beforehand, the oil of sanctification so necessary for them to go out and meet the Divine Spouse. Like them, you would be left in disgrace outside the door of the wedding hall; and you would hear from His lips those terrible words: *I know you not.*

To avoid this misfortune, *be you humbled...* for your past infidelities, *that God may exalt you in the time of visitation.* (2) *Let your modesty be known to all men. The Lord is nigh.* (3) *Be renewed in the spirit of your mind,* (4) that the Celestial Spouse may find you ready to receive the abundance of His graces. Let your zeal for the works of charity, your watchful care of the sick, your love for obedience, poverty and chastity, keep your lamps always burning that you may light the Divine Spouse on His way when He comes to you in the solemn day of His visitation.

(1) Matt. 25, 6.
(2) I Pe. 5, 6.
(3) Philip 4, 5.
(4) Ep. 4, 23.

Finally, we conjure you, our very dear Daughters, *to help us in your prayer to God for us that we may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed with you. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.* (1)

For these reasons, the name of God invoking, we have enacted, decreed and ordained, enacting, decreeing and ordaining what follows for the order of the visitation.

1. We shall repair to the Community of the Sisters of Charity at Providence Asylum in this city, Tuesday next, April second; and we shall there make our entrance at three o'clock in the afternoon in the manner prescribed in chapter fifth of the Ceremonial.

2. We shall conform to the said ceremonial for all that regards the visit of the ornaments, sacred vessels and other objects used for Divine Worship, as well as for what concerns the offices of the house.

3. The Superior in Council shall draw up a memorandum of all the points of rule which are not observed, mentioning the principal reasons

(1) Rom. 15, 30, 32, 33.

(2) The annals mention the opening of this visit as having taken place Tuesday April first; moreover, in 1845, the first day of April fell on a Tuesday.

for such failings. A list shall also be made of the points difficult of accomplishment, and which do not seem proper to the Institute.

4. We shall examine the inventory of goods, movable and immovable, belonging to the Community; also, the accounts of the Treasurer which must be prepared in advance so that we may revise them at the time judged most convenient. We shall likewise examine the lists of indulgences, Foundation Masses, Feasts of the Institute, High Masses and Benedictions of the Blessed Sacrament granted to the Providence.

5. As we can expect our visit to be successful only through the mercy of God, we feel the need of imploring His assistance both for you and for ourselves. We therefore invite you to offer your prayers, your communions, your mortifications and all your good works that the Father of Light from whom come all perfect gifts, may deign to bless this work so important for the good of the Church.

Counting from the day when the present mandate shall be read in Chapter, until the end of the visit, you shall recite after the Community Mass, five *Our Fathers* and five *Hail Marys*; and the priest shall recite at the same Mass the prayer, *Ad postulandam charitatem.* Special prayers shall also be said in the wards of the aged and infirm women, in the orphans' department and at the

Lady Boarders to obtain the blessing of heaven on a work so essential to the welfare of the Institute.

6. We shall close the visit after all things shall have been regulated for the greater good of the Community; and in so doing, we shall follow the ceremonial as prescribed.

Let the present mandate be read in Chapter on the day of its reception, and then be preserved in the archives of the Community.

Given at Montreal, this twenty-eighth day of the month of March, in the year eighteen hundred and forty-five, under our sign and seal, and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

By Monseigneur,

A. F. Truteau, Canon, Secretary.

April 1. — Mgr. Bourget, accompanied by the Very Reverend Canon Prince and the Reverend Father Truteau, makes the solemn opening of the Pastoral visit as previously announced. His Lordship gives two instructions daily and presides at the meditations.

May 8.— Mgr. Bourget closes his memorable visit by the institution of the Feast of Our Lady of Seven Dolors in the church of the Providence. He writes the following letter to the Sisters on said occasion. All remain kneeling while it is being read.

LETTER

OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL FOR THE CLOSING OF THE PASTORAL VISIT TO THE COMMUNITY OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY AT THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM, MONTREAL.

IGNAGE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE FAVOR OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To our very dear Daughters, the Sisters of Charity at the Providence Asylum, greeting and benediction in our Lord.

We close this day, our very dear Daughters, the pastoral visit of your Community, after more than a month of labors and exercises, all very consoling to us on account of the lively faith, and of the humble and entire submission animating you during this time of grace. *You have received us as the angel of God, or rather as God Himself*, and in this you have fulfilled the words of Our Lord to His Apostles: *He who receiveth you, receiveth Me; he who heareth you heareth Me.* The principal object of our visit being to put the final touch to your Rules and Constitutions, so that you should no longer be in doubt and uncertainty, always so detrimental to the perfect regularity of a Community, we have seriously considered the important point upon which so essentially depends your perfection. In our Mandate of insti-

tution, we had already prescribed for you the *Common Rules of the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor Sick*, with a Customary to supplement whatever might be wanting to those Rules. This, however, was only by way of trial; now, that experience has shown us what might contribute more effectively to the good of your Institute, we may proceed with greater certainty in establishing the practice of those same Rules.

Our deep respect for St. Vincent, your holy patron, from whom you have received the Common Rules, has caused us to adopt nearly in their entirety, his precious collection. The only articles we have omitted are those pertaining to the submission of the Daughters of Charity to the Priests of the Mission, the admission of Boarders, and the visit to the wealthy during their illness; the first, because of its impracticability; the two last, because it appears necessary to us to offer a place of retreat to pious persons, and to the wealthy, a new help to prepare themselves well for death. In eliminating these points, we had in view the better welfare of the poor. You will find in the charity of your Boarders, and in the gratitude of the great ones of the world whom you will assist at the hour of death, new resources for the relief of the members of Jesus Suffering, who are to be at all times your

hearts' own chosen ones. As for the Customary, we have made various changes to render it more adaptable to the present requirements of your Community. But all these Rules would be worthless, our very dear Daughters, had you not the good spirit which should animate every Community. The wisest laws are but a dead letter when not animated or vivified by the good spirit. While working on the part of God, to trace out rules for your guidance, we have not ceased to warn you against the bad spirit which may insinuate itself even into the best of communities.

Oh! We repeat it to you, our very dear Daughters, for your instruction and for that of the generous souls, who in future will consecrate themselves with you to the painful labors of your Institute: Be always upon your guard against the wiles of the wicked spirit.

You can easily recognize it, for it is ever a spirit of pride and vanity, of disobedience and revolt, of division and antipathy, of murmurs and criticisms, of presumption or of discouragement, of negligence or forgetfulness of one's duties, of love of one's ease and of harshness for the poor, of complacency in one's supposed good works and of contempt for others, of sensuality, self-interest and other like disorders which are all the bitter fruit of the evil spirit. Never forget the last words

of our Lord to His disciples: they should be forever engraven on your hearts. *Watch ye and pray.... for the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.* Behold, in fact, the most important, as well as the most urgent advice to keep you from falling into the greatest misfortune, — that of being actuated by the bad spirit, always so ready for evil, and always so flattering to corrupt nature.

During the whole period of this visit, we have united our humble prayers to yours, and to those of the fervent souls attending this church to ask, not for the goods of this world, but for the most beautiful gift that God in His mercy can ever bestow upon a Community, namely, a good spirit. Let us trust that our united prayers may obtain from our Heavenly Father so inestimable a favor! We must hope for it! because the good spirit is promised and is given to all who ask for it in all sincerity. Our Lord Himself has made us this consoling promise. Surely, if our earthly fathers know how to give good things to their children, how much more will not God, the first and best of all Fathers give His good spirit to His children, who for His love, have renounced all the goods and pleasures of the world to consecrate themselves to the service of the poor, His lowly representatives here on earth. This is, verily, the hundredfold of the Gospel! A good

so inestimable and so many times greater than all they so generously renounced on quitting the world.

If you have received this good spirit, our very dear Daughters, it will be easily recognized by its fruits : they are, *charity*, *joy*, *peace*, *patience*, *meekness*, *goodness*, *longanimity*, *mildness*, *faith*, *modesty*, *continency and chastity*. Guided by the good spirit, your little Community will share the best gifts of *wisdom*, *understanding*, *counsel*, *fortitude*, *knowledge*, *piety and the fear of the Lord*.

The good spirit will be for you like the mystic cloud ever leading the Jewish people in their lonely wanderings through the frightful desert where they roamed for forty years without going astray. It will descend upon you in the form of a dove as upon Jesus Christ emerging from the baptismal waters of the Jordan, and it will impart to you that happy simplicity which is ever to be the most beautiful ornament of your community. It will overshadow this asylum, chosen by you for the place of your abode, as it enveloped the holy Mount of Thabor; and, by the interior sweetness filling your souls, you will exclaim with St. Peter: *Lord, it is good for us to be here!* Descending upon your Community on this, the last day of the pastoral visit, as of yore in the Cenacle on the solemn day of Pentecost, you will feel its breath divine

while it rests upon your heads in form of tongues of fire. Henceforth the Holy Spirit will be your Master and Director, and He will inspire you what you should do to become true *Daughters of Charity.*

For these reasons, the holy Name of God invoking, and acting by the advice of our Venerable Brethren, the Canons of our Cathedral, we have decreed, enacted and ordained, decreeing, enacting and ordaining that which follows:

1. The Sisters of Charity, Administrators of the Providence Asylum for Aged and Infirm Women, shall observe the Constitutions, Rules and Customs approved by us this day.

2. The church, the sacristy and the offices of the House shall be provided with ornaments, linen and necessary furniture, according to the directions given on this subject; and in strictly observing that religious simplicity which must be the distinguishing mark of the Institute of the said Sisters of Charity.

3. In order that charity may never become weakened, special prayers shall be said daily in the Church and the House of Providence for the success of all the good works of the diocese. For this reason, all priests celebrating in the said Church, shall recite after the collects prescribed, the one in

the missal *to ask for charity*, conforming to the *rubrics* in all things. Lest any one forget, there shall be exposed in the sacristy, a card conveying this our command, with the direction that this prayer be said according to the rites of the Church. The same prayer shall be recited in French by the Sisters and their poor at the end of Mass before the decade of the rosary usually said in common.

4. We affiliate the Association of Charity, established by us for the whole Diocese, January twenty-fifth, eighteen hundred and forty-two, to the Providence Asylum to give said work a centre of reunion, and to the Sisters of Charity the kindly assistance of the members of said society. The said Sisters of Charity shall consider themselves obliged to propagate with all their might, an Association destined to inspire everywhere, zeal for good works.

5. As the holiest enterprises can succeed only by the mercy of God, the best means to obtain this grace is to honor the Blessed Mother of God and to place all our interests in her hands. We, therefore, by this present mandate establish in the Church of the Providence, the devotion to Our Lady of Seven Dolors, a devotion which should always be the dearest to the hearts of the Associates.

We have the fullest confidence that if we

venerate Our Mother of Sorrows as we should, she will communicate to the whole Diocese, and to the Providence establishment in particular, her compassionate charity for all the miseries of this life, and that she will find in the treasury of Divine Providence the means of providing for all.

The present mandate shall be read in Chapter at the Community of the Sisters of Charity, of the Providence Asylum, on the closing day of the pastoral visit, and shall then be preserved in the archives of the said Community.

Given at Montreal this eighth day of May, eighteen hundred and forty-five, under our sign and seal and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

By Monseigneur,

A. F. Truteau, Canon, Secretary.

July 25.— Mgr. J. C. Prince, Bishop of Martyropolis, Coadjutor of Montreal, is consecrated by Mgr. Bourget.

November.— Inauguration of the Work of the Insane in the *yellow house* in the garden of the Asylum. Three patients are there interned.

CHAPTER VIII.

ERECTION OF THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE SCAPULAR OF OUR LADY OF SEVEN DOLORS. CIRCULAR LETTER OF MGR. BOURGET ANNOUNCING HIS SECOND PASTORAL VISIT. CLOSING CIRCULAR.

1846.

April 3.— Mgr. Prince is authorized by Mgr. Bourget to erect the Confraternity of the Scapular of Our Lady of Seven Dolors in the Church of the Providence. He begins the ceremony by the reading of the subjoined Circular Letter.

LETTER

OF THE ERECTION OF THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE SCAPULAR OF OUR LADY OF SEVEN DOLORS.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC.

To our very dear Daughters, the Sisters of Charity at the Providence Asylum, greeting and benediction in Our Lord.

There is a devotion, our very dear Daughters, essential to your Institute, and that is the devotion to Our Lady of Seven Dolors. The Lord in His mercy has deigned to unite you in Community under the sorrowful standard of His desolate Mother. In His admirable Providence,

He has willed that the seven Foundresses of this new Community should take the holy habit of religion on the twenty-fifth day of March, — the day on which Our Lord became incarnate in the womb of the glorious Virgin, and the day on which, according to grave authority, He died on Calvary under the eyes of His divine Mother. It was on a like day that the devotion to the Scapular of Our Lady of Seven Dolors was revealed to the world. The Blessed Virgin, on that memorable day, deigned to appear to seven of her devout servants for whom she had obtained the grace of forsaking the world, to bring them her holy habit. Whilst praying on Mount Senario, their chosen place of retreat, and being absorbed in profound contemplation of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the seven principal sorrows of His holy Mother, they beheld their beautiful Queen, surrounded by multitudes of angels, descending from heaven. Some carried the instruments of the Passion, others bore a book containing the Rule of St. Augustine, which they were henceforth to observe, while others held aloft a shield with a field of azure whereon was written in letters of gold the glorious title *Servites of Mary* which they were destined to bear. Among the throng of happy spirits forming that wonderful procession, were remarked angels bearing palms, and one, especially, who carried a peculiar black

garment of an unfamiliar style. Our cenobites, astonished and frightened at the sight of so strange and mournful a spectacle, knew not whither to turn; when behold! the Most Holy Virgin in the attitude of a heart-broken Mother, advanced towards them and declared in touching accents of maternal love, that she chose them, personally, to be her well beloved servants. As a convincing proof thereof, she presented them with the habit of mourning or scapular which they were, henceforth, to wear in memory of the sorrows she endured at the death of her Son. She signified at the same time her desire that a new Community be formed; that its distinguishing mark should be their own personal sanctification, and the sanctification of others by the continual meditation of the Passion of Our Lord and her bitter grief. In return, the Sorrowful Mother promised them the palm of eternal glory for their reward. Such is the celestial origin of the Scapular of Our Lady of Seven Dolors.

Very soon, through the virtue of this scapular, innumerable graces made men understand that it really was a gift sent from heaven to remedy the many evils at that time devastating the world. At sight of so many diverse marvels obtained through the devotion to Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, we see Sovereign Pontiffs, Emperors, Kings, Princes and Princesses setting the faithful

an example by enrolling themselves in the pious Confraternity instituted to compassionate the sufferings of the Mother of Sorrows.

Following the model given you by those holy personages, our very dear Daughters, you have consecrated yourselves, to this devotion. It was to bind themselves by a solemn engagement that the first professed Sisters of your Community willed to make the vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, and to serve the poor, on the day consecrated to Our Lady of Compassion. Hence, you have been brought forth in religion on Calvary, near the cross at the feet of Jesus dying; in the Heart of Mary pierced with the seven swords of sorrow; and at that awful moment when all nature in anguish bemoaned the death of its Creator.

You are, therefore, daughters of the Most Sorrowful Mother, and as such, you are obliged to compassionate her cruel agony, and to spread abroad with all your might that salutary devotion, the very foundation stone whereon rests the edifice of your Community. The place you have chosen for your abode is very near to Mary, on the holy Mount of Calvary; it is all empurpled with the Precious Blood of Jesus and bedewed with the tears of your Mother.

To assist you in worthily fulfilling your sublime vocation, we, today, establish in your church,

the Confraternity of the Scapular of Our Lady of Seven Dolors. As you have necessary and sanctifying intercourse with so many devout and charitable persons whom Divine Providence retains in the world for the honor of religion, we desire that the spiritual riches hidden in the devotion of the holy scapular of Mary, Mother of Dolors, be likewise enjoyed by them. Nothing more just that those who share so zealously in your labors, should partake, likewise, of the favors Heaven pleases to grant you. To acknowledge and encourage their devotedness, we shall establish for their benefit the Confraternity of the holy Scapular of Our Lady of Seven Dolors in your church.

We have the greatest confidence, our very dear Daughters, that this institution will soon bring forth abundant fruit, that it will render you more agreeable to the Mother of Sorrows, and that it will draw down upon your works new blessings. It will attract to your Community many privileged souls who, generously forsaking the world with all its joys and pleasures, will come and weep with you at the foot of this monument so entwined for you with mournful souvenirs. This devotion will animate you in the practice of your important duties and obtain for you compassion for every human misery, together with the grace to comfort each and all with great success.

Furthermore, this Confraternity will have the happy effect of destroying dangerous societies whose aim is hatred of religion, and whose dream is the ruin of mankind, by its forbidden plays, criminal shows, sensual pleasures and cruel divisions, which menace us on every side.

Consequently, after invoking the holy Name of God, and acting upon the advice of our venerable Brethren, the Canons of our Cathedral, we have decreed, enacted and ordained, decreeing, enacting and ordaining that which follows:

1. By virtue of an Indult of the Sovereign Pontiff, dated the thirty-first day of May, eighteen hundred and forty, we institute, erect and establish in the Church of the Providence in this City, the Confraternity of the Scapular of the Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and we declare by these presents, instituted, erected and established with all the graces, privileges and indulgences which associations of this sort are accustomed to possess, and which all may use and enjoy for the glory of God All-Powerful, and of the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, of the seven blessed Founders of the order of Servites, of all the Saints of God, and for the salvation of souls. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

2. For the government and administration of

said Confraternity, the regulations this day approved by us shall be observed.

3. We authorize the Superiors and Directors of the Sisters of Charity of the Providence Asylum to receive into the said Confraternity, all the faithful of both sexes desiring to be aggregated thereunto with the power to bless and indulgence the chaplets and scapulars used in said Association.

4. Every fourth Sunday of the month, (1) the Sisters of Charity shall make, either in their Church, or within the limits of their enclosure, a procession in honor of Our Lady of Seven Dolors with whatever may be required to foster that devotion. The ceremony shall end with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

5. The third Sunday in September shall be the principal feast of the Confraternity, and a plenary indulgence shall be granted to all the associates, who, having confessed their sins and received Holy Communion, shall visit the said Church of the Providence, and there pray for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff.

6. The practices we recommend to the associates are the scapular and the chaplet of Our Lady of Seven Dolors; devotion to the Fridays preceding the Feast of the Compassion of the

(1) This procession is now made on the third Sunday of the month.

Blessed Virgin ; that of the seven stations instituted in order that there might always be holy souls in prayer from the moment Our Lord expired on Calvary the first Good Friday to the moment when He appeared triumphant and glorious, to His Blessed Mother, — devoted souls to keep her company during those awful hours of desolation; besides the devotion of the week consecrated to honor the seven principal Sorrows of Mary. Finally, we recommend the associates to recite daily the following prayer to which is attached forty days' indulgence every time it is said with piety to obtain a happy death and eternal salvation : *Mary, Mother of Dolors, be our defense in the day of judgment, and obtain for us the glory of Paradise.*

7. We authorize the Most Illustrious and the Most Reverend John Charles Prince, Bishop of Martyropolis and our Coadjutor, to make the erection of the said Confraternity of the Scapular of the Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the above mentioned Church of the Providence.

The present mandate shall be read and published immediately before said erection, and it shall be preserved in the archives of the Community of the said Sisters of Charity.

Given at Montreal at our Episcopal Palace, the day of the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin,

the third day of the month of April, in the year eighteen hundred and forty-six, under our sign and seal and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal,

By Monseigneur,

J. C. Paré, Canon, Secretary.

April 16.— Mgr. Bourget announces his second pastoral visit.

LETTER

OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL, FOR THE SECOND PASTORAL VISIT TO THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM OF MONTREAL.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To our very dear Daughters, Directresses of the Providence Asylum, greetings and blessings in Our Lord.

We experienced such consolation last year in making the visit of your young Community, our very dear Daughters, and said visit having borne such happy fruit, makes it seem advisable to us to repeat it again this year, so that we may praise the Lord with you and procure new help to strengthen you in your holy dispositions.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DU QUÉBEC

How good God is to you, and how He has visited you in His mercy! What right has He not to all the love of your hearts for His ineffable goodness! In undertaking this second visit, our intention is to consolidate the good which was only begun in the first. We comprehend fully, our very dear Daughters, that in order to mould your Community into the truly religious spirit, we must take the Sovereign Pastor of souls for our model. We remark how that incomparable Master, in laboring to form His disciples in the way of evangelical perfection, always had their weaknesses in view, and so proposed to their belief and to their practice only such truths and such virtues as He deemed them capable of turning to their profit from His divine teaching. Indeed, after three years of regular teaching and constant care, He addressed them these words: *I have many things to say to you; but you cannot bear them now.*

There is nothing strange in this; nor should you be in any way surprised to find there is so much yet to be done for the perfecting of the works already begun, as well as for the undertaking of others, should such be the Holy Will of God. That is why Divine Providence, always watching over you with infinite goodness, reserves new helps to aid you in attaining the perfection of your holy state. During our coming visit, He

BIBLIOTHÈQUE MUNICIPALE

will open to you His treasures, and He will invite you to draw therefrom all the riches, and all the spiritual goods for which you sigh so ardently, since bidding an eternal adieu to the false goods of this world. You will be encompassed with light and filled with grace, to enable you to correspond worthily with God's designs upon you.

Besides, in making this second visit, we wish to assure ourselves whether the Constitutions and the Customary given you definitely last year, have been punctually observed. You understand right well, our very dear Daughters, that it is not all, nay, even that it is nothing to have rules, if no attention be paid to them, or if they be badly observed. We shall make a special point of this, and we shall examine seriously all that has been done in your Community since our first visit.

Therefore the Holy Name of God invoking, we have decreed, enacted and ordained, decreeing enacting and ordaining, that which follows for the order of the visit.

1. We shall go to the Community of the Sisters of Charity of the Providence Asylum, this City, on Tuesday next, April twenty-first, and we shall there make our entrance at three o'clock in the afternoon in the manner prescribed in chapter fifth of the Ceremonial.

2. Our Circular letter of March twenty-fifth last year shall be read immediately after the reading of the present letter,— in its entirety, except the first article,— and all shall conform exactly thereunto.

Given at Montreal, the sixteenth day of the month of April in the year eighteen hundred and forty-six, under our sign and seal and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal,
By Monseigneur,
J. O. Paré, Canon, Secretary.

May 19.— Mgr. Bourget closes his second pastoral visit by the Letter hereto subjoined.

LETTER

Of His Lordship, the Bishop of Montreal, for the close of the second pastoral visit to the Sisters of Charity of the Providence Asylum for the Aged and Infirm Women.

Ignace Bourget, by the mercy of God, and the grace of the Holy, Apostolic See, Bishop of Montreal, etc., etc.

To our very dear Daughters, the Sisters of Charity of the Providence Asylum, greetings and blessings in Our Lord:

Since terminating our visit on the twenty-fifth day of April last, we have not ceased thank-

ing God, our very dear Daughters, for all the spiritual riches He has deigned to shower upon you. It has seemed to us that God, All-Good and All-Merciful, has made you share, through the intercession of your holy patron, in that spirit of simplicity which is the distinguishing spirit of your Community. What confirms us in this belief is the fact that during this visit you have opened your hearts to us with all the frankness characterizing souls truly simple before God. You have not feared to make known to us your miseries and your imperfections; and this, without doubt, our very dear Daughters, is the best proof that the Lord has given you the good spirit that is never refused to those who ask for it with confidence. As you were the first to disclose to us your spiritual ills with a true desire of obtaining their cure, we shall give you the advice we think necessary, without fear of wounding any among you; for, you well know, we seek naught but the greater good of your souls.

1. We shall begin by recommending the salutary practice of simplicity, that virtue so dear to the Heart of Our Lord, and which St. Vincent proposes to you in the first chapter of your holy Rules. Contempt of self, seeking the lowest place, choosing those employments which are humiliating and repugnant to human nature, willingly consenting to become an outcast; being convinced that even

then, they are better treated than they deserve; to have no attachment to earthly thing, particularly to places, employments or persons, not excepting their confessor; willingly to leave all when obedience shall demand it; cheerfully to endure ill-treatment, even for having done well. These are some of the sanctifying practices you must learn daily at the school of the great Master, or rather, from Jesus Christ Himself, who says to you with such goodness: *Learn of Me for I am meek and humble of heart.* You are well aware that St. Vincent instituted the Daughters of Charity to receive those subjects who for want of education, could not be admitted into other Communities, provided however, that they have the science of the Saints, that is to say, the spirit of *simplicity*, *humility* and *charity*. In admitting you to profession in this Institute, we have been guided by the same motives, and following the example of that wise and humble Founder, we shall ever make use of our authority to have you always take the last place among the Communities of our Diocese, so that you may have charge of those works only which the others are unable to perform. This is the sole privilege you are to expect from our tenderness and pastoral solicitude. How happy will you be, our very dear Daughters, if you have the eye of simplicity spoken of by Our Lord, for then most assuredly, the whole body of

your Community will shine by its works of justice and of charity. How happy, too, if you partake somewhat in the admirable simplicity of the holy man Job, so praised in the Holy Scripture! Like him, you will share in the inexhaustible treasures flowing from that celestial virtue. Happy again will you be, if you have the simplicity of the dove and the prudence of the serpent!

2. The officers shall receive with simplicity the orders of the Superiors for the direction of their offices, and shall transmit them faithfully to their companions, exciting themselves mutually to the religious execution thereof.

3. The spirit of simplicity that should reign in the Community, must induce each Sister to interpret in good part the words and actions of her companions, above all, those of the Superior; and never to make reports that might disturb the peace and union which are the most beautiful fruit of the spirit of simplicity.

4. They shall take their meals in joy and simplicity of heart, never murmuring about the food, which should, however, always be conformed to the Rule.

5. The Sisters when indisposed or ill, should with simplicity inform the Superior, or the Mistress, if they are novices. The infirmarian shall consider herself strictly charged with the health

of all her Sisters. She shall make it her duty to notify the Superior should she perceive that some of the Sisters fail to make known their ailments. She shall omit nothing that her patients may have all the spiritual and corporal helps accorded by the Rule. She shall take care of them with cleanliness, mildness and joy. She shall procure for them whatever may contribute to their recovery, and shall visit them herself, and have them visited regularly. She shall have an understanding with the Superior so that no one may leave the Infirmary before being well on the road to recovery. That the Infirmarian, may acquire all the experience requisite for the accomplishment of their important duties, the Sisters possessing the necessary qualifications should be left in office as long as possible.

6. That the House of Providence may be always in a sanitary state, means must be taken, at once, to heat the corridors in winter, and to ventilate the Sisters' Dormitories and Infirmary, as well as the wards of the Aged Women and the orphans' departments.

7. The Sisters must always be very prudent in their intercourse with the world. They shall endeavor to satisfy the demands of all, without however, doing anything that might in any way wound their own conscience. They must

remember that their first rule is charity, and that it obliges them to make themselves all to all in order to make Our Lord better known, loved and served. The special rules given them have no other object than the accomplishment of this general and essential rule of their Institute. In cases of great necessity, they may be dispensed from certain points of their rule, when they find that its observance might cause their neighbor trouble. Acting on this principle, they shall try to go to the parlor only at the hours prescribed by the rule; however, they should be willing to go at other times, when the persons requiring their presence cannot easily return at another hour, or who come from a distance and have much other business. In any event, let all the persons presenting themselves at the Community find naught but praise for the gracious and cordial manner with which they are received by the Sisters. Speaking of the parlor, we repeat what we have already many times mentioned; that we consider you in greater danger of losing your religious spirit in that place of reception, even though it be in the interior of the house and under the eye of your Sisters, than in the homes of the sick and the poor. Watch, then, most carefully over yourselves that your conversations in the parlor may be always edifying. The people who come to visit, expect so much of you.

8. If you have the spirit of simplicity, Our Lord will be pleased to bless all your undertakings, for He looks with complacency upon the humble and the little ones. In the sweet confidence that you are now, and that you always will be animated by this good spirit, we recommend to your charity some works which appear to us important. 1. Apply yourselves to direct in the interior way, the married and single Lady Boarders under your care. For this, give them a Sister Directress able to win their confidence and to care for them. Let it be the same for the persons of the world who come to make a few days' retreat in your Community. 2. Have a ward for girls seeking places for service in good homes. Keep them as long as may be necessary to teach them how to work well, and to fortify them at the same time in the good sentiments with which you will inspire them. Let there be a Sister Guardian for those good girls who will care for them while in the house, and who will place them out when fit for service; who will afterwards follow them closely, and assemble them on Sundays after Vespers to give them pious exercices, and to procure for them the means of preserving their innocence. A list of persons needing servants shall be regularly kept, as well as another of the girls ready to go out to service, with their address and place of residence so that they may be called when needed. 3. Zeal-

ously continue the Work of the Insane, and neglect nothing to render the condition of those unfortunate beings more pleasant. 4. While waiting for Divine Providence to ordain otherwise, content yourselves for the time being with visiting the General Hospital in the St. Lawrence suburbs, and the prison as often as possible.

9. Finally, we recommend you to pay serious attention to the following points which we shall touch but briefly, not to lengthen the present letter.

The singing should be always faithfully exercised in the Community and the Novitiate, and at the orphans; moreover, it should always be simple and grave.

The instructions and exercices of the Novitiate shall be regularly made.— The catalogues must be kept in good order. — The regulation hours shall be rung punctually; the Sister in charge of that office should always remain where she can see the regulation clock. One of the Sister portresses shall always keep near the door, so that people coming on business may not have to wait.— They shall be very exact in keeping the accounts of the poor, also the accounts of each ward.— There shall always be a Sister ready to receive the poor that none may be kept waiting; they shall feed those who are hungry,

and they shall be careful to have the reception room for the poor, well kept and properly heated in winter.—Extra dishes shall be served and passed around the table for the weak and feeble Sisters so that each one may serve herself according to need.

They shall keep to the regulation hours for the visits of outsiders in the wards of the aged and infirm women and in the orphans' department. The officers must not fail to ask the Sisters whether they need anything. Should the companions of an office be required elsewhere, the officer must be notified, in order, that she may take the necessary precautions so that her office may suffer nothing by their absence.— In speaking French, they shall not use the words «*thee*» and «*thou*» to one another; and no one must say «*mine*», «*yours*», «*it is mine*» .... It belongs to the Sister in charge of the different departments to conduct the women and the children to the Cathedral.— The servants must be watched over with special care.— Nothing must be taken from the offices without the officers' permission, and everything must be faithfully returned after using.— They shall never go to take care of women in confinement.— They must remember that the Sisters should never concern themselves with women of disorderly lives.— They shall care for the sick only in houses known to

be perfectly respectable.— Silence of words and actions shall be carefully observed.— They shall take means to have reading for the aged women during meal time, and they must see that their monthly retreat is made with fervor. The elderly women shall be separated from the younger, who have up to the present been admitted to the Providence.— Until further order, no one shall be received into the wards but the aged women and the orphan girls. The old women who rise before, or retire after the others, must be required to keep silence.— Whenever a Sister is sent to any office, either as companion or as substitute, she should read the rules of the office, so that everything may be done with order and neatness.— The Sisters shall assist at the recreations as much as possible.— The furniture of the Community, and even that of the Church and sacristy should reflect the spirit of simplicity which is the spirit proper to this Institute.– Nothing must be neglected to spread the society of the Ladies of Charity, and let them remember that the devotion to Our Lady of Seven Dolors is the principal devotion of the Community; that its mission is to propagate the same by every means possible, in this city and throughout the whole Diocese.

We pray the Lord to grant you the grace, our

very dear Daughters, to have but one heart and one soul, and to work with ever increasing zeal for the relief of all the woes afflicting poor human nature, in union with the labors of Our Lord and His holy Mother.

The present mandate shall be read in chapter at the Community of the Sisters of Charity, Providence Asylum, the first day after its reception, and shall then be preserved in the archives of the said Community.

Given at Montreal, in our Episcopal Palace, the nineteenth day of the month of May, in the year eighteen hundred and forty-six, under our sign and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.
By Monseigneur,
J. O. Paré, Canon, Secretary.

September 19.— Departure of Mgr. Bourget for a second trip to Europe.

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CHAPTER IX.

EPIDEMIC OF TYPHUS.— RETURN OF MGR. BOURGET.— PRIESTS AND NUNS, VICTIMS OF THEIR DEVOTEDNESS.— HOSPICE ST. JEROME EMILIAN.— VOTIVE CANDLES.— PROFESSION.— CIRCULAR LETTER OF MGR. BOURGET CONCERNING THE TYPHUS.— THE DEVOTED PRELATE HAS AN ATTACK OF THE DREAD MALADY.— FEAST OF OUR LADY OF SEVEN DOLORS FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY OF SEPTEMBER.— DEATH OF MGR. POWER.— ILLNESS OF MGR. PRINCE.

1847.

May 18. — At an important assembly, held under the presidency of the Honorable Mayor of the City of Montreal, Mr. Mills, precautionary measures are taken against the typhus (ship fever). Since the first of January, several vessels laden with immigrants have arrived at Grosse Isle (20 miles below Quebec). Seven hundred and ninety cases are declared on board.

May 27.— Mgr. Bourget returns to his episcopal city after a sojourn of several months in Europe.

June 8.— The Grey Nuns go to take care of the immigrants quarantined in vast sheds at Point St. Charles and dying of typhus fever.

June 18.— The typhus rages in the sheds where the Grey Nuns are heroically devoting themselves. Concerning their heroism, we here insert the following extracts from an article appearing in the *Mélanges Religieux* of this date: "We cannot refrain from according a tribute of well-merited praise to the Grey Nuns, who show themselves in every way so worthy of their vocation. Those good Sisters are continually in the midst of that scene of

desolation, carrying everywhere consolation and relief to the poor fever-stricken victims....

The Sisters of Providence have also offered their services. The Hospital Nuns have pledged fifty beds in their wards, but the Health Officers will not permit the patients to be received anywhere within the city limits.... Then, the noble religious women begged the Bishop to allow them to leave the cloister and nurse the patients in the sheds where they are detained in quarantine.''

June 26.— The Grey Nuns are no longer able to care for the plague-infected patients without assistance. Several of their number are ill with the typhus. Mgr. Bourget requests the Sisters of Providence to replace the Grey Nuns among the immigrants. Our Institute, founded but four short years ago, numbers hardly enough members to carry on its own works. The Sisters, however, had already offered their services, and as soon as the Bishop's desire was made known, every one, from Mother Gamelin to the youngest postulant, eagerly volunteered for the care of those poor patients. Twelve Sisters went the very same day to the Hospital Sheds.

July 2.— Monseigneur permits the Nuns of the Hotel-Dieu to leave their cloister to go to the relief of the plague-stricken.

July 7.— Illness and overwork force the Grey Nuns to abandon their relief work.

July 9.— Typhus breaks out at the Hotel-Dieu, and the Nuns of that establishment are obliged to relinquish their post at the sheds.

July 11.— Over one hundred and fifty immigrant children are removed from the sheds to a house in the St. Lawrence Suburbs belonging to Madame Nowlan. Mgr.

Bourget personally presides at the installation of these poor little abandoned waifs in the temporary asylum confided to our Sisters. He gives it the name of Hospice St. Jerome Emilian.

July 12.— Opening of retreat at the Providence. The Sister retreatants continue their daily work at the ambulances. Mgr. Bourget gives an instruction every morning of the Retreat; and in the evening, a priest comes to give the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament to the Community.

July 19.— At seven o'clock in the evening, Mgr. Bourget goes to the chapel of the Asylum. His Lordship speaks in touching terms of the ravages of the epidemic among the members of our young Community; several of our number having been brought to death's door by the scourge. The venerable prelate promises, in the name of the Sisters present, and in that of their successors, that every Friday of the year, seven candles shall be burned in honor of Our Lady of Seven Dolors. We reproduce herewith the text of this vow as formulated by Mgr. Bourget.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.

We, the undersigned, *Sisters of Charity and Servants of the Poor* fearing the effects of the typhus fever now afflicting our young Community, turn to thee, O Mary, our good and tender Mother; to thee do we send forth our sighs and tears. In thee we trust with the most filial confidence for the preservation of our dear Sisters whom this terrible malady threatens to snatch away from us. Watch over us your children, al-

though so unworthy and so imperfect. Obtain for us the health and strength we need for the exercise of the works of charity, the end and special aim of our Institute. We promise thee to make use of this gift only to care for thy Divine Son with affection and charity in the person of His poor. We acknowledge that we have rendered ourselves most unworthy of this great favor by our indifference in practicing and spreading the devotion to thy Seven Sorrows. We are now firmly resolved to repair this culpable negligence, by zealously working with all our strength to propagate so salutary a devotion.

Therefore, *we make a VOW for ourselves, and for all those who shall live after us in this Community*, to burn *seven candles* every Friday of the year, before the holy statue reminding us of thy sorrows. *These seven candles* shall be for us the symbols of the *seven principal virtues* we should practice after thy example and in thy honor; namely, SIMPLICITY, HUMILITY, OBEDIENCE, CONFIDENCE IN PROVIDENCE, ABNEGATION, GENEROSITY and CHARITY.

Deign, O good and tender Mother, to accept this little oblation we make thee, in all simplicity, like children who confidently expect their salvation from the best of Mothers. Amen.

July 21.— At six-fifteen a. m., Mgr. Bourget receives the vows of seven novices in the Chapel of the Providence Asylum. (1) After Mass, five of the newly professed, (2) go to breakfeast, then greeting their companions, relatives and friends most affectionately, they joyfully wend their way to the fever Hospital.

July 30.– The *Melanges Religieux* of current date reprints an article from the *Revue-Canadienne*, from which we cull the few following extracts....."Our Catholic Clergymen continue their career of devotedness and charity in the midst of public calamities. Their ranks are being thinned as on a day of mighty battle, yet the survivors flinch not. Like brave, determined soldiers, they reform their scattered forces and face the enemy anew.... True to its traditions, the ancient and venerable House of St. Sulpice has sustained the brunt of the combat. Five of its noble sons have given their lives for their fellow-men, while others are still hovering between life and death..... This void in the ranks of the sacred battalion does not alter its courage, but under the weight of such heavy losses, it is forced to abandon the care of the *sheds*. Mgr. Bourget has now assumed complete charge .... Several times already has the venerable prelate appeared on the ramparts to encourage the combatants. The brave General, Commander-in-Chief has become a soldier and fights in the forefront where danger is ever the greatest. Monseigneur has opened two refuges where more than two hundred children are sheltered .....In such a career of devotedness and sacrifice, Monseigneur is ably seconded by his

(1) These were the Sisters John the Baptist, Bridget, Wilson, Augustine, Philomena, Patrick and Praxedes.

(2) Sisters Wilson and Augustine were ill with the typhus.

Vicar General, the Very Reverend Father Hudon, and the Very Reverend Canon Truteau. The Reverend Father Rey, the Rev. Jesuit Father Duranquet, Rev. M. Charlan, pastor of St. Clement, Rev. Fathers Hughes, missionary priest of Ottawa, Pominville and others all came at the Bishop's invitation, and cheerfully gave their assistance. They go in turn to the *sheds* to baptise, confess and administer the last sacraments to the dying. A priest remains there day and night, and no patient dies without receiving the ministrations of religion. A goodly number of our separated brethren beg, at the last solemn hour, to be admitted into the bosom of Mother Church.

The heroic lives of sacrifice and the tender charity of our excellent Sisterhoods are already known to us; but, to explain the mystery of it, we must visit them in their convent homes, and follow them to the miserable hovels whither they go to dispense the alms of the wealthy and the consolations of our holy Faith. We see those timid young girls, those frail, delicate women, leaving their holy retreats and marching courageously to the scene of death, with greater joy than worldings go to their festal reunions. The horrors of the plague, the danger of contagion, far from intimidating them do naught but inflame their courage. Many will fall at their post in the hand-to-hand struggle with death; already, five of the Grey Nuns have laid down their lives and twenty-one others are at the last extremity. At the House of Providence, twelve Sisters lie prostrate on beds of pain. Such as have escaped the scourge thus far, have in no way faltered in their daily march, or lessened their visits to the fever camp. We see them daily passing by on their errand of mercy, and they remind us of those flower-crowned victims of ancient times, clad in sacred vestments, surrounded by a

countless multitude, and marching to the altar of sacrifice. Their celestial virtue, the homage and admiration of their fellow citizens, an honest meed of praise on the part even of the enemies of our grand religious institutions, will be their crown of glory. The good wishes and the blessings of pious souls accompany them .... Each morning before leaving their peaceful abodes for the day's work, they bid their dying Sisters an adieu, full of love, of faith and of hope ; and, not knowing whether they shall meet again this side the grave, they give them a sweet trysting place in Eternity ....."

August 12.— The Very Reverend Vicar General Hudon dies of typhus at the Providence Hospice St. Joseph.

August 13.— To date, we count among the victims of the contagion, eight priests and ten Sisters. The priests are: the Very Reverend Vicar General, Hyacinthe Hudon; the Sulpitian Fathers Patrick Morgan, Pierre Richard, Remi Caroff, John Richards, Antoine Rey of the Bishopric, Thomas Patrick Colgan, pastor of St. André d'Argenteuil and Lawrance McEnerny, curate at Lachine. The Reverend Etienne Gottfrey, priest of the Seminary, lost his life at the same time by a deplorable accident while on his way to minister to the sick. (1)

Among the Sisters are seven Grey Nuns : the Sisters Limoges, Collins, Chevrefils, Barbeau, Elodie Bruyère, Sainte-Croix (Pominville), Nobles : also three Sisters of the Hotel-Dieu : Sisters Gertrude Poirier, Sophie Darche and Josephine Portelance. The number of patients has in-

(1) At Quebec, five priests have won the double crown of martyrdom and charity by their zeal in attending the patients. They are the Reverend Hubert Robson, Hugh Paisley, Edward Montminy, Pierre Roy and Felix Severin Bardy.

creased at the Providence, but thus far none have succumbed.

Mgr. Bourget addresses a Circular Letter to his diocesans eulogizing the priests, the religious and the laity who have exposed their lives to succor the plague-stricken. We subjoin the following passages:

Great consternation has spread among all classes of society at the sight of the terrible epidemic now raging at our very door, and our cup of anguish is filled to overflowing. Our city, in its desolate state may well be compared to Jerusalem, the once cherished city of Our Lord, and it can borrow from the Prophet Jeremiah, his canticle of mourning to deplore its misfortune. *The Lord hath made me desolate, wasted with sorrow all the day long .... He hath trodden the wine-press for the virgin daughter of Juda. Therefore do I weep, and my eyes run down with water. Hear, I pray you, all ye people, and see my sorrow. My priests and my ancients pined away in the city*.....(1) Alas! a sudden and unexpected death has taken them from me. No longer do I see them at the altar where daily they offered for me the August Victim. No longer do I hear from the chair of truth their holy words vivified by their good example, making me comprehend so well, the horror of vice, and the love of virtue.

(1) Bk. I, c. I, V. 13.

No more do I find them in the sacred tribunal of penance, where so often in the transports of their charity, they mingled their tears with the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ to wash away the impurities of my soul. In vain do I seek them in the hallowed sanctuaries, where, at each recurring solemnity, they took their places with such religious gravity and decorum. Mournfully the echoes repeat the words: Alas! departed, are those good shepherds, who like the Divine Master, gave their lives for their sheep! *Sacerdotes mei et senes mei in turbe consumpti sunt.* (1) Nor is this all; hearken again to the recital of my bitter woe. My consecrated virgins have fallen beneath the cruel sword of dire affliction. Religion, in forming them to the angelic life of their choice, placed in their hearts noble sentiments of devotedness, the most absolute and entire. Deep in their souls she engraved compassion for every misery, tenderness for every misfortune. She bequeathed to them for fathers and mothers, for brothers and sisters, all classes of poor whom she taught them to look upon as their greatest treasures in this world, and that in caring for them, they cared for Jesus Christ. She endowed them with supernatural courage so far above the common weakness of their sex. Behold the motive

(1) Id. c. 19.

power enabling them to devote themselves with all their strength to the relief of misery so intense; their sole regret being their utter inability to do yet more for the love of the God of the Poor, lying now, as of yore, upon straw in the forsaken Stable of Bethlehem. Behold, too, why they faced with such marvellous intrepidity,the awful plague which filled every heart with terror; why they braved, without fear — even with joy — death with all its attendant horrors. Alas! the pitiless scourge has attacked our heroines of charity, and ten have already succumbed to its dread ravages. Fallen on the field of honor are those angels of mercy who brought consolation to so many afflicted souls! Vanished from our midst forever, are those brave and gentle volunteers, who hied to the house of mourning with greater joy than the votaries of the world to scenes of feasting and revelry! No longer will they be seen hovering by the bedside of the dying, whispering words of comfort in their awful hour of agony. Instead of the hymns of exultation resounding but a few days agone in these humble halls of the Servants of the Poor, a mournful silence now reigns; a silence, broken only from time to time by the solemn funeral dirge, announcing another body borne to its last resting place,—another victim fallen beneath the sword of the Avenging Angel, Death!.... Gone are those valiant men and

women whose virtues, and whose unalterable charity were the brightest ornaments of this city and diocese! We owe them a well-merited tribute of praise; yet the silent tears we shed in the secret depths of our soul will be far more eloquent than any word we can utter.

Who or what can comfort us in our great affliction? Faith alone, dearly beloved brethren, has that power. Faith inspired those whom we mourn today with that ardent courage that made them so brave in the hour of trial; so too, Faith, will make us accept with humble resignation, the repeated blows from the hand of a Father so justly irritated by our sins. In our heart-rending agony this thought should be our consolation. The dear departed whose loss we deplore, met their death in exercising the works of mercy proclaimed in the Gospel, as leading surely to life eternal. They quenched the burning thirst of thousands consumed by raging fever; they harbored the harborless, they visited the sick, they buried the dead. Oh! let us hope that they will receive the recompense promised by God whose word is truth infallible. Far from mourning their loss, let us rather rejoice in their happiness, while envying their eternal reward.

(August 13.)

August 18.— Sister Assumption (Brady) dies of the typhus. Her death is the first registered among our Sisters since the Foundation of our Institute.

August 21.— Death of Sister Angelique Blouin, Novice, of typhus.

September 2. — Mgr Bourget, ill with the typhus at our Hospice St. Joseph, since August thirteenth, was able to go to the Cathedral today for the first time. His illness, though not acute, had been a cause of great apprehension to his diocesans.

September 6.— Mgr. Bourget establishes the Feast of Our Lady of Seven Dolors, celebrated the third Sunday of September, as a Feast of our Institute. He announced it by the following Act.

IGNACE BOURGET, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC.

To our very dear Daughters, the Sisters of Charity at the Providence Asylum, greeting and benediction in our Lord:

In virtue of an indult of the Holy, Apostolic See, dated the fourteenth of March of the present year, we establish in the church of your Community, the feast of Our Lady of Seven Dolors to be celebrated each year under the rite of double major, on the third Sunday of September. The Chaplains shall say the office, and all the priests celebrating in the said church, shall say the Mass of the feast.

All the members of the Confraternity of Our

Lady of Seven Dolors, who confessing with sincere contrition, receiving Holy Communion, and assisting at the procession made on that day in the said church, and there praying with devotion for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff, may gain a plenary indulgence.

Given at Montreal, in our Episcopal Palace, this sixth day of the month of September, in the year eighteen hundred and forty-seven, under our sign and seal and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

By Monseigneur,

J. O. Paré, Canon, Secretary.

September 30.— The Sisters of Providence discontinue their ministrations to the sick at the *sheds* of the Point St. Charles.

N. B.— For over three months, the Community was under such a heavy strain, that at one time, Mgr. Bourget seemed to fear its complete destruction. Of the fifty or more Sisters, forming at that period the total personnel (professed, novices and postulants) of our Institute, thirty-four had been devoted to the care of the fever-stricken immigrants; while the others, were employed, either in the care of the Sisters at the Infirmary, or of the clergymen ill with typhus at the Hospice St. Joseph. Others were busied in caring for the orphaned immigrant children, or in performing various necessary duties connected with the service of the poor. Each and all were overcome with exhaustion and fatigue, and collapsing at their posts of duty.

Two Sisters had died, and a third was at the last extremity. Twenty-seven Sisters in all, had fallen victims to the epidemic. We here give their family names and their names in religion. Up to the present date, many professed Sisters were simply known by their family name.

PROFESSED.

Sr. Margaret Thibodeau	*in religion,*	*Sr. Imm. Conception*	
" *Agathe Séné*	"	" *Zotique*	
" *Justine Michon*	"	" *Mary of the 7 Dolors*	
" *Ursule Leblanc*	"	" *M. of the Crucifix*	
" *Hermenegilde Choquette*	"	" *Mary Elizabeth*	
" *Cleophee Legault*	"	" *Janviere*	
" *Catherine Brady*	"	" *L'Assomption*	
" *Cleophee Tetu*	"	" *Theresa of Jesus*	
" *Cesarie Gadbois*	"	" *Ignatius of Loyola*	

(Of the profession of July 21, 1847.)

Sr. Sophie Longtin	*in religion*	*Sr. John Baptist*	
" *Margaret Walsh*	"	" *Bridget*	
" *Henrietta Wilson*			
" *Suzan Ladouceur*	"	" *Augustine*	
" *Desanges Lamothe*	"	" *Praxedes*	

NOVICES.

Sr. Marg. Boissonneault	*in religion*	*Sr. Assumption*	
" *Flore Hudon*	"	" *Annunciation*	
" *Mathilde Davignon*	"	" *Magdalene*	
" *Zoe Masson*	"	" *Stanislaus*	
" *Elizabeth Caron*	"	" *Thomas*	
" *Vitaline Bougret Dufort*	"	" *Rose of Lima*	
" *Olympe Guy*	"	" *Anthony*	
" *Julie Pariseau*	"	" *Martin*	

Sr. Angelique Belouin
" *Marie Rousseau*

POSTULANTS.

Sr. Bridget Ennis	*in religion*	*Sr. Catherine*
" *Albine Gadbois*	"	" *M. de Bon Secours*
" *Francis Lyman*	"	" *Margaret*

The seven other Sisters employed at the ambulances, and who escaped the contagion were :

Sr. Victoire Larocque		
" *Clemence Robert*	*in religion*	*Sr. Nativity*
" *Esther Pariseau*	"	" *Joseph of the Sacred H.*
" *Justine Talon-L'Esperance*		" *Alphonse Rodriguez*
" *Eliza Morrison*	"	" *Patrick*
" *Theotiste Bricault Lamarche*		" *Charles*
" *Cesarie Watier*	"	" *Visitation*

Sister Assumption (Brady), although suffering with lung trouble, willingly offered herself to care for the plague patients; she very soon took the fever and died on August eighteenth. Three days later, (August 21) Sister Angelique Belouin succumbed to the scourge. Sister Olympe Guy seemed to have recovered from the fever; she never rose again however, from her bed of sickness, but lingered on for many long months in great suffering.

We have seen further back how twelve Sisters had contracted the malady since the end of July. It is very difficult to record the exact number who became infected during their stay in the Infirmary. The annals of those dark days are extremely laconic. No one could think of writing when the number left to care for the sick Sisters

was so limited that several ladies aud young girls resolutely volunteered their services for night duty, thus heroically exposing their own precious lives. A few fragmentary notes jotted down in the greatest haste, were all that could be consigned to the archives in those sad hours of dire calamity. Recalling those souvenirs after the scourge had passed away, the annalist of that dismal period assures us that it was a most pitiful sight to see so many Sisters lying ill unto death, with more than twenty raving in the wildest delirium.

The number of Sisters of Providence employed in caring for the sick at the temporary Hospital necessarily diminished until at the end of September, instead of being twelve or more as at the beginning, but three remained to nurse the immigrants. The Grey Nuns then returned to the charge, thus permitting our Sisters to assume the care of the immigrant orphan girls, heretofore with the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. The Hospice St. Jerome had previously taken only the little boys sent from the ambulances.

October 1.— Death of Mgr. Michael Power, Bishop of Toronto. The regretted prelate had contracted the typhus in visiting the immigrants whom he attended with untiring zeal, Mgr. Power died at the early age of forty-three years.

October 14.— Mgr. Prince receives the last sacraments. His Lordship was stricken while devoting himself with heroism to the wants of the victims dying of the plague.

November 5.— We learn the good news of Mgr. Prince's convalescence, and of his being able to return to the Bishopric.

CHAPTER X.

ADOPTION OF THE IMMIGRANT ORPHANS.— CLOSING OF THE HOSPICE ST. JEROME.— MANDATES OF THE THIRD REGULAR VISIT BY MGR. BOURGET.— PROJECT OF AMBULANCES AT GROSSE-ISLE.— FORTY HOURS OF MARY DESOLATE.— PILGRIMAGE TO OUR LADY OF BONSECOURS.

1848.

March 9.— Mgr. Bourget publishes a Mandate inviting the faithful of his diocese to adopt the immigrant orphans.

March 13.— A large number of citizens go to the Hospice St. Jerome to adopt the immigrant children whose parents died of typhus.

The Melanges Religieux publishes the following account: On Monday, the orphans' Home was crowded with visitors the whole day, so eager were the people to gather the first fruits of their precious heritage. Each one makes his own selection: the Seminary of St. Sulpice takes twelve boys for its share, intending to educate those found fit.... The Brothers of the Christian Scools claim six of the little unfortunates to rear and render worthy children of their Father Founder, the Venerable John Baptist de la Salle. The Congregation Nuns take six little girls with the intention of adopting others later on. The Grey Nuns choose by preference six of the most forsaken little girls. The Sisters of Providence select the most afflicted and infirm. The Sisters of the Good Shepherd take six more in addition to those they already have. Quite a number of excellent families open their hearts and

homes to the innocent victims of a desolated country. Others prefer to place the children they adopt in some Community to be educated according to their means. One individual extended his generosity so far as to pay for the care of six adopted little ones. Others clubbed together to pay for the education of their wards, thus giving themselves the pleasure, as well as the merit of a noble deed. Many most heart-rending scenes were enacted during the course of this never-to-be forgotten day. When the moment came for the children, fortunate enough to be taken by guardians or foster parents, to leave brother or sister or near relative, and to part from one another, their sorrow was most pitiful to behold. Huddled together in groups with arms entwined about one another, and tears streaming down their cheeks, they refused to be comforted. Sobbing and weeping, they bemoaned the sad fate of being forever separated from the only beings left of their once happy homes. At this mournful spectacle, the visitors themselves could not restrain the tears welling forth unbidden by such a painful, heart-gripping, human tragedy. The thoughts expressed by the Bishop of Montreal in his pastoral letter concerning the goodness of those children, exiled and alone on foreign shores, and their gratitude for whatever might be done for them were fully verified .... *Oh! how amiable and interesting would you find these dear children, could you but know how keenly they feel all that is done for them. How heart-broken they are when forced to separate, never, perhaps to meet again! . . . .How attentively they study whomsoever comes to adopt them.... How sincere their grief, and how bitter the tears they shed when they must say farewell to the tender mothers whom religion prepared for them in their direst need* .... Heart-throbs of genuine sympathy spread over the entire assembly. One lady, who came with the intention of taking just one little

girl, could not find it in her heart to withstand the pleading of her two brothers who piteously implored her not to separate them. She embraced the three loving winsome children and took them to her heart and home.

The wards of St. Jerome seemed quite empty, when a good mother of a family heard faint, smothered cries coming from behind a vacant bed. She searched and found a poor, little crippled girl crouching there to hide her ugliness and deformity. The brave woman has ten children of her own to provide for; but the sight of such extreme wretchedness inspires her with greater tenderness than would the most attractive beauty; so, pressing the forlorn child close to her bosom and covering her with loving kisses, she assures her that she will always be her mother.

The personnel of the Hospice St. Jerome is quickly dispersed, and the house temporarily closed.

Sixty children remain the heritage of our Sisters and are placed in our different houses. Their good dispositions make us hope for the realization of the wish formulated by Mgr. Bourget: "In adopting these poor children we will make them companions of our faith, good priests, fervent religious and excellent citizens. (1)

April 14.— Feast of Our Lady of Seven Dolors. Mgr. Bourget reads the following Letter to the Community and opens his third pastoral visit.

(1) For fuller details concerning the typhus epidemic of the year 1847, see *Life of Mother Gamelin.*

LETTER

OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL, FOR THE EPISCOPAL VISIT TO THE PROVIDENCE.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To our very dear Daughters, the Sisters of Charity, administrators of the Providence Asylum for the Aged and Infirm Women, greeting and benediction in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

We could not make our visit to your Community last year, our very dear Daughters, owing to the terrible epidemic raging at the very gates of our city, and which attacked nearly every one of you; but our Lord Himself deigned to reward you by visiting you in divers other ways.

We have the consolation this year, of being able to offer you the extraordinary graces and helps that the All-good and All-Merciful Lord attaches to the visit of the first Pastors. You, personally, have petitioned for this favor, and we have already announced it to you. You have prepared yourselves for it during the annual retreat, where you failed not to be penetrated with lively sentiments of faith for the approach of the great solemnity provided for you by the Lord in His ineffable mercy.

You are, therefore, fully disposed to receive us with that profound respect with which you would receive Our Lord Jesus in person, were He to visit you, as long ago He visited the holy women. Well may they be considered the first Sisters of Charity for highly have they honored the Church by their many good works. They followed the Master wherever He went, and aided Him by placing their all at His disposal. Is not this what you likewise do; or, at least, what you ardently desire to do, when like them, you consecrate yourselves to the service of the poor and the sick in whose person, by the light of faith, you discern the Lord Jesus?

During these days of recollection, seriously entering into yourselves, you will be penetrated with the need you have of Our Lord's visit to be healed of all your spiritual ills and weaknesses. This sentiment of lowliness, our very dear Daughters, is one of the most precious favors Our Lord grants to His chosen ones. Very blind, very poor, very miserable are those souls who think themselves rich and in need of nothing. Such a state of presumption and temerity is one of the greatest chastisements, God in His wrath, inflicts upon those who allow themselves to grow remiss in their duties. May Our Lord preserve you from this sad state, our very dear Daughters, and may

He grant you self-knowledge! Knowing yourselves, you will have no difficulty in keeping lowly sentiments of humility, mistrust of yourselves, and simplicity. These are all virtues proper to your Institute.

The most abundant graces generally flow from the visit of the chief Pastor. Let us hope that this third pastoral visit, undertaken for your welfare, will draw down all manner of blessings,—the only ones worth working for— upon your young Community. That there may be no obstacle to the innumerable graces Our Lord destines for you in this visit, let each one examine before God to find out what may be displeasing to Him, either in her own soul or in the interior of her Community. You all comprehend the necessity of laboring not only to your own personal perfection, but likewise to that of your Community. Let this examen be made seriously, but calmly and without passion. Let your intentions be pure and upright; act in all things for the greater glory of God. Do not let yourselves become the prey of discouragement which leads to spiritual death; be humbly confident that God will be touched by your pleadings, and that He will speedily apply a healing balm to the many wounds now distressing you. Oh! how good God is for having called you to so holy a life! In heaven alone, our very dear Daughters, will you be able to fully realize the

immensity of the favors showered upon you. But on earth, at least, you can do all in your power to respond to His holy love. He has given you the beautiful title of *Daughters of Charity;* hence, He has every right to expect that you be really and truly such by your actions. *Daughters of Charity*, love the Lord God Who has so loved you, and for the love of Him, sacrifice yourselves wholly and entirely. Renounce, for His sweet sake, all pride, all self-love, all desire to please the world, all spirit of division, all attachment to your own opinion, all desire of dominating and all negligence in the accomplishment of your important duties.

Almighty God evidently wills to make use of you, our very dear Daughters, as His instruments in the performance of the many works of charity growing daily more and more urgent. But, mark it well, you must place no obstacle in the way of His merciful designs. If He find you disposed, for love of Him, to make the sacrifices He has a right to expect from you; above all, if He find you perfectly united in peace and charity, all of one heart and one soul, oh! then will He condescend to employ you as the channels of His adorable will in behalf of the unfortunate. Contrariwise, were He to find among you a spirit of contention, of cabal, of ambition, of disobedience, the spirit of the world,—in a word—a bad

spirit, He would no longer make use of you for the exercise of His great mercies towards the poor, the sick, the orphans, the prisoners, the insane.

Oh! our very dear Daughters, too well do you know the value of these grand and holy works to expose yourselves, through your own fault, to so great a misfortune, to so terrible a responsibility, by your infidelity to grace, rendering yourselves thereby incapable of bringing your holy undertakings to a successful issue. What must you do to become less unworthy of the graces you need? Nothing more than the faithful practice of the words addressed you by Our Lord when you entered this holy House: *If you will come after Me, renounce yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Me.* God grant you may well understand His divine words; above all may He give you the grace to practice them faithfully to your dying breath!

For these reasons, the holy Name of God invoking, we have decreed, enacted and ordained, decreeing, enacting and ordaining that which follows:

1. This afternoon at about three o'clock, we shall go to the Providence Asylum and make our solemn entry in conformity with the rules of the Customary.

2. We shall give Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in honor of our Lady of Seven Dolors; we shall then make the visit of the Tabernacle, of the sacred vessels and of the altar.

3. We shall afterwards proceed to the Community room where we shall give a few words of advice to the professed Sisters; and we shall begin to hear them in direction.

4. We shall follow, during the whole time of the visit, what is prescribed in the Rules and Customary; and we shall regulate the exercises to be performed during these days of salvation.

5. We shall conclude the visit on the day most convenient, after we shall have fulfilled all the duties imposed by the Good Shepherd for the visit of Communities, and we shall follow what is prescribed for this ceremony.

We place this visit under the protection of Our Lady of Seven Dolors to whom you have the happiness of being especially consecrated; of the blessed St. Vincent de Paul, of St. Elizabeth and of St. Genevieve, who have been given you for protectors. We heartily recommend its success to the powerful mediation of the holy Angels charged with the care of your persons and of your holy Institute.

The present Letter shall be read in Chapter today, immediately before the particular examen.

Given at Montreal on the day consecrated to honoring the sorrows of Mary, the fourteenth day of April, eighteen hundred and forty-eight, under our sign and seal and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.
By Monseigneur,
A. Lacombe, Eccl. Secretary.

April 18.— Mgr. Bourget, fearing a recrudescence of the typhus, arranges with His Grace, the Archbishop of Quebec and Mother Gamelin for the establishment of a post for Hospital Sisters at Grosse-Isle. Seven Sisters are chosen for that service on this day, April 18. (1)

(1) God accepted the good will of His servants. The fever did not reappear in 1848. Only a few cases remained over from 1847.

LETTER

OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL, FOR THE CLOSE OF THE THIRD PASTORAL VISIT AT THE ASYLUM FOR THE AGED AND INFIRM WOMEN IN THE HOUSE OF PROVIDENCE.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To our very dear Daughters, the Sisters of Charity, Administrators of the Asylum for the Aged and Infirm Women in the House of Providence, greeting and benediction in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

We terminate today, our very dear Daughters, the pastoral visit begun on Friday last,— a day very dear to your hearts because consecrated to the devotion of Our Lady of Seven Dolors; also, because of its being the anniversary of your consecration to Our Sorrowful Mother, and the foundation day of your new Community.

This visit, like the two first already made, was attended with the most abundant consolations for us. You received us with a respect as full of faith, as if you had received an angel of the Lord, or better still the Lord Himself. The simplicity with which you humbly acknowledged your personal faults, as well as the defects reigning in

your Community, inspires us with genuine confidence in your good will, and makes us believe that the Lord, whose delight is to *converse with the simple*, will deign to establish His dwelling amongst you, and will Himself direct you in the paths of justice, and bring you to the perfection of your holy state. You have manifested such zeal for the complete and entire accomplishment of your holy Rules, that we are fully convinced of your being well disposed to profit of the different admonitions we shall give you, and that you will consider them as commandments addressed to you by Our Lord Himself for the relief of your consciences, and for the greater good of your Community. We shall proceed with the greatest simplicity, and we shall divide the whole into sections that you may better keep them in mind. They will touch upon the sacred engagements you have contracted with the Lord for the practice of charity, poverty, obedience and chastity; besides other subjects concerning the general welfare of your infant Institute.

OF CHARITY.

Be well penetrated with the serious obligations imposed upon you by the Lord Who calls you, notwithstanding your unworthiness, to the sublime vocation of Daughters and Sisters of Charity.

Love God with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul and all your strength: for this is the first as well as the greatest of all commandments.

Love the August Virgin Mary with a most tender and childlike affection; to her you owe the happiness and the honor of being consecrated to God. In herloving bosom you became children of religion upon Calvary, at the foot of the Cross beneath the eye of a God dying for love of mankind. What powerful motives for you to be true and worthy Daughters of Charity!

Love your Community, since of your own free will you chose her for your mother; for love of her you have forsaken the mothers who brought you forth. Labor for her as good daughters should labor for the mother they fondly cherish, and who is in the direst poverty. Never speak of her but with respect and affection; endeavor to prove in every way possible, your happiness in having been admitted among her children in spite of all your unworthiness.

Love one another for the love of Jesus Christ, and avoid with the greatest care all the defects which might wound charity. Let no bitter reproach, no harsh word, no secret animosity, no quarrelsome contention, no spirit of cabal or intrigue ever arise to disturb that peace and order which

are the most beautiful fruits of charity. Let the Sister Monitress, charged to warn you of all the faults committed against charity, acquit herself zealously of so honorable a duty. Banish far from you all those injurious suspicions, those tormenting thoughts, those rash judgments that might cause indifference or coldness to spring up and wither your hearts to the ruin of charity. Have confidence in one another. Fear not to communicate in all simplicity whatever God may have inspired you with for the greater good of your Community. Animated by this mutual understanding, speak out your minds with perfect freedom in the councils without fear of wounding any one. Never act in a secret and hidden manner like slaves in the service of harsh and cruel masters. Help and assist one another so that you may be mutually relieved in the hard work which overburdens you. Be careful, however, not to disturb the companions of a different office without having consulted with the officer beforehand. Should you disclose your troubles to one another, let it be with the intention of mutually encouraging yourselves to bear them with generosity. Avoid with great care anything in these communications that might cause others to fall into discouragement.

Bear patiently with one another, recalling to mind that your Sisters have much more to endure

from you than you have to suffer through them. Warn one another charitably of all exterior failings.

Make the public avowal of your faults with simplicity and humility, being fully aware that your Sisters, who love you tenderly, and who desire nothing more than your perfection, know well all your defects.

It costs proud nature much to accuse one's own self.... But remember, it is the demon who raises all these objections in your minds; for well he knows the great profits such voluntary self-accusations bring to a religious soul.

Avoid with care, fly even, from particular friendships, because they are the plague of Communities.

Apply yourselves above all to train your novices well. Remember that the future welfare of your Community depends upon their present formation.

Let the Community Sisters go to the Novitiate only when absolutely necessary, and let them remain there no longer than the time actually required for the affair in hand. Such, our very dear Daughters, are the duties of charity you must fulfill with regard to your Community.

Then, let your charity be exercised before and above all in favor of the *aged and infirm women.* Remember always that they are the foundation stones of your Institute. The principal name given your House bears witness to this fact, as it is properly and legally known as the *Asylum for Aged and Infirm Women.*

For the better exercise of charity, receive into the Asylum by preference those who are the most decrepit and infirm; because of their sad condition, they are in the greatest need. Exert yourselves to the utmost to provide these poor, old people with the food, clothing and care their infirmities require. Treat them as you would your own mothers. That says everything. Above all, give them instruction and the helps of religion. See that they frequent the sacraments regularly. Watch over them so that they may live in peace and harmony. Redouble your care of them when ill, and be zealous in preparing them for a happy death. Receive their last sigh with truly filial affection. Follow them beyond the grave by fervent prayer. Never fail to have them recommended to the prayers of the faithful who frequent your church. Try to have as many people as possible assist at the funeral services you have celebrated for the repose of their souls.

Be devoted in heart and soul to your poor

and your sick; the care of them is the principal end for which you have been instituted. Look upon them always as precious treasures, and see in their persons Jesus Christ suffering and dying.

Be careful never to treat them with indifference, much less with haughtiness which would be most unpardonable. Treat every one alike; if at times you must show preference, let it always be for the poorest and most miserable. Never let them wait too long, either in the parlor or elsewhere through your fault. Treat them with such kindness and compassion that they may withdraw, happy and satisfied with your sweet and amiable ways, even though you cannot assist them according to their desires.

In imitation of Our Lord, who went about doing good to all, let your pathway be marked everywhere by some deed of charity and love.

Since you should consider yourselves the humble servants of your poor and your sick, the loving daughters of your old women, so must you, likewise, be the mothers of your little orphans. Those dear children trained and formed by you in your schools should be able to make an honest living after leaving you; and by their good conduct spread abroad the fair name of your Community. Let us hope that God will reward your

zeal in cultivating the garden of their hearts by giving them the vocation of sharing in your labors. Hence, while carefully watching over their innocence, you may be forming chaste Spouses of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

A certain means of awakening interest in the beautiful work of the orphanage would be to invite wealthy and charitable ladies to your different little exhibitions. Should they offer to pay something for the board of one or more orphans, so much the better. From time to time, it would be proper for such children to write to their benefactresses in token of gratitude. It would also be well for the ladies, friendly to your Community, to bring the strangers who flock annually to our city, and who are always eager to inspect our different establishments, to visit your little orphans. The children's room should have glass cases well filled with a variety of rare objects and curios. May Divine Providence bless these suggestions and enable you to shelter a large number of His poor, abandoned children!

The Lady Boarders also merit your tender and earnest care. Since they have willingly chosen your Community as a place where they may withdraw from the noise of the world and meditate in peace upon the eternal years, you must secure for them the means of satisfying their piety.

Let each and every one of these virtuous ladies be equally dear to you. Were the slightest preference shown, they might be tempted to complain, to murmur or even to leave the house. Cultivate the good dispositions they now manifest, and the desire they have to lead the common life to a certain extent.....

Let those who have anything to do with the ladies be well filled with the spirit of God. Otherwise, far from finding in your house the religious spirit expected of you, those persons would soon communicate to you the spirit of the world; then, alas! farewell to your Institute!

Try to associate them with you in all your works; this is the surest means of leading them to perfection, and of attaching them to your house all on account of the great consolations which always accompany good works.

Entertain with the Ladies of Charity the most intimate and cordial relations, in order to attach them strongly to the Institute for the greater good of the poor. Whenever they come to the house, receive them with the most affectionate and sincere friendship. When they assemble for sewing and helping you to clothe the poor, let there be at least two Sisters detailed to work with them, and to encourage them in their

praiseworthy efforts. Let the said Sisters be affable, yet very discreet, and let them season the work with pious readings and edifying conversations. Associate the Ladies of Charity with you in all your good works, but leave to them all the honor and glory. In fine, let your conduct be at all times so admirable that they may have naught but words of praise for their charitable relations with you, and let them always withdraw from you, edified and consoled by your charity and modesty.

Prepare yourselves far in advance for the very necessary works of the prisoners and of the insane; meanwhile, let us hope that God will one day provide us with the means of caring for the patients in the General Hospital of the St. Lawrence Quarter.

Beg daily for the grace of having good servants, and neglect nothing that may render those you have better christians. Endear them to the service of the house by kind treatment, and try to keep them for many years. Endeavor to have them follow the rules and regulations through love of duty rather than through fear.

With regard to the Hospice St. Joseph, we have but one recommendation to make; and that is to remember always that the priests retired there, have used their strength in the service of the holy

altar. Therefore, we should treat them with the deepest respect and the most profound veneration. Whatever their holiness may be, you should always strictly observe the regulations prescribed, and never remain alone with any of them. Be always accompanied when you enter their rooms, unless it be for an instant only, or that the doors be left open. Keep at a respectful distance when you have no service to render, and avoid all useless conversation. Pray for them unceasingly that they may find under the protection of St. Joseph, the helps for their salvation, and the grace of a holy and happy death.

POVERTY.

Remember that the spirit of poverty should always be your personal and distinctive characteristic. Look upon the things you use as being loaned to you by the Community: consequently, never give, lend, borrow, exchange or receive anything without permission. Never take anything out of the offices of others without the permission of the person in charge; if, at times, it becomes necessary to do so, be faithful to render an account to whom concerned. Return whatever you have taken with as little delay as possible. Look upon the different offices as so many houses of strangers.

Take as much care of what is confided to your keeping, or given you for your personal use as you would of whatever might be loaned you by outsiders, and which you are expected to return in good order. Let your clothing, your books, your furniture, your vehicles, and even the ornaments of your churches bear the mark of that spirit of poverty by which you should be animated.

Quicken your spirit of poverty by an unbounded confidence in Divine Providence, and believe firmly that as long as you are true Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul, the same Divine Providence will let you want for nothing, and that it will provide you with whatever is needful for your works. Past experience should convince you forever of this truth. But if, through a spirit of poverty, your clothing should be poor, never forget that it must be always neat and decent. Your continual intercourse with the people of the world makes this imperative for you. For the same reason, while you should everywhere practice the spirit of simplicity, you should observe all the proprieties becoming your holy state. For instance, whether in the city or out in the country, never ride in any conveyance that might expose you to ridicule or contempt; neither is it proper for you when walking along country roads to cut across fields the sooner to reach your destination.

In all similar circumstances, ask yourselves whether such little liberties taken on recreation days, are permitted by the rules of simplicity or modesty.

OBEDIENCE.

Consider Jesus Christ in the person of the Superiors who conduct you. Obey them blindly and lovingly as you would Our Lord Himself. Believe that with such an obedience of faith and confidence, a Community is capable of everything.

Avoid all murmurs, all complaints, all reflections against obedience. Beware of all mistrust of your Superiors or officers, or of thinking them unqualified to guide you. Know you not that God would sooner perform a miracle than abandon a Community where reigns the obedience of faith; that is to say, wherever obedience is given to whomsoever belongs the right to command, in the firm conviction that it is God Himself Whom we obey. Fail not to rise each time the Superior enters or leaves the apartment. The rule prescribing this outward mark of respect is founded upon the spirit of faith which makes you see God in her person. Believe that God will be honored by the honor you render your Superior, and the graces He grants her for your guidance will be in proportion to your good dispositions in obeying

her with faith. Be exact in asking your permissions daily so that you may do nothing except in the spirit of obedience: then, perform freely all the rest of the day whatever your rule prescribes for the good administration of your office.

Apply yourselves to the training of good officers, since upon them depends the happiness of your Community. Provide in such a way that several Sisters may fill the same office successfully, so that in case of the death or displacement of an officer there may be always some one ready to fill the vacancy. For the same reason, it would be unwise to withdraw a Sister from an office for which she shows aptitude before she has acquired the necessary skill and experience.

Try to do everything with the utmost perfection possible, considering that God is so great and so perfect that we can never do enough for Him, nor reach His perfection.

Trust in all humility that if you apply yourselves to fulfill the duties of your office with purity of intention, and in the simplicity of your souls, God will be pleased to bestow upon you the gift of wisdom which will enable you to accomplish all things.

Avoid all negligence in the work sent you from outside, so that the people who place their

orders with you for your encouragement, will have only praise for you. It would be very hurtful to the Community, had they just reason to complain of you.

Through a spirit of punctuality, give each exercise the time allotted by the rule, and perform it always in the place and in the manner prescribed. For instance, remain at table for dinner and supper the whole half hour the rule allows you for those repasts. Besides, this is necessary for health; and the time devoted to the needs of the body is not lost for the nourishment of the soul, provided you listen attentively to the reading during the meals. For the same principle of health and perfect regularity, never exchange beds, bed-linen, pillows or bolsters.

Let those who are unable to eat at the common table, remain at the table set apart for the weak. In eating at this table, the sickly Sisters will imitate the obedience of St. Aloysius Gonzaga who gave his body the relief his Superiors required of him; but who so well knew how to compensate himself by the practice of interior mortification. In order that all may be able to endure the labors of the Institute, let the ordinary fare be wholesome and nourishing as prescribed by the rule.

Let not the work of the Sisters be of so exhausting a nature as to undermine their strength in a few years. Their health belongs first of all to the poor and the sick, according to the spirit of the rule, because for the sake of these, they voluntarily became the *Servants of the poor.* Again, for the same reason, let the Community be provided with sufficient linen so as to avoid too heavy and too frequent washings.

Let the persons charged to watch over the Sisters' health be exact in remarking those who do not eat at the refectory..... and let them report to the Superior. Have the Sisters who need treatment go to the Infirmary without waiting until their condition becomes critical. Let them there receive all the spiritual and corporal care they have a right to expect from the Community who is their mother. Warn the confessor in time that he may administer the sacraments for their consolation. Cheer them by regular and interesting visits. Do not permit them to leave the Infirmary before they are able to resume work. Let them take their meals a while longer at the table for the weak.

For more perfect regularity, let the catalogues be carefully kept that each one may see what she has to do. On that catalogue let there be movable stops opposite each Sister's

name; and on confession days, let each one draw out her stop to signify that she will go to confession that day when her turn comes. In this way each may foresee in the morning the hour she should present herself, thus avoiding the trouble of seeking one another to inform them of their turn; above all else, do not to keep the confessor waiting.

Walk always in the presence of God, and religiously keep silence of words and actions as a necessary means to nourish within your souls the interior spirit. Never let the sound of doors opening and closing noisily, heavy and hurried footsteps, nor loud and excited voices be heard in your houses. Have such strong control over all the movements of nature that no matter what interior revolts or contrarieties you may have to endure, no trace thereof may appear upon your countenance. All this means very much for regularity, and contributes greatly to that interior silence of the soul, that perfect calmness which is a foretaste of heaven. Should there be necessity to speak in times of silence, let it be always in a low tone of voice. Let us be faithful to this rule even out of the house, unless we have to treat with strangers.

Let all the books belonging to the Community, except those for the Sisters' personal use,

and those required by the Pharmacists, be gathered together into one place. Let them be arranged in order, and let the Sister Librarian take exact note of all, so that the books the Sisters wish to read with the Superior's permission, may be found without delay.

The different orders for work to be done in the Community must be carefully entered in detail, so that all confusion, disorder and misunderstandings may be avoided.

An exact register must be kept of those requesting admission to the Novitiate, and every information concerning the candidates should be taken before their entrance.

CHASTITY.

Be pure as angels, always considering yourselves the Spouses of the Lamb without spot. Never rely upon your purity, but ever dread both surprises and temptations. Watch and pray; for the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak. Let your looks, your words, your actions breathe the angelic virtue, and let your conversations be edifying.

Obliged by your state to be always in the world, be there like roses in the midst of thorns. If you appear for the works of charity only,

your father, St. Vincent promises you the visible protection of God. Never go forth into the world but to spread abroad the good odor of charity. Dread the numberless pitfalls lurking in the parlors of all Communities. You are in greater danger of contracting the spirit of the world there than in the homes of the poor and the sick. Never go to the parlor but with the pure and simple intention of attracting to God by your piety and modesty, the persons who come to visit you. Let them carry away from these visits, sentiments of esteem for religious virtue, and a greater desire of working out their own salvation. Let your ordinary subjects of conversation be about the needs of your poor. Never remain in the parlor alone, not even with your nearest relatives, without witnesses; and never after sundown. Never put your foot there either, without first having the permission of the Superior or her representative, nor without having fortified yourself with strength from on high by a fervent prayer. Fail not all the while you have to remain there, to raise your hearts frequently to God, at the sight of the imminent danger surrounding you; and never stay longer than the rule allows.

Avoid, as far as politeness permits, special visits to the homes of people of the world, unless for a religious or a charitable motive. Use the same

reserve with regard to your parents and relatives. No matter how virtuous they may be, you will soon feel the spirit of the world springing up again in your hearts, if through a very natural attachment, you persist in visiting them too frequently. Jesus Christ, the Saint of saints, seemed not to recognize His Blessed Mother, and others of his flesh and blood relations who came to visit Him while He was exercising the functions of His sacred ministry. He publicly declared on one solemn occasion that He acknowledged for His Mother and His brethren, those only who do the Will of His Father! This beautiful example, our very dear Daughters, should always remind you that since you are consecrated to God, you should henceforth acknowledge no other father or mother, brother or sister, but your poor.

Beware of the esteem of the world! Therein lies the loss of the religious spirit. Alas! how many Communities have been lost for having sought to please the world, that sworn enemy of Jesus Christ and of all His holy maxims. Deprived of the living spirit which should animate all Communities they fell into strange errors. The Life of St. Ignatius of Loyola presents a terrible instance. It is related that in his time, a Community, once fervent and regular, fell into such a state of disorder and corruption, that the

Nuns composing the Order, were nothing less than vile courtesans masquerading under the religious habit....

DIFFERENT COUNSELS.

Watch carefully over your offices, that nothing may happen there displeasing to God. Never act hastily or with precipitation, because you will always have reason to regret your inconsiderate actions.

Render yourselves capable of giving a religious and practical education to your orphans, and to all the poor little girls whom it will be judged proper to confide to your care. We shall approve any practical regulations that may enable you to fulfill this important duty with success.

Take the necessary measures to open at as early a date as possible, a place of refuge for servant girls in your Community. Their patroness is St. Blandine, a slave according to the world, but a virgin martyr of Jesus Christ. Apply yourselves to train them to every kind of manual work proper to their state, and which will be of assistance to them in making an honest living. As they remain a certain length of time with you

while training for service, you may employ them with the Sisters in the harder work of the kitchen, laundry and elsewhere. Above all, spare no effort to confirm them in the practice of solid virtue that they may the better resist the terrible temptations to which they will be so often exposed. Try to have them assemble the first Sunday of every month for their little exercises, and procure for them annually a few days of retreat. Encourage those good girls to live very frugally, and to deposit whatever they may be able to lay by from their earnings in the Savings Banks. In fine be always good mothers to them.

Take prompt and practical measures for the ventilation of the Infirmary, Sisters' Dormitories and the different wards for the old women and children. Let the Sisters' attic be separated from the one used by the seculars of the house. Try to have a drying room located in a small space somewhere.

Let the altar-stones and the linen coverings be washed once a year.

Let blinds be placed on all openings to the Chapel.

Neglect nothing to procure an isolated and quiet dormitory for the night watchers so that they may sleep during the day.

Let the blessed statue of Our Lady of Seven Dolors, also the walls and ceiling of the Chapel be cleansed and kept in good order.

Let the authenticated documents for the different relics exposed to the veneration of the faithful be procured from the Bishopric without delay.

Let there be a glass panel placed in the door between the procure and the second parlor, for the better accomplishment of the Rule which does not permit the Sisters to remain alone, or without witnesses, in the parlor.

The former parlor shall serve as a room for the Superior that she may be near the Community, and that the Sisters may be able to communicate with her more freely about their affairs.

These are all the recommendations we have to make to you, our very dear Sisters. They are made with the greatest simplicity, as you see. So should you, likewise, receive them with that perfect simplicity so strongly recommended by St. Vincent de Paul, your Founder.

One of your number asked us through the Superior *the meaning of simplicity*? It will be our sweetest delight to answer that question. We say to her as we say to all, our very dear Daugh-

ters, simplicity is a virtue so sublime that we have no expressions wherewith to define it. All we can say is, that we are simple before God when we ask about things we do not understand, just as this Sister has done with a desire for her greater perfection; when we esteem ourselves so little that we cannot conceive how others can form a good opinion of us; when we look upon ourselves as good for nothing, and absolutely incapable by ourselves of doing anything worth while; when we honestly acknowledge our faults without seeking to excuse ourselves; when we say frankly what we have in mind, and when we would much rather be punished and humiliated than to say a word otherwise than we think; when we are firmly convinced that others are very much better than ourselves, and when we never find fault with the honor or consideration shown them; when we willingly accept the lowest and most painful offices, never thinking it possible for us to aspire to higher ones; when we obey the Superior blindly, without ever finding fault, and with the firm conviction that God is in the person of the Superiors; when we are in the habitual disposition never to ask nor to refuse an office; when we receive each charge equally well, whether it pleases us or not; when we courageously undertake works beyond our strength the moment they are imposed by obedience.

Good Brother Giles was simple when he stood for hours behind St. Francis of Assisi at prayer, saying: «*Lord, I know not what to say to You, but I offer You all the prayers of my Father Francis.*» St. Francis de Sales was simple when he practiced what he recommended to others: «*Ask nothing; refuse nothing.*» St. Alphonsus Liguori was simple, when, forbidden by the Pope to act henceforth as Superior, owing to false accusations reported to Rome against him, he replied to those who maintained in his presence that the action of Pope Pius VI was too severe: «*Speak not thus. He is the Pope.*» By this he endeavored to make them understand that the Holy Father had private, but just reasons to act in this wise.

And now, our very dear Daughters, let this spirit of simplicity be planted and grounded in the very depths of your hearts. May it be the distinguishing mark and the vivifying spirit of your new-born Community. May it preserve you pure and simple as doves in the midst of the dangers and difficulties of the world. May it keep you forever from the spirit of pride and duplicity. May it fill you with faith, confidence, love, humility and generosity. May it prosper you in all your pious and charitable undertakings. May it enlighten you in the darkest hours of the night

when you keep your lonely vigil at the bedside of the dying. May it open unto you the doors of the eternal Tabernacles, and introduce you into the choir of virgins to sing the joyful canticle that will replace the sighs of mourning you have so often breathed forth at the sight of the untold miseries you are called upon to succor and relieve. May it seat you at the Celestial Banquet whither the Lord invites you in reward for having so often fed His Poor. May it prepare for you those robes of glory to be given you in return for the coarse and humble garments wherewith you are clothed here below. May it make you share in the happiness and joy of your Mother whose tears you so often wiped away in this land of exile. In fine, *Be in peace and the God of peace and charity will be with you.*

Given at Montreal under our simple seal, this nineteenth day of April eighteen hundred and forty-eight.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

April 21. — Mgr. Bourget inaugurates the Forty Hours of Mary Desolate in the chapel of the Providence Asylum. On this occasion, His Lordship said to Mother Gamelin :

I desire that the seven first candles burned in honor of this devotion, be furnished by a poor

person; and as I think myself by right, the poorest in the whole diocese, I hand you herewith, the price of said candles.

May 21.— The personnel of the Providence Asylum assists at the solemn coronation of the statue of Our Lady of Bonsecours.

May 26.— The poor, the Sisters and the Ladies of Charity, make a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Bonsecours for the first time. With banners flying, the pilgrims proceed to the sanctuary, reciting the rosary. Mother Gamelin presents a beautiful scapular of red velvet embroidered in gold to Mgr. Bourget for the adornment of the statue.

CHAPTER XI.

MGR. BOURGET ORDERS PRAYERS FOR HIS HOLINESS, PIUS IX. —THE CARNIVAL SANCTIFIED.— BLESSING OF THE CHAPEL AT ST. ISIDORE.— THE CHOLERA AT MONTREAL.— THE ST. CAMILLE HOSPITAL.— FOUNDATION AT ST. ELIZABETH.— ROSE GRANDPRÉ.

1849.

January 18.— Mgr. Bourget issues a Mandate ordering the clergy and faithful to pray for His Holiness, Pius IX, who is forced to exile himself from Rome and take refuge in a strange realm. We insert an extract from said Mandate.

.....We have a sacred duty to perform, our dearly beloved Brethren, all the while this conflict lasts, and that is to pray with more fervor than ever for our most worthy Pontiff. Let us take to ourselves those pressing words which he, himself, addressed to the faithful of Rome. «*We wish and ordain that fervent prayers arise to God each day for our person and for the re-establishment of peace in the world; most especially in our Pontifical States, and at Rome where our heart will always be, no matter in what part of the fold of Jesus Christ we may find shelter.* » This touching invitation will be heard throughout the whole Catholic world, and soon every temple

of the universe will re-echo with humble supplications that the ardent wish of the universal Pastor may be promptly heard.

United in prayer with all the Churches of the world, let us supplicate with confidence, let us ask with faith that the successor of Peter may walk intrepidly over the angry seas agitated by fierce passions. Let us by our fervor, awaken Jesus sleeping in the Bark of Peter during the furious tempest, and let us conjure Him to command the winds and the waves that soon there may be a great calm.

Pray, ye zealous pastors, and send forth deep sighs; cover yourselves with sackcloth and ashes, and offer the Lord works of penance to appease His wrath.....

Pray ye innocent virgins, raise your suppliant hands to heaven, and by your lamentations, obtain from the Father of mercies for the Father of the Church all the perfect gifts he needs in these perilous times. Pray also for the numerous Communities dwelling in the Holy City, and singing night and day, canticles to the Lord. Ah ! it is mightily to be feared that the wicked, after striking the Shepherd will vent their fury upon the chosen portion of his flock. *Plange, quasi virgo.* (Joel, 1, 8.)....

Children of St. Vincent de Paul, let your works of charity rise unceasingly to the very Throne of the Father of the Poor. Let them return thence all impregnated with celestial favors, and let them shed joy and consolation into the bosom of a Father so cruelly persecuted.

Pious confraternities, fervent congregations, christian families, forget not in your holy reunions to recommend to God and the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Pastor who feeds you in rich fields, and who showers upon you the blessings of Heaven !.....

January 22.— Mgr. Bourget introduces into our Institute, the devotion of the Carnival Sanctified in honor of Our Lady of Seven Dolors. The motive of this devotion is to make reparation for the excesses committed by worldings at this time of the year. The exercises are performed during the thirty days preceding Ash Wednesday.

February 1.— Mgr. Bourget, assisted by the Very Rev. Vicar General, Father Truteau, and Father Drapeau, pastor of Long Point, proceeds to the blessing of the Chapel at the Farm St. Isidore, Long Point. His Lordship celebrates Mass and grants the Sisters the privilege of keeping the Blessed Sacrament in their Chapel.

April.— Cholera makes its dread appearance in Montreal. All the Sisters in good health hasten to the care of the cholera patients. Mgr. Bourget permits the Sisters to visit the plague-stricken unaccompanied.

N. B. — From the first of July until the end of September, the patients attacked by the epidemic were received at the St. Camille Hospital opened by Mother Gamelin at the request of Mr. Raymond Fabre, Mayor of the City. One hundred and twenty-seven were received at the Hospital; of this number seventy died. The total of cholera patients cared for by our Sisters from the month of April to the end of September, was five hundred and one, — seventy-nine dying of the scourge. Many Sisters were attacked by the disease, but God required only one victim, — Sister John of God.

September 15.— With the authorization of Mgr. Bourget, our Sisters open a house at St. Elizabeth near Joliette. This foundation, made at the request of the curé, Reverend Father Quevillon, combines the works of charity and the education of young girls.

November 30.— By permission of Mgr. Bourget, Rose Grandpré consecrates herself as secular auxiliary to the works of charity in the Institute.

CHAPTER XII.

FOURTH CANONICAL VISIT BY MGR. BOURGET.— LETTER TO THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES.

1850.

March 13.— The reading of the following letter opens the fourth canonical visit made by Mgr. Bourget. His Lordship preached the annual retreat at the same time.

LETTER

OF THE FOURTH PASTORAL VISIT TO THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM, MONTREAL.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To our very dear Daughters, the Sisters of Charity, Directresses of the Providence Asylum, greetings and blessings in Our Lord.

On the twenty-fifth day of March, eighteen hundred and forty-three, we gave the religious habit to the first Sisters of your little Community, gathered in their modest oratory to offer themselves with all their hearts to the Lord to be the humble servants of His Poor. On a like

day, the Word becoming Incarnate in the bosom of His glorious Mother, clothed Himself with our poor humanity as with a vesture of penance for the expiation of our sins. Again on this day of mercy, the Man-God expiring on Calvary, *naked and despoiled of all*, left His poor and simple garments as a legacy to the Communities of His Church. It was also on this same day of grace, in the year twelve hundred and fifty-nine, that Our Lady of Seven Dolors descended from Heaven, accompanied by a procession of angels carrying the instruments of the Passion, a book of rule, a shield sparkling with golden letters which formed the glorious title, *Servites of Mary*, a palm, symbolical of victory, and a black habit to serve as a pattern for the clothing of those who should have the happiness of being called to spread the devotion to her sorrows.

So many striking circumstances, happily arranged by Providence, have made this day for you, our very dear Daughters, one of most hallowed associations. Moreover those touching monthly processions when the faithful are to be invested with the scapular; those imposing entries to the solemn ceremony of profession, when the wise and prudent virgins desiring to consecrate themselves to God, arrive at the Altar of Immolation; the rule of St. Vincent, that precious treasure so providentially acquired by you, and which each

Superior receives on the day of her election from the hands of the Church as a book brought from Heaven; the holy habit you wear, and which has become your heritage as the first vesture worn by the Servites, all remind you unceasingly of a day so holy and so full of happiness for you. On our part, we must here acknowledge to you, our very dear Daughters, that never has a day in our life made such deep impressions upon our heart. They seem to be engraved thereon with the sharp point of the sword that pierced the amiable heart of Mary; indeed they are ineffaceable!

The year following, on the mournful Feast of Our Lady's Compassion, we admitted to the profession of vows, the seven Sisters whom the Blessed Mother, herself, had prepared by a noviceship spent entirely on Calvary at the foot of the cross. God alone knows,—for He has counted them,—all the tears shed during that trying time of *probation*. That solemn hour marks the happy date of your birth to religious life, and the living monument whereon is inscribed your title, *Servants of Mary*, or better still *Daughters of Our Lady of Seven Dolors*.

Your Community, formed under the patronage of the Mother of Sorrows, has for its mission to represent Mount Senario where occurred

the vision, that is to say, the place where reposes the majestic throne of Heaven's Queen, surrounded with brilliant lights and decorated with flowery garlands. By this you must understand that by your purity you are to be the lilies of dazzling whiteness which she so loves to wear upon her holy and Immaculate Heart. By the practice of all religious virtues you are to furnish her with garlands of flowers to crown her regal brow. At the same time, it should be a consolation to remember that our good Mother received you this day beneath her venerabe mantle to acknowledge the pleasure she feels in seeing you wear a habit resembling the one she wore in the days of her widowhood and constant mourning.

These mysteries were hidden from you, while your most amiable Mistress directed your faltering steps along the rocky road leading up the rugged heights to Calvary. May you always abandon yourselves lovingly to a direction, so wise, so safe and so maternal!

On the twenty-first of March, eighteen hundred and forty-five, we announced our first pastoral visit. Its principal motive was to settle definitely your holy rules, so that you might no longer be driven hither and thither by contradictory customs and regulations, and be exposed thereby to the deplorable effects of human incon-

stancy. You no doubt recall all the pains we took, both you and us, our very dear Daughters, that nothing might be wanting which could contribute to the perfect regularity of a good community.

We record the fact here, so that those coming after you may lovingly and gratefully observe the rules which cost their first Mothers and Foundresses so much labor and toil. We would address to you the touching words the Blessed Virgin spoke to her servants on Mount Senario when presenting them their rule and their holy habit, she said : « *Accept this habit to serve as a pattern. Receive this rule which you must follow, so that you may be my servants, and truly deserve this palm, symbol of life eternal.* » How respectfully then should this holy rule be read ! How piously should it be meditated ! How carefully should it be observed ! Mary, herself, has placed it in your hands ; as she will also place in your hands the victor's palm, provided you are faithful. Behold here reasons sufficiently strong to inflame your ardor.

The sixteenth day of April, eighteen hundred and forty-six, we informed you that we should return in quality of first Pastor to see you, and to put the finishing touch to your rules and customs ; and to inspire you above all with the good spirit promised by Our Lord to those who

humbly ask for it, and which He never fails to breathe into the hearts of every Community ardently desiring it. You know that without this good spirit, our very dear Daughters, the best rules are worth nothing. Five months later found us on our way to the Holy City to lay at the feet of the Vicar of Jesus Christ all your works to make them share as much as possible in the stability of that sacred edifice, founded upon Peter, and against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. For that reason, may the blessing specially obtained for you from the Father of the Faithful, strengthen you in the practice of all your religious duties, and remain with you forever!

The year 1847 brought the first omission in our annual visits to you. They were all the more consoling for us as they became more advantageous to you. But God always so bountiful and good, supplied abundantly for this by making it a year full of most painful trials, and therefore we must hope it was a year full of merit for you. You know that trials are the surest and most certain proofs of God's love; in order to be convinced of said fact, it suffices to cast a glance on that field outside the city limits where the dread typhus raged in all its fury during those awful days and nights of '47. It still bears the marks

of your footsore and weary steps, worn with seeking for the victims felled by the devastating scourge. Even yet, it is bedewed with the bitter tears you shed at the sight of such extreme misery and woe; and it is still saturated with the cold, agonizing sweat of your brow falling upon those loathsome, infected bodies, who breathed forth their last sighs and expired in your arms.

That spot for which your hearts longed so ardently has become a holy land for you,— a land where milk and honey flows— for the Lord in His great mercy hath visited you there. That land, in truth, hath brought forth the most delicious fruits; namely, the excellent virtues of *simplicity*, *humility*, *obedience*, *confidence in Providence*, *abnegation*, *generosity*, *charity*, to whose practice you have so strictly bound yourselves. Falling, as you were, one after another beneath the repeated onslaughts of so cruel a malady, and stricken, nearly all well-nigh unto death, you raised your eyes to Mary's chosen throne in your chapel. There, on the nineteenth of July, you made a perpetual vow to burn seven candles every Friday before her blessed image, with the firm good will to practice the virtues symbolized by those flaming tapers, and your prayers were heard. Oh, our very dear Daughters, may God the All-Good, who then hearkened to your humble supplica-

tions, now complete His work! For the love of Mary, may He cause you to shine forever in all the splendor of those seven admirable virtues before the Heart of your Mother, as hitherto shone before the Ark of Alliance,— which was but a figure,— the seven lamps ordained by the Lord to be kept continually burning there for perpetual worship.

We undertook our third pastoral visit on the fourteenth of April, 1848. That favor you had solicited personally, owing to the pressing need you felt after two years' delay. You required a respite after so many severe hardships. So, on your great festival of the Sorrows of your Mother, the fourth anniversary of your foundation, and the happy day of your renewal of vows, we found you prepared for the countless graces of a pastoral visit. The annual Retreat, terminating likewise on that holy day, and which renews you annually in the spirit and the fervor of your religious life, also contributed to make the occasion more fruitful of good. Moreover, the hundreds of innocent little children whom you had snatched from the horrors of death, and the good Sister who had so generously sacrificed her life for love of them, had raised their suppliant hands to the Father of the Orphan, and had drawn down upon this Retreat the most abundant benedictions.

You were in deed and in truth, inebriated with all manner of spiritual blessings during those two most important exercises of religion. May God be praised! Yet, those graces were vouchsafed, as usual, in preparation for further trials.

Last year the cholera again made its appearance in this country. Without being as violent as in 1832-34, it made all tremble at its approach and it reaped a dread harvest of between five and six hundred victims. Joyously once more you went forth. Leaving God for God, you willingly renounced the repose of retreat to fly to the help of the cholera patients, lying in all sorts of poverty-stricken hovels, and deserted by their terrified friends and neighbors. Providence reserved for you the happiness of controlling one of the two hospitals opened by the city for the relief of poor and forsaken strangers. God again blessed your sacrifices, your watchings, your hard labors and all your errands of mercy. Among other consolations you had that of contributing to the return to Holy Mother Church of forty-two of our separated brethren, and to the baptism of two young children whom death soon delivered from the miseries of this vale of tears to place them safe forever in the realms of eternal bliss. A victim of agreeable odor to the Heart of Mary plunged in an ocean of woe, was needed in those

dark days of calamity ; and God chose that victim from among the ranks of your young Sisters just newly professed, whom He found ready to receive the crown of virginity. The flowers of her chaste bridal wreath had had no time to wither, and their sweet perfume, doubtless, appeased the heart of the pure Spouse of Virgins, since none other succumbed to the frightful epidemic.

Now, behold you at length arrived at the seventh year of your religious career ! During those seven years,— seven of your cherished and dearly beloved Sisters passed away to a better life. They are placed, we hope, before the throne of Mary in Heaven, to be like seven burning lamps before the August Virgin, and to number as many as the candles before her blessed image so religiously venerated in your chapel. The mystical number seven, is replete for you with grace and happiness. From the very beginning of your establishment that number appears in so many striking instances that you cannot fail to have great devotion to it. In regard thereto behold another very special coincidence which will greatly surprise you.

Among the Jews, every seventh year was one of jubilee, that is to say a year of rest and full remission. Property, during that year reverted to its former owner, nor was ground tilled

or seeded for harvest, Divine Providence having doubled the provision of the year preceding the jubilee, just as in the desert a double portion of manna fell on the sixth day of the week. The whole time of jubilee was a period of holy joy wherein the people of God were to detach themselves from the things of earth and to excite within their souls a desire of Heaven. It was announced by the sound of trumpets, and it was spent in the delights of perfect peace, causing all toils and labors of the past to be forgotten. Here you recognize the Hand of God, our very dear Daughters, and you readily admire the inventions of His love to sanctify you by the devotion to Our Lady of Seven Dolors. For now the year of jubilee brings you the precious graces of general pardon for all your faults and that interior peace which you will quaff in deep, long draughts after the many perils and hardships of your first six years of existence.

Let us all rejoice in the Lord! our very dear Daughters! The heavens, until now of brass are changed for you into sweetest honey. Let your hearts, hitherto so oppressed with grief and care, expand with delight in holiest joy. All sadness is forbidden in the service of so good a Master. You have labored in His Vineyard unto extreme weariness; now rest yourselves amid the odors of its fragrant blossoms. Restore your

shattered strength by the sanctifying repose of this *year of jubilee*. We announce it to you in the name of the Lord. This letter shall be to you like the sacred trumpet of old among the ancient people, proclaiming the jubilee and driving away all sorrow. May the Holy Ghost cause the melodious strains of joy to vibrate within the very depths of your hearts, and chase far away all melancholy and sadness.

Forget not, our very dear Daughters, that the only aim you should have during the visit and the annual retreat is to begin your seventh year in complete repose with the privilege of regaining all the good things you may have lost. This repose will be tasted in the absence of all inordinate affections and in the loving accomplishment of God's most holy Will. What you have lost may be found once more in your holy rules. They contain, as you have been so often told, the spirit of your illustrious Founder, St. Vincent de Paul. They are the fruit of the tears, the prayers, the labors and the long experience of that good Father. They are the reward of his inimitable simplicity and rectitude of heart which merited for him the praise accorded by Scripture to the holy man Job, *a man simple and just*. The principal fruit of this jubilee will be for you the renewal of self in the spirit of your holy rules.

Therefore you shall make them the ordinary subject of your reflections and meditations during the pious exercises we are about to begin.

It is now clear to you, our very dear Daughters, why we went back to the origin of your community and touched upon the principal facts in your short history. We repeat, it is because there is question of placing in your possession the priceless treasure of your holy Constitutions. We pray you not to consider it vain ostentation on our part when we remind you of what we have done for you. Alas! how much more have we left undone? On the contrary, we have to make a serious examen of our own conduct in your regard, and to penetrate ourselves with deepest compunction for not having corresponded to the merciful designs of the Mother of Sorrows upon us and upon your little society; for believe us truly, we have many faults to acknowledge, and many pardons to ask.....

You will therefore, help us by your prayers and your good works, and you will fill with joy the hearts of all who have given themselves so much trouble to lead you to the perfection of your holy state.

On these conditions, we announce the pastoral visit at the community of the Sisters of Charity,

Directresses of the Providence Asylum, this thirteenth day of March at three o'clock this afternoon, conformably to what is prescribed in the Ceremonial and Customary. We shall read the present letter, personally, to develop it as may seem necessary, and as God may inspire us.

Given at Montreal, the thirteenth day of the month of March, eighteen hundred and fifty, under our sign and seal, and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

By Monseigneur,

J. O. Paré, Canon and Secretary.

December 8. — Mgr. Bourget addresses a letter to the Communities of his diocese concerning a pastoral visit.

LETTER

OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL, FOR THE COMMUNITY.

General visit of all the Communities. (1)

December 8, 1850

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To our very dear Daughters of the different Communities of our diocese, greetings and blessings in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our solicitude should extend to each and every one of the sheep whom the Lord has committed to our care; wherefore, we go yearly through the cities and towns, villages and country places, spreading everywhere the graces of our holy ministry. The just and the sinner, animated by a lively faith, flock to us as to Jesus Christ, to deposit in our bosom their hidden miseries, and to seek relief from the evils afflicting them. How many good souls we discover all about us, and

(1) Mgr. Bourget had made the visit at the Providence Asylum on the thirteenth of March; but as this mandate is addressed to us as well as to the other Communities, it is here inserted.

how great a Master is the Holy Spirit Who forms them! Ah! how many times have we humbled ourselves at the sight of those wonderful works of God the Sanctifier. But, our very dear Daughters, if we are the debtor of all without exception, there are, nevertheless, certain portions of our fold that require more earnest attention. Such are all your Communities whom the Good Shepherd orders us to care for, in so far as human frailty will permit, even as He cared for the holy women by forming them to all the religious virtues. We shall here recall a fact you already know. In one of your holy houses, ten years ago, we received the last sigh of our illustrious and venerable predecessor. At that solemn hour the pastoral burden already bore us down beneath its heavy weight. With a weak and trembling hand we took the helm of administration, hitherto so ably held by the dying pilot during nineteen years of a stormy episcopate, and we fearfully glanced about us as does every terror-stricken mortal, in agonizing appeals for help. The sight that met our eyes was this: a number of Hospital Sisters were kneeling around the mortal remains of the deceased prelate who had so often broken to them the Bread of Life in return for the material bread wherewith they had nourished him for many years. Their fervent prayers accompanied his soul and assisted it still

although it had already appeared before the dread tribunal of its Sovereign Judge.

We must acknowledge in all sincerity, our very dear Daughters, that at that solemn moment, your Communities appeared to us like so many bands of holy women, following our Divine Master, ministering to His material wants during His evangelical career and surrounding His cross, weeping and mourning at His cruel death. That solemn deathbed scene is ever before our eyes; its memory is as vivid today as at the hour it happened.

The lesson it engraved upon our mind can never be effaced. We, there, saw how the ministrations of women, ennobled and sanctified by the Sovereign Pastor, was to be for all time to come, the glory of His Church and the consolation of His Poor. It dawned upon us then that the ministry of a Bishop should, likewise, bear the same marks of resemblance with the MASTER. To us, the holy women of the Gospel seem to have been formed in the school of Jesus Christ to become the model of *each* religious Community; having like the Disciples to exercise an apostolate of devotedness and charity, they also have need of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, on the great Day of Pentecost, they had their place amongst the disciples in the Cenacle where the Holy Ghost

descended in form of fiery tongues and rested upon the heads of all gathered together in the Upper Room. We have the proofs and we feel the effects thereof down the centuries; more especially we, the descendants of that nation which one day beheld a vessel, without rudder or sail making for its shores. By a miracle in favor of the strange people, until then in the shadow of darkness and death, the disabled bark had crossed the stormy sea, guided solely by the Divine Pilot. In that vessel were many exiles for the Faith, among them Martha and Mary, the two devoted sisters who had followed and ministered to Jesus while He preached His Gospel throughout Judea; and who now out of love of Him, follow His persecuted brethren to a far-off, unknown country to render them the same devoted help and assistance.

On reaching the shores of that infidel land, the two lovers of Jesus unfurl the standard of religious life. Martha, at the head of all good works, by her ardent charity, becomes the model of the active Orders. Magdalene, in the mountain solitudes of Saint Baume, washing in tears her early wanderings, and in continual prayer becomes the pattern of contemplatives. Thus was the tiny grain of mustard seed cast by the Divine Hand of Jesus in our fair and sunny France, that in its fruitful soil the religious

state, soon becoming a mighty tree should gather all nations and all peoples beneath the refreshing shelter of its wide-spreading branches. Other generous women animated by the same spirit and devoted to the same functions, succeeded those of the Gospel times. Wherever the Apostles and their successors carried the light of Faith, there, too, went the devout sex, joyfully leaving all, and consecrating themselves to the perfect life to be enabled to care more freely for the altars and to relieve the widow and the orphan. The Church, like a good mother, surrounded them with every attention, and assigned them a place of honor in her sanctuary, thus proving to the people the holiness of their profession. We were particularly impressed with this fact when we visited the Church of Saint Clement at Rome, where we were shown the choir of the religious of early days. It is separated by a grille from the sanctuary and nave, and is a precious monument proving to the world in all ages how tenderly the Church cares for its virgins; and how through them she has ever received powerful assistance for the salvation of souls. In truth, our very dear Daughters, the service woman is privileged to render His holy Church, proves the reason for the species of sacred ministry conferred upon her by the Lord Jesus. He has endowed her with a loving and compassionate heart, ever ready and

active to relieve the heavy burden of sin and woe which crushes to earth the poor, miserable children of Adam. We cannot here bring out in detail all that woman, blessed and consecrated by God, has been able to accomplish in the Church. We should never finish were we to undertake the enumeration; all that we can say is that, beside each human misery, there stands a religious Community of women prepared to administer relief. A rapid glance will convince us of this truth.

Vying with one another in zeal and devotedness, our Communities share among themselves the sad legacy of corporal and spiritual sufferings entailed upon us by our first parents. Each adopts its own; its charity is rewarded by the grace necessary, and it is blessed with such success that we exclaim in wonder: «Happy fault of our forefathers which brought such misery into the world, since religious heroism stands by to repair the havoc it has wrought!» A bond of tender union makes of all but one heart and one soul,and inspires all with sublime and holy courage to take upon themselves the manifold evils of degraded and despairing humanity. Verily, our dear Daughters, at the sight of our Convents, we can say in all truth: «There, food is given to the hungry, drink to the thirsty; the naked are clothed, the pilgrims and strangers are harbored, the sick are visited,

the prisoners are freed and comforted, the dead are buried.» And, as the corporal works of mercy are offset by the spiritual, we may say with even more certainty, while pointing to the houses of education: «There the ignorant are instructed, sinners are admonished; the doubtful are counseled; the sorrowing are comforted; all injuries are forgiven; the living and the dead are prayed for; while the speedy conversion of the enemies of Holy Mother Church is the most earnest petition of all; there personal enemies are unknown.»

Is not each religious house, our very dear Daughters, the personification of the various works of charity to whom our Lord Jesus Christ has promised life eternal? Do they not all work hand in hand to provide man in his painful journey through this land of exile with stations of rest where he may repose awhile from his toilsome wanderings through rough pathways? Just cast a glance upon the road to be traversed from the cradle to the grave. All along the way you will find institutions of charity opened wide for the relief of every human woe.

The Maternity Hospitals watch over the child in its mother's bosom to preserve its life and save its soul. The Day Nurseries clothe and warm the poor little ones while their working

mothers fare forth to earn the daily food and shelter for the family. The Foundling Asylums receive the abandoned waif whose unnatural mother would strangle it in her mad effort to hide her shame, did she not know that virginal hands and hearts were ready to save the innocent fruit of her crime. The Houses of Providence admit the hapless child bereft of a father to maintain it or a mother to press it to her loving heart. The Hotel-Dieu, (God's Hotels or Hospitals) extend compassionate care and skilful nursing to suffering brethren of every age and condition. How calmly he faces death, who in his last agony, sees an angel of mercy by his bedside with a prayer upon her lips and loving charity in her heart! He hears the words of peace and hope that bring joy to his poor sinking soul! The Homes for the Aged gather in the pitiful wrecks strewn along life's pathway. What a sight to see the blind, the halt, the lame, the deaf and the dumb of both sexes and of all conditions gathered together beneath hospitable and religious roofs, tenderly nursed and cared for,—nay more,—even loved and served as *other Christs!* In those Asylums are harbored the miseries that can find no shelter elsewhere; and from their doors each morning, the servants of the poor patiently wend their way from house to house to seek out

and to assuage many other hidden miseries and sufferings.

Refuges exist where, rescued to the glory of the Good Shepherd, penitent Magdalenes find a safe retreat. How many poor, misguided sinners purify themselves there in tears of repentance and how many sacred lavers in those places of expiation! How many souls warped and disfigured, regain their pristine beauty with the precious pearl of innocence restored. Finally, religious institutions exist for the healing of ignorance,—that hideous wound inflicted by sin upon the whole human race.

Here are the chosen places where the good Master teaches the science of life and the thrones from whence he preaches the virtues of Heaven. In these sacred schools are formed the Daughters of Sion who, ere long, will fill the universe with the good odor of christian virtue. For the woman of the world has an apostolate all her own to exercise in the midst of society where wordliness and folly reign supreme. The graces of her state are accorded her to form and to mould the heart of childhood, and to preserve in the family circle the heavenly deposit of the Fear of the Lord which is the beginning of true wisdom.

Behold, our very dear Daughters, the numerous Communities applied to the various works of

charity, and forming an admirable diversity of religious Institutes, which shine like so many brilliant constellations in the firmament of the Church. There exist as many as there are needs ; as many habits as modes of life ; as many rules as societies ; and all so intimately united that they form the warp and woof of the royal robe wherewith is vested the Holy Church who is shown to us in the Sacred Scripture as the majestic Queen whom the king maketh to sit on his right hand. That garment, woven of gold and embroidered in myriad hues is a beautiful figure of our revered Communities offering with the same charity to a wondering world the spectacle of the most varied and distinct works of benevolence. The devout St. Bernard was so enamored of religious orders that he cried out in transports of love: «Though I can belong to one Order only, still I embrace them all in my heart.» Such, our very dear Daughters, are your own sentiments.

We have every reason to rely upon you then for great works for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Truly our heart beats high with hope, surrounded as we are with Communities to whom God has given His Holy Spirit, the most excellent gift which the Father of Light never refuses to fervent prayer. The weakness of your sex diminishes not our confidence. One thing

alone makes us tremble, and that is our negligence in giving you the care you have a right to expect from our pastoral solicitude. Since you hold in our regard the place of the holy women of the Gospel, we should be for you another Jesus Christ. This thought fills us with great apprehension! Oh, our very dear Daughters! long and deeply do we lament in our innermost soul, because we have not always surrounded you as we should have done, with the tenderness you need to reanimate your courage and good will in the rude trials the Divine Spouse reserves for consecrated souls for whom He is, in very deed, a Spouse of blood. We comprehend fully the grave obligations your sublime vocation imposes upon you. Virginity is a beautiful flower, but oh! how frail and delicate! At the least breath, it fades and withers, and droops upon its stem unless nourished and kept forever pure and fair by the dews of heaven. Jesus is infinitely good to His Communities, but, O God! how jealous He is of the souls whom He chooses to be His best beloved for time and eternity. He is prodigal of His graces in favor of such privileged souls; yet, how strict is the account He will exact of all His gifts and talents. He prepares most magnificent espousals, and a sumptuous wedding banquet; but once He enters in, how quickly will the door be closed! Ah! then how happy those wise and

prudent virgins will be who have made an abundant provision of purity, of obedience, of poverty and of charity. They, alone, will be admitted to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Consider how miserable and unhappy a fate awaits the foolish virgins so quietly sleeping in the arms of tepidity! How terrible will that voice sound from within the wedding hall, and how stinging the awful words: «*I know you not*».... Amidst the anxieties and cares of a charge far beyond our strength, how often do we raise our eyes blinded with tears, to the Communities from whence we seek help and strength. St. Theresa, that brilliant ornament of the religious state, assures us that it is in those strongholds where chaste souls flee for refuge from the seductions and snares of a wicked world, that we shall find prayer in all its sweetness and purity,— the prayer whose chaste fragrance rejoices the heavenly Spouse, and whose power disarms Heaven so justly irritated by our sins. And yet, those Communities appear to us enveloped in the dark clouds of the world's dust, driven hither and yon by the violent winds of passion blowing in wild fury over the stormy sea of the world. Oh! how we dread lest the dust scattered broadcast on the wings of the tempest should accumulate in some religious hearts and wound the eyes of the Spouse who so jealously guards your holy houses! Your Com-

munities are, in very truth, the novitiates of that Virgin Band whom Jesus loves to have around His throne in Heaven. In those earthly abodes is learned the canticle to be sung eternally by virgins in the Courts on High; and when hearts and voices are judged sufficiently pure to entone it, the exiled brides are summoned to dwell forever in Heaven, the Community of all Communities. Here again is another thought to make us shudder. Alas! shall there be some among you, who after making the long and painful novitiate of earth, by faithless conduct at the last be adjudged unfit for profession in the holy, happy Community of Heaven?....

You see now, our very dear Daughters, that our fears are well founded and that we have real reason to condemn ourselves for our negligence. Oh! how ardently we desire to repair those dark days whose passing has been as a shadow, but which have left in our heart bitter food for sorrow and compunction! Uniting your prayers with ours, you will obtain from the Father of Mercy, pardon for our miserable past and grace for the future. Touched by your tears, He will impart to us some share of His infinite wisdom. Without interrupting His eternal repose, He sees and provides for all,— not even the tiniest atom is hidden from the sight of His admirable Providence.

We come to you, therefore, our very dear Daughters, with the earnest desire of bestowing upon you all the treasures of grace which the Lord confides to our keeping. Prepare yourselves to receive us as if Jesus in person were coming to you, for Faith tells you that whosoever receiveth us, receiveth God Himself. Light your sacred Lamps, and may divine charity keep their flame brightly burning! Be generous; by this, will the Divine Spouse prove the intensity of your love. Holy Generosity gives the religious soul strength and vigor for the most heroic sacrifices! Holy Generosity seeks always the lowliest place and employment, undertakes the hardest labor, accommodates itself to the most difficult characters, sympathises with the worst of bad tempers, lives in peace in all offices and with all manner of persons. Holy Generosity accepts humbly corrections most displeasing to nature; courageously receives humiliations most trying to self-love, kisses lovingly the hand that strikes it, blesses modestly the lips that curse it. Holy Generosity flows copiously forth from the tree of the cross like a health-giving sap over all Communities to quicken the flowers and fruits of Calvary.

We desire during our visit to cultivate this delightful fruit of generosity; for we well know that upon it depends all the perfection and all the

happiness of the religious life. How strong and potent for good are the Communities who possess numbers of subjects ready and willing to undertake anything and everything! How grand the works they accomplish when all the members sacrifice themselves for the common good! What immense services they render religion when all their duties, employments, even the lowest and most insignificant, are administered by wise and discreet officers. How rapid the progress in the way of perfection, when all is performed with a good heart at all times, no matter how repugnant or displeasing the command may be. This is reducing to actual practice the words addressed by the good Master to those whom He calls to the perfect life: *Renounce yourselves: Take up your cross: Follow Me.* Again, how happy the Community where generosity, the true manna from Heaven, holds sway. It is relished by every one. Like the tree of life, it is planted in the midst of the terrestrial paradise, and its exquisite fruit furnishes the souls partaking thereof with a strength all divine to march onward and upward to the holy Mountain of God. It is verily that « *peace on earth, good will to men* » sung by the angels in their midnight canticles of joy above the Stable of Bethlehem where Christ, the Lord was born. Those heavenly spirits proclaimed the glad tidings to earth and its melody was wafted

far and wide upon the Christmas breeze. The peace of Heaven is for men of goodwill, who on earth give themselves to Our Lord to be born, to live, and to die in imitation of Him. But this religious peace can be found only at Bethlehem, Nazareth and Calvary ; that is to say, it is given only to the generous soul who places all her affections in whatever is most painful to nature. The cost is great ; but oh, how immense the reward!

For these reasons, therefore, the holy Name of God invoking, we have ordained, enacted and decreed, ordaining, enacting and decreeing that which follows for the order of the visit in each Community.

1. We shall go to your Community on the day and hour judged most convenient. The time will be announced to you, after we shall have conferred with the Reverend Mother Superior.

2. We shall make our solemn entry, and then proceed with all the exercises of the visit, conformably to your special ceremonial or customary.

3. We shall receive in private audience all of the Sisters who desire to speak with us personally ; those on mission may write us if they deem it necessary.

4. We shall examine carefully whether all the points of rule are religiously observed. The Sisters of each Institute, outside the Mother House, must ascertain in council the needs of their little community and submit a report in common to the Superior General.

5. The prayers and good works of the Communities shall be offered to God from the present moment to obtain complete success for our visit. Each one, moreover, shall have the poor or the pupils pray for the same intention. The Chaplains are requested to add their fervent mementoes at the Mass and at the Divine Office.

6. We have regulated, that in future, each Community shall have its own ecclesiastical Superior and its own Chaplain. We doubt not that they will be honored and respected as the guardian angels charged with the visible ministry which they should exercise for the salvation of all. They will assist us during the course of the visit; and we shall afterwards act in union with these men of God for the good government of the souls confided to our pastoral solicitude.

7. We desire that this Mandate be distributed to all the Sisters so that each having her own copy, may read it by herself to prepare for the graces of the visit, and afterwards encourage

herself by perusing it frequently to preserve its precious fruits. In a Spirit of Faith, each will look upon this epistle as a letter addressed to her from Heaven by the Queen of Virgins, under whose inspiration we have endeavored to write it. May Mary, whose hand has guided our pen, obtain that the Holy Ghost may engrave the spirit and meaning thereof upon every religious heart.

8. To this present Mandate we add the leaflet of the Parochial Visits, in order that each recipient may nourish her piety with what Holy Mother Church does for the sanctification of the world where she has left all so dear to her heart, as well as for the cloister whither she has been drawn by the grace of God. For this supreme grace she can never be too thankful, and out of gratitude, she must so endeavor to sanctify herself as to obtain that the sacred deposit of faith may never perish in this fair land which our forefathers willed should always be a land of Faith. Alas! in our day, the enemy scatters broadcast the seed of false and wicked doctrine. Hence, a powerful motive for the zealous heart to redouble its efforts. The more hell works to destroy religion, the more should religious Communities struggle to defend it by their knowledge and piety. Daughters of Jerusalem! lament and weep over the evils of your country; and may your mournful accents

be re-echoed afar! May they touch many a hardened and indifferent heart! Alas! How little is our most amiable Jesus loved! How violently is His holy religion assailed! How horribly are the powers of hell exercised in these wicked days!

9. We shall terminate the visit when we shall have regulated all things, according to the method prescribed by the ceremonial or customary.

O Most Holy Virgin Mary, only after having implored your powerful protection for your beloved Daughters, and for us their unworthy Pastor, shall we begin this visit. We unite our voice with theirs to tell you how crushed we are beneath the weight of so many evils; but we are filled with hope because we know that you are our good Mother and loving Mistress. Your holy name is full of light and your tender heart is full of love. Enlighten our understanding, inflame our hearts, and loosen our tongues, that we may worthily praise you in these days of salvation. Take up your abode in all our Communities. Reign there as at Nazareth with Jesus and Joseph. Virgin most holy, sanctify us; Virgin most powerful, strengthen us; Virgin most clement, change us; Virgin most faithful, direct us in the paths of perfection. O Virgin of Virgins, you see at your feet the Spouses of your dear,

divine Son. Preserve them from all evil; grant them all the good you know to be necessary for them. Send one of your angels with a burning coal, as to the prophet of old, to purify our lips. May that celestial guide conduct us through the desert of this dreary world, even as of yore, he led the chosen people through the frightful solitudes of Arabia. May he be for us a true pillar of fire to illuminate the path of duty. May he, likewise, be a beneficent cloud enveloping us in its refreshing shade from the scorching heat of the arid plain whereon we dwell. O Mother of Mercy, bring us one day to that happy land where flow the rivers of milk and honey. There, prostrate at your sacred feet and covering them with kisses, we shall enter the choir of virgins and follow with you the Divine Lamb, your Son, whithersoever He goeth. Amen.

The present Mandate shall be read in chapter in all religious Communities on the day of its reception; and it shall then be preserved in the archives of each Community.

Given at Montreal under our sign and seal, and the countersign of our secretary, the eighth day of December, eighteen hundred and fifty.

Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

By Monseigneur,

J.O.Paré, Canon, Secretary.

CHAPTER XIII.

INAUGURATION OF THE WORK OF THE DEAF MUTES.— PASTORAL VISIT.— FIRST COUNCIL PRESIDED BY MOTHER GAMELIN.— DEATH OF MOTHER GAMELIN.— ELECTIONS.— LETTER TO SISTER CONCEPTION.

1851.

February 19.— Sister Marie de Bonsecours (Gadbois) begins the Work of the Deaf Mutes at Long Point.

April 11.— Mgr. Bourget terminates the Pastoral Visit begun on the third of the present month. His Lordship issues no special Mandate for this visit. He recommends us to read and to put in practice the advice contained in his Mandates of preceding visits.

September 22.— First Council presided by Mother Gamelin. Prior to this date, either an Ecclesiastical Superior or Mgr. Bourget had presided at the Community Councils.

September 23. – Mgr. Bourget, accompanied by Mgr. Prince, assists at the deathbed of Mother Gamelin. She was stricken with cholera at about four o'clock in the morning. Knowing all the symptoms of the dread malady, our venerated Mother requested to be removed to the Infirmary where she expired at four in the afternoon.(1)

(1) For fuller details of the death of our Foundress Mother, see the *history of her life*, written by a Sister of our Institute.

October 7.— Mgr. Bourget, accompanied by the Very Reverend Canon Prince, and the Reverend L. Z. Moreau, priest, presides at the elections which result as follows: Sister Caron, Superior; Sister Larocque, Assistant; Sister Philomene, Mistress of Novices; Sister Elizabeth, Treasuser. (1)

LETTER TO SISTER CONCEPTION
AT ST. ELIZABETH.

Montreal, October 10, 1851.

Honored Sister:

I received yours of the 8th instant, and I hasten to reply. You have good reason to mourn the loss of your Mother.(2) Accustomed however, to receive from the Hand of God all the blows which have fallen upon you up to the present time, I can only adore and bless Him. I am confident that the prayers of Mother Gamelin will fill the void she has left on earth. In any event, we must all work together so that the Work of the Providence already so well advanced, may not fail.

(1) The preceding elections held on October 1, 1844, were as follows: Mother Gamelin, Superior; Sister Vincent, Assistant; Sister Caron, Treasurer; Sister Thibodeau, Mistress of Novices.

(2) Mother Gamelin.

I told the Community yesterday that its heavy debt did not frighten me.....God will soon pay off a few thousand dollars, if you are all true Servants of the Poor. I rely upon the good will of each one; and I hope that, little by little, you will all arrive one day at the port of religious perfection.

As to what regards your Sister Servant,(1) I have no fears on account of her lack of education. I am even glad that there are some among you who so closely resemble the first Daughters of Charity enrolled by St. Vincent de Paul. Education is not absolutely necessary. The most beautiful science, and the one most indispensable to your Community, is sweet and holy simplicity, which willingly, seeks the last place always and loves to be unknown.

I consider that God has directed the elections so that the elders might give the younger Sisters a grand example of devotedness and simplicity. In my judgment, your Community has arrived at its crisis. If you cordially extend a helping hand to one another now, you will most assuredly escape the shipwreck you dread.

You, my good Sister, will set the example, by acting towards your Sister Servant in so hum-

(1) Sister Vincent who had recently replaced Mother Caron as Superior at St. Elizabeth.

ble, so kind and so edifying a manner that you may be regarded as a true Daughter of St. Vincent, whose name she has the honor to bear. See God in her and everything will become possible to you. Lighten her burden by offering yourself with good grace to help her in all her needs. Take care of her health; you know it is very frail. Be to her, through a spirit of faith, what you were to your good Mother, (1) out of human affection. If you know how to make these little daily sacrifices, you need have no doubt that peace will be yours.

I am very sincerely, most honored Sister,

Your obedient,

Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

(1) Mother Caron who replaced Mother Gamelin.

CHAPTER XIV.

PROJECT OF A FOUNDATION AT VANCOUVER.— MGR. PRINCE, BISHOP OF ST. HYACINTH.— LETTER TO MOTHER CARON ON THE SUBJECT OF THE JUBILEE.— DESTRUCTION BY FIRE OF THE CATHEDRAL, BISHOP'S RESIDENCE, ETC.— DEPARTURE OF THE SISTERS FOR OREGON.

1852.

April 25.— Mgr. Bourget imparts to the Counselors the desire of Bishop A. M. A. Blanchet of Nesqually, former confessor of the Community, to have the Sisters of Providence at Vancouver, Washington. Mgr. Bourget advises the Sisters to pray that God's Will may be known concerning the missionaries.

May 1.— The pilgrimage to Notre Dame de Bonsecours, as well as the exercises of the Month of Mary are offered for the intentions of Mgr. Bourget, and for the happy issue of the project of Foundation above mentioned.

June 8.— Mgr. J. C. Prince is named Bishop of the new diocese of St. Hyacinth.

LETTER TO THE SISTERS OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.

St. André d'Argenteuil, June 16, 1852.

My dear Daughters :

You will receive with the present Mandate of the Jubilee, two Encyclical Letters of our Holy Father, the Pope, published

throughout the entire world. A letter from the Vicar of Jesus Christ is a letter direct from Heaven. The more you read and meditate upon it, the more will your faith and piety be nourished. So that all may enjoy the benefits, I shall send copies enough for each house.

You will remark what is said in the Mandate about the holy religious state to which you have been called by the Divine Mercy. In writing this, my intention was to make known to the world the happiness of the religious calling, to foster vocations in other good souls, and to make them share the inestimable advantages you enjoy in the delightful solitudes prepared for you by the Heavenly Spouse; also, to procure for you the help and assistance you so greatly need. Let us hope that during the time of Jubilee, Our Lord may call many chosen souls to your Community to contribute by their generous devotedness to the glory of religion and the salvation of the world.

Your fervent prayers will impart to my words the spiritual unction they require to reach many hearts struggling, perhaps, against the grace which attracts them to the terrestrial paradise you inhabit..... Your prayers will be all the more efficacious as you increase in fervor at the near approach of the Jubilee. It is a time most fruit-

ful in graces for you and for your dear ones left in the midst of the world, and exposed to daily shipwreck, by the furious storm of passions.

To gain innumerable souls on the very brink of perdition for the Heart of your Divine Spouse, you must sacrifice yourselves, my dear Daughters ; and I specially recommend to your charity those souls whom the world brands to the dishonor of Jesus Christ. Never forget that on entering religion, you offered yourselves as victims for the love of sinful souls. Oh! how many poor, unfortunate souls, sighing beneath the weight of their miseries and beseeching you to have pity on them might be saved for Eternity by your prayers! To assist you in your work for the conversion of sinners, I permit the exercises of the Jubilee to be made in your Chapels. I attach, above all, the greatest importance to the preparatory prayers recited after your conventual Masses.

Needless for me to insist here on the principal intention of the Jubilee, which is to obtain that the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of all religious Communities, be solemnly declared by the Church, Immaculate in her Conception. Your filial love makes you ardently desire this triumph of her purity. Besides, the dogma once universally proclaimed, will confer a more brilliant lustre on all

religious Communities. They are, as you know, polished mirrors reflecting afar the life of the Virgin of Virgins,— that life, which gave Life to the world.

Continue to pray for the success of Temperance now so violently assailed. It will be victorious, I hope, in spite of the assaults of hell. Later on, you will appreciate the worth of the prayers and sacrifices of Communities when offered to God for the reformation of the world.

I am very sincerely, my dear Daughters,
Your most humble servant and affectionate Father,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

July 8 — The St. Lawrence and Quebec districts are destroyed by fire. The Sisters go to the scene of disaster to help the unfortunate victims. The Cathedral, the Bishop's residence, the St. James School and our Hospice St. Jerome are reduced to ashes. The Providence Asylum escapes miraculously from the devouring flames; it stands alone in the midst of ruin and desolation.

July 11.— The church of the Providence is opened to the public for the regular offices of the parish. (1)

October 18.— Departure of the missionary Sisters for Vancouver, Washington.

(1) After the fire the Hospice St.Joseph serves as a residence for the members of the Bishopric.

TO MOTHER CARON.

Hospice St, Joseph, December 7, 1852.

Reverend Mother:

At 5:45 this evening all the bells of the city will announce the Jubilee. Fervent prayers are needed to accompany their joyous chimes. Arrange everything so that your Sisters and your poor may say the rosary, and other prayers during the quarter hour of the Jubilee bell-ringing. Let us ask for ourselves, for the Community and for the City, all the graces of the Jubilee.

I am, very sincerely, Reverend Mother,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

CHAPTER XV.

LETTER TO THE SISTERS OF THE ASYLUM.—WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR.— ZEAL FOR THE CONVERSION OF PROTESTANTS.

1853.

TO THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.

Hotel-Dieu, January 1, 1853.

My dear Sisrers:

May you all be *happy and holy* in religion. Such is my wish for the New Year. May your pious Constitutions be more than ever in your minds and hearts, as they are the only road whereby you may arrive at the holiness and happiness you came to seek in this holy Community. May Our Lord, who is so good, send forth upon you His divine Spirit that you may understand and relish your holy Rules. In fine, may you be blessed in all your works. This is the ardent wish arising from my heart each instant toward Heaven for all the good Communities wherewith the Blessed Virgin has been graciously pleased to endow our diocese.

To our desire for your happiness, is joined the interest for other souls confided to our care. In you, we should find true advocates for poor sinners. Last year, you offered yourselves as victims to obtain the gift of temperance for the diocese. Your sacrifices were agreeable to the Divine Spouse because, in spite of the desperate efforts of the powers of evil, heavenly temperance has won striking victories. Behold a convincing proof. Out of every eight crimes brought before the tribunal of justice, it is a well known fact that seven are directly attributable to drink. Today, among the prisoners in this city, we count but thirty Canadians, twenty-one men and nine women. Such are the gains made by temperance sustained, in the fierce war waged against it, by so many fervent prayers.

This year, you must become victims for the conversion of our separated brethren. Alas! in this diocese, and in the adjoining one of St. Hyacinthe they number over a hundred thousand. You will, therefore, immolate yourselves the whole year for the return of so many straying sheep to the one true Fold. I am confident that you will not recoil before any sacrifice; that overcoming all natural repugnance, you will die to every feeling of nature for the love of these hundred thousand souls. You will not grieve over the petty miseries to be met with everywhere;

your one great sorrow will be the loss of so many souls created to the image and likeness of God. The sighs of the seraphic Theresa will be re-echoed in every Community and will mount heavenward from every heart. Oh! how many vigils she spent in weeping over the thousands of souls precipitated into hell by the heresies of her time. And how many souls did she not bring back to the path of righteousness and truth! You must have her heart, my dear Daughters; in every one of your prayers and good works, you will animate yourselves to renewed fervor by the thought that the more merit you acquire, the greater number of souls you will bring into the Church.

I prescribe no special prayer for this intention. The one for the conversion of Protestants should dominate all your exercises. I would counsel you, however, to repeat in private the following, addressed by the Church with such great confidence to the Blessed Virgin. *Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, for thou alone hast destroyed all the heresies of the world.* Meditating daily on this magnificent word of praise, you will become penetrated with holy confidence in the Mother of God, the Virgin most powerful whose foot hath crushed the serpent's head. What enrages and humiliates the demon most of all is to see himself overcome by a woman. In your petitions,

never cease to implore that the Virgin Mother of all religious Communities be proclaimed by the entire world, Immaculate in her Conception.

I bless you all, and I recommend myself to your fervent prayers during the coming year wherein I have so much to do, should it please God to make use of me as a feeble instrument in showing forth His glory. I shall be deprived of the consolation of seeing you as often as I should wish ; but I shall make up for this by visiting you daily in spirit, and uniting myself to all you do for your own sanctification and the salvation of your neighbor. Do not fail to have your poor pray for the same intention.

I am very sincerely, my dear Daughters,
Your most devoted Father in Jesus Christ,
† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

P. S. The Superior is requested to remind the Sisters often of the sublime mission confided to their care this year, especially when there is any painful sacrifice to be made. She will also kindly send a copy of the present letter to the Sisters residing in the other houses. Neither must she forget that the prayers of the poor and the orphans will be a powerful help to us, and that she must in consequence, frequently call upon them for this intention.

CHAPTER XVI.

LETTER TO MOTHER CARON.— MGR. BOURGET RECOMMENDS TO THE SISTERS THE EXACT OBSERVANCE OF THE LITURGICAL CEREMONIES.—PRAYERS PRESCRIBED FOR THE SUCCESS OF TEMPERANCE.— PRACTICES OF PIETY.— MGR. BOURGET'S THIRD TRIP TO EUROPE.

1854.

LETTER TO MOTHER CARON, SUPERIOR.

St. Joseph, April 5, 1854.

Reverend Mother:

You will receive with the present, a circular letter to the clergy, dated March 22, 1854. Among other things, there is question of a new ceremonial for this country to be observed in all our churches. I thought the nuns should have some explanations on this point; so I give it to them by means of the circular which I have had distributed in the Communities of women.

Attached as you are to your own special ceremonies, you can only be edified by the solicitude of your Bishops for the most venerable of all ceremonials, that of the Holy Roman Church. Zeal-

ous as you all are for the glory of God and the honor of religion, you will not fail to pray that the Divine Office may be everywhere celebrated with scrupulous regularity. I depend, therefore, upon your fervent prayers to obtain that all the churches of our diocese may be like so many *churches of religious.*

I am very sincerely, Reverend Mother,
Your most humble servant,
† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

The following is an extract from the circular mentioned above.

Our Churches, therefore, will become like so many mirrors of the holy canons and living pictures of true piety, by our fidelity in observing all the rules. Our divine offices, *well chanted* and *well served*, shall proved an unfailing source of blessings for both clergy and people. The sacred discipline maintained in our temples will pass into our dwellings and into those of the faithful. Our life, *private* and *domestic*, *sacerdotal* and *pastoral*, will be like rays of holiness reflecting, on Sundays and Holidays, the splendor of Divine Worship. From thence will result greater glory for God, greater edification for the Church, and greater merit for ourselves. By the careful cultivation of Divine Worship, we shall preserve our Faith ;

and by Faith we shall reign over all hearts, and our reign shall be continued among the people. These truths are most convincing; consequently they need no proof.....

LETTER TO MOTHER CARON, SUPERIOR.

St. Joseph, April 18, 1854.

Reverend Mother:

The cause of Temperance has great need of the prayers of your Community, of your poor, of your aged people and of your orphans. In its name I claim them all; and for this reason, I am sending you some crosses which you will kindly place in each of the Community rooms, the Novitiate, the wards of the aged and of the children. I should be pleased to have one in the men's ward and one in the servants' quarters.

Five Our Fathers and five Hail Marys should be recited daily before this cross for the success of Temperance. Before hanging the crosses in the different places, you will have them respectfully venerated, and you will invite the

holy souls sharing in your zeal to pray with all their might that God may grant the Association of Temperance a complete triumph over the dreadful vice of drunkenness.

I desire you to distribute the Manual and the Annals of Temperance among the Sisters so that learning the importance and the advantage of Temperance and the terrible evils of drunkenness, they may know how to speak on the subject to the poor and the sick under their care. You might also make a very interesting spiritual reading on this topic..... The pamphlets might also be read by those able to draw profit therefrom.

I rely most of all on the help of prayer for the success of this grand work for the salvation of so many souls so greatly exposed to eternal reprobation on account of intemperance.

I am very sincerely, Reverend Mother,
Your most humble and obedient servant,
† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

July 3.— The Sisters having made a request for a collection of pious practices, Mgr. Bourget gave them the following reply through Mother Caron :

You have enough prayers to say every day; consequently, I am not in favor of your adding any more in future. The main point to be observed for the honor of God and His saints, is to say your daily prayers with constantly renewed fervor.

October 23.— Mgr. Bourget undertakes a third trip to Europe. During his stay in Rome, His Lordship will assist at the solemn definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

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CHAPTER XVII.

MGR. BOURGET WRITES TO MOTHER CARON FROM ROME.— DEVOTION TO OUR LADY OF SEVEN DOLORS.— READING OF THE BULL OF THE DOGMA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.— CONCESSION OF PRIVILEGES AND INDULGENCES.

1855.

LETTER TO MOTHER CARON, SUPERIOR.

Rome, May 7, 1855.

My dear Daughter:

Your letter of March eleventh reached me at a very busy time, and it is only today that I could find leisure to reply. I am happy to learn that you are pleased with your little Community and that the greater number are doing well. I rejoice with you, as you may well believe, since I desire nothing so much as your perseverance in the right path. You cannot make too many sacrifices for Our Lord. From the moment you began the work under His inspiration, for His glory and the greater good of the poor, He has been prodigal of His graces to you.

Foremost of all, He has bestowed upon you for your first Mother and Foundress, Our Lady of Seven Dolors. The more I reflect upon the work of your foundation, the more I find it providential; yes, most providential, and I am more than ever convinced that I have been but a blind and powerless instrument in His Hands.

Placed at the head of your young Community by Divine Providence, it is necessary, good Mother, that you powerfully second the accomplishment of His adorable designs for the perfection of His Work. This you will do by guiding it along the path of simplicity, humility and charity, that it may ever be in the eyes of the world a living proof of the maternal care God takes of His own here upon earth. One thing only does He ask of you, and that is that you be a Superior according to His Heart; that you always keep your eyes fixed upon Him, walk ever in His holy presence, and be ready at all times to receive His divine inspirations. Looking upon Him, it will be impossible not to see clearly, since He is the Light of the World. Study your holy Rule constantly; love and practice it yourself. You will have no difficulty then in making the Sisters observe it, for I am sure none of them are wanting in goodwill. Finally, do courageously whatever costs

poor human nature most. Animated by such noble sentiments of generosity, we may accomplish something for Our Lord who so generously sacrificed for our sakes what He held dearest in the world, —His own Divine Person.

Rome is singularly devout to Our Lady of Seven Dolors. On every side we meet with visible proofs of this devotion. Many of the numerous Madonnas exposed in the streets to the veneration of the passers-by, are represented with the sword of sorrow piercing the heart of our good Mother. The first chapel on the right as you enter St. Peter's is the chapel of Our Lady of Dolors. Above the altar of this chapel there is a representation in marble, something like at the Providence, of the mystery of the Sorrows of the August Mother of God. Into this chapel, the *Holy Door*— opened only at the times of great Jubilee — swings inward as if to say to the thousands of pilgrims who pass through, that it is only through Mary, the Mother of Sorrows that we can go to the throne of Divine Mercy. On either side of the choir of this chapel, are two other chapels which are always kept closed. In the one on the right is the column of the Temple of Jerusalem, near which, according to ancient tradition, Our Lord stood when preaching to the people. In the chapel on the left is kept the

treasury of relics belonging to the grand Basilica. I cannot tell you all I saw or venerated there. What appealed to me most was the hair of the Blessed Virgin preserved in a glass case so that pious curiosity may be easily gratified. I saw that sacred hair again and again; and it seems to me the impression that priceless relic made upon my heart will never be effaced. If there is so much happiness in contemplating for a few moments only, in this vale of tears, some of the hairs that covered the head of the humble virgin, crowned today with everlasting glory, what will it be to see her face to face in all her ravishing beauty forevermore? The practice of your holy Father, St. Vincent, who thought he saw the souls of the blessed whose precious remains he venerated on earth, helped very much to reanimate my fervor in this city so like a vast reliquary containing millions upon millions of precious holy relics. But I must return to Our Lady of Seven Dolors. Devotion to her is an everyday practice here. At the Servites an exercise is held daily in her honor at eleven-thirty. At the Sacramentines where they have the happiness of having the Blessed Sacrament exposed all day long, there is always an exercise in honor of the Compassion of the Most Holy Virgin. Their chapel being at the door of the Quirinal, I generally go there for Benediction, and I frequently

hear your favorite hymn, the *Stabat Mater* sung by the nuns. What strikes me most is to hear the good people who throng the chapel chant the alternate verses in unison. One is carried away in spite of oneself in hearing so many sweet and simple voices uniting their harmonious melody to the tender sighs of the best of Mothers.

But I see that I am at the end of my paper and so I must stop. I learn with pleasure that, notwithstanding your hard winter, the poor did not suffer too much. Public misery brings you, as always, into contact with the world; so, try to edify every one by your sweet and amiable charity. Since our dear, separated brethren desire you to care for their sick, show yourselves at all times very devoted in their regard. This is the best and surest means of bringing them to the knowledge of the true religion. You may be certain that the dogma of the Immaculate Conception will draw a great number into the bosom of the Church.

Please thank the venerable Father Lacroix for me and tell him how much I appreciate his rosary which does me so much good. My best wishes to the sick members of St. Joseph's now at Long Point. Their sufferings are the source of great graces for us. I recommend myself to the prayers of your good ladies, of all your aged peo-

ple, your dear little orphans and of every one.

I remain as always,
Your devoted servant,
† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

June 3.— The Papal bull announcing to the whole world the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception is read this day. Our Chapel, used as a parish Church since the great fire of 1852, is filled by a crowd of faithful holding lighted candles and listening to the reading of the proclamation on bended knees.

August 28.— Although absent and far away from his diocese, Mgr. Bourget does not forget his Works. He obtains from the Holy See a concession of Privileges and Indulgences as contained in the subjoined document, which is forwarded to us from Paris, by His Lordship.

CONCESSION OF PRIVILEGES AND INDULGENCES.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To our very dear Daughters, the Sisters of Charity, administrators of the Providence Hospice for the relief of Aged and Infirm Women, greetings and blessings in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Holy Father, the Pope, wishing to encourage more and more in your Community, as well as in the City and Diocese of Montreal, the salu-

tary devotion to Our Lady of Seven Dolors, so popular in the Holy City, and whose beneficial effect is to remedy at all times the evils afflicting both religion and state, has deigned by an Indult, dated July eighth of the current year, to grant to your Chapel the following privileges and indulgences.

1. The main altar of your said Chapel shall be, each day of the year and forever, *privileged* in favor of those holy souls in purgatory for whom the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass shall be there offered by any priest, either regular or secular. In virtue of this privilege, that soul in purgatory to whom this plenary indulgence may be applied is delivered from its place of expiation and purified to see God in Heaven.

2. In future, all priests, celebrating in your Chapel, may say the Masses approved by the Holy See in honor of the saints of the Order of Servites on the days of their respective feasts.

In communicating these signal favors to you, our very dear Daughters, we firmly trust that your devotion to Our Lady of Seven Dolors will be duly increased, and that you will be more faithful in imitating her virtues, and more zealous in the observance of your holy Rules; that your love for the poor will increase day by day; in

fine, that the holy virtues of *simplicity*, *humility*, *charity*, which form your true religious character, will be dearer than ever to your hearts.

We profit of this occasion, our very dear Daughters, to recommend to you the study of the lives of the holy men and women of an Order at all times so cherished by the Blessed Virgin. When she adopted you as the Daughters of her Sorrows, she deigned to bid you enter the great family of her devoted servants. Apply yourselves to the faithful imitation of the virtues of those holy men and women who have become your brothers and sisters by adoption. Love to bear their names, and be happy to celebrate their feasts. Believe that their holy souls unite with their bodies wherever the smallest portion exists. You will soon have among you those souls so pure, so humble, so devoted to Mary, the Mother of Dolors, since you will ere long, have the happiness of possessing some part of their mortal remains.

May the marvelous growth of these blessed servants of Mary pass on to you, so that gathering in new recruits and good subjects, you may always labor more zealously for the perfection of the works of charity.

We sincerely hope, our very dear Daughters,

that in a spirit of filial gratitude for so many and such priceless favors, you will pray with ever renewed fervor for the good Pope whom God in His mercy has given to His Church, and for all who assist him in the government of the entire world.

The present decree shall be read in chapter by the Daughters of Charity at the House of Providence in Montreal, the first free day after its reception at the choice of the Superior.

Given at Paris, the twenty-eighth day of the month of August, on the feast of St. Philip Beniti, in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-five, under our sign and seal and the countersign of our secretary, *pro tempore.*

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.
By Monseigneur,
H. R. Lenoir, priest, secretary, *pro. tem.*

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CHAPTER XVIII.

LETTERS OF MGR. BOURGET (FROM PARIS). — DEVOTIONS OF THE INSTITUTE. – SOUVENIRS OF MARCH 25, 1843.— RETURN OF MGR. BOURGET. — COLLECTION IN BEHALF OF THE WORK OF THE DEAF-MUTES.— ASSEMBLY OF THE LADIES OF CHARITY AT LAPRAIRIE.

1856.

LETTER TO MOTHER CARON, SUPERIOR.

Paris, March 11, 1856.

Reverend Mother:

I owe you a letter for quite awhile in reply to the one you wrote when sending the letter from the good Sisters of Chili, written before their departure last October.

I am profiting of Mr. Connelly's departure tomorrow for Montreal: he will kindly deliver this letter free of postage to you.

I presume you made the retreat for the Feast of Our Lady of Seven Dolors this year as usual; so from the very beginning, I united heart and soul with the retreatants, in the hope of gathering up a few crumbs fallen from their table. I hope

they have all found in the Heart of our good Mother, the graces necessary to strengthen them in the love of their religious duties and the practice of the holy works of charity.

Provided with such powerful help, and accompanied by the angels bearing the instruments of the Passion, they will again tread the pathway of sacrifice with renewed courage and generosity.

On this subject, I must tell you what struck me most in Rome, each time I visited the already mentioned Chapel of Our Lady of Seven Dolors. I had the happiness of seeing there the precious hair which covered the august head of the holy Virgin, who, today, is crowned with glory everlasting. I had frequently to cross the bridge Sant' Angelo ; and on that bridge is represented in a most striking manner the vision accorded to the Seven Holy Founders of the Order of Servites. On either side of the bridge are great marble statues representing the angels in procession ; one bears the column where our Savior was scourged; another, the whips which tore His divine body ; a third, the crown of thorns; a fourth the cloth whereon Veronica received the imprint of the Savior's Holy Face ; a fifth, the cross ; a sixth, the lance ; a seventh, the sponge, an eighth the winding sheet, etc. , etc. How many times have I not stopped to view this procession, ending

with the statues of Sts. Peter and Paul! How many times have I not wished that you were in my place to enjoy this scene! What impressions the soul feels in crossing that bridge so fitly guarded by the angels and the Princes of the Church! The bridge ends at the castle known as the Castle Sant'Angelo. Surmounting this castle is seen the figure of an angel as he appeared to Saint Gregory the Great, and to the whole people of Rome, who were at the time making a procession in this very place to ask for grace and mercy. This angel is represented in the act of sheathing his sword and entoning the *Regina Cœli.* Before this bridge, so replete with souvenirs, the annual procession of St. Mark halts on its way to St. Peter's to sing hymns in honor of the angels.

These little details prove to you how dear your devotions are to the Holy City, and by how many venerable monuments they are consecrated. Cling firmly, therefore, to devotions so ancient, so universal, so sweet and so full of graces. They are your natural element; you breathed them at your very birth to the religious life. You could not live now unless you breathed them night and day. This explains why Our Lord, always so liberal to your little Community, has never ceased to pour out upon you the chalice of His holy Mother's most bitter sorrows.

Friday next will be your day of great solemnity. I shall endeavor to be with you in spirit to share in your joys as in your sorrows. I send you all my good wishes for a happy feast, and I bless you all in the name of the Lord, beseeching Him to give you His good spirit, so that you may live for Him only and for His poor of whom you have the signal happiness to be the humble servants.

I recommend myself to your pious prayers, to those of your ladies, of your old women, of your orphans and of your poor.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

TO THE SAME.

Paris, April 2, 1856.

Reverend Mother:

Your letter of March 25, recalled the souvenirs of thirteen years ago as vividly as if it were but yesterday, so keen were the impressions I received on that memorable date. I firmly believe the day I suffered most cruelly in my life was that day whereon I gave you the Holy Habit. I thank God you have worn it ever since with great happiness..... I must confess that when I saw you kneeling at the foot of the little altar of immolation, I was seized with the thought:

What is to become of these good Daughters who so confidingly abandon themselves into my hands? Should their enterprise fail, as in all probability according to human judgment it must, how ridiculous will be their position before a wicked and malicious world which will never forgive them this folly. Behold them lost and disgraced forever in the eyes of the world, should success fail to crown their efforts! Judging by the ordinary rules of common sense, success, as understood by human reasoning, was hardly possible. Even in the light of faith, this foundation may seem, to say the very least either too premature or highly imprudent.

The ceremony of the first investiture was made, therefore, in the midst of agonizing doubts and perplexities on your account. For my part, it seemed to me that I did not so much dread the blame I might deserve, as the apprehension I felt for you, should you, after putting your hand to the plough, turn and look backward. The only reason for my heart-rending anguish was the thought of your future. Hardly had you been clothed in your Holy Habit when you were jeered and mocked at in the streets and called crazy. Then furious storms arose violently assailing your infant Community. Scorn and contempt from without, interior troubles and desolations from within, dire poverty with all its attendant

privations and temptations, besides a thousand other trials more or less grievous, surrounded the early days of your religious life. All, without doubt, were necessary for the growth of your little Institute; still, as no one could foretell how it would all end, religious hope and trust were often at a very low ebb.

Such are the souvenirs the twenty-fifth of March evokes in the depths of my soul each recurring year. Judge then how gladly I bless the glorious Mother of God on this great day of salvation for having deigned to turn her eyes of mercy towards you in a more tender and compassionate way because you were the *weakest*, the *most destitute* and the *most abandoned* of her children. Now methinks, if your Community knows how to maintain itself in these lowly sentiments of its *nothingness*, it will always continue to be the object of the most tender solicitude on the part of our incomparable Mother. On the other hand, I fear, lest prospering visibly in the sight of the world, your Community may become inflated with pride, and may begin to think itself as much and even more than others; then will it surely cease to be the object of the gracious predilection of the Mother of God,—a predilection a thousand times more desirable than the esteem of the whole universe.

And so the most ardent wish my heart can

form for you all, is that you may never, never forget your humble origin. It is very evident to me that Divine Providence which has given you its name, will make you realize from generation to generation all the spiritual and temporal treasures hidden within its bosom. In its all-wise designs, your Community is to be the ever-living proof that Divine Providence is truly the mother of all mankind, and that it sustains and nourishes all the unhappy children of Adam....

I note with pleasure that the number of your infirm, your orphan girls, your old women and your pupils has considerably increased; also, that the deaf-mutes are gathering around you. I trust you will teach them how to express in the sign language all the marvels of Divine Providence in their regard.

I learn with keen regret that Madam Gauvin and Miss Guy have left you for a better world. I trust they will become your intercessors in Heaven: I shall add their names to my memento of the dead. It always seems to me that the good souls in purgatory, especially those of my diocese, quench their burning thirst in the chalice and derive nourishment from the holy host I have the happiness of offering daily to the Divine Majesty. Such a thought affords me the consolation of their company at those precious moments.

As I am in the city where your holy Father, St. Vincent, lived for so long, and where he died, I endeavor to absorb as much of his spirit as possible in order to transmit it to you. His practice of praying daily at three o'clock for souls in their agony and others, is more present to my mind here than elsewhere, as you may readily believe. I inclose a little leaflet on this subject, in case you have not yet seen it. The devotion to the Agonizing Heart of Jesus is surely yours by every right.

I bless you and recommend myself to your fervent prayers.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

July 25.— After an absence of two years, Mgr. Bourget returns to his episcopal city, bringing blessings and encouragement from His Holiness, Pius IX.

September 19.— Monseigneur orders a collection to be taken up in the four principal churches of the city in favor of the Institution for the Deaf-Mutes.

September 28.— His Lordship goes to Laprairie to preside at a meeting of the Ladies of Charity. The object of this assembly is to ascertain whether the Ladies are willing to continue their works of benevolence on behalf of the Hospice which is in the greatest straits, or whether the house shall be closed for want of funds. The Ladies unanimously decide to redouble their efforts for its support and maintenance.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FORTY HOURS AT THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.— LETTER TO SISTER JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART.—ORDINANCE OF MGR. BOURGET CONCERNING THE CEREMONIAL.— REBUILDING OF THE ST. JAMES' CHURCH.— LETTER AND MANDATE ANNOUNCING THE PASTORAL VISIT.

1857.

February 21.— The Forty Hours at the Church of the Providence for the first time.

LETTER TO SISTER JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART, SUPERIOR AT VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON.

Montreal, March 21, 1857.

My dear Daughter:

I address you thus out of custom and without any right, as you are now peacefully browsing in other pastures far afield, and under the guidance of another Shepherd. I am delighted however to learn of your safe arrival in Oregon, that happy land for which you so ardently sighed, and whose sod, no doubt, you joyfully kissed on landing.

Your wishes for the New Year were just as good and quite as welcome in February as in January. I thank you for them, and I beg you to pray hard for their accomplishment because I have great need of them all.

You had reason to hope that Our Lord would sweeten the trials awaiting you, since no *foundation* is made without trouble. The magnificent *hundredfold* promised to those who leave all to follow the good Master is found everywhere, more especially there where it is but natural to think it does not exist; that is to say, in those places where there are greater sacrifices to be made, provided we make them generously.

In taking possession of your mission on the Feast of *the Immaculate Conception* of the Blessed Virgin Mary, you must indeed have had high hopes. You certainly had good reason to consider the coincidence a fortunate sign for the success of your worthy enterprise, which is to preach in its own way the new dogma of faith that shall fill the entire world with joy and riches both spiritual and temporal.

The Spiritual Bouquet sent in your letter of January 27, arrived in good order, and I found its fragrance all the sweeter because of its spirituality. I thank you for this new proof of goodwill. In return, I implore Our Lord, His Immaculate

Mother and glorious St. Joseph whom we all try to honor, to reward you a hundredfold.....

I have the greatest confidence that nothing in the world can separate you from those sacred objects so worthy of possessing all your hearts; neither the cold winds blowing from your mountains, nor the flying sands of your deserts, nor the wandering lives of your Indians, nor the temptations of the spirits of evils, nor any breath of the myriad scandal to be found wherever human beings are gathered together.

I bless you, your good Sisters, and all your new-born works. Pray for me that I may fulfill those confided to my keeping by Divine Providence. They should in reality be very great; but, unfortunately through my own fault, they are small, very small. You may believe me, Sister, I know whereof I speak.

I am, my dear Sisters and Daughters,

Your most devoted Father and servant in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

June 5.—Mgr. Bourget addresses an ordinance to all the Communities of his diocese, recommending them to conform to the prescriptions of the Holy, Roman Church, and to suppress all customs and usages contrary thereto.

ORDINANCE

OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL, CONCERNING THE CEREMONIAL.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To the religious Communities of our Diocese, greeting and blessing in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Intimately convinced, as we have always been, our very dear Daughters, that the Spirit of God dwelt in the hearts of your Founders and Foundresses of happy memory, we have ever made it our bounden duty to exhort you to maintain yourselves in the primitive spirit of your respective Institutes. They form that beautiful variety which so enhances the dazzling beauty of your Queen, the Virgin Immaculate, eldest Daughter and Mother of the Church. Aiming at this, we have scrupulously applied ourselves to urge you to the perfect accomplishment of the very least points of your holy Rule with the thought that in this exact observance, you would find sovereign perfection. We know, however, that the Rules are not binding under pain of sin except in cases of infraction where the vows of religion are concerned.

It is therefore evident, our very dear Daughters, that one of the strictest duties incumbent upon us, is to make you observe the liturgical rules imposed on all by the Church in *virtue of holy obedience*. Such is the purpose of the present ordinance, as you will soon perceive. With all religious hearts so well disposed, and animated by faith and piety, it is in no wise necessary, to examine in detail the reasons which should induce you to accept with great happiness the reforms we are constrained to make in the ceremonies followed in your Churches and Communities. The thought that the ceremonies of the Holy Roman Church, Our Mother and Mistress must be observed in all their purity will, doubtless, be sufficient.

However, in order to make our meaning quite clear, we shall suppose a case which will bring out more strongly the absolute necessity of adhering strictly to the liturgical rules of the Holy, Roman Church. A certain fervent Community had been deprived for a great length of time of the precious advantage of frequent communication with its Mother Community; hence, in course of time, many changes became apparent in the usages, regulations, costume, etc. Divine Providence came to the rescue and placed said Community once more in touch with its Mother-House. Its mem-

bers soon noted that they had imperceptibly drifted away, without knowing any too well how or why, from the observances and practices of the Mother Community. This latter by the grace of God meanwhile, had maintained itself in all the vigor of its primitive spirit. Hence, ought it not be very natural, that the branch House should seek to ascertain the various points of difference between itself and its Mother House? And, as it is still animated by a good spirit and is very fervent, is it not certain that it will quickly adopt every reform necessary for its perfect union and harmony with so good a Mother? Now, our very dear Sisters, such has hitherto been our identical position in this country, and this will explain to you the modifications that must be made, little by little, until we arrive as near to perfection as it may be permitted us to aspire in this vale of tears. By submitting humbly and simply to the yoke of Holy Mother Church, you will share largely in the inestimable advantages she has to offer, as may be clearly inferred from the different prescriptions of the present ordinance.

We recommend you to pray fervently, our very dear Daughters, that the Divine Offices may be everywhere celebrated with such punctuality, fervor and devotion that while rendering the homage due to the Divine Majesty, good christians

may be wonderfully edified, and poor sinners converted.

For these reasons, the Holy Name of God invoking, and advised by our venerable brethren, the Canons of our Cathedral, we have enacted, decreed and ordained, enacting, decreeing and ordaining that which follows:

1. The ceremonial of the Holy, Roman Church shall be observed in all the Chapels and Communities of our diocese.

2. We suppress all usages and customs contrary thereto.

3. The regulations accompanying the present ordinance, having been made especially for the use of the Communities, shall be strictly complied with.

4. Consequently, except on the first and last day of the Forty Hours celebrated according to the *Ordo* of the current year, Masses will no longer be sung or said in presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed.

5. Each Community may choose, instead, any day of the octave of Corpus Christi, Sunday excepted, for its own private procession within the limits of the Convent inclosure with permission for the erection of a repository. The public

procession throughout the city shall be held on the Sunday as above reserved.

6. They shall be happy to celebrate the anniversary of the election and of the coronation of the Sovereign Pontiff in the following manner: On the first of said anniversaries there shall be singing at the Community Mass; on the second, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at the hour judged most convenient, besides a grand holiday for the Community.

The present ordinance shall be read in Chapter the first day after its reception.

Given at the Bishopric of Montreal, at Mount St. Joseph, the fifth day of the month of June in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-seven, under our sign and seal and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

By Monseigneur,

J. O. Paré, Canon, Secretary.

June 28.—The St. James Church destroyed by fire in 1852, is rebuilt and now ready for worship. The Providence will no longer be used for the public offices.

November 9.—Mgr. Bourget announces his canonical visit to our Community.

To Reverend Mother Caron, Superior.

Mount St. Joseph, November 9, 1857.

Reverend Mother:

In addition to the accompanying mandate, I inclose a few directions which will help you and your Sisters to prepare for the graces of the visit.

1. This evening after prayer, you will notify the Sisters that you will read the mandate of the visit tomorrow at lecture, and that they should dispose themselves by prayer to hear it with simplicity and humility.

2. You will begin the spiritual reading and the meditation on the Rule; each Sister will be invited to make a private memorandum of the points wherein she fails so that she may correct herself.

3. You will assemble your counsellors as often as you can; with them you will ascertain which of the *common Rules* have fallen into disuse, and you will make a special note of each.

4. You will also assemble the officers to see with them which customs should be adopted for the better administration of the different offices

of the house; and you will advise with the counsellors on this matter.

5. Write to the Sister Servants so that they may, with the Sisters of their respective missions, do the same as you are doing at the Mother House. Advise them to send you without delay, the statement requested in the mandate. These notes shall state: 1. The year the house was founded. 2. By whom it was founded. 3. The number of poor cared for, or how many pupils have been taught yearly since the foundation. 4. The annual receipts and expenditures. 5. The names of the Sisters successively residing there and the offices they held. 6. The points of Rule not observed and why. 7. The condition of the house and its dependencies. 8. Whether any debts exist and the amount of indebtedness. 9. What religious helps are wanting. Each one may add whatever others remarks she may think useful or necessary.

6. Remind the Sisters frequently of the approaching visit, so that they may prepare for it by generous sacrifices; above all, by fidelity and punctuality to each and every one of their holy Rules.

7. Beg the Superiors and Directors to assist you by their counsels, and by their instructions in the Community and Novitiate to prepare well for the great day of the Lord's visitation.

I most humbly beseech the Holy Spirit to enlighten and strengthen you in the accomplishment of the important duties you have before you. You will do the same for me, who am in greater need of light and strength than any one else.

I am most sincerely, Reverend Mother,
Your very humble and obedient servant,
† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

MANDATE

OF THE VISIT TO THE PROVIDENCE.

IGNACE, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To our very dear Daughters, greetings and blessings in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

We announce to you with the greatest consolation, our very dear Daughters, the pastoral visit we are to make in your Community. Quite a while has elapsed since we entered into the details of your spiritual needs, as we were formerly wont to do, especially at the time of your foundation.

We have never ceased, as you may well believe, our very dear Daughters, to extend our

pastoral vigilance over you all through the medium of the Superiors and Directors whom we have assigned you ; and we are the daily witness of the care they have lavished upon you in their ardent charity. We felt we could rely implicitly upon them for the interests of your small and humble family. But, as certain graces are exclusively attached to the visits of the Shepherds to their Folds, we do not wish you to be any longer deprived thereof.

We shall go to you, therefore, our very dear Daughters, laden with the abundance of graces attendant upon our holy ministry in whatever place we exercise it ; because the Supreme Pastor of souls is ever acting through His representative on earth.

Hence, it is not the visit of man, but that of God, you are about to receive ; you are all penetrated with the truth that he who receives and hearkens to us, receives and hears Jesus Christ Himself: and from this you will readily conclude that the Good Master will do for you today through His representative, no matter how unworthy he may be, what He Himself did while on earth.

Oh ! yes, our very dear Daughters, all the graces He bestowed upon the holy women of the Gospel, who had left all things to follow Him,

He will likewise grant you; because in renouncing the world you have placed yourselves like them, amongst the followers of our incomparable Master, to feed and care for Him in the person of the poor whose humble servants you have become. Those graces, our very dear Daughters, will be as so many new lights to make you appreciate better the happiness of your vocation, and higher degrees of fervor to make you fulfill its sacred duties with more fidelity. They will be your consolation in troubles, your strength in temptations, and your remedy for every spiritual weakness you may have to deplore.

This precious treasury of graces, will be granted you especially, our very dear Daughters, so that you may all be renewed in the spirit proper to your holy state, the spirit bequeathed by St. Vincent de Paul, your founder, as a legacy to His Daughters of Charity. He was, undoubtedly, inspired by the Holy Ghost when drawing up the plan of life you follow, and he has stamped it with the seal of his spirit. During the visit, we shall minutely examine whether you have carefully guarded that sacred deposit, and whether, in consequence, simplicity, humility and charity are truly the distinguishing marks of your Community. With those three admirable virtues, you have all the virtues; and with them the perfection of the holy Rules which guide you.

Nor shall we limit our serious examen to this point only. We propose to put the finishing touch to your Customary, in order to give stability to the usages adopted, in conformity with the spirit as well as the letter of the *Common Rules* given you by your holy Founder.

From this simple outline, our very dear Daughters, you see at once that your greatest and most vital interests are concerned; that there is question of establishing traditions and customs anent the spirit proper to your holy state, which you must transmit from generation to generation; that your Community, yet in its infancy, must be firmly set on a solid, lasting, and well-assured basis; that active zeal and quickened religious fervor must be infused to firmly establish, once for all, that religious discipline which should maintain it in its primitive fervor until the end of time. You must never forget, our very dear Daughters, that you are tracing out the road which all who come after you must follow. They will be just what you have made them, more by your example than by all the Rules, which after all, are but a dead letter unless kept in vigor by constant practice.

For these reasons, the holy name of God invoking, we have enacted, decreed and ordained;

enacting, decreeing and ordaining that which follows :

1. We shall go to the House of Providence on the eighteenth day of December next at three o'clook in the afternoon. We shall conform to the Ceremonial and Pontifical of the Holy, Roman Church, for our solemn entry, as for all the other ceremonies of the pastoral visit.

2. All the prayers and good works of the Community must be offered with the intention of obtaining from Heaven the full success of our proposed visit. It may, perhaps, be the last we shall ever make in that abode of charity. The poor shall, likewise, be requested to pray for this intention.

3. The Sisters shall prepare themselves for the graces of the visit by a serious examen of their conduct to ascertain whether they are perfectly regular; so that they may make known to us in the private interviews we shall give them, the different irregularities or habitual infractions of the Holy Rules.

4. From now until the time of the visit, a special study of the Rule and Customary shall be made, so that the Sisters, being filled with the spirit of their holy vocation, may present themselves to their Heavenly Bridegroom with their

lamps trimmed and brightly burning ; that is to say, with hearts all inflamed with love and charity.

5. The Superior in her Council, shall make note of all points of Rule which have fallen into disuse, so that the best means of renewing their observance may be considered, should such be deemed necessary for the maintenance of regularity.

6. The Sisters in the offices should make note of the usages and customs considered proper for the guidance of the officers and companions, in order that the offices may be always wisely administered.

7. A list of the professed Sisters, Novices and Postulants shall be prepared, indicating after each one's name, the date of profession, investiture or entrance to the Novitiate, and the office each one holds.

8. The account books, the inventories of the church and the Community, the lists of the Lady Boarders, the poor, the orphans and others under the Community's care shall be kept ready for our inspection.

9. The Sisters on mission shall send a memorandum of the state of the houses under their control that we may judge whether the Rule is faithfully observed, and what works are carried

on for the honor of the Divine Majesty. In their respective houses they shall do all that is required of the Sisters at the Mother House as above outlined.

10. We shall make the visit of the Church, the ornaments, the sacred vessels, and all other objects pertaining to Divine Worship. We shall examine very strictly whether our ordinance of January twenty-third last, regulating that the divine services be carried out in all the churches of our diocese according to the Roman ritual, has been put into execution.

11. We shall likewise visit the place destined for the burial of persons belonging to the Community, and shall there recite the prayers prescribed for the departed Sisters and the poor.

These are the principal points to which we desire to call your attention, our very dear Daughters, so that preparing yourselves with more care for the visit of the Lord, it may be for you all a day of salvation and of great benediction.

On our part, we shall not fail to recommend the success of the visit to the August Virgin whom you honor most especially in her sorrows; to St. Vincent whose admirable Rule you follow,

and to all the angels and saints under whose protection and guardianship Divine Providence has placed you.

Given at Montreal, the ninth day of November, eighteen hundred and fifty-seven under our sign and seal and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

By Monseigneur,

J. O. Paré, Canon, Secretary.

CHAPTER XX.

MGR. BOURGET ADOPTS THE RULES OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL FOR OUR INSTITUTE, AND DRAWS UP THE CUSTOMARY.— MANDATE OF APPROBATION FOR THE RULES.— DISTRIBUTION OF THE BOOKS OF RULES.— ENLARGEMENT OF THE ASYLUM.— ELECTIONS.— MIDNIGHT MASS.

1858.

February 2.— Mgr. Bourget terminates the canonical visit begun in November last, by a Mandate adopting the Rules of St. Vincent de Paul for our Institute.

MANDATE

OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL, APPROVING THE RULES OF THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To our very dear Daughters, the Sisters of Charity, Servants of the Poor at the Asylum of Montreal for the Aged and Infirm Women, greetings and blessings in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The principal object of our last pastoral visit, our very dear Daughters, was to confirm you more and more in the spirit of your holy vocation

by determining definitely your Rules, *common* and *special;* because in every well-regulated Community, the good spirit and the Rule go together. And verily, it is the good spirit that renders the Rule living, by making it be exactly observed; while the Rule, wherever it is in vigor, fosters the good spirit; or, if you prefer, the Rule is the lamp and the good spirit is the oil burned therein to produce light. You all know how the Divine Spouse urged the virgins of the Gospel to lay in an abundant supply of that sacred oil, failing which, they could not be permitted to enter the hall of the wedding banquet.

You are aware, our very dear Daughters, that we have set aside all diocesan affairs to carry out this great work, and to proceed with more mature reflection in so serious a matter concerning your welfare. Upon it depends the future of your Community. We have spent forty days in solitude at your Hospice St. Joseph where we had all the advantages and the charms of retirement. In all truth, it was for us like the *Holy House of Nazareth*, a perfect abode of the *interior life*. During those days of sweet repose, you will, no doubt, recall how we went about from place to place, now in your humble but pious oratory, again in the wards of your good old women, then in the devout chapel of your innocent little children. Our

purpose was to unite our humble supplications to the fervent prayers embalming those holy places with celestial fragrance, and meriting for us the light whereof we stood in such pressing need. You have probably remarked that it was always in some solitude, or desert, that God conducted those whom He deigned to make use of, for the promulgating His laws to the different Communities wherewith He has enriched His Church. Oh ! it is because in solitude, *Heaven is nearer, the air is clearer and God is nigher unto us.*

Only at the end of our long retreat, and after many prayers, do we feel justified in placing the stamp of our approval on your *Holy Rules* and the *praiseworthy customs* that are the outline and application thereof. We have, however, yet another word to say to you on the true spirit of your humble and little Community ; because it is extremely important for you to know and never to forget *why you exist*, and what footing *you hold in regard to the other Communities.*

You have been engendered in religion, our very dear Daughters, to perform all the corporal and spiritual works of Mercy, and to assuage every human misery, in all places and at all times, and towards all kinds of persons, women of disorderly lives excepted. These latter, Divine Providence

does not commit to your care. You have been enrolled among *the women consecrated to the Lord.* You are known in the Church of God under the title of Daughters of Charity, because the distinguishing mark of your Community is charity, so much in fact that without it your Community would be nothing more than *sounding brass* and *tinkling cymbal*, even though it possesses all the qualities most admirable in the eyes of the world, because then it would *be nothing* in the eyes of God.

Hence, you are consecrated to God, our very dear Daughters, not for the education of the children of the rich, but to feed the poor and to care for the sick; also, to keep poor children and bring them up in holiness whilst holding the place of mothers in their regard. Down in the humblest shelters or the loathsome hovels of the very poorest where they ofttimes strive to hide, must you seek out the miseries you would relieve. In the homes of the sick or by the bedside of the dying, must you immolate yourselves for charity's sake by sacrificing for the suffering members of Jesus Christ, whatever strength you possess, and that until your very latest sigh. Even though you have neither wards nor hospitals wherein you can serve, still you shall always have a wide field for the exercice of the works proper to your Institute in the homes of the poor and the dying, in cholera

and other plague-stricken premises; in fine, wherever there are misfortunes to be relieved.

At your birth into the religious life, you received, with the name of *Daughters of Charity*, that of *Servants of the Poor;* because, as God who is charity itself wished the poor to be *other Gods*, so must you necessarily be the *Servants of a God poor*, in order to be worthy Daughters of Charity! The title, Servants of the Poor, to which you so jealously cling and which you prize above all else, brings you constantly back to the principal end of your vocation, which is to fulfill these words of Our Lord: *When you are invited to a wedding, seek always the lowest place.* In very truth, you have been instituted to be the least of all Communities, to perform the most humiliating works, to fill the lowest offices, to care for the most disgusting poor, to do the most painful labor; to charge yourselves, in a word, with all the works of charity, incompatible with duties other Communities have to fulfill, and like the good Chanaaneans you are, to gather up the crumbs that fall from their tables.

You were received into the Asylum of Providence, our very dear Daughters, as into a cradle, on the day you entered religion by pronouncing your vows. You are popularly known and called Sisters of Providence. Here again is the spirit

proper to your holy state revealed,—a spirit which should be one of perfect abandonment to the designs of an adorable Providence. Deprived of all human resources, and obliged, at the same time, to succor every misery, you are compelled to draw with the utmost filial confidence upon that inexhaustible treasury of Divine Providence which has never yet failed you. Nor will it ever fail you, if you only know how to have recourse to it for all your own needs and those of your poor. With that spirit of confidence in Divine Providence whom you are pleased to invoke as the good and tender mother of all, you will be like St. Vincent de Paul, who was always so keen to compassionate and so ready to relieve the necessities of the poor.

Oh! how truly with this good spirit, will you be enable to assuage all the miseries, and comfort all the sorrows afflicting poor mankind.

Daughters of Charity! your very features should proclaim you as the children of the Queen of virtues, for children, well-born, should resemble their mother. Therefore, your spiritual portrait should resemble the one on Charity drawn by St. Paul. *Charity*, he teaches us, *is patient, is kind: envieth not, dealeth not perversely; is not puffed up; is not ambitious; seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not*

in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

As you see, our very dear Daughters, charity has a magnificent retinue of virtues whereby she may be easily recognized. Amidst such surroundings you, too, will be readily known everywhere as her daughters. This is what you ask in that prayer for Charity which we gave you on the first New Year's Day. It was a gift you joyfully accepted in proof of your faith; and it was assuredly the most precious the Father of Light could bestow upon you. From Him all good gifts come, and Our Lord assures us that His Heavenly Father always grants the petitions of those who earnestly ask.

Behold, our very dear Daughters, the spirit proper to your little company. It is the sacred fire Our Lord brought from Heaven, and with which He desires to enlighten and inflame your entire Community. By the light of that hallowed torch must you walk in the path of justice, and by the brightness of that celestial light must we proceed to the examination and approbation of your Rules, and explain the points still unsettled.

That you may better enter into the spirit of these Rules, we shall tell you very simply what

happened in connection with them. During the year eighteen hundred and forty-one, when the Government incorporated the *Providence Asylum established at Montreal for the Aged and Infirm Women*, we were abroad in Europe seeking for charitable Hospitallers to take charge of the work. Little did we then know that God had right here and ready waiting, the Foundation Stones for the new edifice He designed to erect in our city for the honor of His Blessed Mother, under the title of Our Lady of Seven Dolors.

We had taken measures to have France furnish a small colony of the admirable Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul; and, according to human experience, we could depend upon the promises made us. But God whose designs are impenetrable, had ordained otherwise. We had to submit in all humility to His Divine Will, accept with resignation a bitter disappointment, and see our mission doomed to disgrace and failure. After having lost all hope of having the Daughters of St. Vincent come to our city, we desired to secure at least a copy of his Rules.

By a very special intervention of Divine Providence an authentic copy of those same Rules fell into our hands; and, it was the identical copy that had formerly been obtained by the late Bishop of Bardstown, Monseigneur Flaget of saintly

memory, who found himself at one time in a precisely similar predicament. At the moment of setting sail with his promised Daughters of Charity he had the sorrow of seeing all his hopes dashed to the ground. To console him for so terrible a blow, and contrary to the inviolable custom of never giving their Rules to any one, they gave him the copy in question ; and, it was on that precious manuscript that the Daughters of Charity were formed in the United States.

Behold, then, how you have become the Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul. You have his Rule. It is the very foundation stone whereupon rests the entire edifice of your Community. His Rule is so filled with the spirit of God that it has sufficed to direct those heroines of charity for two centuries in the right way. At the present time, from eleven to twelve thousand Sisters are so animated by its hidden though powerful strength that the world marvels at its efficacy.

There is more than enough in the recital of our early struggles to warrant you to receive those precious Rules, as a most sacred deposit, and to urge you to practice them with love. They will form the first part of your Constitutions, which we shall sanction in the Name of Our Lord so that you may no longer be wavering and irresolute in the accomplishment of your religious du-

ties. We give you those Rules in all their simplicity; we should fear to lessen their delightful savor were we to attempt to change their style. Moreover, a change of any kind would cause them to lose that venerable air of antiquity that always clings so closely to things of olden times.

As for the Rules, forming the second part of your Constitutions, they are, likewise, most worthy of your esteem and veneration. Besides the fact that they have been practised for over two hundred years by many fervent Communities devoted like yourselves to the exercise of the works of charity, they have already proved of immense value to you in initiating you into the holy practices of the religious life.

The Rules of the Customary also include your Constitutions. Embracing as you must, every species of good work, it is absolutely necessary for you to have practical Rules especially appropriated for you. But such are to be of your own choice, since you must have remarked that we are investigating your *praise-worthy customs*, and that before confirming them as Rules, we have carefully assured ourselves by the testimony of the seven councillors, representing the whole Community, that they are agreeable and salutary to all concerned.

The reason why Our Lord is so specially

honored in Communities, our very dear Daughters, is because through love for Him, they submit to the yoke of the Rule,—in itself a résumé of the evangelical counsels. He did not make them a precept binding upon any one. Oh! how the consideration of observing your Rules out of pure love of God should animate you never to fail. Another powerful motive of encouragement in the practice of even the least point of Rule is the thought, that if each Sister is regular, so will the whole Community be; and, that in recompense for fidelity, God will make it prosper in all its works of charity.

That you may always have before your eyes the happiness awaiting you even upon earth, if you perform the holy works confided to you by Divine Providence with all the requisite dispositions, we here reproduce that beautiful passage of Isaias, the prophet, who in language sublime, unfolds to us the abundant blessings God is pleased to shower upon houses of charity. Hearken most attentively to the touching words Our Lord addresses you by the mouth of His prophet: « Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the harborless into thy house: when thou shalt see one naked, cover him, and despise not thy own flesh. Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall speedily arise, and thy justice shall go before thy face

and the glory of the Lord shall gather thee up ....When thou shalt pour out thy soul to the hungry, and shalt satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light arise up in darkness, and thy darkness shall be as the noonday. And the Lord will give thee rest continually, and will fill thy soul with brightness, and deliver thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a fountain of water whose waters shall not fail. And the places that have been desolate for ages shall be built up in thee, thou shalt raise up the foundations of generation and generation : and thou shalt be called the repaired of fences turning the paths into rest. (1)

We shall not pause here to make the application of these divine words to your different works of charity. We know well that in time, by practice more than by study, you will acquire an intimate knowledge of them.

A few recommendations still remain, our very dear Daughters, to help you to know better how to observe your holy Rules. You comprehend perfectly that they will be no more than a dead letter unless closely studied and religiously observed even to the most minute point.

1. Each one will soon receive a complete

(1) Isaias, Ch. 58.

printed copy of your Rules and Customs. Accept them with respect as coming from the hand of Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and look upon them as a priceless treasure. Take them for your guide in the voyage of life. Ah! if you would but let yourselves be conducted by that faithful guide, you would surely arrive at the land of the living, the true promised land where milk and honey ever floweth.

2. Every time you open this book, believe that Our Lord opens His divine lips to instruct you in the duties of the religious life which are none other than the evangelical counsels reduced to practice.

3. Kiss your book of Rules affectionately before and after reading, just as you would have kissed the feet of the Good Master had you, like the holy women, been admitted to His company and heard His teaching.

4. Never cease to ask for the good spirit to make you understand your Rule and the good will to make you observe it. In understanding it you will love it; in loving it you will keep it; and in keeping it you will become perfectly regular. Then, if all are animated by the spirit of regularity, the Community composed of individual members, will, as a necessary consequence, become a good and fervent Community. Each one

may encourage herself in the observance of her Rule by saying: *if I am regular, I contribute to the regularity of the whole Community. If I am not regular, I prevent my Community from being as regular as it should be.* What an awful responsibility!

5. Read little at a time, but reflect deeply, the better to feel and to taste all the deliciousness of the holy Rule. Follow the method of prayer of St. Ignatius while reading your holy Rules. First, read them in examining whether you observe them faithfully, and humble yourselves for your negligence. Make a note of all the points wherein you fail and keep it always before you to incite you to do better. Next, read them in meditating upon them to exercice your memory by feeding it with good thoughts; to enlighten your understanding by serious reflection, and to inflame your will by exciting it to holy and pious aspirations. Read them in fine, as you would read, or rather sing, a harmonious canticle whose melody charms the ear and rejoice the heart. Stop on each word long enough to draw a breath so as to enkindle the light that illuminates your mind, and the fire that inflames your soul.

6. Consider your holy Rules as letters addressed you from Heaven by your Divine Spouse and sent you by your guardian angels to warn

you of your very slightest faults. He is sovereignly jealous of the purity of your hearts and He loves to entertain with you, His Spouses, a holy intercourse of love. Oh! how delightful is such an union!

7. Accept as addressed to you personally the recommendations made by the Lord to His people when giving them His Law: « These words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart: and thou shalt tell them to thy children, and thou shalt meditate upon them sitting in thy house, and walking on thy journey, sleeping and rising. And thou shalt bind them as a sign upon thy hands, and they shall be and move between thy eyes. And thou shalt write them in the entry and on the doors of thy house. » (Deuteronomy, ch. VI)

8. That you may be constantly faithful to these divine recommendations, let it be your invariable practice to recall at each action the methods taught you by the Rule to perform it well. Before beginning, recollect yourselves, raise your hearts to God, and say to yourselves: *What does the Rule say?* Oh! if you listened day and night to those powerful words: *What does the Rule say*, how well would you perform all things.

Finally, out of love for the Rule, make it your happiness to learn some portions of it by heart. Go daily into this garden of fragrant flowers and gather some blossoms for your spiritual bouquet. Seek therein the weapons of offense and defense you need for the day of evil and the hour of strife to gain a brilliant victory over all your enemies. Let one of your resolutions at the end of your meditation, at your thanksgiving after Holy Communion, and at your other pious exercises, be to observe well your holy Rules, and especially that particular point which costs you most or which you transgress most freely.

Such, our very dear Daughters, are the principal pratices we recommend to you as the certain means of arriving at the perfection of your holy state by the punctual accomplishment of the holy Rules we give you in the Name of Our Lord. He says to you by our mouth: Take upon you and receive with holy joy the yoke of the Lord, for His yoke is sweet and His burden light. Oh, what unction in those words of the Divine Spouse! How they will help you to study, love and practice your holy Rules and Constitutions to your dying breath!

For these reasons, the holy Name of God invoking, we have regulated, enacted and ordained, regulating, enacting and ordaining that which follows:

1. The Common and Special Rules of St. Vincent de Paul for the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor, are, by these presents, approved and sanctioned to serve as constitutive Rules for the Daughters of Charity established in this city by our Mandate of March twenty-fifth, eighteen hundred and forty-four, and therefore to be faithfully observed by them and constantly followed.

2. The Customs are, likewise, by these presents admitted as praise-worthy usages efficacious in entertaining perfect uniformity amongst the Sisters.

3. The Rules and Customs shall both be printed in one volume of handy size, and each Sister shall have her own copy.

4. By virtue of a special commission to us given by the General of the Servites of the Blessed Virgin Mary on July ninth, eighteen hundred and fifty-five, we establish the Third Order of the Servites of Mary in each church and chapel of the said Daughters of Charity, with all the privileges thereto attached by the Sovereign Pontiffs. The priest charged with the service of these churches or chapels shall be the Chaplains of the said Third Order, and shall have the privilege of aggregating the faithful of both sexes, in conformity with the rules prescribed, provided no

Community of the said religious Order of Servites exists in the same place.

5. We confirm, as far as may be necessary, the confraternity of Our Lady of Seven Dolors, and we authorize by these presents, the priests charged with the service of the churches or chapels of the said Daughters of Charity, to receive with all the ordinary powers into that pious association the faithful of either sex.

6. In virtue of an Indult of the Sovereign Pontiff, dated July first, eighteen hundred and fifty-five, we declare privileged in perpetuity, the main altar of the churches or chapels dedicated to Our Lady of Seven Dolors. This privilege extends to every day of the year.

7. In virtue of the same Indult, we permit in all the churches and chapels dedicated to Our Lady of Seven Dolors, the office and Mass of all the Saints and Blessed of the said Order of Servites to be recited the same as in their respective churches by privilege and Apostolic concessions.(1)

8. The diplomas of the said General of the Servites authorizing us to establish the Third Order and the Confraternity of the holy scapular of Our Lady of Seven Dolors, shall be exposed

(1) By a Decree of the Holy See, our Institute no longer forms a part of the Third Order of the Servites of Mary.

in the sacristy; also the calendar of the Saints and Blessed approved by the Holy See for the said religious.

All these priceless favors have but one aim, our very dear Daughters, and that is to nourish more and more in your hearts the devotion to Our Lady of Seven Dolors. New Saints are given you as protectors to aid you in propagating everywhere, even to the extremity of the earth, so salutary a devotion. In reading their lives you will see by what admirable means they were called to their celestial vocation; with what generosity they responded to the designs of God; with what success they spread the devotion to the Mother of Sorrows; to what sublime heights they attained; what extraordinary graces they secured through Mary most Desolate, and how happily and holily they died. May their beautiful examples excite you to worthily fulfill your mission!

We now implore you, O Mother of Sorrows, to bless the Rules written at your dictation for the glory of your Divine Son and your own. Bless, we beseech you, these Daughters of Charity, the Servants of your Poor for whom they are made. Grant them your good spirit so that they may observe these Rules faithfully to the end of time. Bless their small and humble Community. Under your protection may it become a moun-

tain of myrrh and of incense spreading far and wide the good odor of your Immaculate Heart, pierced with a thousand swords of sorrow. Multiply their number by sending subjects patterned after your own heart and devoted to the service of the poor. Oh! may you always be their good and tender Mother; and may they in return remain forever your devoted Daughters.

The present Mandate shall be read in Chapter as soon as received, and then be printed at the head of the Book of Rules.

Given at Montreal the second day of February, eighteen hundred and fifty-eight, under our sign and seal, and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

By Monseigneur,

J. O. Paré, Canon, Secretary.

June 9.— The enlargement of the House of Providence is begun this day, thanks to the generosity of Mr. O. Berthelet and his sister, Miss Therese.

October 5.—The elections, presided by Mgr. I. Larocque, titulary Bishop of Cydonia, resulted in the following nominations: Sister Philomena, Superior; Sister Vincent, Assistant; Sister Elizabeth, Treasurer; Sister Mary of the Holy Ghost, Mistress of Novices; Sisters Zotique, Mary of the Seven Dolors and Genevieve, Counsellors.

December 25.— Celebration of Midnight Mass at the Church of the Providence,— the first solemnly chanted in Montreal since 1780.

CHAPTER XXI.

SECOND DESTRUCTION OF ST. JAMES CHURCH BY FIRE.— LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA : DEVOTION TO THE PASSION OF OUR LORD.— BLESSING OF THE NEW ANNEX TO THE ASYLUM.— LETTER TO SISTER JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART.— REBUILDING OF THE ST. JAMES CHURCH.— LETTER TO SISTER AGNES.— LETTERS TO THE SISTERS OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.

1859.

January 4.— Second destruction of the St. James Church by fire.

January 9.— The Chapel of the Providence Asylum is again placed at the disposal of the public and serves as a parish church.

LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA, SUPERIOR.

Montreal, January 29, 1859.

My dear Daughter :

Being confined to my room by a slight indisposition, I am able to keep a resolution taken some time ago : namely, to distribute among the Communities of the Diocese the rich treasury of spiritual graces hidden in the devotion to the Passion of Our Lord, and to the

different sacred objects proposed by the Church to our veneration to maintain us in so salutary a practice.

To make you understand my meaning more clearly, I shall recall to your mind the intention of Holy Mother Church in instituting the feast of the Prayer and the Agony of Our Lord in the Garden of Olives, of the Passion, of the Crowning with Thorns, of the Nails and the Lance, of the Holy Winding Sheet, of the Five Wounds and of the Precious Blood. These holy days are honored with special devotion in each Community, when the sufferings of their Divine Spouse are portrayed so visibly. It seems to me, however, that it would be more profitable were each Community to adopt one of these days and celebrate it in a special manner. I have therefore decided to assign to you the Feast of the Passion of Our Lord which falls on Tuesday in Sexagesima Week. Thus, it will be a great happiness for each member of your Community to labor with ever increasing ardor in acquiring devotion to the Passion of our Savior . . .

The office for this feast is so beautiful and touching that no one can fail to find therein an inexhaustible source of piety, and to taste the delicious fruits of the tree of the cross ; and these are, according to St. Ignatius, sorrow, af-

fliction, confusion, sadness, lamentations, contrition, tears and interior trials.

Beg your director to kindly translate this beautiful office into French. The Church, the Spouse of Christ, makes us hear the voice of her great sorrow for the sufferings of her Divine Spouse; and she expresses to Him all the most tender and affectionate sentiments of her afflicted heart. You will find ample subject for pious meditations and devout canticles wherewith to foster a devotion belonging by every right to your Community for all time.

I bless you and your good works, and I remain,

Your most devoted servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

June 19.— Mgr. Bourget blesses the annex to the Providence Asylum begun in the preceding month of June.

LETTER TO SISTER JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART.

Montreal, December 3, 1859.

Dear Daughter:

I received your letter dated October 22, on November 30, and although I am in Retreat with the whole Bishopric, I hasten to say in a few words what would otherwise require a

very lengthy epistle did the retreat regulations and my time of solitude permit.

However that may be, I have only to bless Divine Providence for having furnished you the opportunity of receiving the missionaries. Do you know, after their departure from Montreal, I regretted that I had not advised you to go to N.... to bid welcome to the humiliations sent you by God Himself for the purpose of helping you to gather in an abundant harvest of souls. But from what I have since learned, God did much better in your regard.

What I wish to recommend to you above all else, is to have intimate relations with the Superiors of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary of Portland, Oregon, and the Sisters of St. Anne, of Victoria, B. C.; also, to have a cordial understanding with them for all the enterprises you have to undertake for the spread of the reign of Jesus Christ. Use all your authority and influence over your Communities, so that the Sisters being animated with sentiments of mutual affection and esteem, it may be everywhere apparent that your three (1) Communities are but one and the same. Even though you do wear a different habit, you should all have the same spirit, the same heart, the same will to glorify the Divine Majesty and

(1) The communities of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, of Saint Anne, and of the Providence.

to serve Holy Mother Church, in caring for her poor and in instructing her children.

I must tell you here that your General Superiors entertain these dispositions, and that they will not fail to give you similar directions whenever occasions arise.

Our Lord has provided the trials that were necessary to make you comprehend more fully what it cost Him to found His Church, the grandest and most admirable of Communities; you will now be better able to assist and console the new Superiors who will have to pass through the same severe ordeals. No one is fit to guide others who has not herself passed through the crucible of affliction.

It seems to me that there will be more life and animation in your works now that there are a greater number of laborers in the field. Your confessors and directors may take turns in giving you retreats and serving as extraordinaries Ember time. You could even exchange services with your neighbors, mutually assisting one another in the care of the poor and the instruction of the children while keeping as closely as possible to the works proper to your holy state.

Correspond with one another as often as possible, and whenever you perceive any misunder-

standing has arisen that might mar the harmony existing among you, do all in your power to explain matters cordially and amicably. Oh! how much happiness there is in the religious state, when the spirit which animated St. Bernard reigns as Sovereign and Master. "For my part," said this great Saint, « I love all the Communities, and I live in mind and heart and affections in all holy houses, though I can remain bodily only in the one wherein I have chosen to labor for my sanctification. »

But I have said enough on this subject; so I must finish. I bless you and your dear Daughters, and I recommend to all of you to try to become worthy Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul. Tell Sister Agnes that I shall answer her letter by the next mail.

My respectful homages to Monseigneur Blanchet, and all sorts of kind messages to Father Brouillet, Roussi and the others to whom I shall write later. Pray for me who am

Your devoted servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

December 8.— The building of the St. James Church, being once more completed, the Chapel of the Providence Asylum no longer serves for the public offices.

LETTER TO SISTER AGNES AT VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON.

Montreal, December 29, 1859.

My dear Daughter:

I received in due time your letter of October 22, 1859, in which you gave me all the news, both good and bad, of your wonderful trip. I had heard how ill you were at sea; also that you had partially recovered before arriving at your mission.

Now that you are at your post, you and Sister Pudent will increase the number of the Servants of the Poor in that far country. It appears that very soon your number will be too small to meet all the growing needs. This thought, I am sure, will be a powerful means for you to immolate yourself night and day for the glory of God and His Immaculate Mother, Our Lady of Seven Dolors whom you love so dearly, and who on her part cherishes you with all a mother's tenderness. Consequently, you will offer very willingly to Our Lord all the trials it may be His good pleasure to send you, especially the interior troubles which should finish to make you die to yourself.

Be perfectly regular; keep your holy Rules by a principle of faith and piety; therefore, study it well, meditate upon it constantly and observe it punctually.

I bless you and all the good Sisters, and I most cordially wish you full success in all your undertakings.

I remain your Father in Jesus Christ.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

LETTER TO SISTER JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART, VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON.

Montreal, December 29, 1859.

My dear Daughter:

Yesterday brought me your letter of November 21, and I hasten to reply at once, as it will be impossible later, owing to the visits I shall have to make and receive. This letter, besides, must be my New Year's visit to you, and so, I first bless you and your dear Sisters, while wishing you all that you most ardently desire for your perfection in this world and your happiness in the next. How quickly time flies, my dear Daughter! How we should

attach ourselves to God alone who changes not, but remains eternally the same! How quickly have the troubles you have had to endure passed away!

But I forget that I must answer your questions; I shall do so at once, lest I be carried away by other reflections that make me lose sight of what concerns you most....

The meditation may be resumed during Holy Mass or at the visit to the Blessed Sacrament or at any other free time; but never during recreation. That should always be taken by the Daughters of St. Vincent with a joy so holy that it is transformed into prayer. Hence, my good children, pray while recreating yourselves and recreate yourselves while praying: that is to say, do all things well, then you will pray always.

It seems that Our Lord wished by all means to make use of you for all kinds of works of charity in the vast territory of Oregon. I have an intimate conviction, and I am firmly convinced that you will in no wise, oppose His adorable designs in your regard. I also think He would have you die to yourselves by making you undergo very severe trials both interior and exterior. Trials are absolutely necessary to the religious soul whom the Good Master desires to possess for Himself alone. Therefore, prepare yourselves to endure

courageously, desolation, disgust, home-sickness discouragement, sadness, obscurity, aridity,— all of which tend to crush the poor soul, already a prey to such bitter agony that everything and all persons become unbearable to her: Bishop, priest, Superior, Sisters, the poor, the children, the old men and women, and so on. Were we to believe such a soul, we would think God Himself had rejected her; nothing she does is of any good; everybody is against her — she cannot even bear with herself. What is to be done in this sad state? St. Ignatius recommends us to pray with more assiduity, and to be more constant in the examination of conscience and in the practice of mortification. He bids us change nothing either in the Rule or in our spiritual exercises. He advises us to humble ourselves by manifesting with simplicity the troubled state of our soul, and to patiently await the return of consolation. It will assuredly come at the precise moment when the terrible agony of soul seems most intense. The demon's power is weakened when he sees us so full of courage and so determined to remain at the post assigned us by Divine Providence.

You must expect all these trials, my Daughter, and you must believe in all sincerity that your dear Sisters must of necessity pass along this pathway so thickly strewn with briars and thorns.

Otherwise, how could you be the worthy Daughters of Our Lady of Seven Dolors? Render yourself able to console your Sisters whenever it shall please the Divine Spouse to make them travel the way of suffering so painful to nature, but so sanctifying in virtue of the graces bestowed by the Father of all consolation.

I am always delighted to learn, either through you or Sister Alphonse (1) of the friendship existing between your two Communities. Of course the demon is jealous of this. So be prepared for the combat and the daily efforts he will make to sow discord amongst you. He gathers that vile seed in the depths of the infernal abyss where it grows in abundance; then he goes forth to scatter it far and wide in the field of Holy Church and religious Communities; because he knows but too well that this is one of his best weapons of success.

May God bless you in multiplying the means of preserving peace and union! Pray for me who am always

Your devoted Father and Servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

(1) Superior of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, Portland.

LETTER TO THE SISTERS OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.

Montreal, December 31, 1859.

My dear Daughters:

I most sincerely appreciate the sentiments of filial affection which you so well express and which you feel still better.

I thank God and His Immaculate Mother for the good will animating you to work with ever increasing ardor to your perfection, and my thanksgiving constantly mounts heavenward at sight of all the success wherewith Divine Providence is pleased to crown your labors and sacrifices.

Reading your hearts like an open book, I see that you are not yet satisfied with your efforts, and that you all wish you could do a great deal more for the glory of your Divine Spouse. You realize how much He has done for you, and by contrast how little you have accomplished for Him. So, at the end of the present year, already lost in Eternity, and at the beginning of another which will pass as swiftly as its predecessors, you feel deeply penetrated with the necessity of re-

pairing time lost, and of making rapid strides from virtue to virtue, because God expects much of you.

While blessing you with all my heart, I must especially recommend you to assist us in correcting all the scandals existing in that world which you have so fortunately renounced. Offer for this intention, your meditations, Communions and all your sacrifices to obtain the extirpation of vice and the reign of virtue. You will acquit yourselves of that duty with all the more zeal, during the grand mission we shall have preached in our city this year. May it recall to the paths of justice and truth all sinners and heretics! You will never cease to implore that favor from the Immaculate Virgin of virgins whom you will be pleased to contemplate as an army set in battle array to destroy the enemies of the Church, and to whom you will repeat in joyous transports: *Hail Mary, conceived without sin, the honor of our people! Let us be glad and rejoice on this day which the Lord has made!* With this pious intention, you shall say to-morrow before the Community Mass, the *Veni Creator*: and that hymn shall be said or sung every New Year's Day in future. Pray very much for me that I may neglect none of my duties; and believe that I shall do the same for you, that the Lord may be pleased to make use

of you for the accomplishment of His adorable designs.

I bless you again, my dear Daughters, and I remain very affectionately,

Your most humble Father and Servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE INDIAN MISSIONS.— FIRST PRIMARY SCHOOLS.— DEATH OF MGR. PRINCE.— DECREE OF PRAISE OF THE INSTITUTE.— AGGREGATION TO THE THIRD ORDER.

1860.

January 2.— In his New Year's visit, Mgr. Bourget intimates that the Community will soon be called upon to teach and catechise the Indians. Among other things he said: "Only too happy should you be, my dear Sisters, were God to grant you such a favor."

January 18.— The work of the Primary (or Infant) Schools is founded at the St. Vincent de Paul Asylum, Visitation Street.

May 5.— Death of Mgr. J. C. Prince, Bishop of St. Hyacinthe. Two of our Sisters having gone to see him a few days prior to his death, he received them most cordially and affectionately. He wished to have a private interview with his *Daughters of Providence*. Here are a few of his last words. "Tell your dying Sisters that there are great mercies at the hour of death. Be assured that if I have been able to render some service to your Community during my life, I shall do much more for it in Heaven." The eve of his death, he called his secretary, and charged him to transmit to us with his last blessing, the expression of his fatherly tenderness.

May.— Reception of the Decree of Praise of the Institute, granted on the twenty-fifth of April at the request of Mgr. Bourget, by our Holy Father, Pope Pius IX.

The specific end of our vocation is thus defined in the Decree: The Institute of the Sisters who are called Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor, who nurse the sick, care for the poor, and sometimes even give a Christian and civil education to young girls. "

September 16.— Feast of Our Lady of Seven Dolors. Aggregation of the Community to the Third Order of the Servites. (1). Mgr. Bourget officiates at this ceremony with great solemnity.

(1) See note page 274.

CHAPTER XXIII

RETREAT PREACHED BY MGR. BOURGET.— CONSECRATION OF THE CHURCH OF THE PROVIDENCE.— FOUNDATION OF THE MISSION OF KINGSTON.

1861

March 13.— The Retreat is preached by Mgr. Bourget. His Lordship speaks often of the Passion of Our Lord and the Sorrows of His Blessed Mother. During the course of this retreat, His Lordship addressed to us those never-to-be-forgotten words:

« Sisters, do you wish to make progress in the interior life? To follow the call of your vocation? Then think of nothing, study nothing, know nothing but Jesus and Jesus Crucified. May it please the Divine Goodness never to let the Community want for crosses! Instituted to compassionate the sufferings of the Savior, if her principal food fail her, she is in danger. On the contrary, in suffering, she cannot fail, because it is in the time of trial most of all that she draws nearer to Jesus her only help. The more the Community suffers, the more humiliations, and the more painful labor she has to undergo, the more fervent will she become. If crosses be wanting, her ruin is imminent. »

Speaking of poverty, Monseigneur said to us :

« It is very easy to deceive oneself in this regard ; and this is the reason why you must save at all times for the poor, even in the very care of the altar, in the ornaments, the decorations and every thing necessary for Divine Worship. The seculars will be all the more edified, because they will know that the spirit of poverty is practised in favor of the poor. Twelve candles are sufficient for your ordinary Benedictions, and sixteen for the grand feasts : let your hearts, instead, be as so many burning lamps consuming themselves forever to the glory of your Divine Spouse. As the ornaments and decorations of your chapels should be very plain, so should the singing be religious and conformed to the rubrics of Holy Mother Church. »

August 27.— Consecration of the Church of the Providence by Mgr Bourget. A great number of priests assisted at the ceremony. Solemn High Mass was celebrated by Mgr. Taché of St. Boniface.

December 13.— Foundation of the Mission of Kingston.

By request of Mgr. Horan, Bishop of Kingston, Mgr. Bourget sent some Sisters of Providence thither to found an Institute of the Sisters of Charity and to form the first subjects.

CHAPTER XXIV

VISITATION OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM BY MGR. BOURGET.— TRANSLATION OF THE BODIES INTERRED IN THE ST JAMES CHURCH. – DONATION OF LAND FOR THE DEAF MUTE INSTITUTE.— CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES.— FOURTH VOYAGE OF MGR. BOURGET TO ROME.— A LETTER FROM HIS LORDSHIP.— DETAILS OF THE ETERNAL CITY.

1862

January 7.— Mgr. Bourget begins the visitation of all the offices of the house at Providence Asylum.

January 12.— His Lordship calls a meeting of the Sisters of the different residences of the city, and gives them most precious and fatherly advice concerning their progress in virtue. His Lordship recalls among other things those words of the epistle of St. Paul :

> If the members of the body have one and the same end and all tend to the same thing which is to procure the welfare of the body ; so, likewise, should the different members of a Community nourished by the same substance, be all one in Jesus Christ.

January 25.— The mortal remains of the Very Reverend H. Hudon, V. G., the Very Reverend Canon Mercier, and those of our Sisters Lawrence, Camille and Abraham are exhumed from the crypt of the St. James Church at its third rebuilding, brought to the Providence

Asylum and re-interred in the mortuary crypt. Mgr. Bourget presides at the ceremony.

February 18.— Mgr. Bourget offers the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the Hospice St. Joseph for the benefit of Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Cherrier, notable benefactors of the Work of the Deaf Mutes. Monseigneur expresses to them his lively gratitude for their generous gift of a magnificent piece of land on St. Denis Street destined for the new Institution. The Deaf Mutes also convey, in their silent but eloquent language, their deep thanksgiving towards their devoted benefactors.

March 9.— Mgr. Bourget announces his fourth voyage to Europe in a circular letter to the different Communities.

CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES.

March 9, 1862.

My dear daughters :

I cannot leave for the Eternal City without interrupting for a short while my incessant round of business matters to devote to you in particular, a few moments of the time left me for making preparations for the trip. Could I employ to any better advantage the few short moments at my disposal than in using them for the spiritual good of the choicest portion of the Shepherd's Fold,— the glory of the Lamb without spot, and one of the most beautiful ornaments of Holy Church? I should be only too

happy could I, in this way, repair my many past negligences in not giving you all the care you had a right to expect from me.

I shall endeavor to make amends by adding a few practices to the inclosed circulars concerning the general good of the diocese. I rely very much upon your hearty co-operation for the development of the works especially recommended to your charity; above all for the success of the Peter Pence collection, destined in the adorable designs of Providence to effect so much good in the diocese, and to place you in possession of the greatest of all goods, namely the good spirit, the spirit of our Lord Himself.

When making my farewell visits a few days hence, I shall collect the Peter Pence from you, your pupils and other persons under your care and who are but one with you, together with the addresses you may be pleased to send by me to lay at the feet of the Holy Father. He will be kind enough to accept and to bless all he receives from his daughters, who from far overseas send wishes the most ardent and sincere.

There is nothing to prevent those respectful petitions from being signed by each one personally. Aided by your fervent prayers, I hope our good ship may reach port in safety before Easter, and that I shall have the happiness of being

received in audience, and of obtaining the first blessing which I shall beg for all of you.

I prescribe no special prayers. I well know that each time you place yourselves in God's holy presence, you will solicit some new help for me from His infinite goodness; while I, on my part, am firmly disposed to do the same for you.

I do not forget what you seemed to have overlooked, that I have at times treated you harshly, and that my conduct has frequently grieved you. I cannot explain this seeming mystery, but I know that it is not according to my heart. However that may be, I bless you all the more affectionately, and I form the most sincere good wishes that it may please Our Lord, His Immaculate Mother, and His Foster Father, Saint Joseph, with the consoling protection of the angels and saints to fulfil your holy desires in attaining the heights of perfection on earth, and the enjoyment of your Divine Spouse for a blissful Eternity.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

March 21.— On the eve of his departure for Rome, Mgr. Bourget comes to make his farewell visit to the Community. He is accompanied by the Very Reverend Canon E. C. Fabre. The Sisters assemble in the Chapel and sing seven verses of the *Stabat Mater*. His Lordship then makes a most touching address, closing with the following words:

« Do not fail to pray for my intentions so that I may fulfil the great mission imposed upon me. You, too, my dear Sisters, will contribute in some measure to the success of our important undertaking. Indeed you will contribute powerfully thereto by your generosity in making the sacrifices the Lord requires of you. Yes, exercise yourselves in the spirit of sacrifice and you will be happy; always in peace with yourselves and agreeable to God.

March 22.— Departure of Mgr. Bourget for Rome. His Lordship proposes to work for the approbation of the Constitutions of our Institute. He is also requested to submit a petition signed by the professed Sisters soliciting the above favor, and conveying to our common Father our sentiments of veneration for his person, and our profound sorrow on account of the persecutions of which he is the victim.

LETTER TO THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF PROVIDENCE.

Rome, May 31, 1862.

My dear Daughters :

Your kind letter of April 21 reached me the 15th inst, and as you see, I have taken a fortnight to reply. I think it is thanks to the Blessed Angela of Merici whose feast is celebrated for the first time in the diocese that

I have found time to answer you. It seems to me that you and the other Communities will rival one another in zeal in honoring that holy Spouse of Christ, and above all in imitating so beautiful a model of all religious virtues.

I must first thank you for your fervent prayers and good wishes for my very pleasant trip. I am all the more grateful, as I feel more keenly the pressing need of your assistance. The Vicar General has, no doubt, informed you how I celebrated your grand Feast of Our Lady of Seven Dolors here with your Fathers and mine, the Servites of Mary. When I see all that is done in this country to honor our Sorrowful Mother, I find that what we do for her is very little, indeed, and very poorly done at best.

I thank you for the interesting news you give me of the different missions. The Bishop of Kingston had already informed me of the serious illness of Sister Mary Carmel. I sincerely hope that though she did receive the Last Sacraments she is not doomed to die so soon or so young because she has a mission to fulfil in the place I assigned her in the name of the Lord.

Your notes on your holy Rules will be most useful to me in the work still to be done to render them worthy of the pontifical sanction.

All your prayers and good works should be directed for the obtaining of so precious a favor.

I have discovered here in Rome, by God's grace, some Sisters of Providence who have charge of a prison for women. The prison is called *Termini* because it is built over the *Baths of Diocletian*. Those religious of Providence were founded about thirty years ago by the Bishop of Namur in Belgium. I had the pleasure of meeting the said Bishop in Rome in 1854. Their Mother House is at Champion, near Namur; the principal end of their Institute is to care for the poor in hospices, hospitals, and most especially in prisons. Their first director was the Reverend J. B. Kinet, curate of Saint John the Baptist. When their numbers increased, he relinquished his parish to devote all his time to the Community. The Pope hearing of this wise and holy director, made him one of his chamberlains, and the Bishop of Namur appointed him Canon of his Cathedral. He died two or three years ago, sincerely mourned and regretted by the Sisters for whom he had sacrificed all things, and who now hold his memory in deepest veneration. In a little sketch of his life which the Sisters showed me, I remarked that he never ceased to recommend to his Daughters what Saint Vincent so strongly recommended to his own, namely, simplicity. Their holy Rules have been praised by the Sacred Congregation of

Bishops and Regulars, and they hope to receive their final approbation ere long. The Pope has deigned to grant them a special mark of distinction in permitting them to be styled *Sisters of Providence of the Immaculate Conception.*

They founded their establishment in Rome in March, 1854. They now number nineteen Sisters in three houses including the large and small prison known as that of the *Thermes*: they have constantly under their care two hundred women and girls held for vagrancy, murder, etc. There are only about thirty at the *Thermes.* The prisons for women are entirely separated from those for men; and the Sisters have the sole charge of the female prisoners. No jailer, turnkey or other officer is seen on the inside except the Sisters. A soldier is stationed on the outside for sentry duty, and such is the only mark by which the place may be known as a prison.

A radiant happiness shines on the countenances of the Sisters, proving that even in prison, they receive the hundredfold promised by Our Lord to whomsoever renounces the pleasures of the world for love of Him. When asked whether they found the prison life hard, they replied with great simplicity, that at first, they did find it somewhat difficult, but that they soon became accustomed to it; and that they were very happy

because they were enabled to do a little good to those poor lost sheep.

The good they do is incalculable. The Prison, under their wise direction, resembles more a hospice or an orphanage than a house of correction. The penitents follow a rule of life somewhat similar to that you have in the wards for the old women or in the orphan department. All the exercises of piety are performed regularly and without constraint. A chaplain gives them Holy Mass daily and hears their confessions at stated times. They have exercises of singing and have very fine concerts on their feasts, novenas, months of Saint Joseph and of the Blessed Virgin. They are always kept actively employed, without, however, being over charged, either at washing, sewing or housework. They even make very fine and handsome laces which are much sought after and highly prized by the Roman Princesses.

The penitents become quite happy and some hate to leave when their sentence expires. They grow accustomed to the spirit of order, silence and prayer. So marvelous a transformation is all the more surprising as they are committed to prison with extremely bad habits, and are often incarcerated for the most horrible crimes. Time, tact, and an infinite amount of trouble are required to

bring them back to a sense of duty. It is ordinarily the most refractory subjects that afterwards give the most consolation.....

I bless you.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

August 7.— Return of Mgr. Bourget to his episcopal city after an absence of several months.

November 6. — Mgr. Bourget comes to the Providence to receive the aggregation of Mlle Therese Berthelet to the Third Order of the Servites of Mary. She takes the name of Sister Mary Amable Theresa.

December 7.— Through the kindness of Reverend Mother Jerome, we receive the book of *Meditations for Retreats* as used by the Daughters of Saint Vincent de Paul.

CHAPTER XXV.

RETREAT AND PASTORAL VISIT.— ADVICE OF MGR. BOURGET.— ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL CONFERENCES.— RETURN OF OUR SISTERS FROM CHILI.— FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL.— RESIGNATION OF THE "LADIES OF THE CORPORATION OF THE ASYLUM."— SPECIAL ADVICE OF MGR. BOURGET TO MOTHER PHILOMENE.— ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE.— FIRST CONSECRATED GIRLS.— FOUNDATION OF THE DISPENSARY.— FIRST DIRECTRESS OF SCHOOLS.— RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING VACATION TIME.— CIRCULAR LETTER ON THE WRITINGS OF ERNEST RÉNAN.— LETTER TO THE SISTERS OF OREGON.

1863

TO THE SISTERS OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.

March 9, 1863.

My dear Daughters:

The present is to inform you that I shall begin the pastoral visit of your community on the 18th inst., while directing the annual retreat by which you generally prepare yourselves for the celebration of the great and beautiful feast of the Compassion of your Sorrowful Mother, and for the renewal of your vows.

As you are all deeply penetrated with the great need you have of the graces attached to those two pious exercises, and that you have it very much at heart to partake as abundantly of them as possible, I shall confine myself here to the simple indication of a few practices to aid you in your preparation for those days of grace and immense blessings.

1. Offer for the success of those religious exercises, the whole of Lent, the month of St. Joseph, and the Novena to St. Francis Xavier. Those periods are favorable for all and more especially for you.

2. Perform your spiritual exercises and your works of charity with renewed fervor, and with the intention of purifying yourselves more and more, so that with the wise virgins, you may be admitted to the hall of the wedding banquet which the the Divine Spouse desires again to celebrate with your souls.

3. Engage your infirm, your poor, your sick, your orphans, your deaf mutes, in fine, all among the suffering members of Jesus-Christ to whom you minister, to pray, in order that they may obtain for you through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Immaculate, your Mother, of your holy patrons and patronesses, and of all the angels and saints of Paradise, the grace to receive worthily the abundance of heavenly benedictions.

4. Read the mandates and recommendations of the preceding visits the better to recall to mind what takes place during the great solemnity of the Lord's visit.

5. Look upon yourselves in the light of the holy Rule as people of the world regard themselves in their mirrors. Thus shall you be better able to discover your faults and irregularities. Note them down in writing, and be ready to give an account to the Lord when He visits you in His infinite goodness.

6. Review your methods of meditation, examen, etc., so that you may more easily follow the exercises of the retreat. I shall have so many other things to say to you that I shall be able to touch only very lightly upon those pious practices. They have, moreover, been so constantly recommended and so frequently explained in order to teach you how to become women of prayer, that notwithstanding your manifold occupations, you should now be able to live a life of continual union with Our Lord by the uninterrupted remembrance of His holy presence.

7. Choose St. Ignatius in advance for the patron of your holy exercises. Beg him to remind you of all that he has told you through his sons in Jesus Christ, and from whom you

have so often received the benefits of spiritual retreats. You will have to render a rigorous account to a strict Judge for those as well as for the many other graces lavished upon you since your entrance into religion.

These seven practices will be sufficient. I beg Our Lady of Seven Dolors to engrave them upon your hearts with the seven swords of sorrow which pierced her own. Out of the love this afflicted Mother bears you, and through the the filial affection you entertain for her, and in return for the great graces she has obtained for you from her adorable Son expiring before her and the holy women whose devoted example you strive to emulate, apply yourselves to implore for one another the *good spirit* which will place you in possession of the religious virtues which you undoubtedly appreciate as your one and only treasure on earth.

I beg you to pray also for me that without any regard for my unworthiness, Our Lord may grant me the light and strength I need to accomplish well the duties He imposes upon me in sending me to visit you in His stead. Actuated by the thought that this may be the last visit I shall ever make you, I feel urged to omit nothing that may in any way contribute to

strengthen you in the grace of your vocation; and, in the meantime, I too, shall implore the like favor for each and every one of you.

Your devoted servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

March 18.— Opening of the exercises of retreat preached by Mgr. Bourget. His Lordship profits of the time of the retreat to make the canonical visitation of the Community.

N. B.— During the course of this visit and during Easter Week, Mgr. Bourget established regularly the spiritual conferences. Gathered together in conference, each one is invited to say simply what she has remembered best or enjoyed most in the readings or instructions she has attended. This exercise, according to Monseigneur, is to have all the children of the family share in the gifts each individual has received. To initiate the Sisters in this method, the venerable prelate chose to take part in the pious conversation as if he were actually a member of the Community. After questioning several Sisters, who with the greatest simplicity told the *good thoughts* with which they had been inspired during their meditations on the apparitions of Our Lord, Monseigneur said :

Well done, my Daughters! It is now my turn to make known what impressed me most. In all the apparitions of Jesus, He consoles and comforts His own. Magdelen weeps: He says to her by His angel : « weep not. » She keeps on

mourning. Then He, Himself, comes to comfort her, because her grief is caused by the absence of her Divine Master. The holy women are afflicted at His death. He says to them : « Peace be with you; be ye not afraid, » and He blesses them. Appearing to His Apostles, He gives them His peace and confirms them in the faith of His Resurrection without reproaching them for their past cowardice. He appears to the disciples of Emmaus because they were speaking of Him, and then He consoles them. While the Apostles are engaged in fishing, Our Lord suddenly manifests Himself on the shore to draw them to His side. They were saddened and downcast by His absence,— they thought only of Him. His loved presence cheers and comforts them. Thus will Our Lord be ever with us when our minds are intent upon Him. He will always console us, provided we think of Him. He will always be with us in the exercise of our works if we seek for naught, labor for naught, save His interests and His glory.

During the course of the visit, Monseigneur gave many instructions. He furnishes a summary of all in the following text :

We here resume in form of recommendations, the instructions we have given you, our very dear Daughters, during the retreat and the visit. Those

days of grace were to us a source of great consolation, and they will be to you we hope, by the Divine Goodness, most profitable for your progress in the paths of religious perfection. The good will animating you makes us believe you will accept our simple recommendations with the same submission as if they were episcopal ordinances. They are drawn from the Passion of Our Lord. May they be to you like the Sacred cloth presented to our Lord by holy Veronica on the Way of the Cross to Calvary's Mount, and upon which was indelibly imprinted the Sacred Face covered with sweat and blood. Or, again, may they be like the Holy Winding Sheet about the Divine Body in the Sepulchre, whereon was stamped the marks of all the sufferings Jesus endured for love of us.

1. Therefore, make the mysteries of the Passion of Our Lord the continual subject of your meditations; for, in that Book of the Elect, you will find the true science of the Saints and the sure way of Christian perfection.

2. Remain night and day upon Calvary with the Mother of Sorrows who brought you forth to the religious life at the foot of the Cross. Be tenderly united by the holy affections of your hearts, and by the practice of the virtues growing upon that hallowed mount which she bedewed

with her tears, and which is now for you a mountain of incense and of myrrh.

3. Be obedient to your Superiors whom you should honor and respect as the representatives of Jesus Christ.

4. Endeavor to become true Daughters of Charity, by wearing yourselves out in the service of your neighbor the better to imitate Our Lord who spent His whole life in hard labors.

5. Each hour of the day, look at the Clock of the Passion. There, you will find potent reasons for being faithful to each exercise in your daily round of duties. Regular observance is so intimately bound up with your perfection.

On awaking at five in the morning, think of the enemies of Our Lord assembling at that very hour to condemn Him to death. That thought will encourage you to rise promptly, to assist at meditation and to perform exactly all the exercises of the day so as to love, honor, and serve Him to the very best of your ability. Do the same in the weariness of your night watches with the sick. When you think of that awful night of suffering Our Lord endured during the hours of His dread Passion, your fatigues in comparison will seem very trifling.

6. Liken your chapel to Calvary, and the altar, to the true cross whereon Our Lord, the Good Shepherd, gives His life for you His beloved sheep. Make the holy mysteries your delight, and above all, place your happiness in holy communion, that celestial Food given you by the Good Shepherd. Here let me exhort you to prepare yourselves always with extreme care for that divine action that you may not fall into routine or experience disgust for that delicious Food. Live each day as if you were to approach the table of the Lord. Make a holy practice of frequent spiritual communion; this, in itself, will always be one of your principal preparations for receiving sacramentally. It will also substitute, in some measure, for the communions you are unable to receive.

7. In your interior trials, unite yourselves with the interior agony of Our Lord in the Garden of Olives. There, you will ever find strength and consolation in the dark days of desolation reserved by the Good Master for your sanctification.

8. In Our Lord going to His Disciples only to find them fast asleep during His lonely and awful time of agony, and in His looking to them for comfort in His hour of woe unutterable, you should learn what you must do in your trials

and difficulties. Remember that you are always free to open your heart to the Superior whom God has given you for a mother in place of your own whom you have left in the world for love of Him. Here you must remark, that the Holy See forbids in Communities that direction only which places the Superior in the stead of the Confessor or Director. (1)

9. *Watch and pray:* such is the loving advice bequeathed to us by our charitable Master at the very hour of His most dreadful suffering. Never forget that had the Apostles been faithful to this important advice, Judas would never have betrayed his Master; Peter would never have defended Him so wretchedly with his poor weapon against a horde of enemies, and then denied Him with horrible imprecations; nor would the other disciples have cowardly fled away. Remember that it is ever thus in a Community which fails in prayer and vigilance; it can but perish; for traitors will arise to betray it; indiscreet members will defend it badly, while the cowardly will abandon it entirely. On the contrary, armed with watchfulness and prayer, you will possess a good spirit, a truly religious spirit, the very spirit of Our Lord Himself; and with this spirit you will surmount all disorderly affections, all instability

(1) See *Decree Quemadmodum.*

of nature, according to the words of Our Lord: *The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.* Animated by this good spirit, you will sacrifice all for the good of your Community, and you will have the prudence of the serpent which saves its head at the expense of its body even though the latter be hacked to pieces.

10. Imitate the silence of Our Lord when He was falsely accused and overwhelmed with reproaches; like Him, make no account of the false judgments hurled against you or against your Community. Abiding by this wise practice, you will always preserve your souls in patience and in peace, and you will never commit any of those indiscretions liable to compromise the whole Community. By silence of words and actions, you will walk peacefully in the ways of recollection and the interior life.

11. Embrace all the painful practices of religion with the courage and joy of Our Lord when He took upon Himself the heavy burden of the cross. It is in this manner you should accept the burden of your Rule; it will ever be sweet and light to you, provided you never lose sight of Jesus carrying His cross before you on the road to Calvary.

12. Our Lord so mercilessly torn with the cruel scourging at the pillar, will help you to

endure generously the weariness and labors of your state while assisting the poor and nursing the sick.

13. The sight of Our Lord dying naked upon the cross will teach you to observe poverty in all its rigor, and it will make you avoid in your clothing and furniture whatever may savor of self-seeking, superfluity, delicacy and worldliness. Through a spirit of poverty, you will be mindful of the practices introduced into the Community for the better observance of this virtue. You will never make use of fine linen, expensive stuffs, nor clothing fashioned in such a way as to expose you to the suspicion of being worldly-minded. Out of this same spirit of poverty, you will love to wear old and mended garments, and you will be careful not to rip and make them over to suit your taste, at least, not without the permission of the Superior. You will willingly use sheets and towels which have not been ironed; and you will be especially careful to keep, in whatever is permitted for your use, the shape and the color as prescribed by the Rule or Customary. Let it be a point of honor among you to make your clothing and everything allotted to your use, last as long as possible by careful mending.

14. Our Lord, sorrowful even unto death in the Garden of Olives, will remind you not to let

yourselves go to too noisy demonstrations of joyousness during recreation time, as this might lead you to dissipation. You will profit of the hours of relaxation, also of your holidays and vacations by giving mutual proofs of holy friendship, and by discoursing with one another in the spirit of your vocation. For this, you will be careful to assemble in the places destined for the recreations which you must consider as a necessary exercise and fully as meritorious for you as any other duty of the day. But, you must avoid all vain and frivolous conversation, all touching of one another without necessity, and so unbecoming to religious; also card-playing which is altogether forbidden you. You must avoid, likewise, all coldness in your manners, all hastiness or snappishness in your ways, and all sharp, cutting words that are so painful to others. You must be truly respectful towards one another and full of deference for your elders. You will be equally on your guard concerning the rules of religious modesty, in your manner of walking, in your conduct with one another; in fine, in all your actions which should be always grave, yet stamped with the seal of simplicity. Everywhere, and more especially in the parlor, should you diffuse the aroma of sweet simplicity and holy religious modesty. The persons who come to visit you should depart edified, and inflamed with the desire of practising the holy virtues you have

rendered so agreeable by your gracious manners. Remember, however, that if you remain longer with persons of the world, or stay in the parlor longer than the rule allows, you will forfeit the grace that should accompany you at all times and enable you to spread abroad the good odor of Jesus Christ. Be careful always to be accompanied, according to the rule both in the common and in the infirmary parlor; and recall often to mind that many religious have lost the spirit of their holy state in the parlor. No secular should be admitted to the Infirmary under any pretext whatever.

15. Our Lord in suffering such torments for the love of mankind, made the Will of His adorable Father, His own. Inspired by His example, perform all your works for the love of God and the good of your neighbor. Be constant in your zeal for the service of the poor, in watching with the sick, in visiting prisoners, in caring for the orphans, the old women and the deaf mutes, in the distribution of alms, and in maintaining all the works confided to you by Divine Providence. Watch and pray that none of those good and holy works may languish. For this reason, endeavor to render yourselves capable in the offices assigned you by obedience; if you are officers, apply yourselves to the formation of your companions so that the community may be always firmly organized in all its different parts. Take

special care of your good old women and look upon them as the foundation stones of your Institute. Have a good understanding with the Ladies of Charity and your the Lady Boarders for the success of your work; but let your relations with them be ever safe-guarded by a wise discretion which will shield you from the spirit of the world. Never forget that by your very vocation, you are sent abroad in the world to keep alive the sacred fire of divine love. Above all, be prudent and discreet in your visits to the homes. Never take any intoxicating drink while there; should your state of weakness require it, take something else in preference. Impress firmly upon your minds that the principal end of your Institute is the exercise of charity, and that you should practise it with zeal in so far as the other offices of your charge permits your doing so.

16. Penetrate yourselves well with this truth, that it is at the foot of the cross and in the heart of Our Lady of Seven Dolors that you were brought forth to the religious life, and that the Precious Blood of Jesus and the tears of His Sorrowful Mother, have given you the wonderful progress you have made in so short a time. ....

17. Forget not that Our Lord in dying upon the cross, bequeathed to you that divine

spirit which He commended into the Hands of His adorable Father. Believing this without a single doubt, you should let yourselves be guided by the good spirit, and seek only the glory of God in all your actions. Let it enlighten you in all your undertakings, and preside at all your councils, that your decisions may all tend to the greater good of your community. Let it make you love your community better even than your own mothers, because in her you have been born again to the religious life which is so infinitely more precious than the natural one. You will be encouraged to sacrifice yourselves willingly for the love of your cherished mother. and to exert yourselves to the utmost that your community may spread its beneficent influence far and wide. The good spirit will lead you to respect all the decisions of the Council as emanating from the Holy Ghost; it will move you to anticipate one another by proofs of friendship truly cordial and sincere; it will enable you to practice the exercises of culpe and fraternal correction with such good dispositions that you will draw therefrom, each time, great spiritual profit, and always find in your Sisters, charitable monitors to warn you of your slightest faults. It will preserve you from the spirit of rivalry,—the cause of so many evils—and will inspire you with renewed zeal for the relief of

the poor and the sick, both within and without the convent walls. It will help you to observe holy poverty even in the minutest details, to the use of every moment of time so that not one second be lost. The good spirit will enable you to draw daily increasing profit from the quarter of an hour spent in the preparation of the morning meditation, as well as in the period allotted for the spiritual conference and the catechism. In fine, it will assist you in keeping all the rules of religious modesty and decorum, especially in your dealings with seculars.

May the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ be for you a source of strength divine to ever protect and defend you. May His Sacred Wounds be the delicious food and the mystic drink nourishing, inebriating and satisfying you. May His Precious Blood wash and purify you from all stain of sin. May His Death procure for you eternal glory, and lead you onward and upward in the faithful practice of all religious virtues. May His divine Cross, more brilliant than the starry firmament of the skies, and beloved by all religious communities, because upon it was hanged Him who is the salvation of the world, save and protect forever the community this day established to celebrate the mysteries of Calvary, and to console the Mother of Sorrows by assuaging every misery afflicting our poor, suffering, fallen humanity!

In concluding these recommendations, we decree that which follows:

The monthly retreat shall be made according to directions specially given.

A Sister shall be named Directress of Studies both in the city and country schools.

Those among the servant girls who are judged worthy, may be permitted to consecrate themselves to the service of the poor in the Providence Asylum. They shall wear a special costume and shall follow the rules and regulations prescribed for them. They shall have a Sister to direct them in the ways of the interior life and to make them observe their regulations.

That all order possible may reign in the wards, parlors and procure, there should be stated hours for business or reception. The public should be notified of these hours by notices conspicuously posted on the doors or stairways to the different apartments.

All the accounts of the several offices of the Asylum should be settled at the procure; that is, the treasurer should pay out what the community owes and collect what is due to it.

Instead of undertaking too much at a time, they shall perform with all perfection possible

each of the works confided to them. Hence, they shall not admit more old women, orphan girls, or servants seeking positions, than can be conveniently fed, lodged, clothed and otherwise provided for.

In order the more easily to provide the poor with medical care and proper remedies during sickness, a dispensary shall be opened in the Providence Asylum, and the prescribed rules faithfully followed.

Let it be remembered that in caring for the poor, we must endeavor to render them good, laborious and industrious.

The crypt of the church where the departed Sisters are interred, might be used as a place of pilgrimage during the summer, especially on retreat days. It should be kept in good repair so that any one might walk about, or remain there for some time without being incommoded by the dampness. For such visits, there should be an altar with all the objects necessary to foster devotion to the holy souls in purgatory. There should also be a few seats. Permission may be obtained for the erection of the Stations of the Cross. By this devotion the Precious Blood of Our Lord would flow upon the graves of those who have consecrated their lives to the solace of His suffering members.

The necessary repairs shall be made in the apartments destined for the Postulants, in order that the exercises preparatory to the Novitiate may be made properly and without danger to the health of these young aspirants.

Proper surveillance must be kept over the servants that they be not exposed, especially in the evenings, to meetings with persons of the opposite sex. Measures shall be taken whereby this watchfulness may be easily exercised.

The first day of June each year, shall be consecrated most especially to honor Our Lady of Grace, who will be known here under the title of Our Lady of Providence, because she has been filled with graces to pour them out everywhere and to exercise the ministry of charity. The Father of Mercies charged her with this office by depositing in her maternal heart that solicitude which impels her to care for the whole human race. She is the Depositary of all the treasures hidden in the bosom of Divine Providence. The Community will, on this day especially, give testimony of its profound gratitude to God for the precious gifts He has conferred upon His holy Mother.

To entertain and spread abroad more effectually the devotion to Our Lady of Seven Dolors, each altar of this chapel shall be dedicated under

one of the titles of the seven swords piercing the heart of the Mother of Sorrows, and making her in very deed, the Queen of Martyrs. With such devotion to Our Lady of Pity, the Community shall be confirmed in its devotion to the Passion of Our Savior.

Every year during vacation, while the Sisters are assembled in greater numbers, a service shall be chanted for the repose of the departed members of the Institute.

At the death of each of the Ladies belonging to the Corporation, a Mass shall be said and a communion offered by the Sisters that she may come into the possession of God without delay. During the retreat of the Ladies of Charity, the Sisters shall have a Mass said for their departed benefactors, and shall receive holy communion for the repose of their souls.

Closing this pastoral visit, Monseigneur Bourget gave the Sisters a conference during which he uttered these remarkable words:

« Upon you, my dear Daughters, depends the future of the Institute; what it is to-day, that it will be in fifty, one hundred, two hundred years, if God, in His Infinite Mercy deigns to preserve it that length of time. The novices here present absorbing your spirit now, and forming the Community later, will transmit it to their

successors. You are, therefore, as you see, responsible for the eternal preservation of your Community. »

April 16.— Return of sixteen Sisters from Chili. The Chilian foundation had been made in 1853 under very peculiar circumstances. At the request of Mgr. A. M. A. Blanchet, Bishop of Nesqually, five Sisters had left Montreal on October 18, 1852, to found a mission at Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory. They were under the guidance of the Reverend Gedeon Huberdeault. (1)

Being unable to effect a permanent foundation on account of unforeseen difficulties, they started on their return trip to Montreal early in 1853. Their extreme poverty forced them to take passage in a sailing vessel via Cape Horn. For nearly three months their wretched bark was at the mercy of wind and wave. They finally succeeded in making port at Valparaiso at the beginning of June. The Archbishop of Santiago, learning of the arrival of our little band of nuns, did all in his power to keep them in the country. Whilst awaiting a decision from the Mother House, the Sisters remained in Santiago and exercised the works of charity. Later on, their number was increased by recruits from the Mother House, and they were enabled to found two other houses. Everything was in a most flourishing condition until the Archbishop of Santiago exacted that the Sisters of Providence, established in his diocese, should be under his absolute jurisdiction, and become altogether independent of the Community of Montreal. Our Sisters would not consent to such a separation Faithful to the bond which united them to their

(1) The Abbé Huberdeault came back to Canada from Chili only after the definite return of the Sisters.

Mother House, they sacrificed the fruits of their labors in that foreign field, abandoned their promising missions and returned to the Community Home and native land. (1)

LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA, SUPERIOR.

Montreal, April 27, 1863.

Dear Daughter:

To-morrow we inaugurate in this diocese the feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel. (2) This feast recalls the apparition of the Blessed Virgin to the Princess Petruccia, while she was in prayer before a picture known under the title of *Our Lady of Good Counsel.* The august Mother of God told her humble servant *that when a church should be built in this place, she would come and take up her abode therein.* Hearkening to this voice from Heaven, Petruccia began at once to put the orders of the Blessed Virgin into execution. She went about collecting in the streets of the city and suburbs, and even into the surrounding country. She gathered in as

(1) Four of the number, however, elected to remain in Chili and to carry on the works already so well begun. To-day (1909) the Community existing there is composed mostly of native Sisters numbering about one hundred and fifty.

(2) Said feast is celebrated on April 26.

many affronts and insults as alms, being looked upon as a visionary; but heaven came to her assistance. On the twenty-fifth of April, 1467, a great light suddenly appeared before the eyes of the inhabitants of Genezanno, and in the midst of that light there was portrayed a picture of the holy Virgin which, to the accompaniment of angelic melodies, descended and remained hovering above the walls of the new church without touching them. This fact made the people cry out: A miracle! A miracle! The prodigy soon rendered the place famous, and crowds from all adjacent parts came flocking hither to recommend themselves to *Our Lady of Good Counsel.* The holy picture brought by the angels with such joyful singing, was so pleasing and beautiful that it was known for a long time as *Our Lady of Paradise.* Innumerable pilgrims came to visit it, and many miracles were performed,—one hundred and fifty-nine being recorded during the space of three months.

You may have singing at Mass to-morrow as upon great solemnities, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in the afternoon.

Recommend me to *Our Lady of Good Counsel* whose assistance I sorely need, and believe me, my daughter, very sincerely,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

April 30.— The Ladies forming the Civil Corporation of the Providence Asylum, relinquish their rights in favor of the Sisters, who in the future, will be the sole administrators of the temporal concerns of the Institute.

May 4.—Mgr. Bourget addresses a letter of advice to Mother Philomena who proposes to visit our missions in Oregon. (1)

LETTER to MOTHER PHILOMENA, SUPERIOR.

Providence Asylum, May 4, 1863.

My dear Daughter:

I am sending you the recommendations I thought proper to make your Community during the pastoral visit (2)

Pray yourself, and have prayers offered that they may bring forth fruit; it is only by prayer, after all, that said recommendations can ever be engraved upon the hearts of your Sisters.

I likewise inclose some special directions which may assist you in the observance of these, as well as other recommendations made in preceding visits. Make them the subject of your spiritual reading occasionally, at least once

(1) Sickness prevents Mother Philomena from making the projected trip.

(2) See recommendations, p. 310.

a year, and during vacation time when nearly all the Sisters are assembled at the Community. Accompany this reading with such explanations and reflections as you may judge proper.

Impress upon your Sisters the necessity of studying, reading, and meditating upon the Rule with the special intention of correcting themselves in all the points wherein they have grown remiss. Assuredly, this is the safest and sweetest means of procuring regularity in your community.

All sorts of reasons make it a duty for your Sisters to arrange their little personal disagreements among themselves, so that the miseries of the community may not become known to outsiders, for fear of disedifying them, or of giving them a bad opinion of the Institute. Insist firmly on this point that none may forget themselves when occasions arise.

As mental prayer is the life of communities, take every means in your power to obtain that your daughters become women of prayer. Oft-repeated readings and instructions on so important a point of the interior life will naturally imprint more and more deeply in their hearts the necessity and the advantages of this exercise. You should watch very carefully, that, as much as possible, they all assemble, both morning and evening, in the room designated for meditation. Those who

need more sleep could retire earlier so as to be able to rise in time for meditation with their Sisters.

The regulation for the monthly retreats gives you the opportunity of pointing out to your Daughters the faults they should correct and the virtues they should practice, by assigning the subjects of meditation for the day of retreat; and, occasionally, the subject of examen for the whole month. No defect can withstand the efforts made to overcome it when the practice of the particular examen is applied in all its vigor.

The conference if well made, cannot fail to produce precious fruit. The subject should be given a long time in advance, so that the Sisters may prepare it carefully. It might, at times, be the same as for the monthly retreat and particular examen, while the spiritual reading could be profitably made upon the same subject. It is well to remark here, that in order to make lasting impression upon hearts, serious work and constant efforts are necessary. Each conference could be begun with the reading of some extracts from the Conferences of Saint Vincent de Paul, which we shall soon have translated into French that they may serve as a text for all that might be said by the Sisters. There can always be found in those Conferences something relating to the

matter under consideration for the monthly conference.

Wise, pious, and discreet Sisters should be appointed to visit, from time to time, the old women and the Lady Boarders, that both the one and the other may be edified and consoled by good and holy conversations.

The Sisters charged with the surveillance of the common parlors and the infirmary, provided they be pious and intelligent, may do much good to persons of the world. Therefore, a wise selection should be made.

A Sister of good and solid piety should be named to direct the servant girls who consecrate themselves to the works of the Providence Asylum. If we take serious interest in this small beginning, it will produce great and happy results. It is likewise desirable that a sister be named Directress of the ladies and young girls who wish to make special retreats at the Providence Asylum. It was during the time of such a retreat that the present Superior of the Sisters of Misericorde decided to consecrate herself to the work of the penitents, — a work that up to that time had had a very precarious existence.

The Lady Boarders should conform to the rules, but let us proceed slowly and prudently. We must never forget that they seek a shelter

in our Asylum in order to meditate in peace upon the eternal years, and that they are not in an ordinary boarding house.

Good conversations are the infallible mark of the interior spirit in an Institute. The Superior, who should be the life and the soul of her community, would do well to preside at all the recreations, to enkindle the divine fire which should be maintained in every heart during the joyous demonstrations that should reign supreme at these hours. If they really love the poor, they will always find interesting things to say in their behalf.

If we desire that a praiseworthy emulation exist among the different offices, it is necessary that they be regularly and carefully visited. The Superior can always find, in her grace of state, something beneficial to say to the officers, to encourage and help them to acquit themselves better of the duties of their office, day by day, and with more perfection.....

The Sisters chosen to fill the office of portress should be so dignified and modest in their comportment as to edify all who visit the house.

With time and patience, the monitors will succeed in having all the rules of religious modesty, and others, requiring but a little attention, observed by the community.

The works of charity should be nurtured and developed by assemblies and feasts. The Superior must do her best to see that said good works never languish for want of care.

It is very important that the Sisters never travel alone with men....

If the regulations of the Infirmary be faithfully followed, both the infirmarians and the patients will sanctify themselves. Let the rules, then, be observed there at all times. The Superior must remember that it belongs to her to invite the chaplain to hear confessions and to console the sick Sisters.

Vacation days ought to be a most precious time for all the Sisters, provided the rules made for spending well said period of rest and relaxation are carefully observed. This point merits all the solicitude of the Superiors.

In order that everything may go well in the missions and offices, it is necessary that the Sister Servants and the officers have all the authority required over those whom they have to conduct; and it is the Superior's duty to uphold their authority at all times.

It has become urgent to form a secretariate and to employ as many Sisters as may be necessary to maintain an active and carefully

supervised correspondence between the Mother House and the missions, so that the bonds of union and interdependence may become more and more strengthened. It will also be a means of transmitting to the missions the directions given at the Community, and of maintaining the strictest regularity.

Every thing possible must be done to interest the Irish people in the works of the Providence. The Sisters should make it a duty to *learn English*, so as to make themselves more useful to the poor who speak but the one language.

The Novices should be formed with the utmost care, and all the time required by the Church should be accorded them to prepare worthily for profession.

To prevent abuses from being introduced, the discipline concerning penances prescribed by rule should be maintained in all its vigor.

Constant vigilance should be kept over the old women, the orphan girls, and others confided to the Sisters' care, by never leaving them alone. This active surveillance should be strictly observed in the less frequented parts of the house where clandestine meetings might be held.

None but wise and prudent Sisters, worthy of making the Community respected, should be sent to make purchases.

An incalculable amount of good is to be done at the English Hospital: therefore, let every effort be put forth to have the visit regularly and carefully made.

We shall have to consider the publication of a new edition of the *Manual;* to think of making rules for the residences; of watching over the health of the Sisters, confiding them to the care of the pharmacist or another Sister named for the purpose; of procuring copies of the *New Testament* for the use of the Sisters; of regulating the servants' work; of keeping up zeal for the collections; of deciding upon prayers for the repose of the departed Sisters; of preserving the pious practices introduced from the beginning, v. g., to remind the Sisters to recall the holy presence of God during recreation; of remitting all temporal matters to the treasurer; of naming a Sister, Directress of Studies, so that uniform methods may be followed in teaching; of attracting the former orphans and pupils to the Asylum that they may be guided through the critical period of adolescence; of having the letters signed *Sisters of Providence;* (1) of exhorting the Sisters often to study their rules and to make use of them for their self-improvement.

(1) Since the definite approbation of the Constitutions, the Sisters add the initials, F. C. S. P. *Filiæ caritatis servæ pauperum*, to their signature.

These are the principal points, which I believe, deserve your immediate attention and solicitude. I am confident that, with the help of God, you will have the happiness of guiding your community in the path of regularity which will infallibly bring it to the heights of perfection.

With this sincere hope, and blessing you and your daughters in the name of our crucified Lord and His sorrowful Mother, I am

Your most humble and devoted servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA, SUPERIOR.

Montreal, May 12, 1863.

My dear Daughter:

Before leaving for the Council (1) I send you word to prepare beforehand, all the papers, books, pastoral letters, ordinances, etc., etc., written for your Community, and which the Sisters of Oregon may make use of with profit.

I also urge you to foresee and to note all the difficulties you may expect to meet with in your travels and during your visit to your good

(1) Third Provincial Council of Quebec.

Sisters, the better to know before leaving what your line of conduct should be in those distant missions. (1)

Let us pray fervently that the holy will of God may be done.

Believe me, my daughter, very sincerely,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA, SUPERIOR.

Montreal, May 24, 1863.

Reverend Mother;

Replying to your letter of the 18th inst. received at Quebec, I must first inform you that the Deaf Mutes have not been forgotten. Pray that the little that was done there in favor of those unfortunate children may be like unto the good leaven which was hid in a few measures of meal .....

I presume you will take the whole week to prepare yourselves for the feast of Our Lady of Providence,—eight days from to-morrow,—so as to render the day, June first, as solemn as possible.

(1) See page 329.

It might be well to have each Sister write during the week, whatever good sentiments the Holy Ghost may inspire her with on the subject of Our Lady of Grace who is, for your Community, Our Lady of Providence. The Angelical Salutation well meditated will suffice to impress you with the spirit of this great feast.

I had only a few moments with your Sisters while in Quebec; but I was able to procure an audience for them with the Administrator who received them most graciously. I also recommended them to Mr. Bolduc, who promised to do all in his power to make their visit profitable. I likewise gave them personally, a few directions as to how they could best get whatever information would be most serviceable to them.

I bless you and your daughters, whilst wishing you the full plenitude of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Pentecost recalls the holiest of anniversaries, when the Paraclete descending in visible form within the Cenacle, sought pure hearts for His temples and sanctuaries.

Hoping He has found a dwelling place amongst you, I remain

Your most devoted servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA, SUPERIOR.

May 29, 1863.

My dear Daughter:

The present is to announce that hereafter the feast of *Our Lady of Grace* shall be celebrated every year in all the Communities of our diocese, on the first of June. In order that you may more worthily honor our glorious Lady, I permit you to have Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament on that day.

Our Holy Father, Pope Pius IX, in his beautiful and most admirable Brief on the Immaculate Conception, has consecrated a few lines in honor of the Mother of all Grace, saying that the Fathers have taught that by this singular and solemn salutation, unheard of till then, the Mother of God has ever been the seat of divine grace; that she is adorned with all the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and that she has, moreover, always been an infinite treasury of all graces, etc.

What spiritual riches there are reserved for us in the celebration of this new festival! Pray, then, and have prayers offered to our good Lady of Grace for all the Communities, charged to honor her most especially. Pray, too, for the whole diocese,

and for the success of the next pastoral visit which is soon to begin.

I bless you and all your Sisters, and I remain of you all,

The most devoted Father in Our Lord J. C.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

June 1.— Inauguration of the Feast of *Our Lady of Grace* or *of Providence* in the chapel of the Asylum. This feast is especially established to implore the help of Divine Providence through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, and to thank her for the special favors she has accorded us since the beginning of the Institute.

On the same day, six pious girls affiliated to our Community under the name of *Consecrated Girls*, take the habit of the Third Order of the Servites of Mary.

Under the patronage of Mgr. Bourget, and with the kindly assistance of the Professors of the School of Medicine and Surgery of Montreal, a dispensary is founded for the free treatment of the poor of the neighorhood. (1)

Ours is the first Catholic Dispensary established in Montreal. In reality, however, it is but the regular

(1) At this first assembly the following persons were present: His Lordship, Monseigneur, Founder and first Director.— Rev. D. Tambareau, almoner of the poor for the Seminary of St. Sulpice.— The Professional Staff of School of Medecine and Surgery of Montreal.— Drs. E. Trudel, President, P. Beaubien, J. C. Coderre, P. Pelletier, J. G. Bibaud, Thos. d'Odet d'Orsonnens, P, Munro, J. P. Rottot.— Mother Caron, Superior, and the Sister Pharmacists.

organisation of a custom vigorously upheld from the beginning of the Institute. The visiting Sisters had always from the commencement treated the poor with *simples* and the drugs most in use at that period. For a while, the Doctors Dagenais and Ricard visited the sick poor free of charge at the request of our Sisters, and their prescriptions were filled at the Providence.

The Dispensary is greatly favored since its very foundation by the protection of the Sulpician Fathers, almoners of the St. James Parish.

June 15. — Nomination of the first Directress of Classes. This office is confided to Sister Immaculate Conception, one of the Foundresses of the Institute. Mgr. Bourget prescribes the regulations of the office.

LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA, SUPERIOR.

Blairfindie, July 8, 1863.

My dear Daughter:

Your Sisters will soon arrive from all parts to spend their vacation in a happy family reunion; so I write you these few lines to recommend you to put into practice what was regulated at the last pastoral visit and at other times.

Try to make the missionary Sisters feel perfectly at ease by the cordial welcome extended them by all the Sisters. Provide for them by every means imaginable, the opportunity of open-

ing their hearts freely, so that no one may grieve over past troubles. Let all be careful not to talk on any subject likely to recall sorrowful remembrances. Encourage the family spirit, the interest which all, like good daughters, should have for the prosperity and regularity of the community that has brought them forth to the religious life. For this reason, set them all more or less to the exercise of the different works according to their strength. Give them, or have the Directress of Studies provide, some methods of teaching. Have them learn all they should know to become economists, sacristans, visitors of the poor, nurses for the sick, etc.

Procure for them, at an early date, the exercises of the retreat, so that being relieved of their troubles in the beginning of vacation, they may be more at their ease during this time of relaxation. In their holidays, let them enjoy all the pleasures which religion gives to pure and devout souls. Have them observe the regulations for vacation time in every point so that the good Sisters may increase in their love for regularity.

I pray the dear St. Elizabeth of Portugal, whose feast we celebrate to-day, to give us her peaceful spirit; and, on the nineteenth, feast of St. Vincent de Paul, I shall beg him to give

your Community his charity; I shall implore him to consider you, and to treat you always, as his children.

May you all be blessed!

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

December 3.— In a circular letter addressed to the faithful, Mgr. Bourget denounces the writer, Ernest Renan, and his impious novel entitled, "*The Life of Jesus*". Monseigneur wishes the letter to be read in the Communities to whom he especially addresses the following lines:

I know I am coming to bring trouble into your peaceful abodes, by acquainting you in the accompanying letter with the horrible blasphemies which hell has just vomited forth against the adorable Person of Our Lord. I heartily regret the necessity of making known in your holy houses, where night and day, the incense of so many fervent prayers arise heavenward, the awful outrages committed against the most amiable and celestial Spouse whom you have chosen, and who inundates your souls with the delights of His love. But truly there is urgent need for you to become victims of propitiation to repair such diabolical insults to the Divine Majesty; and this is why I have decided to make known to you the new thorns which encircle and pierce the Heart

of Jesus. Does not that sweet Master seem to recall to your minds the words He once before addressed to His humble servant; *Behold the Heart which has so loved mankind, and which receives in return naught but injuries and outrages.* No commentary is needed to awaken the liveliest sorrow in your hearts at the sight of so many and such grievous insults. In transports of love, your virginal hearts will make reparation; you will follow whatever inspiration your piety may suggest, and you will invent new methods of atonement. Oh, surely! in a spirit of sacrifice, and for the honor of your Divine Spouse, you will perform the very opposite of what impiety does to dishonor Him. It despises Him, blasphemes Him and overwhelms Him with the grossest insults; you, on your part, will honor, praise, love and serve Him with ever-increasing fervor. Yes, now more than ever, you will immolate and sacrifice yourselves for His glory, precisely because there are ungrateful and guilty men, who attack His Divinity and outrage even His holy Humanity by imputing to Him the most shameful crimes. In such a spirit of immolation, you will not shrink from any sacrifice, and the most painful will cost you little or nothing, when you consider what a God so shamefully outraged has endured for your sake. All that may be said or done against you in future will appear to you light; nor, can

any injustice make your courage falter, when you remember the injuries heaped upon your Divine Spouse... The labors and trials of religious life will seem sweet and easy to you at the sight of humiliations wherewith your Good Shepherd is crowned. Like plaintive, innocent doves, you will fill the diocese with the sound of your mourning because the God of majesty is so shamefully outraged by the very men upon whom He has showered His blessings. May the echo of your lamentations be heard in the assemblies of the wicked and inspire them with sentiments of lively sorrow! May your reparations purge the earth of the old leaven of impiety, and render it worthy of the benedictions of Heaven, which we shall gather in all the sweetness of peace.

May the glorious Mother of God, Our Queen Immaculate, bless you and assist you in your work of atonement.

I bless you all in our dear Savior,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

To the Sisters of Charity of Providence,
Missionaries in Oregon.

Montreal, December 16, 1863.

My dear Daughters:

Sister Joseph of the Sacred Heart, who arrived here rather unexpectedly, has given us all the details possible, concerning your dear missions in Oregon. We have all blessed the holy and loving Providence which has deigned to make use of you, the least and most humble of the servants of the Lord, to accomplish something worth while in that distant portion of the Master's Vineyard. I, on my part, never cease to render most humble thanksgivings to the Lord our God, referring to Him all the glory justly due to Him alone; and, in the intimacy of my soul, I supplicate Him to strengthen and confirm your works, and to multiply them in that vast field He has given you to cultivate. I have also most heartily approved the immense sacrifices your Community has had to make in sending you new recruits so soon after the departure of the Sisters last June, and its readiness to send more, God willing. You must, therefore, unite with us in fervent prayer to obtain that those amongst you who are unable to work on account of their infirmities, may

regain their health and become strong enough to perform all the works, requiring generous hearts and willing hands ready for every kind of manual labor. The present letter will be handed you by the five new missioners who, in spite of the inclemency of the weather and the lateness of the season, will start day after to-morrow for Oregon. They are anxious to be with you and eager to relieve you in your works of charity. You will receive them with open arms, and you will mutually console one another for the privations you have to endure by being so far away from the Mother House; by the hope of making the Divine Spouse, to whom you are bound by a sacred alliance, better known and loved and served in the vast country He has given you for your inheritance. Many flock to those distant regions in search of gold, yet, after untold misery and hardship, find naught but death. You, on the contrary, go there in the interests of charity, to glorify the Lord Jesus, who so loved us that He descended from Heaven to redeem us from death eternal.

You will learn from the Sisters all that has happened here, and you will draw useful lessons therefrom to strengthen you more and more in the grace of your holy vocation. In it, you will always find the happiness promised by your Divine Spouse, a happiness a hundred times

greater than you could have enjoyed had you remained in the world, as you might freely have done. The more contentment you find in following Our Lord in the midst of your greatest trials, the more pleasing will you be to that incomparable Master, who increases His love for us in proportion to the proofs of love we give Him.

The good Sisters are bringing you some pictures, leaflets and pamphlets which will apprise you of our little devotions. You will, no doubt, be glad to unite with us in making honorable amends to Our Lord and His Blessed Mother for all the outrages they receive from mankind; also to honor the new Saints whom the Church placed upon the altars on June 5, 1862, viz: the twenty-five martyrs of Japan and St Michael Santi.

The Sisters will give you more particulars than I could ever do, concerning all the good it has pleased God to effect through the Sisters of the Mother House. Such heart-to-heart talks cannot fail to reanimate your courage in your hours of desolation, and to strengthen the bonds which unite you to your Sisters in Canada.

Keep forever firmly united to the Mother House which brought you forth in religion on Calvary at the foot of the cross where so faithfully stands the Mother of Dolors, providen-

tially become your own dear Mother. Endeavor to promote her honor by your simplicity, humility and charity. Cause her name to be blessed, alike among Catholics and those not of our Faith, by the good works they see you perform for the greater honor and glory of the Divine Majesty and the increased good of the poor. Let there always exist among you but one heart and one soul. Do all in your power to settle amongst yourselves the little difficulties that may arise to trouble your peace and happiness. Observe each and every point of your Holy Rule, with the firm conviction, that by so doing you will reach the highest point of perfection.

Finally, may Almighty God, after favoring you with His choicest blessings here below, bring you, together with the souls whom you have sanctified, into the company of the Saints in Heaven.

Never forget to pray for

Your most devoted Father,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

SPIRITUAL NEW YEAR'S GIFTS TO THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES.— GIFT OF A PAINTING OF OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE.— EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.— CATASTROPHE ON THE BRIDGE OF BELŒIL.— ADVICE OF MONSEIGNEUR BOURGET TO THE SISTERS WHO GO TO THE SCENE OF THE ACCIDENT TO TAKE CARE OF THE WOUNDED.— HOSPICE SAINT JOSEPH, RESIDENCE OF THE AGED AND INFIRM PRIESTS.— COLLECTION IN FAVOR OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.— DEPARTURE OF MGR. BOURGET FOR A FIFTH VOYAGE TO EUROPE.— HIS LORDSHIP WRITES TO THE COMMUNITIES OF HIS DIOCESE FROM LIVERPOOL.

1864

SPIRITUAL NEW YEAR'S GIFTS

TO THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES OF MONTREAL.

Montreal, January 6, 1864.

My dear Daughters:

I had to let the time of visits and other business pass by, so as to recollect myself a little before answering the many pious letters which you have, as usual, written me to offer your good wishes for a Happy New Year.... For your New Year's Gift this year, I address

you the accompanying pastoral letter (1) written at the feet of the Holy Child, by the shining of the celestial light which illumines the Stable of Bethlehem, where we meet Mary and Joseph with the angels, the shepherds, and the kings who have left Him their gold, frankincense, and myrrh, for our inheritance.

In calling you to the *Apostleship of Prayer*, our pastoral opens to you the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary as the inexhaustible sources of grace, virtue, and consolation. Therefore, no gift could be more agreeable to you. It will be a great delight to you and to those confided to your care, to exercise an *Apostleship*, at once so sweet, so easy, and so important.

In calling you to the *Apostleship*, I claim the help of your fervent prayers, and of your holy works to obtain the victory over all the errors infecting the whole world to-day, and more especially those, as pointed out in the pastoral, which contaminate our own diocese.....

You cannot read the sad history of the errors blighting human society without shedding many bitter tears. Hearts so sincerely devoted as yours to the service of the Divine Spouse,

(1) The Mandate establishing the association of the Apostleship of Prayer. Mgr. Bourget addressed it to all the faithful of his diocese, Dec. 25, 1863.

will feel most keenly, the outrages heaped upon Him by the impious who seek to make the world believe that God has nothing to do with the government of mankind; that His Gospel is a barrier to human progress; that His law counts for naught in the laws that govern the empires of the earth; that human reason has no need of divine faith since it is perfectly able to guide itself.....

You will likewise be profoundly grieved on seeing those men, enemies of all that is holy, attacking religious communities, trying to break asunder the sacred vows which bind them to the Lord, seeking to make them believe that their burdens are insupportable to human weakness; rejecting such admirable institutions as useless and suspicious; combatting their religious obligations as not being founded on the Gospels; arrogating to themselves the right of appropriating their possessions, which are, in very truth, the patrimony of the poor, refusing them the right of caring for the unfortunate; pretending they must be prevented from giving education; and, if communities consecrated to the exterior works of charity are tolerated, it is only that they may have good servants for themselves when ill, or to care for their soldiers on the battlefields, where wounded and stricken, they lie abandoned by all.

On beholding such deplorable errors, you will attach yourselves to the service of God more ardently than ever, precisely for the reason that He is outraged and despised by irreligious men. You will more tenderly love your holy state, the more they endeavor to drag you away from it. You will bear the burden of religious life with greater joy, the more they seek to make you believe it insupportable. You will fulfil the obligations of your religious vows with so much the greater delight, the more they try to make you think that Our Lord who has promised you the *hundredfold* in this life, and who gives it to you with divine prodigality, will fail in His promises, or that He has deceived you in luring you on to an imaginary happiness.

Whilst appreciating the blissfulness of your holy state, and spending such peaceful hours in your delightful retreats, cast a compassionate eye upon your Sisters in Italy whom the impious renegades above mentioned, maltreat with such barbarity as to fill one with horror. How well do those religious heroines deserve the high words of commendation uttered by the Sovereign Pontiff in his Encyclical Letter of August tenth last:

« We praise, as they so well merit, those religious women so violently torn from their mon-

asteries, deprived of their possessions and reduced to beggary; and who, far from failing in the fidelity they have vowed to their Spouse, patiently endure their pitiable state, lifting their hands unceasingly to Heaven, and imploring by day and by night the blessings of God for the salvation of all, even of their persecutors, and who await with the utmost resignation the mercies of the Lord. »

Oh! how you will pray with them and for them in the mighty combat which hell wages against virginity and against every other good principle, so that our Holy Mother the Church may gain a brilliant victory over all the errors now rampant amongst the nations of the world.

You have undertaken, with all the ardor of your souls, the work of reparation to which your Divine Spouse invited you by my letter of December third last. (1)

You will be all the more powerfully encouraged to continue that work of reparation in union with all those whom you can persuade to join you, when you learn that in the Eternal City, and in the whole Catholic world, the Divinity of Our Lord is celebrated by solemn exercises, and that the most public protestations are everywhere

(1) See page 344.

made against the impious man who dared to deny His Divinity, adored alike in Heaven and upon earth.

You will, no doubt, read with pleasure the words addressed to the Romans on the thirtieth of August last by Cardinal Patrizi, Vicar of Our Holy Father, the Pope, when ordaining that the venerable painting of the Son of God made Man, which is kept in a chapel at Rome called the *Holy of Holies*, be carried in procession. « Our intention in making this procession is, to expiate not only our own sins, but also those wherewith the whole earth is deluged at an epoch, when all rights, both human and divine, are trampled under foot, and where man carries impiety and irreverence so far as to blaspheme with impudence the Majesty of God, to deny the holiest articles of our faith, amongst others the very Divinity of Christ. The honor which we shall render the holy picture of the God-Man shall be in reparation for the outrage recently done His Divine Person by the impious productions of a sacrilegious pen. »

So many and such great examples will animate you, my dear Daughters, in the way of the painful sacrifices you must make to become living victims, and worthy *reparatrices* of the ignominies heaped upon the God of Love by

those upon whom He showers His blessings. Consequently, you will generously endure all interior desolations, all disquieting temptations, hard trials, deep humiliations and disgusts, repugnances, revolts of nature, vexations, etc., all of which are the briars and thorns strewn along the pathway of religious perfection.....

May your holy lives and your daily sacrifices mount heavenward like precious incense, and spread throughout the diocese the perfume of virginity, so that the enemies of your Divine Spouse may be annihilated, or better still, that they may be drawn to the love of God made man.

I am very sincerely, my dear Daughters,

Your devoted servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

May 31.— Reverend D. Tambareau, Sulpician, presents our Community with a painting of Our Lady of Providence. Mgr. Bourget solemnly blesses said painting, and he requests that it be exposed to the veneration of the faithful during eight days.

June 3.— Feast of the Sacred Heart.... Mgr. Bourget permits, for the present year, the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel of the Asylum.

June 29.— Catastrophe at Belœil.— An Express train, consisting of a locomotive and eleven coaches filled with emigrants coming from Quebec to Montreal, dashes into the Richelieu River. At about one-fifteen in the morning, the

bridge between Belœil and Saint Hilary, had been opened to let a number of barges through. Although all the danger lights were burning, and the regulations, besides, exacted a full stop before crossing the bridge, the train rushed onward at high speed and plunged to the bottom of the river beneath. The number of passengers, men, women, and children, aboard the train, is estimated at five hundred. All day long, the dead and the wounded were dragged from the wreckage in the river; only towards evening could the latter be transported to the Hotel-Dieu and the English Hospital in this city. Reverend Father Villeneuve, Sulpician, came to us on the part of the Doctors of the latter place, begging the services of our Community. Nine Sisters went at once, to help the poor victims of the disaster, who were arriving in great numbers.

July 3.— On this occasion, Mgr. Bourget, who was visiting at Saint Martin's, writes the following letter to Mother Philomena.

LETTER TO REVEREND MOTHER PHILOMENA, SUPERIOR.

Saint Martin, July 3, 1864.

My dear Daughter:

On arriving here yesterday evening, I found your letter of June 30, in the room prepared for me.

You should have an understanding with your Sisters, so as to have them observe the following rules in their service at the English Hospital:

1. Let them be extremely reserved in their words, actions, and relations with the patients and the Doctors.

2. Act only in accordance with the directions of the Sisters named by the Superior for the general surveillance of the patients, so that there may be harmony among the Sisters.

3. Treat both Catholic and Protestant patients alike, as far as bodily comfort is concerned.

4. Never speak of religion to Protestants, unless they speak of it first themselves; and even then, be very prudent, so as to avoid the appearance of making proselytes. The simplest way, in such cases, would be to have them read some good books, and to give them short explanations.

5. Never argue with any one whomsoever on religious subjects. Excuse oneself modestly from replying to attacks made on our holy religion. Say that the Sisters of Charity do not enter into religious controversies; that their business is to take care of the poor confided to their care.

6. Quietly advise the Catholic patients not to accept the Protestant books which might be offered them, and to refuse in so gentle and straightforward a manner as to offend no one.

7. Endure patiently and silently, all abuse, reflections or actions seemingly offensive to reli-

gion and to persons consecrated to God. This is the best refutation that can be made to all the taunts with which error unceasingly assails virtue and truth.

8. Walk constantly in God's holy presence, and in the midst of so many distracting cares, have naught in view but His greater glory.

9. Fail not to recommend to Our Lady of Seven Dolors the many poor sick, in order to obtain their conversion.

10. For this purpose, offer all the prayers of the Community, of the good old women, of the innocent orphan children and of all the poor under the care of the Community.

11. Take the greatest interest in the service of the new Hospital, in the well-founded hope that much good will result therefrom.

12. Consider one's self as being continually a spectacle in the sight of God and of His angels.

These are the principal rules which your Sisters should follow, in order to profit of the advantages offered you by Divine Providence to whom the Holy Church, on this day, addresses the following beautiful prayer, suitable for you at all times, but more especially now:

O God, whose Providence faileth not in what it ordains; we humbly beseech Thee to take from

us all that is harmful, and to give us all those things that will be profitable to us. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord. (1)

I beg you to charge your Sister Secretary, or another, to take notes of all that occurs at the English Hospital while you go there to nurse the Germans, so that I may be able, at the proper time and place, to publish abroad in the diocese the daily interesting, and at times most touching events that occur. Let her faithfully record anything that may in the least interest charity, and awaken good sentiments in truly christian souls. Said notes may be addressed to me at Long Point.

I bless you with all your Daughters and your patients, and recommend myself to the fervent prayers offered everywhere for the success of your good works.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

September 29.—The Deaf Mutes having left the Hospice Saint Joseph in the month of June, the house is repaired and again placed at the disposal of the sick or aged priests.

October 2.—The Providence Asylum is in a state of extreme poverty. Monseigneur Bourget comes to its assistance by permitting a collection to be made in all the churches of the city. A high recommendation from His Lordship disposes the faithful to be very liberal towards the Sisters.

(1) Collect of the seventh Sunday after Pentecost.

November 14.—Monseigneur Bourget starts on his fifth voyage to Europe.

CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES.

Liverpool, November 26, 1864.

My dear Daughters:

The short and pleasant trip we made across the ocean proves very fully that you have prayed much and well for us. I must beg you to continue your fervent prayers which have accompanied me so efficaciously to this side of the Atlantic, and which may be so advantageous to me wherever I go, whether for the good of religion in general, or of your communities in particular.

In my innermost soul, I ask myself: *Whither am I going? What am I to do? What is to happen me?* Of all this I know nothing, nor do I desire to know anything beforehand. All that I know is, that God, in His infinite goodness, has foreseen all, regulated all, ordained all for the best, and that naught will befall me but what He wills. My only fear now is, that I, by my fault, may dissarrange the plans He has marked out for me in His adorable designs. It is, therefore, to prevent such a misfortune, that I reclaim the help of your most fervent prayers. Desiring

to render them more and more efficacious, I think it well to exhort you to a renewal of fervor in the accomplishment of your religious duties.

Yes, my dear Daughters, your simplicity, your humility, your charity, your obedience, and all your other virtues will be a powerful help to me in the transacting of the serious matters in hand, that all may turn to the preservation of the sacred deposit of faith, and to the maintenance of christian and religious discipline.

I do not, however, ask for any special prayer, over and above those prescribed by your holy Rule. To conform to my desires, it will suffice to perform all according to my intention: meditation, Holy Mass, communions, good works, sacrifices, etc., etc. The *Litany of the Blessed Virgin* which I have recommended you to say, and even to sing every Saturday, in honor of the Immaculate Conception, before one of her statues, may also be offered for this intention.

I profit of this occasion to recompense you somewhat for the different litanies I was obliged to suppress, in order to put you in harmony with the rules of the Church which has forbidden all private litanies under severe penalties. I therefore recommend that you replace all said litanies of devotion by the beautiful and most pious *Litany of the Saints*, as it contains all that a religious

heart can either ask for or desire. It will replace the *Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus* heretofore recited at the end of the morning prayer. It is but natural for the saints of the Church Militant to be daily united with the saints of the Church Triumphant; and it goes without saying, that the Saints, no matter to what church they belong, love one another and mutually render the honors due to holiness.

Such are the New Year's spiritual gifts I have to offer you together with my own best wishes for the New Year, while awaiting the blessings I shall implore for you all when prostrate at the feet of His Holiness, the Father of all the Faithful.

I am very sincerely, my dear Daughters,

Your most devoted Father in Our Lord J. C.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

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CHAPTER XXVII

EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE FOR THE TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH.— RETURN OF MGR. BOURGET FROM EUROPE.— HIS LORDSHIP MADE A SIXTH VISIT "AD LIMINA APOSTOLORUM".— RECEPTION OF THE RELICS OF ST. PACIFIQUE.

1865.

January 25.— Mgr. Bourget addresses a pastoral letter, from Rome, to the clergy and faithful of his diocese, announcing an extraordinary jubilee granted by His Holiness, Pius IX, for the triumph of the Church.

September 15.— We receive news of Mgr. Bourget. On August 25, His Lordship was in Paris. Monseigneur proposes to visit Rome a second time before returning to Canada.

December 8.— The recitation of the *Te Deum* closes the exercises of the Jubilee in our Community.

December 19.— After an absence of over a year in Europe, Mgr. Bourget returns to his episcopal city which greets its first Pastor with great demonstrations of joy.

N. B. While abroad, Monseigneur had the happiness of making twice the *Ad limina Apostolorum* pilgrimage. Returning from Italy on his way to France, and on the point of embarking for Canada, the Bishop of Montreal was recalled to Rome.

December 29.— Reception of the relics of St. Pacifique. The holy martyr's body, taken from the catacombs on the eighteenth day of June, 1833, was obtained for us by Mgr. Bourget in a recent visit to the Eternal City.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF ST. PACIFIQUE.— PASTORAL VISIT AND RETREAT PREACHED BY MONSEIGNEUR BOURGET.—DEATH OF MISS THERESE BARTHELET.—EXPOSITION OF THE HOLY RELICS.—ELECTIONS.—FORMATION OF THE GENERALATE.—RETURN OF THE SISTERS FROM KINGSTON.—COLLECTIONS IN FAVOR OF THE OREGON MISSIONS.—FIRST REGULAR VISIT OF THOSE ESTABLISHMENTS.

1866

February 5.— Solemn translation of the relics of Saint Pacifique. On this same date, Mgr. Bourget enriches our church with a great number of other precious relics.

March 12.— A letter from Mgr. Bourget announces his Pastoral visit, which coincides once again with the annual retreat.

LETTER

CONCERNING THE PASTORAL VISIT TO THE COMMUNITY OF THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE.

IGNATIUS BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, etc.

To our very dear Daughters in Jesus Christ, the Sisters of Providence, greetings and blesssings in Our Lord.

We feel, our very dear Daughters, a pressing desire to visit you, in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ; and this desire is for us both a need

and an imperative duty. Three years have already elapsed since our last pastoral visit in your Community which has always been the object of our constant solicitude.

We shall, consequently, tear ourselves away from an overwhelming multitude of cares to bestow upon you all the charity we feel for you. We are intimately convinced, that you will render yourselves more and more agreeable to the eyes of your Divine Spouse by your fidelity in corresponding to His designs, and be better able to devote yourselves to the service of His suffering members, the poor. Hence, while taking time from our other occupations to busy ourself exclusively with your dearest interests, namely, the sanctification of your souls, the perfection of your new Community and the success of your works, we desire, in so far as it lies in our power, to repair the spiritual losses our long absences must have caused you; and all the more so, since it seems evident that Divine Providence deigns to make use of us to mould you into a new religious family.

We are in the midst of events most memorable for you, and nearing anniversaries full of the most touching souvenirs for your souls. We too shall profit of this time to recollect ourself in the calmess of our dear solitude, and thus be

the better enabled to assist you more effectively, and to ground you more firmly in the spirit proper to your holy Institute. We can do this with all the more certainty, since at our last visit to the Holy City, we were able to secure considerable precious information which will help us to draw up your Constitutions in true canonical form; that, after all, is the only solid basis for permanent stability. We shall, therefore, during the visit, give this point our most serious attention. Our greatest desire is, to be able to prove to our own satisfaction before death shall call us hence, that we leave your Community in such a state of perfect religious regularity, that it may always, to the very end of time, spread abroad the good odor of the charity of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are so many things to be said on this subject that my paper cannot contain them, much less can it explain, as I should wish, the impressions that ought to be indelibly engraved upon your hearts. Let us postpone the matter then, until the period of the pastoral visit and the annual retreat. For it is in those days of wonderful graces and blessings, that Our Lord will send forth His Divine Spirit to inflame our hearts with the love of His holy Law. Those two religious exercises,— the pastoral visit and the annual retreat,— combining to fill you with more graces, will likewise open unto you,

our very dear Daughters, the richest treasures of the mercy of our God. Like the holy women of the Gospel, you will follow Our Savior, and with these same devoted women, you will hear from His lips, words of truth and of life. Oh, yes! «*The splendor of the Lord Our God will shine upon us and direct us in all our ways to assure the success of the works of our hands.*»

We should be all the more animated by this fervent hope, since we are to be transported together to the Mount of Calvary, where we shall spend happy hours in union with Our Lady of Seven Dolors. Twenty-two years ago she brought you forth at the foot of the cross. During this most acceptable time and during these days of recollection, we shall consider ourselves as hidden on that solitary mountain where grows in profusion sweet smelling myrrh — emblem of holy prayer,—whose fragrance rises heavenward day and night. Placing ourselves in our retreat close to our desolate Mother whose immense sorrows will soften our hard hearts, we shall easily yield to those strong impressions which render us docile to the movements of grace. It may be said of you during this retreat what Holy Church says of the Mother of Dolors in her plaintive chants in honor of the sacred wounds of Our Divine Savior: At the cross her station keeping, stood the mournful Mother weeping, close to Jesus to

the last; in her heart, His anguish sharing, till at last the sword has passed. Oh, how sad and sore distressed was that Mother highly blest, of the sole-begotten One!

With sentiments such as these, do we desire to undertake and complete the pastoral visit. You, on your part, must bring all your good will; and so, let us hope, that both the retreat and the pastoral visit will be productive of happy results for the sanctification of your souls and the prosperity of your Community.

For these reasons, the holy Name of God invoking, we have decreed, enacted and ordained: decreeing, enacting and ordaining that which follows:

1. We shall commence the pastoral visit of the Sisters of Providence on Wednesday of this week, the fourteenth day of the present month of March, and we shall make our solemn entrance at four o'clock in the afternoon, conforming in all things to the prescriptions of the Roman Ritual.

2. We shall continue on the following days, the public and the private exercises of the visit and of the retreat made at the same time, in accordance with the Customary of the said Community.

3. On the days judged most convenient, we shall make the visit of the Church, the relics, the

sacred vessels, the ornaments and the linens of the sacristy; also of the prayers to be offered for the holy souls in Purgatory, and the examination of the accounts of the House.

4. We shall likewise visit the Community and the wards destined for the sick and the infirm of the Hospice Saint Joseph, the orphanage, the deaf-mutes, the Saint Vincent Asylum, and the schools directed by the said Sisters of Providence. We shall pay an especial attention to the Novitiate, and to all that concerns the postulants and the girls consecrated to the works of charity.

5. All our free time shall be devoted to private interviews with the professed Sisters, the Novices and Postulants, so that all may profit of our visit to strengthen themselves more and more in the practice of their religious duties. It is, above all, during the precious time of the pastoral visit that Our Lord addresses to religious souls His consoling words: *Come to Me all ye who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will refresh you.*

6. All the communions, prayers and good works of the Sisters and of the poor, shall be offered to God to obtain His blessing on both the retreat and the pastoral visit.

7. By virtue of an Indult of the Sovereign Pontiff, dated the twentieth day of the month of

June, eighteen hundred and sixty-two, we grant a plenary indulgence to all, who being contrite, and having confessed their sins and received Holy Communion, will pray with piety in the church of the Providence for the propagation of the Faith, and according to the intentions of our Holy Father, the Pope.

8. We shall regulate, during its progress, all other exercises of the visit and also the time and manner of its closing.

The present Letter shall be read in Chapter as soon as possible after its reception, and then be filed away among the archives of the Community.

Given at our Episcopal Palace, the twelfth day of the month of March of the year eighteen hundred and sixty-six, under our sign and seal and the countersign of our secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

By Monseigneur

J. O. Paré, Canon, Secretary.

March 14.—Opening of the pastoral visit and of the retreat. Monseigneur Bourget presides at the exercises.

March 22.— On the eve of the renovation of the vows which closes the retreat, Monseigneur Bourget exhorts the Sisters to prove their lively gratitude to Our Lady of

Seven Dolors for the visible protection their August Patroness has bestowed upon the Community since its foundation twenty-three years ago. Our devoted founder reminds us that our Institute must continue to maintain and expand itself by laying its foundations now and forever beside our Mother Mary on Calvary. As the spiritual bouquet of his touching conference, we cull the following thought:

«Sisters, you will have the whole of Eternity to enjoy yourselves with Our Lord. Do make good use then, of the present life, to compassionate His sufferings and the sorrows of your afflicted Mother.»

April 6.— Close of the canonical visit. During this visit, Mgr. Bourget and the Counselors, in view of the approaching elections, occupied themselves with the revision of the Constitutions, the compiling of the Customary, and the planning of the erection of a Generalate.

April 18.— Death of Miss Therese Berthelet at the age of eighty-two years. She had been a boarder at the Providence Asylum for the past twelve years, and had been admitted to the Third Order of the Servites in 1862. Miss Berthelet was always a signal benefactress of the Community.

August 4.— Monseigneur Bourget solemnly presides at the ceremony of the Exposition of the Holy Relics in the Chapel of the Asylum. He addresses the Community as follows:

I permit you, my dear Daughters, to have the Exposition of the Holy Relics, so that from the venerated remains of the friends of God ex-

posed for your veneration, you may draw the wisdom and inspiration you need. Go, therefore, and expand your hearts in their presence; lay before them your sorrows and your joys, your trials and your vexations. They will comfort and strengthen you.

August 6.— Establishment of the Generalate. The same day, Monseigneur Bourget, in presence of the Very Reverend Canon M. Moreau, Ecclesiastical Superior, and of Father Chabot, Chaplain, presides at the elections which result as follows: Sister Philomena, Superior General; Sisters Caron, Amable, Mary of the Holy Ghost, Assistants General; Sister Mary of Providence, Secretary General; Sister Theresa of Jesus, Treasurer General.

September 14.— The Sister Foundresses of Kingston leave to the diocesan professed Sisters, whom they have formed, the entire direction of the establishment in their city, and return to the Mother House. (1)

October 21.— With the kind authorization of Mgr. Bourget, a collection is taken up in all the churches of Montreal for the Oregon Missions.

November 7.— Departure of the Superior General, Mother Philomena, for Oregon. Five new missionary recruits accompany her. This is the first regular visit ever made in the far distant houses.

(1) See Dec. 13, 1861, p. 294.

CHAPTER XXIX.

POVERTY OF THE INSTITUTE.— ADDRESS OF MONSEIGNEUR BOURGET TO THE LADIES OF CHARITY.— HIS LORDSHIP ORGANIZES SUBSCRIPTIONS IN FAVOR OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.— THE CONSTITUTIONS ARE SENT TO ROME.— OFFERING OF A CASSOCK TO HIS HOLINESS, PIUS IX.— DECREE OF APPROBATION OF THE INSTITUTE. — APOSTOLIC BLESSING.— CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES CONCERNING THE TRIDUUM OF PRAYERS PRESCRIBED BY THE SOVEREIGN PONTIFF.

1867.

February 11.— At an assembly held in the rooms of the Generalate, Monseigneur proposes a plan to help the Institute whose finances are in a very precarious condition. The devoted prelate takes upon himself the task of preparing the public for the collection to be taken up in our favor, and he encourages the Sisters by these beautiful words:

« Have no fear, my dear Daughters, on account of your poverty; provided you are always faithful to your holy Rules, God will be ever ready to assist you. Does not the past confirm you in this belief? Carry on your work and trust in Providence. Be regular and fervent and God will do the rest. »

February 18.— Mgr. Bourget assembles the Ladies of Charity to organize, in union with them, subscriptions in favor of the Providence Asylum. His Lordship addresses them most eloquently as follows:

Address of the Bishop of Montreal to the Ladies of Charity.

Ladies: We have worked together for the past twenty-six years in the interests of charity for the establishment and support of the *Providence Asylum.* For it was, in 1841, at our first meeting, that I made an appeal to your kind hearts in favor of the aged and infirm women whom a pious widow had adopted. Her name is now held in benediction because of its association with the numerous works of benevolence flourishing to-day in our midst.

After a quarter of a century of united efforts for the success of our enterprise, it is but right and just that we stop a moment to consider, in a special meeting like the present, said good work in its humble beginnings, in its wonderful development, in its present means of subsistence, and in the immense amount of good it is destined to accomplish in the future. Under these four points of view, Ladies, does the Providence Asylum present itself to-day for our consideration.

As is well known to all the world, but to none better than yourselves, Ladies, *the Providence Asylum had a very humble beginning.* To realize this truth more effectively, we must go back to the very cradle of the work, even as far

back as 1827. In that year of grace there passed to his eternal reward a charitable fellow-citizen, Mr. Gamelin. In making his young widow the legatee of his modest fortune, he also bequeathed to her the care of a poor idiot whom he had tenderly sheltered in his own home, like a precious treasure, for many years.

Truly charitable hearts know and are attracted to one another; a very striking proof of this is manifest in the happy union of these two spouses, and in the fruits of charity brought forth by them. The young widow received her living legacy with the greatest happiness, and from that moment devoted herself to his welfare with all the ardor of loving charity. Very soon, her home became the refuge for the most abandoned and afflicted widows.... She refused many excellent offers of marriage, for the reason that she wished to be perfectly free to help her chosen friends and to relieve their pressing wants.

This most admirable woman was gifted with a heart too broad and too compassionate for the woes of others, for her modest resources to longer withstand the numerous demands, or to stem the flow of her ever increasing bounty. By making full use of her wonderful talent of prevailing upon others with hearts as generous as her own, to come to her assistance, she was enabled, not-

withstanding her slender income, to undertake and to bring to a successful issue so many and such grand works.

From the very first days of foundation, a brave young girl bound herself inseparably to Madam Gamelin's little asylum for aged and infirm women, and she became her devoted companion. But help and assistance of all kinds were required. Happily, Madam Gamelin knew how to win the confidence, affection and esteem of the best families in the city in favor of her dear poor and to their profit. She made frequent raids upon their wardrobes, appropriating what cast-off clothing, linen, etc., she needed for the poor suffering members of Our Lord Jesus Christ; and all this she did with that wonderful graciousness and affabilility which so charmingly distinguished her. She also possessed the secret of loosing the purse-strings of her friends for help to feed, clothe, and shelter her dear old women and the other poor whom she undertook to care for.

Soon, an association was formed among her friends, and each member assumed the duty of paying a small sum regularly for the maintenance of one of her poor protégées. In a short while, the number of poor increased so rapidly that the modest refuge became too small. Then Madam Gamelin made an appeal to the generous

heart of a wealthy citizen, (1) who willingly donated a more commodious dwelling for her purpose. This house, at one time in its history, a place of ill-fame and disorder, now becomes an asylum of charity and the birthplace of a new community.

So well did Madam Gamelin know how to turn everything to the profit of her dear poor, that people said: *It does not cost us at all to give to Madam Gamelin because she makes the best use of everything we give her.* Her friends were even amused to see her going through their wardrobes and linen presses. When at her pressing invitation, they went to visit her refuge, so touched were their hearts at the sight of her poor that they never left her without shedding tears of compassion, and leaving some substantial gift. Nor were her charitable activities forgotten in the dark evil days of 1837-38, when she went about visiting the prisons of the city where so many of our brave countrymen were kept in durance vile. Everywhere the charity and devotedness of that valiant woman were extolled, and all were happy to prove their gratitude in return for the consolations and comforts she secured the political prisoners and their grief-stricken families, during those troubled times.

(1) M. Olivier Berthelet.

Wonderful development of the Providence Asylum. In order to form some idea of this development, Ladies, we must hark back to the year 1841. Your association, already in active operation at that period, was incorporated on the eighteenth day of September that same year. The Bishop gave it an auxiliary in the form of a new Community to be known as the *Sisters of Providence.* From that moment, the Ladies of Charity and the Sisters of Providence became associates in Canada, even as in France, Saint Vincent de Paul had associated the Ladies and the Daughters of Charity. Many and strong were the links that bound them; they assembled frequently; every Monday they held a weekly reunion. All assisted at Holy Mass offered with great solemnity, heard an instruction and had Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Then followed conferences wherein improved methods for the relief of the poor were discussed.

It very soon became apparent to all that the *Yellow House*, although quite spacious, had become too small for the needs of the many aged and infirm poor who presented themselves daily to Madam Gamelin and her associates. Every one set courageously to work, and on the tenth day of May, 1842, the foundation was laid for the present chapel and main building of the Providence Asylum. A subscription list was

opened and the Ladies collected nearly four thousand dollars. With this substantial encouragement and a few loans, the building was pushed rapidly ahead. Another collection was necessary, however, and this time it was taken up by the Bishop (1) in January and February of 1843. In spite of hard times, the sum of four thousand dollars was realized. By the 29th of March 1844, everything in the new chapel was ready for the profession of the seven first Sisters of Providence.

But the new building could no longer suffice the young community and its poor people; so, an annex, one hundred feet long by twenty-eight wide was added. Heavy and considerable loans had to be made at this time. Finally the kind-hearted citizen mentioned above, seeing the crowded condition of the house, came to its rescue, in 1859, by building a second annex, one hundred and five feet in length by fifty-five in breadth at a cost of four thousand dollars. Miss Therese Berthelet, his sister, who like him lived for the poor only, contributed no small share to the funds required for the said construction.

The material development of the Providence Asylum also brings to our notice the rapid increase in its personnel, of which, Ladies, I shall now speak.

(1) Mgr. Bourget.

Since the 29th of March, 1844, date of the first profession, two hundred and eighteen Sisters have made their vows; thirty-six have died, and one hundred and eighty-two are living. Of this number, fifty-eight reside at the Mother House, and one hundred and twenty-four in the other houses. The new community has been able to found sixteen establishments in the diocese of Montreal, and thirteen elsewhere. Of these latter, some had to be closed on account of varying circumstances.

This wonderful growth in the personnel, explains the rapid increase of the works on all sides; these I shall sketch very briefly.

1. *Hospice St. Joseph.* It was founded for the purpose of offering a suitable place of retirement for the clergy who had become toil-worn, aged, and ill, in the exercise of their sacred ministry; and where they could meditate in peace and solitude upon the eternal years. Eighteen intrepid veterans of the sanctuary have died there, and now repose in the Bosom of God.

2. *Rooms for Lady Boarders.* These were opened for married or single women for whom the world no longer has any attraction, and who desire to withdraw from it altogether. They wish to enjoy more fully the pure delights which religion offers them in its churches and oratories, by its festivals

and religious ceremonies, its sacred psalmodies and its different solemnities. Nineteen of the number admitted have breathed forth their souls into the hands of their Creator, under the loving care of the good Sisters.

3. *City Orphanage.* This was opened in 1844, and was the fruit of the beautiful Month of May. Since the opening day, fourteen hundred orphan girls have passed through its portals, learning their religious duties and how to make an honest living for themselves.

4. *Day School.* St. James Day School was founded in 1851. From that date, three thousand six hundred and fifty-eight poor children have received an education suitable to their state in life.

5. *School for the Deaf Mutes.* Its beginning dates from February, 1851, and since then, it has undergone many transitions. It is now permanently located at the Coteau Barron through the liberality of one of our generous citizens, Mr. C. S. Cherrier. He has donated a magnificent piece of ground where the buildings for this excellent work are well under way. Eighty-four children are presently under instruction, while one hundred and thirty have passed through the school since its foundation.

6. *Distribution of Alms.* The Seminary confides to the Sisters of Providence the task of distributing its alms to the poor in the eastern section of the city; five hundred and ninety families come to them for provisions of all kinds. During the winter season, soup is made and given daily to the poor. Besides this, the Providence Asylum feeds approximately four thousand eight hundred poor transients the year round.

7. *Dispensary.* Over and above the food required for sustenance as already mentioned, there is a *Dispensary* at the Asylum which contains the medicines the poor may require. Doctors from the Montreal School of Medicine and Surgery are in charge. Other Doctors, selected by them, visit the poor in illness. Their prescriptions, numbering ten thousand five hundred and seventy-seven, are compounded and distributed by the Sisters in charge of the drug department. About five thousand and seventy persons are annually benefitted by this service of charity.

8. *Night watches and visits to the poor in their homes.* This is the principal end of the Institute of the Sisters of Providence. (1) In con-

(1) The definitively approved text of the Constitutions determines as follows the end of our Community with regard to the Works of Mercy : *The secondary and specific end of the Institute is to serve Our Lord Jesus Christ in the person of the poor, the sick and the infirm; and, in case the Ordinary should judge it necessary, to impart a christian education to the youth of their own sex.*

formity to this, they visit the prisoners regularly, and more especially when there is to be a public execution of a condemned person; likewise, the patients at the General Hospital, principally in times of epidemics, cholera and frightful accidents. Not a year has passed in which they have not visited the poor and the sick in their homes, making a record of four hundred night watches, and fifteen thousand eight hundred and sixty-five visits. An exact account of all the works performed by the Community is carefully kept.

9. *Wards for the Aged and Infirm Women.* The care of the most unfortunate and abandoned widows has been from the very beginning the work nearest and dearest to the heart of the Foundress Mother, and her Daughters have inherited her tender charity for those poor old women. From the year 1843 to the present day, the Sisters have admitted three hundred and fifteen aged women; of this number, one hundred and sixty-four have died. Unceasingly, by day and by night, these good old people pray for the Sisters and their benefactors, and they are constantly in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament.

10. *Various Schools.* In the different schools of the Mother House, and elsewhere in the missions, the Community educates, yearly, sixteen hundred and five children; takes care of one

hundred and eleven poor people, and keeps three hundred and three orphan boys and girls. It is to be remarked that they have three prosperous foundations in far away Oregon and Montana.

11. *A Primary School.* This was founded in the Quebec Suburb, on January 19, 1860. The number of little children who have daily frequented the school since then, totals fourteen hundred and eighty.

12. *Members of the Third Order of Servites.* These are pious young women who consecrate themselves to the works of charity as practised by the Sisters of Providence, and who help them in all their labors. They receive no other reward than their frugal fare and the sombre garb of the Third Order of the Servites. They render the Sisters great service.

13. *Résumé of all the works performed by the Sisters of Providence, outside of Montreal, since their establishment.* I shall simply give you the statistics which follow: 331 aged men; 775 aged women; 1697 orphan boys; 2986 orphan girls; 76 insane patients; 3602 boarding pupils; 10,469 day pupils; 86 secular boarders; 469 patients; 5992 visits in the homes; 46 ecclesiastical boarders in Oregon. These figures suffice, Ladies, to give you a clear outline of the works accomplished by the Community you have adopted to

help you to make the Providence Asylum a useful auxiliary in spreading abroad the sweet odor of charity.

Present means of subsistence for the Providence Asylum. It is but right and just, Ladies, that you should be informed of the different resources your *Asylum* has in hand to carry on so many extensive works. I must acknowledge, in all sincerity, that I am unequal to the task. For it is a mystery to me how this house has been able to exist to the present time, and still maintain so many and such wonderful works. Viewing it all in the light of faith, I am forced to exclaim: *Let worldlings who believe not in Providence come and see for themselves how this house manages to subsist; and they will be lost in admiration at the wonderful care Divine Providence takes of the poor and of those consecrated to their service.*

We read in Holy Writ how, as promised by the prophet, the bread and oil failed not the widow of Sarepta, and how they were multiplied daily in an invisible manner all the time the famine lasted; and in another place how the mysterious oil flowed as long as there were vessels to receive it. We also see, in the history of the Church, how for sixty years, Providence sent a raven with half a loaf of bread, daily, to Saint Paul the Hermit for his sustenance; and how,

when the great St. Anthony came to visit him, the same providential bird brought a whole loaf. I love to contemplate those two great servants of God, humbly sitting by the fountain, and partaking with joy and simplicity of heart, the frugal, but most excellent fare sent them by the kindness of the Heavenly Father. I love, too, to listen to their hymn of thanksgiving for the loving care of Divine Providence who multiplies the supply of food necessary for life as the servants of God increase in number.

And now, Ladies, entering as much as we may into the adorable designs of Providence, it will not be difficult to convince ourselves, that marvels none the less surprising, are enacted before our own eyes. For, Divine Providence, making use of human agencies, accomplishes its ends with as much power and goodness to-day as in the olden time. The following estimate will enable you to judge for yourselves.

Divine Providence has favored the Asylum in ways most wonderful since its beginning in 1841, for the achievement of the works enumerated above. The two general collections amounted to about $8000. The first four bazaars netted $2960. The yearly fairs held since, have yielded, according to the time, from $240 to $600. The Government allows $1120 per annum. The Savings Bank

contributes about $400 annually. Then there are the alms received from the public at large, a few legacies from individuals, the income from the boarders, and whatever pay the Sisters receive for the little work they may be able to do, outside their regular duties towards the poor and the sick. But how can all these resources even, supply so many needs? Ordinarily speaking, the receipts for the year amount to $18,240, and the expenses to $19,040, leaving a deficit of $800. According to human reasoning, such a yearly deficit should make us fear lest the Asylum fail to meet its obligations, and be crushed beneath the weight of its manifold undertakings.

Immense results for good the Asylum for Aged and Infirm Women may have. Notwithstanding all this, Ladies, your Asylum is destined to bring forth blessed fruits of charity. We are confirmed in our opinion when we reflect upon the astonishing amount of good accomplished in so short a time and with the slender resources in hand. The works enumerated above have only just begun, and it is easily foreseen that at no very distant period, they will be perfected by experience and fully developed by the needs of the times. With an ever increasing population, our city is making giant strides forward: this very fact shows a fearful perspective of appalling miseries. The establishments of charity must, of necessity, be prepared to cope with

these miseries from the outset, if we do not want to be overwhelmed by their enormity, or reduced to the bitterness of seeing vice in all its hideousness, boldly parading before our eyes. It is only by multiplying visits to the homes located in the poorest districts, that we can stem the tide of demoralization and prevent it from submerging the lower classes.

By providing our Sisters of Charity with the necessary resources now, Ladies, they will be enabled to consecrate their entire lives to the sacred ministry of charity, and you will thus attain most admirable results. For relieved of all worldly care, you will see them going from house to house by day, teaching the living how to conduct themselves; by night, helping the dying to die the death of the just. In visiting the homes they will in truth exercise all the works of mercy: they will feed the hungry, warm the chill, clothe the naked, nurse the sick, comfort the sorrowing, find shelter for the strangers, instruct the ignorant, correct the sinner with mildness, assist the dying to receive well the last sacraments, gather in the orphans to shield them from the danger of losing their faith in godless schools, protect young girls from vicious ways by showing them how to make an honest living, and procuring employment for families exposed to the ravages of idleness and other demoralizing influences.

You no doubt realize, Ladies, how potent such active charity must become in the hands of religious, and what sway they must have over the most hardened hearts. Fortunately, we possess several Communities already prepared, in a measure, to tender eminent service to our poor. But I must again call your attention to the fact, that said Communities should, of necessity, be provided with sufficient means to enable them to devote their whole time to the service of the poor, without having to be solicitous about their personal maintenance or being compelled to earn their own living....

But here I must pause, Ladies, to speak to you of the special aim of our meeting to-day. There is question of making a third appeal to the general public; more especially to persons of wealth, in order to obtain the help so absolutely necessary at the present time, as you shall see.

The Providence Asylum is actually burdened with an interest-bearing debt of $20,000. It is easily understood in what manner such an indebtedness has accrued, when we consider the constructions required for so many pressing needs in the course of its twenty-six years of existence.

Again, reflecting upon the insufficiency of revenue, we may readily infer how the additional sum

of $1200 per annum for interest makes heavy inroads upon the meagre resources of a poverty-stricken Community.

I deemed it wise to convoke an assembly today, Ladies, to advise with you on the ways and means we should take to liquidate, in some way, the immense debt lying so heavily upon this Asylum so dear to your hearts.

Until we can devise something better, I propose the following: Make out a list of the persons whom you know to be kindly disposed towards this work of charity, and then divide the debt into equal portions.

For example: You could secure one thousand subscribers to sign for $20: or five hundred at $40: or two hundred and fifty at $80: and, if only one hundred and twenty-five, at $160, each. There is no doubt that many charitably disposed citizens would subscribe their names to several series of lists, at your request, contributing willingly $40, $80, and even more. By the very urgency of the matter, every one will understand that this is no ordinary affair proposed to the public-spirited people of Montreal.

The Sisters take upon themselves to conduct this third collection, since the first was made by you, Ladies, and the second by your Bishop. The only asset the Foundress Mother left her Daugh-

ters for the continuance and development of her works, and the one she employed so successfully when laying the foundations of the Institute, is the one of soliciting alms from door to door. I feel certain that the Daughters will be fully as welcome to-day as their Mother was in days gone by.

That venerable Mother will animate her Daughters with her own good spirit so that they may impart to the rich the lessons learned of her, and the necessity of making sacrifices and enduring privations for the purpose of giving alms more abundantly. Neither will that good Mother fail to pray for the success of the cause; from her home on high, she undoubtedly contributes powerfully to the prosperity of the *Asylum* which she founded at the cost of so many heroic sacrifices. Indeed, Ladies, we are most firmly convinced that the tomb which encloses her mortal remains, spreads abroad in our diocese, and above all on your charitable association, the sweet odor of that Christ-like charity which inspired her in life, and which she practised in all its perfection in your very midst. You will run after the odor of that sweet perfume, while laboring to strengthen more and more and to render permanent the foundation eternally sacred to her memory.

Our proposed collection will certainly meet with unqualified success, because the Father of Mercies,—the Father of the Poor—always blesses

whatever is done for the relief of the suffering members of His Divine Son.

Again, our new collection must succeed, because it is under the protection of the Mother of Mercy; and from high Heaven where she is all-powerful, she helps those who devote themselves, even as you Ladies are doing, to the solace of human misery. She loves the poor, because she saw her Divine Son in the most abject poverty, and because like Him, she lived and died poor.

Productive of great results will this third collection be on account of the numbers of poor who are praying for the realization of our project. Naught has more sway over the Heart of a God so good, than the cry of the poor, banished children of Eve, who send up their sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.

Daily prayers are said for benefactors. Moreover, the nineteenth day of November each year, is wholly consecrated to prayers of thanksgiving and of gratitude for all who come to their assistance. Wherever a House of Providence stands, this feast is observed. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered, and the Sisters with their poor, make a general communion for the intentions of all their benefactors; so beautiful a day appropriately closes with solemn Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Behold, Ladies, the points upon which I desired to address you to-day. I have committed them to writing so that they may be preserved and re-read when necessary, long after I shall have passed from among you. It is only natural that I should carry with me beyond the grave, the hope that the good works to which I have had the honor of contributing, may continue to prosper and thrive indefinitely under the protection of public charity. My last wish on earth will be, that God may bless both the works and the people so entirely devoted to their success.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

March 7.— The Constitutions of our Institute are sent to Rome in care of the Very Reverend A. F. Truteau, V. G., to be submitted to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

May 11.-- The Community sends His Holiness, Pius IX, a cassock made by our Sisters according to a pattern brought from Rome by the Reverend Ep. Hudon. The offering is accompanied with a petition, begging the blessing of our Holy Father.

June 7.— Approbation of the Institute by His Holiness, Pius IX.

DECREE OF APPROBATION.

The pious Institute of the Sisters, known as the Daughters of Charity and Servants of the Poor, had its birth in the City of Montreal, Canada, in the year 1844. In

the month of April, 1860, the Holy See bestowed upon it a Decree of Praise, and thereby encouraged the Sisters to apply themselves with greater zeal to the care of the infirm and the poor; that being the principal end they have in view, whilst working at the same time to their own sanctification. They make, moreover, the three simple vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, and they are under the direction of a Superior General. Recently, the Bishop of Montreal, through his Vicar General visiting in Rome, again submitted to the judgment of the Holy See the Constitutions of this pious Institute, earnestly beseeching meanwhile Our Holy Father Pope Pius IX to graciously accord greater favors to the said pious society. In an audience granted to the undersigned Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, on the seventh day of June, 1867, His Holiness, after taking into consideration the petition of the said Bishop, has approved and confirmed the said pious Institute as a Congregation of simple vows under the government of a Superior General, and the jurisdiction of the Ordinaries, and according to the regulations of the Holy Apostolic Canons and Constitutions which they approve and confirm by the tenor of the present decree; They defer their approval of the Constitutions to a more favorable time, or until they shall have received fuller explanations as requested.

Given at Rome at the Secretariate of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, this twenty-second day of June, 1867.

(Signed) A. Card. Quaglia, Prefect.

(Countersigned) S. Svegliati, Secretary.

To Sister Mary of the Holy Ghost. (1)

Montreal, August 29, 1867.

Dear Daughter:

The Holy See has just issued a new decree, approving your Constitutions saving a few corrections to be made. On the arrival of the authentic documents concerning this approbation, we shall make it the occasion of a solemn festival. Meanwhile, let each one of you rejoice in your heart and exalt Divine Providence.

I bless every one and remain always

Your most humble and devoted servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

October 5.— Mgr. Bourget approves the "Meditations of Retreat."

We have seen and approved the *Meditations for the Monthly Retreats*, and we recommend their use to the Sisters of Charity. They will find therein great and useful lessons for their rapid advancement in the paths of perfection, and how to prepare themselves for the terrible passage from time to eternity....

Given at the Providence Asylum, Oct. 5, 1867.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

(1) 3d Assistant General.

October 19.— Mgr. Bourget transmits to us the Apostolic Blessing granted by His Holiness, Pius IX. At the bottom of the petition presented to him, May 11 last, the Holy Father wrote these words: *Benedicat vos et custodiat. Dies 7 Septembris 1867.*

December 8.— On the occasion of a *Triduum* prescribed by the Sovereign Pontiff for the triumph of the Church, Mgr. Bourget addressed a pastoral letter to the different religious Communities. From it we make the following extracts:

..... A great conflict is now raging..... You are not strangers to it. The means available to you to serve in this great and noble cause are prayer, devotedness and sacrifice, and these are certainly, most efficacious helps.

Prayer. It should be animated with all the sentiments which filial piety, religious affection and sacred attachment inspire towards the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the successor of Peter, the common Father of the Faithful who is the firm, unshaken foundation stone of the Church....

That you may be continually engaged in prayer, it suffices that the needs, the agonies, the dangers of Our Holy Father be always present to your mind night and day: that your memory, your understanding and your heart be filled with these thoughts at meditation, at communion, and in each of your actions. This continual preoccupation with the needs, the dangers, the

sorrows of the Holy Father, can but fill your minds with holy thoughts and your hearts with pious sentiments; it will enkindle in your souls the fire of divine love and attachment to the Celestial Spouse; because to love the Pope is to love Jesus Christ, just as hearkening to the Pope is hearkening to Jesus Christ.

To attain such an end, you are not required to apply yourselves to extraordinary exercises of devotion. You are simply to pay a special attention to the duties you have to accomplish from morning till night, and from night till morning, so that you may perform them with a more lively faith, a greater confidence, a more ardent charity and a deeper humility; and all this, without disturbing in any way the common practices or the ordinary intentions. It would be advisable, however, that each day, each week, each month, one of your exercises be consecrated especially to prayers for the Pope.

Devotedness. When we refuse God none of the sacrifices He asks of us, He, on His part, can refuse us nothing we ask of Him in the order of His Providence. What a powerful incentive we have then for being generous towards a God, who will not let Himself be outdone in generosity, and who repays a hundredfold even in this world. It behooves us, at the present time, to implore

the Divine Mercy for graces for the whole Church, upon which depends the salvation of many souls and the happiness of the entire world..... If great sacrifices and numberless acts of devotedness are performed on earth, Heaven will pour forth, like sweetest honey, the abundance of its benefits, its consolations, and its delights.

By uniting in the concert of prayer rising heavenward from all quarters of the universe, you will not fail to contribute your generous mite of true religious devotedness. In so doing, you will assist in healing the mortal wounds that impiety, rebellion, human pride, indifference to all that pertains to religion, and sensuality, have inflicted upon the different classes of society.... For the cure of this great patient,—the whole human race,—a wonderful Physician, with specific remedies is required; one who will pour the soothing balm of healing and peace divine upon its torn and bleeding wounds. That renowned Physician is none other than the gentle Savior, who appeared amongst men, full of grace and sweetness and goodness, instructing them, that, denying ungodliness and worldly desires, they should live soberly, and justly, and godly in this world. (Tit. 2)....

Place your prayerful exercises in opposition to the powers of darkness, with the avowed inten-

tion of stemming the tide of impiety which is increasing at such an alarming rate by the spread of irreligious and immoral books, insidious discourses and impious periodicals. Be submissive in heart and soul to your holy Constitutions and to your superiors, with the intention of quelling the spirit of revolt, insubordination and contempt of the sacred laws of the Church. Generously renounce your own will and judgment to combat the pride of human reason which goes so far as to think and to style itself the equal of the Divine. Walk with giant strides in the paths of fervor, to uproot that deadly indifference which aims to make the world believe that all religions are alike and equally good: that all will be saved, provided they are honest according to the world's code of honesty. Fight against sensuality by interior and exterior mortification, to purify bodies and souls mortally infected with the poison of impurity. Sacrifice all things that peace and union may reign, and crush forever those fatal discords, quarrels, and animosities that cause such riot and disorder everywhere.

Sacrifice. Sacrifice is the most beautiful fruit of true devotedness. At the present time, the pontifical cause incites noble and courageous souls to make sacrifices of every kind; sacrifice of the land of one's birth always so dear to the heart;

sacrifice of cherished friends and kindred; sacrifice of all personal comfort and ease to which we cling so fondly ; the willing sacrifice of honors and renown ; sacrifice of the goods of fortune which must be trampled under foot whilst we labor to acquire the goods of heaven ; sacrifice, in fine, of all that we hold most dear in the world. These are the distinguishing characteristics of those who enroll themselves under the Pontifical colors, or of those who favor this extraordinary act of devotedness.

You will be encouraged then, to make your daily sacrifices well, by the thought that you are thereby contributing powerfully to create, develop, and strengthen in the holy Church the numberless sacrifices made in behalf of the Pontifical cause. You will, likewise, wish to add your mite to the contributions of the entire world, and to let the tiny streamlets of your charity flow into the vast ocean of voluntary offerings that are to enrich the Pontifical Treasury. Should your pecuniary resources prevent you from offering as much as your hearts prompt you to lay at the feet of His Holiness, perhaps the work of your hands and that of your pupils, your orphans, and your aged people may supply the deficit by making the uniforms for the Canadian Zouaves who will soon enroll themselves as representatives of our country in the pontifical army.

CHAPTER XXX.

DEPARTURE OF THE PONTIFICAL ZOUAVES.— LETTER FROM MGR. BOURGET ON THIS SUBJECT.— TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE INSTITUTE.— ADDRESS BY OUR VENERATED FOUNDER.— PLENARY INDULGENCE GRANTED BY THE HOLY SEE.— CIRCULAR LETTER OF MGR. BOURGET, ANNOUNCING THE PASTORAL VISIT.

1868.

February 19.— The Canadian Pontifical Zouaves leave for Rome. At the request of Mgr. Bourget, our Sisters gladly contribute to the good work by helping to make the uniforms for the brave defenders of the Pope.

February 22.— Monseigneur addresses the following letter concerning the occasion to the Sisters of the Providence Asylum.

TO THE SISTERS OF THE PROVIDENCE ASYLUM.

Montreal, February 22, 1868.

My dear Daughters:

As was expected of you, you associated yourselves most cordially with the beautiful organization of the Canadian Zouaves. The touching emotions they everywhere awakened, will not soon be forgotten.

There is question now of making this movement productive of permanent fruit, so that the young soldiers of the Pope may conduct themselves so becomingly at home and elsewhere, that they may be, in reality, an honor to their country, and a credit to their religion. To be such, they must be truly Christian heroes.

I invite all the faithful of the diocese to pray fervently and earnestly for this intention. For, as the movement was inspired by prayer, so by prayer must it now be sustained. Naturally, you will all join in this grand harmonious concert of prayer for the success of the expedition. For this intention, it will suffice to offer some of your ordinary exercises, such as Masses, communions, and good works, performed on certain days, the litany of the Blessed Virgin, if it is sung on Saturdays in your oratories or before one or other of your pious Madonnas.

For your better information concerning the principal things done in the diocese for the encouragement of the Zouaves, I forward with the present letter, papers and leaflets containing the address made the Zouaves before their embarkation.

I avail myself of this opportunity to thank you for your sacrifice of time and labor in helping to clothe the soldiers who have gone to defend

the Church and the Pope. They are aware that it was their Sisters in religion who made their military uniforms, and, no doubt, this fact will prove a strong incentive to them to do us honor by their edifying behavior.

I recommend myself to your fervent prayers while blessing you, and I subscribe myself very sincerely the most humble and devoted servant of each and every one of you.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

March 16, Monday.—Opening of the exercises of the annual retreat, advanced this year, so that it may end on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first taking of the Holy Habit. On that day, Mgr. Bourget delivered the following sermon.

SERMON

Delivered by Mgr. Bourget on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the Institute.

My dear Daughters:

There are, as you know, days on which the Lord in His infinite goodness is pleased to pour upon us His graces in greater abundance. Days of recollection, when we meditate more seriously on the years that are passed

and gone; days of mercy, when we are more impressed by our infidelities; days of sorrow and compunction, when the tears of penance flow more abundantly; days of light, when the eternal truths shine with greater brilliancy; days of joy, when all the troubles of life are forgotten, and when, renewed in fervor, we tread with firmer step the pathway of perfection.

One of such beautiful days is about to dawn for you, and your hearts are filled with liveliest emotion. The approaching event recalls the most touching souvenirs. This twenty-fifth anniversary unrolls before your eyes, all the happenings of a quarter of a century in the cradle of your Institute. It is a day of jubilee falling on the great day of the Incarnation when a God became Man, and a Virgin became a Mother, but the Mother of a God! Surely the twenty-fifth of March is for you a chosen day, a day of great blessings, a day on which all hearts should expand with joy, the purest and holiest! Well have you understood the grandeur of this day, my very dear Daughters, since you hastened to solicit as a priceless privilege, the permission to celebrate in a solemnly befitting manner, the day of days, so especially blessed and so truly dear to the heart of your little religious family. We have implored the Holy See to make this day ever memorable for you, by raising it to the rank of

days which the Church consecrates to God as days of jubilee, and on which she opens her treasures for the benefit of her children.

The twenty-fifth of March then, will always remind you of that happy day, twenty-five years ago, when your first Sisters, bidding farewell to all they held most dear on earth, laid the foundations of this humble Company by putting off the habiliments of the world and clothing themselves in the modest garb of religion. It is to prepare yourselves worthily to celebrate this grand day, that you will consecrate all the exercises of your annual retreat which begins to-day. May this sermon which we now address you, our very dear Daughters, be like unto the resounding tones of the sacred trumpets, heralding to all the holy people the dawn of the Year of the *Jubilee*! ! And how truly do we bless the divine Mercy for prolonging our days that we might witness this twenty-fifth anniversary! We shall profit of this epoch to note the progress your Institute has made during its first quarter century of existence, and to foresee what it shall be able to effect in future, beneath the sheltering arm of Divine Providence, that Providence which surely will not fail to complete what it has so auspiciously begun. Let us therefore cast a glance over the years that are past and gone, ere we consider the future of your infant Community.

Everything in your Institution, my very dear Daughters, bears the seal of Divine Providence. In your history, the Hand of the Lord is everywhere revealed. He it is, who brings forth all things out of nothing, and who chooses what is weakest and most contemptible in the eyes of the world to confound the designs of human wisdom... To accomplish His projects so merciful and loving, He has chosen a few women without wealth or education, without influence or importance in our city, to make of them the foundation stones of this new spiritual edifice, destined for the relief of every corporal and spiritual misery.

From high Heaven, the Father of the Poor has cast a merciful regard upon a very modest asylum hiding a rich treasure: a few poor, aged, and infirm women sheltered beneath an humble roof, lodged and fed by a devoted widow whose charity is proverbial, and cared for by a lowly handmaiden, who first bore the name, which has since become for you symbolic. Into this tiny field there fell from the Hand of the Sower, a seed, that in the course of twenty-five years has grown into a wide-spreading tree, whose branches to-day extend westward beyond the Rocky Mountains, and southward to far-off Chilean lands. Nor is all this to be wondered at. In that unpretentious dwelling, were gathered together total decrepitude with all its attendant weaknesses and miseries.

The small number of women assembled therein at the beginning of the year 1840, in their combined ages reached the exact amount of eighteen hundred and forty years. What an excess of labor, weariness and fatigue for Madam Gamelin and Mlle Madeleine Durand, later known as Sister Vincent, was the care of those superannuated beings so sadly bereft of all that makes life dear!

The incense of their arduous sacrifices by day and by night, mounted heavenward as an agreeable odor, rejoicing the heart of God, so good and so merciful; the fragrant aroma of charity which arises from this little corner has diffused itself throughout our city and many far-away places. The seed of devotedness hidden away in fertile soil, and fed by the invigorating sap of sacrifice, has already brought forth fruit to the delight of the great and the small, for our God hearkeneth to the sighs and the longings, to the tears and the lamentations of His Poor!

Very soon afterwards, the Lord breathed His spirit into other hearts, to attract them unto the holy work He would have them accomplish, and to prove once again to mankind in general, that it was He who brought fire from heaven, and that He desired nothing more ardently than to see the whole world enkindled. Sweet and powerful was the divine breathing, and they who

felt it could not resist its gentle influence, no matter how great the obstacles strewn along their way. From far and near they gathered, all strangers to one another, and, by a remarkable coincidence, they met on the day consecrated by the Church to honor the soldier, St. Longinus, who with a spear opened the Heart of Jesus dead upon the cross before the eyes of the Mother of Sorrows. Thus, on entering that obscure little novitiate, a long forward stride was made towards Calvary. And in that fountain of water and blood flowing from the wounded side of our Savior, they were purified from the spirit of the world to which they bade an eternal adieu, and in that sanctuary, opened to all thirsty souls, they made their preparatory retreat for the religious ceremony of their oblation.

On the twenty-fifth day of March, they were ready for their immolation in behalf of the poor; and, as a pledge of their voluntary engagement, they cast aside their worldly dress to clothe themselves in the habit of religion. And here again, another timely incident appears expressly designed by Providence; for it was the anniversary of the day whereon the Son of God descending from heaven in the splendor of the Saints, annihilated Himself, taking the form of a slave, that is, our poor human nature, wherewith He clothed Himself to hide the brightness of His divinity. It was also the

anniversary of the day on which thirty-four years after His Incarnation, He died for love of us upon Mount Calvary, with His Mother standing beneath His cross, plunged in an agony of bitterest woe. The Sisters were therefore initiated into the religious life on the anniversary of the day when the Spouse of Virgins entered into a chaste virgin bosom, and when virginity was implanted upon Calvary and bedewed with the blood of the Son and the tears of the Mother of God.

The cradle of your Community then, is to be found upon the summit of Calvary, which is a mountain of myrrh by its bitterness, and a hill of incense by its agreeable odor. After all this, must we be surprised by the fact that your religious life has been one long, heavy cross made by the continual linking together of pains and sufferings? Engendered to religion on Calvary, you could be naught else, but the daughters of sorrows, whose weeping and mourning like that of the women of Jerusalem, is heard throughout the land.

But the new novices needed a name whereby the world should be informed what they were to religion and what they had to do to attain the end of their institution. Our Lord willed that their title should be altogether significative; for they were from the very first styled, even as you now

are; *Daughters of Charity: Servants of the Poor; Sisters of Providence.* These names are very high and noble in the eyes of faith, and they should urge you constantly to accomplish great things; for as you know, we ought, always endeavor to render ourselves worthy of the names we inherit from those who obtained their title at the cost of untold sacrifices.

The persons who embraced this new religious career had need of constitutions adapted to the manner of life they were to lead, and proper for their direction in the paths of religious perfection. God's most amiable Providence led them by the hand, provided for all their wants, and gave them the means of procuring the *Common Rules* of St. Vincent de Paul. His rules are the precious fruit of the great experience he acquired while directing the admirable Daughters of Charity. They are a master-piece of the highest wisdom and are most evidently drawn from the school of the Holy Ghost. Thus did the man of good works, by that very fact, become their patron, their father, and founder. Verily has he been all this and more for them, and for you likewise, our very dear Daughters; and his name is rightly held in benediction amongst you who possess his spirit of simplicity, humility and charity, so visibly diffused throughout his rules and conferences, all impregnated with the spirit of God.

It was moreover necessary for your first Sisters to have a Superior to govern the newly born Community, also a mistress of novices to form them to the practices of the religious virtues. None on earth could be found to fill that double office; but the Queen of Heaven deigned to assume charge, and under her guidance, the Sisters learned how to tread the road to Calvary, how to prepare themselves to make their vows, and how to employ themselves henceforth in the exercise of the works of charity. Who can ever worthily tell the loving care our Blessed Mother lavished upon the first Sisters of Providence? From that August Mistress did they imbibe the good spirit which they were to transmit to their associates in succeeding generations.

Finally, the new Sisters needed a permanent fund to supply their wants and those of their poor. Divine Providence opened out to them the inexhaustible treasury of its riches, and took upon itself the care of providing for all their wants both corporal and spiritual. Never for a moment has it failed in your regard, and its tenderness towards you has ever been truly maternal; neither shall you ever be able to extol worthily the miracles Divine Providence has effected in your behalf.

It is then under the triple title of *Daughters of Charity*, *Servants of the Poor*, and of *Sisters of*

Providence, in embracing the rules of Saint Vincent de Paul, and under the guidance of Our Lady of Seven Dolors, that your first Sisters laid the foundations of your little society twenty-five years ago. Everything seemed to conspire to crush out its existence in its very cradle, and for the reason that trials have never been wanting, your humble Institute bears the seal of a divine work.

In fact, from its very start, afflictions of all kinds beset your Foundress Sisters; and their first steps in religion had to be taken through briars and thorns. They had to struggle in the interior of their hearts against desolation, fear, disgust, loneliness, discouragement, all of which plunges the soul into an ocean of bitterness. To these interior struggles, so overwhelming in themselves, they had to endure, besides, exterior trials. The bare thought of founding a new Community was looked upon as an extravagance. There was no need for it, cried the world; enough already existed for works of charity. It was downright folly to dream of undertaking such a work without means, without resources, without guarantees. It could not last long, etc. Every one expected to see the Sisters disband in shame and ignominy. Other Communities had difficulty in securing subjects: how could this one expect to increase and prosper? Where raise the funds necessary for construction? How were these deluded Sisters

and their poor old women to subsist? What work could they undertake in such a state of affairs? Thus did the world greet the new-comers; and, judging by human prudence, the world was right. But Divine Providence had its own ends in view; so its work forged ahead with giant strides, as if purposely to confound the vain reckoning of a world always on the alert to censure and to condemn.

These trials are all known to you; for you shared them, more or less, as it pleased the Lord to make you drink of His bitter chalice; for all without exception, you have borne in turn, the burden and the heat of the day in the quarter century just passed.

But these enormous difficulties wore themselves away; those fears of seeing the Community crumble and fall into ruin, vanished like a fleeting shadow. The difficulties besetting the pathway at every turn, disappeared like thick mists before the rising sun. Through almost insurmountable obstacles did Divine Providence lead you. As a beneficent cloud, it protected you by day from the heat of the sun, and as a column of fire, guided you by night, showing you, at all times, the way you had to traverse through the dread wilderness.

Twenty-five years agone, your little Institute was but the tiniest grain of mustard seed. Behold how rapidly it has developed and what abundant fruit it has already brought forth! Numberless charitable associations have been ingrafted onto this tree, young as yet, but daily extending its branches far and wide. The high and mighty ones of earth have accorded you their patronage and loosed for you their purse-strings! And God has truly rewarded them for their bounty towards you. In giving you legal existence, the Government has granted you its moral support. You have thus been enabled to relieve the needs of three hundred and sixty-seven old men, nine hundred and nineteen aged and infirm women, eighteen hundred and fifteen orphan boys, three thousand two hundred and sixty orphan girls, besides giving a Christian education to fifteen thousand nine hundred and nine children.

Above and beyond all else, has Divine Providence shown itself most admirable towards you in inspiring the Vicar of Christ to bless your Constitutions as sanctifying, and your Institute as good and useful to the Church. From that holy benediction and high approbation flow torrents of graces to fertilize the many fields of charity you have to cultivate in the twenty-four establishments you have founded.

That you might suffice for so many works, vocations were greatly multiplied. Two hundred and thirty-seven subjects have become enrolled by making profession among you, embracing your mode of life, and becoming, like you, Servants of the Poor. The forty who have left you for a better world have, ere now we trust, received the reward of their charity, and have become your intercessors with the God of the Poor. You are now one hundred and ninety-seven members, dispersed in twenty existing establishments, where you care for three invalid priests, thirty-six aged men, one hundred and forty-four aged women, one hundred and eighteen orphan boys, two hundred and seventy-four orphan girls, eighteen hundred and thirty-eight pupils, together with the many thousands of poor whom you assist in your depots and dispensaries, your visits in the homes, and your watchings by the bedside of the sick and the dying.

You have passed through terrible trials, our very dear Daughters, during the first quarter of a century. You have surmounted enormous difficulties, struggled against horrible epidemics,—cholera and typhus,—undergone crushing sorrows, and faced overwhelming contradictions. Yet, in spite of all, you have walked with firm, unwavering step toward the goal of your desires; you have not let either weariness or fatigue overcome you

on the way; you have accomplished many and useful works; and, in fine, you have attained unparalelled success. What conclusion must we draw from all this? We must conclude that God has ever been with you, to assist you in all your enterprises, for His greater glory and the greater good of His Poor.

Finally, this rapid backward glance upon the first twenty-five years of your religious career, our very dear Daughters, should make you enter into sentiments of penitence at the sight of your infidelities; of humility, in considering your lowliness and unworthiness; of gratitude, at the remembrance of so many graces; of confidence, at the very thought of all the care God has bestowed upon you; of courage, in recalling all the marvelous means whereby the Lord has caused you to triumph over all the obstacles strewn along your pathway; of devotedness, in animating you to do your very utmost for a God who has done so much for you. The happy fruit of this anniversary should be a renewal of fervor and of generosity for the better performance of the works confided to you by Divine Providence; and assuredly, this point above all others, merits your undivided attention. We shall propose some subjects for your serious reflection in the hope that they may be of assistance to you as you enter upon the second period of your existence, strong,

generous and resolute in your determination to vanquish, if need be, even greater obstacles.

1. Consider yourselves, first and foremost, as *Daughters of Charity*, *Servants of the Poor*, *Sisters of Providence*. Keep to these titles heart and soul, not in words but in deeds: and look upon as secondary only, the offices of teaching and all else that are not the principal end of your Institute.

2. Consequently, as *Daughters of Charity*, you must tenderly love the poor; as *Servants of the Poor*, you must cultivate a sincere veneration for the suffering members of Jesus Christ; as *Sisters of Providence*, you must rely entirely on the help of the Father of Mercies for the maintenance of your Community and the relief of every misery.

3. Prove your love for the poor by thinking of them night and day; by speaking of them at every opportunity with esteem and happiness; by making it your delight to relieve their wants; by applying yourselves gladly to their instruction, and by making use of the thousand and one ways which true charity inspires for their betterment.

4. Should obedience call you to offices which prevent you from coming into immediate contact with the poor, devote as much of your

time as you may on holidays and during vacation to visiting the sick, watching by the dying, laying out the dead, collecting for the poor, etc., and do all this with the view of keeping ever in touch with the noble end of your Institute.

5. In your houses of education, maintain, as far as you may be able, wards for the infirm and the little orphan children; and, in general, let it be your greater happiness rather to care for the poor than to instruct the rich. May it be your highest ambition to be able to count, at the time of your Golden Jubilee, a larger number of the poor and infirm whom you have assisted than of the boarders and day-pupils whom you may have taught in your schools.

6. You must, undoubtedly, render yourselves competent to impart a true and solid education, should you be charged therewith by obedience, so as to form good mothers of families; still, your chief endeavor must be to become good hospitalers, good pharmacists, good visitors of the poor, and good nurses for the sick.... Neglect nothing for the perfection of these various functions in the exercise of charity.

7. Make yourselves agreeable to the rich, but always in the interests of the poor. Visit them occasionally, especially when they are in affliction. You will thus dispose them to be generous

and charitable in favor of your poor, either in remembering them in their last wills or when you go to collect in their homes.

8. Try to obtain, little by little, that generous persons, well disposed in favor of the poor may establish a fund. The interest accruing therefrom could be used for the support of the Sisters, who, in such an event, would have no other occupation than that of working directly for the poor. For it is very much to be desired that as many Sisters as possible be destined exclusively for the care of the poor. Let us hope that Divine Providence which has already done so much for you, will eventually permit the realization of this project.

9. Believe that in consecrating yourselves entirely to the exercise of the works proper to your holy state, your hearts will be filled with joy, the inseparable companion of charity. This joy will chase away all sadness, disgust, weariness, and other desolations, which are the torment of religious souls. With this interior joy, which is one of the most beautiful fruits of the Holy Ghost, your conscience will always be at ease. You will fear sin as you would the demon, but you will not be alarmed by trifles or mere bagatelles. You will pass through the scandals and dangers of the world without trouble because the

Lord is always with you, when employed in the exercise of your good works. Your confessions and communions will be made in peace. All confessors and directors will be alike agreeable to you, because in them you will see Jesus Christ alone. You will be in perfect accord with your superiors and officers, because for you, they represent the august person of the Immaculate Virgin. While applying yourselves to the accomplishment of your duties of charity, you will secure the corporal exercise so necessary for health of body and vigor of constitution.

10. As you see, our very dear Daughters, the work proper to your Institute is the visit of the sick and the care of the poor in their homes. (1) Therefore, let it be borne well in mind, that in taking all the time requisite for these visits, you perform an incalculable amount of good. For by prudence in your dealings, you secure proper family relations and maintain peace in the homes. You instruct the ignorant, correct vices, and suppress scandals. You inculcate industry and economy among the poor, love of work among the fathers and mothers; you strive for Christian education of the children, removal of occasions of sin, frequentation of the sacraments, conversion of great sinners and the return of the impious and the blasphemer to religious

(1) See note page 384.

principles. All this you do, wholly or in part, by the power of virtue and the irresistible influence of charity.

Evidently, you have a beautiful career mapped out for you, our very dear Daughters, in the visits you are called upon to make in the homes. Such a ministry entails no great expense, and yet, if it be well organized, you will do more real good there than in your houses of education, or even in your orphanages.....

At the beginning of the second quarter century of your existence, our very dear Daughters, let it be your earnest endeavor to ground yourselves firmly on the solid basis which is to sustain the entire weight of the whole edifice of your Institute. Ponder seriously upon the principal end of your holy vocation. Never deviate therefrom under pretext of doing other works, more brilliant perhaps in the eyes of the world, but far from being so glorious to God, so advantageous to your neighbor, or so meritorious for yourselves. Adhere strictly to the means you should take to attain the principal end in view. Keep resolutely to the pathway traced out for you from the very beginning, and never, never wander astray.

Twenty-five years hence, you will again compare the actual state of your Institute with that

of the present time. You will see what you have gained in every respect by keeping to the works for which your Foundress Mothers consecrated themselves to God. For it is to be hoped, that at the end of each quarter of a century, the Community will recollect itself as you have done, to examine the past and foresee the future.

As for us, our very dear Daughters, we are exceedingly happy to have assisted at the birth of your little Institute, and to have witnessed its wonderful development during these first twenty-five years. The next anniversary of similar import will find us sleeping our last sleep within the grave already opening beneath our feet. Meanwhile, we form the most ardent wishes for you, that you may ever press forward rapidly in the ways of perfection; that you may be always animated by the good spirit bequeathed by Saint Vincent to all his Daughters; that you may continue to recruit good subjects whose only desire is to love and serve God in the person of the poor; that you may be happy in all your holy undertakings; that the spirit of the world may never enter to tarnish the brightness of your purity or of your charity; that you may be of one heart and one mind, so as to perform your works always with joy and happiness; that you may be, until the end of time, the privileged sheep of your pastors, by your simplicity and docility; in fine,

that you may never cease to be the consolation of your superiors whose burden you will lighten by your humble submission and filial affection, while awaiting our joyful reunion in the land of the living.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

March 25.—The twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of our Institute is celebrated at the close of the annual retreat.

March 28.—Mgr. Bourget informs Mother Philomena of the great favor he has obtained from Rome on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the Institute.

LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA, SUPERIOR.

Hospice St. Pelagia, March 28, 1868.

My dear Daughter:

Yesterday, I received the Indult which I had requested for your twenty-fifth anniversary. This Indult grants a plenary indulgence for the Feast of the Annunciation and during the octave, not only for the Sisters of the Community, the Novitiate, and the poor under their care, but also for all persons connected with the Institute by the exercises of piety and charity; consequently, by all the Ladies, and by the

members of the confraternity of Our Lady of Seven Dolors.

I thought it might be well to announce a general communion to be made by all these persons on the last day of the octave, viz: Wednesday, April first. After the Benediction at four o'clock in the afternoon, an assembly of the Ladies of the Association of Charity might be convoked.... You might also consider whether it would be advisable to send a telegram to your Sisters in Oregon to-day. See your Council about this and do for the best.....

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

April 3.— Feast of Our Lady of Seven Dolors.

December 13.— Mgr. Bourget addresses a letter concerning the pastoral visitation of all the Communities of his diocese. Said document is herewith reproduced in part.

.....As you are already aware, we shall undertake our seventh pilgrimage to the tomb of the Apostles (1). In this, our last voyage overseas, it is incumbent on us to perform a very important duty: that of rendering an account of our administration to the Vicar of Jesus Christ. You do not doubt the fact, our very dear Daughters, that in this general report of the diocese, must be included that of each community in

(1) See p. 365, Dec. 19, N. B.

particular. For it is very necessary that the common Father of the Faithful should know well in detail, the end and the aim, the spirit and the works, the regularity of life and the temporal resources of each one of the religious Institutions he has already praised and blessed in reward of their devotedness, and upon which he ardently desires to place the seal of his pontifical approbation, that they may remain steadfast and unshaken in their holy constitutions. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that we should be perfectly well informed of the present state of affairs in your community.....

Moreover, we shall have to assist, during our contemplated trip to the capital of the Christian world, at the *Ecumenical Council* convoked by the Supreme Head of the Church on the twenty-ninth of June last, the day consecrated to honor the glorious martyrdom of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul....Neither do you ignore the fact, our very dear Daughters, that in that august assembly where so many and such great affairs are to be treated, the religious congregations, as well as their poor, their pupils, and others, will be the special object of the solicitude of the Bishops of the whole world, who gather there to the number probably, of seven or eight hundred.....

From the foregoing, you may judge, our very dear Daughters, that the proposed pastoral visitation has not for its only end to make you sharers in the treasures of grace ordinarily belonging to such occurrences, but it likewise aims to dispose you to receive the graces of the future Council, by exhorting you to co-operate therewith by your fervent prayers and by your works of charity and zeal.....

Given at Montreal, December thirteenth, eighteen hundred and sixty-eight.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

PASTORAL VISIT.—DEPARTURE OF MGR. BOURGET FOR ROME.—ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF THE VATICAN.—LETTERS TO MOTHER PHILOMENA AND SISTER RAPHAEL—TREATISE OF *Materia Medica*.—A COPY IS FORWARDED TO MGR. BOURGET AT ROME.

1869.

January 11.—Mgr. Bourget closes the pastoral visit begun on the seventh instant, by the following:

COUNSELS OF THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL, GIVEN DURING HIS PASTORAL VISIT, TO THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE.

It is, our very dear Daughters, in the Heart of Our Mother of Sorrows, always so good and so compassionate, that we shall draw the counsels we are about to leave you. We shall leave them to you at the moment of our departure for the Holy City, as a souvenir of our visit and as a last proof of the paternal affection and the deep interest we have for you all in general, and for each one of you in particular....

Love especially, and observe most religiously, silence of word and action, as the distinguishing characteristic of a community truly interior; for we

must not forget, that silence is the grand master of prayer, and that where silence reigns many virtues abound.

Carefully employ your time and never lose a moment thereof, remembering that that time has cost all the Blood of our Lord, and that it is given you only that you may earn Heaven.

Practice holy poverty with the greatest zeal, for it is the most precious treasure of a community. Never have anything of your own; and make it your duty never to appropriate anything to your own use without permission from the Superior. Never take anything away from an office without this same permission, nor without informing the officer, who must know where everything belonging to her office is, because she is held responsible for all. For a like reason, never take the mark off anything belonging to private individuals; otherwise such things are put aside, and no one knows to whom they belong.

Always look upon charity as your distinguishing characteristic, and let that great virtue be the soul of your life. Consequently, avoid whatever might wound it in the least. Hence, let there never exist amongst you, criticisms, murmurs, suspicions, detractions, calumnies, false reports, or indiscreet communications, capable of giving rise to divisions, susceptibilities, tale-bearing, and

that party-spirit so productive of evil results in a community.

May divine charity, reigning in the interior of your community, spread its fragrance abroad by means of your tender love for the poor, your constancy in visiting and caring for the sick, watching by their bedsides and assisting them in the terrible passage from time to eternity, enshrouding them and introducing them into Heaven; by your zeal in teaching the children of the poor everything necessary for them to earn an honest living and to save their souls. Finally, may it reign by your ardor in performing perfectly well all the duties of your holy state.

Remember, that the more you devote yourselves to the good works of your sublime vocation, the more also will you be blessed by God and man.....

Above all, it is during vacation time, when the Sisters assemble from the surrounding missions to take a legitimate and very necessary rest, that they should apply themselves to the different works of charity, so as to maintain the taste and ability for the duties imposed by charity upon the Sisters of the Institute.

Be punctual in the observance of all your holy constitutions, in rising at the first sound of

the bell, in assisting each day at meditation, in hearing Mass, etc.

Let the holidays be spent in recreating and diverting yourselves and mutually entertaining one another. They are allowed you for that purpose.

Shun the news of the world as much as possible ; it can only distract you and make you lose the sweet feeling of God's holy presence. On the other hand, love to communicate news concerning religion, the good of your Institute and of your poor.

Whilst laboring for the success of your works, be careful of your health and take all the nourishment you need. Your fare should be always frugal but wholesome, in order to enable you to carry on for a longer period the duties of charity.

Be on your guard against the use of certain drugs and liquors. Without your perceiving it, they insidiously create cravings which are most difficult, and even dangerous to satisfy.

Take back the sleep lost in your night-watchings with the sick. For this reason, let there be a dormitory reserved for the exclusive use of the night Sisters, and let no one presume to disturb them in their much needed rest.

Necessary steps should be taken without further delay, to instal a good system of ventilation in the wards, the dormitories, the class rooms, and all other places exposed to become infected by the large number of people gathered there.

Let especial care be taken, at all times, of the good old women, who are the foundation stones of your Institute. As long as they are contented with your efforts to make them comfortable and happy, they will bless you with their whole hearts and obtain heavenly benedictions for you. Let your conduct be the same towards your outside poor and sick.

Train yourselves in the necessary art of nursing the sick, and make diligent use of the book now being printed to instruct you how to become good pharmacists. Let that book follow you everywhere, in the country as well as in the city, that you may become more useful to the poor.

Let a mistress of health be appointed in your houses, especially in the Mother House, and have good rules drawn up for her guidance.

Give your consecrated girls all the care a good mother bestows upon beloved and religious daughters.

Never forgive yourselves any faults you commit; and should they be public, be the first to ask penance for them so as to make amends therefor

before approaching the Holy Table. Otherwise, you might give scandal by presenting yourselves there with bitterness or resentment in your hearts.

Be happy when you receive admonitions and recommendations from your Superiors, either General or Local, and whatever advice they give you, always accept it with so much simplicity and docility, that the Mothers whom religion has provided for you, will be encouraged to fulfil well a duty which costs poor human nature so much.

Do not be discouraged by the difficulties you meet with in your different employments, in begging, for instance: because the success of your works will depend always upon the greatness of the sacrifices you are required to make. Take every precaution possible in soliciting, and try never to go about alone with a person of the opposite sex. Abstain as much as possible from taking charge of little boys. (1)

These are the counsels we leave you, our very dear Daughters, that you may engrave them upon your hearts and make them the rule of your conduct. We shall not fail to deposit them upon the tomb of the holy Apostles, and upon that of your blessed Father St. Vincent de Paul which we shall soon have the pleasure of visiting, in

(1) The Sisters may take charge of such children only after having obtained an Indult from Rome to that effect.

order to obtain for you all the help you need to make you observe them faithfully.

Once more, we bless you all in the Name of our Lord and of His Immaculate Mother. Do not fail to pray for us, and in return, we shall never cease praying for you.

The Providence Asylum, this eleventh day of February, eighteen hundred and sixty-nine.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

January 20.—Departure of Mgr. Bourget for the Ecumenical Council of the Vatican. (1)

May 6.—Mgr. Bourget addresses a circular letter from Rome to the religious communities of his diocese concerning the jubilee preparatory to the Ecumenical Council. (2)

LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA, SUPERIOR.

Rome, June 12, 1869.

My dear Daughter:

I received your kind letter of April 7, in due time, but could not reply before to-day.....

I give to you all the blessing you solicit once more, although Our Holy Father himself,

(1) Sixth voyage to Europe, seventh to Rome. See page 365.

(2) See p. 485, Vol. V, Episcopal Circular Letters of Mgr. Bourget to the faithful of his diocese. (In French: there is no English edition.)

blessed you on that beautiful Easter Day which so happily renewed your courage and caused you to superabound with joy. Each time I have the happiness of kneeling at the feet of our Holy Father I never fail to present the family confided to my care, and «Providence» of course has its place....

Our Lord has called good Sister M. Aurelia home. She will, no doubt, add to the number of Sisters of Providence in heaven who now plead for the Sisters they left behind in this valley of tears. ... I trust God will be pleased with this sacrifice, and that in His infinite goodness, He will deign to restore the sick Sisters to health, so that all may bear together the burden and the heat of the day.

I shall unite with the Religious Servites at St. Marcel or at St. Mary's *in Via Lata* in celebrating the feast of Our Lady of Seven Dolors. I offered Holy Mass last Sunday in the latter place in honor of the solemnity of the most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary. These feasts very naturally bring me back amongst you, and give me, moreover, the precious privilege of hearing the *Stabat Mater* chanted in every style. Here it is quite impressive to hear the people responding to this hymn of the sorrows of our Mother.

You inform me that the renovation of vows has confirmed each and every one of you in the grace

of the pastoral visit. I am firmly convinced of this, as I well know the spirit of faith which prompts you to see Our Lord in the person of him who visited you. Animated by such principles, direction no matter by whom given, will always be of immense profit to you. Oh! may you always see none but Our Lord Himself! He alone suffices you, and in possessing Him, you possess all!

I see by the newspapers that the community took part in the public demonstrations of joy in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of priesthood of our Holy Father, the Pope. (1) That was a most dutiful act; and I trust, that in so doing, all were penetrated with that lively faith, that profound veneration, and that filial affection for the Father of the Faithful, which is in all places the characteristic of a true religious spirit. Can we be devout to Our Lord Jesus Christ without being so to the Pope? Therefore, on that forever memorable day, you proved your devotedness to the Holy Father more by your interior sentiments of piety than by your brilliant illumination. Men saw only the outward signs of filial love and devotion, but the angels saw the true inward sentiment, the only one worthy in the sight of the Heavenly Father.

(1) Pius IX.

May St. Joseph be forever blessed for his new favors! They cannot fail to increase in all of you the faith, confidence and love you have for so good a Father. The development which Divine Providence has given your works, and more especially to your primary schools, deserves your eternal gratitude. I thank you for all the interesting news you give me. Sisters Raphaël and John are not forgotten, for they are both placed at the feet of the Holy Father, along with many others.

Arriving here the thirteenth of February, and overwhelmed from the moment of my arrival with all sorts of business and all kinds of trouble, it was impossible for me to present, in time, the petition that would certainly have obtained for you the jubilee indulgence. It arrived too late last year to crown the festival of your twenty-fifth anniversary of foundation. Let us hope that when the time comes for your Community to celebrate its Golden Jubilee, those in charge will succeed better than we have done.

Pray, and have others pray for me who am for you, for your Sisters and for your poor,

The most devoted,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

LETTER TO SISTER MARY RAPHAEL.

Rome, June 28, 1869.

My dear Daughter:

This letter will be handed you by the Reverend Father Moreau on his return to Canada, together with an indulgenced crucifix from Our Holy Father, Pope Pius IX. He has heard your humble petitions, and in blessing this precious object of piety for you, he recommends you to the Divine Goodness that His holy Will may be done in your regard. (1)

This crucifix will remind you of the Father of the Faithful, who blessed it for you, so that it may be done unto you according to your faith. With a faith strong enough to remove mountains and to cast them into the sea, you know that everything is possible. While praying before this crucifix, you will be transported in spirit to the feet of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, of God crucified for love of us. You will bedew them with your tears, you will kiss them with respect, and you will not leave them until you have received the graces and blessings you desire. There is a plenary indulgence attached to it for you at the hour of death.

(1) Sister Mary Raphael was subject to epileptic attacks for many years.

No doubt, you will share your happiness with the Sisters, who, like you, will be pleased to kiss your precious crucifix, most especially the sick ones in the infirmary, with the thought that the Pope blessed it that it might spread all sorts of graces everywhere.

But with that enlightened piety which animates you in so high a degree, you will not fail to make many exterior and interior acts of loving submission to Our Lord's good pleasure. He knows best what is good for us, and He delights in giving us much more than we ask of Him.

In finishing my letter, I bless, with all my heart, you and all your good Sisters, whose fervent prayers I implore by night and day, while I remain forever

The most devoted servant of your little Community.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA.

Rome, July 3, 1869.

My dear Daughter:

..... I thank you for so kindly keeping me informed of the most important happenings of your Community. I see that Divine

Providence continues to take charge of it, and deigns to direct it in the ways of most astonishing prosperity. I never fail to render thanks in union with you all.

It was a real pleasure for me to unite with you in celebrating, with great spiritual joy, the feast of Our Lady of Providence. She was my special patroness during the month of June, as she herself chose to fall to my lot. St. Vincent de Paul succeeded her for the month of July, and thus far, has well filled his office. I shall celebrate his feast with his Daughters of Charity, who direct the Military Hospital of the Holy Ghost, where I go occasionally to visit the Canadian Zouaves when any are there under treatment. The good Sisters take especial care of our dear soldier boys, and seem pleased and edified with their conduct. I am told that whenever the Pope goes to visit that great Hospital, he always inquires if there are any Canadian Zouaves there. I have already been there once to say Mass for the Sisters in their private chapel, and I am going again on St. Vincent's Day. I have also given Benediction for them at an altar in one of the wards of their immense Hospital, and it was our Canadian Zouaves who, at their invitation, did all the singing for the occasion. Nothing is wanting to the comfort of the Zouaves when they go to the Hospital,

but they do not like to go there very well. They prefer life at the barracks to the Hospital, and military drill to invalid diet.

You say with good reason, that the feast of Our Lady of Providence is rich in graces, and so it really is. Mary, in presenting herself to your small and very young Community under so consoling a title, becomes its *Queen*, and infuses it with the spirit of life which animates all its acts of piety, simplicity, humility and charity. She is eager to be for each of you, in some sort, what Our Lord is for her, that is to say, full of grace. Therefore, Mary is with you to assist you in all things, temporal as well as spiritual; with you, to make you sharers in her good spirit; with you, to direct you in your counsels and undertakings; with you, to help you in all your needs; with you, by night and by day; with you, in death as in life; with you, in time and in Eternity.....

I shall do all in my power to keep you informed of the important services rendered you by your benefactors, particularly of Madam Montmarquette whose noble generosity in founding the Asile St. Vincent de Paul you have made known to me. (1)

(1) That is to say, the Asile du Sacré Cœur in the parish of St. Vincent de Paul, Montreal.

Father Moreau will bring a small crucifix indulgenced by our Holy Father the Pope, to your sister, Sister M. Raphaël.....

I do not forget your Sisters Charles (1) and Emerentienne (2) for whom I implore a sojourn of a few years longer in this vale of tears.....

I wish a pleasant journey and much success in their mission to your Sisters Mary of the Blessed Sacrament, Peter of Alcantara, Dorothea and Pacifique (3), whom obedience sends West to share the labors and privations of your Sisters in Oregon.

Good luck and grand success to your City Fair for the diminution of your indebtedness! A thousand good wishes to the ladies and other generous souls who are working for it! The same success to your building in the Quebec Suburb! It has long been needed.

Amidst all the splendors of the Holy City, I do not forget your Community. I place it at the feet of the Holy Father every time I prostrate myself before him to expose my own needs and those of the souls confided to my care. No matter what his occupations are, and in spite of

(1) Née Bricault, died Nov. 7, 1869.

(2) Née Touzin, died June 20, 1869.

(3) Née Legris, died April 9, 1900.

the manifold cares and anxieties besieging him at every turn, he is always calm and serene, and kindness personified.

While praying for our good Holy Father, pray and have others pray likewise for me, who am for you and your Daughters, always,

The most humble and devoted servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

A copy of our *Treatise of Materia Medica* having been forwarded to Mgr. Bourget, His Lordship acknowledges reception thereof in the following letter addressed to Mother Philomena, Superior General. (1)

Rome, October 30, 1869.

My dear Daughter:

The great, big, beautiful volume sent me by the Community, reached me in due course of time, and is all the more pleasing to me because it is the work of your Sisters.

The appearance of this long-desired volume had already been heralded by the newspapers. I was glad to know of its expected advent, and

(1) *The Treatise*, undertaken for the purpose of forming the Sisters in the art of caring well for the sick, is dedicated to our illustrious Father and Founder, who had given the first inspiration for such a work.

although I took no part in its preparation, I was most anxious for its publication, as I knew how beneficial it would be to you in the exercise of your works of charity, especially in the care of the poor and the sick. Now that I am in actual possession of the precious book in question..... I can more readily appreciate its advantages and calculate its good results for the future. One of the advantages to which I attach the highest importance is, that it will be much easier to form the Sisters to the life *of true Servants of the Poor, of Hospitalers and of Nurses*, which they must lead in your new Institute. If they have the slightest aptitude for the service of the sick, which is, after all, the duty most proper to their holy vocation,.....they will soon perfect themselves in the art so highly praised by Our Lord when He said: *I was sick and you cared for Me.*

My one desire has always been, and it is still, that all the Sisters be occupied from morning till night, and from one end of the year to the other, solely with the care of the poor and the sick. In order that my desire may in time be realized, I pray the *Father of the Poor* to take your indebtedness upon Himself, and in His Divine Providence, to provide you with resources, so that you may have the means of supporting the Community without having to earn your bread in the sweat of your brow. Your whole time

could then be employed in forming your pupils and your orphans to perform the different kinds of manual labor which now absorb your every moment.

In the meantime, the young Sisters and the Novices will learn the real art of becoming *Servants of the Poor* by following attentively the course of lectures in Materia Medica, etc., given at the Dispensary. Then it will not be difficult for them afterwards to fill the Doctors' prescriptions intelligently, or to prepare the different medicines. But enough on that subject.

I am informed through various sources, that you have lost some of your dear Sisters by death; that some of your missionaries have returned to the Mother House; that new works have been started and are doing well....There is no need for any one, however, to apprise me of the fact that you are always walking in the painful and thorny road leading to Calvary, and that, thanks be to God! your chalice of bitterness is ever overflowing. Each and every one has her burden of grief to lay at the foot of the Cross where stood the Mother of Sorrows in her hours of anguish.... Be courageous and full of confidence, since by no other way can you arrive at religious perfection or attain complete success in your charitable and holy undertakings.

I generally go to celebrate your patronal feasts with the good Servite Fathers, who consider me as one of their own. I have already promised to sing High Mass on the Feast of the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin, at the convent of the religious of St. Juliana Falconieri, who look upon you as their Sisters. Pictures of the Sorrowful Mother are given me wherever I go. . . . Pray for me. To-day is my birthday, and the heavy load of my seventy years is bowing heavily upon me; whereas the counter-weight of my merits and good works is so exceedingly light that it hardly counts.

I bless you and all your works.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA.— RETURN OF MGR. BOURGET. — PROCESSION.— TRIDUUM.

1870

LETTER TO MOTHER PHILOMENA, SUPERIOR.

Rome, June 1, 1870.

My dear Daughter:

I have your last two letters, and I am happy to be able to answer both on this day especially dear to you, since it is for you all, a great feast, the feast of Our Lady of Providence. . . .

Although your Constitutions have not yet been approved, they have nevertheless been praised; and by that fact, your Institute enjoys the precious advantage of being acknowledged by the Holy See. You are now, as it were, on trial, and while observing your Constitutions, you should assure yourselves whether each one of them is, and always will be, your rule of conduct for your perfection, as well as for the success of your works. You need not fear that these Constitu-

tions will be approved for some time yet. For, while I have not the least intention of soliciting their approbation for a while longer, I am sincerely convinced that any effort on my part in that direction would amount to naught. It is most desirable that you be enabled to judge by your own experience which rules are practicable for you and which are not; a matter so important cannot be decided in a day. How many things which at first sight revolt the feelings are, notwithstanding, animated by the spirit of God; while,on the other hand, how many things pleasing in the beginning, prove, in the end, very disadvantageous to the good government of a community. Every point should be minutely examined in the light of the good spirit, which everywhere, but particularly among you, should be a spirit of simplicity, humility and charity.

Whatever may happen, you must in concert with the Bishop of Nesqually, address yourselves to the Holy See to obtain the permission to open a novitiate at Fort Vancouver. Expose clearly your reasons for so doing; you may then confidently hope for a favorable answer....

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

August 9.— After a long absence, (from January 20, 1869 to August 9, 1870), Monseigneur Bourget returns to his episcopal city.

September 18.— The personnel of the Providence Asylum and the branch houses, take part in a procession ordered by Mgr. Bourget to obtain the ending of the war in Europe. (The Franco-Prussian war.)

November 6.— In a circular letter addressed to the faithful of his diocese, Mgr. Bourget orders a triduum of prayers in order to obtain a cessation of the evils that afflict Our Holy Father the Pope and the whole Church. These prayers will be offered especially to ask that the dogma of Papal Infallibility, as defined in the Ecumenical Council of 1869, be accepted with joy everywhere, and firmly believed by all the Faithful.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

LETTER TO SISTER JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART.— RETREAT PREACHED BY MGR. BOURGET.— ADVICE GIVEN BY HIS LORDSHIP.

1871

LETTER TO SISTER JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART, SUPERIOR, VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON.

Montreal, March 6, 1871.

My dear Daughter:

Your kind letter, dated May 19, reached me in due time, and I am heartily ashamed of myself for not having been able to answer you ere this; however, better late than never.

I did not fail to foresee and to forestall your ardent and pious wishes; hence, I placed you and all your good works at the feet of our Holy Father, that he might deign to bless you, together with your poor, your pupils, and your sick. For I value his blessing most highly, so intimately convinced am I that it is always our dear Lord Himself who blesses us through the hands of His Vicar.

The interesting details you give me of your works fill me with joy and happiness. For I always associate myself with your many good works and holy enterprises; and for this reason, it makes me exceedingly glad to learn that your sufferings and sacrifices have been amply blessed with good success.... What greater happiness could I experience than to know that those whom religion has given me for daughters, walk with alacrity in the paths of perfection? That their labors, their sorrows, the sweat of their brows and their weary vigils are all so pleasing in the sight of the Lord? Courage, then, my dear Daughter! May the past be a pledge for the future! God, so merciful and so good, who has conducted you and your Sisters until now by ways so truly admirable, will not abandon you. He will continue to guide and protect you until you reach port safely.

What you tell me concerning each one of your dear Sisters, edifies me greatly and fills me with consolation. Your works are a wonderful help to me and stimulate me to renewed energy. I feel, alas! that I am nearing the end, and that I shall soon descend into the grave. May I there sleep the sleep of the just, while my Daughters in Jesus Christ fill the world with the good odor of the religious virtues, and above all, with the exquisite

fragrance of that sweet simplicity, humility and charity bequeathed to you by St. Vincent de Paul as a most priceless heritage. Kindly convey to all your good Sisters, affectionate sentiments of good will, and my ardent wish that their lives may be full of merit for Heaven....

We are doing our utmost to celebrate worthily the feast of our good Father, St. Joseph, as *Patron of the Catholic Church.* The decree conferring a title so glorious for him and so advantageous for us, was received and hailed with transports of joy. Each one feels inspired with greater love, devotion, and confidence, towards so powerful a protector.

The thought that the Church has chosen him for its universal *patron* and the *patron* of each one of its children, naturally incites all to place whatever concerns them in his hands, and to make them firmly believe that even the most difficult enterprises will be blessed with success.

What expands the heart and makes it thrill with joy and hope is, that if we look with the eyes of faith, we shall see how each of our days has been marked with some favor due to the intercession of St. Joseph. We are lost in contemplating the grandeur, the splendors, the privileges of St. Joseph, and the inestimable treasures of sublime graces, of ravishing gifts, of celes-

tial communications hidden in the heart of that glorious patriarch of the whole Christian world.

But here we must stop, for it is impossible to fathom the depths, or to scale the heights of the perfections and merits of our beloved patron. Let us love, bless, and serve him with hearts full of joy and gratitude.....

Your most devoted Servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

March 22. — Opening of the exercises of retreat preached by Mgr. Bourget.

March 25.— The venerated Founder, in a most intimate and fatherly conference resumes, as it were, the instructions which he had given the Community during the past twenty-eight years. Following are some of the principal points.

My dear Daughters:

On this day so full of sweet souvenirs, I must confide to you in the sacred intimacy of a family reunion, what my views and designs were in working for the foundation of your Community. It will be my Last Will and Testament, for I have nothing else to leave you.

Founded at the foot of the Cross to be the Daughters of the Mother of Sorrows, I have al-

ways thought you were destined to pass through great sufferings and that those sufferings would last as long as you remained faithful to your vocation. Let us hope that it may be forever.

I have never ceased to think that the severe trials awaiting you in your religious career would but tend to strengthen you in your vocation, and, that by virtue of sacrifices, you would come to love the cross as others love the good things of life.

It has always been a source of great happiness to me to see you admitted into the family of St. Vincent de Paul, by the adoption of his holy Constitutions. They were secured for you from the very beginning by a special favor of Divine Providence. Hence, I conclude from that very fact, that that admirable saint in becoming your patron, would grant you a large portion of his spirit of humility, simplicity, and charity, which shines out so brightly in his beautiful life.

I have always been under the happy impression, that he would, at the same time, impart to you something of his genius for the administration of the works of charity, if you were constantly animated by that triple spirit so wonderfully characteristic of him. That talent for good works is an absolute necessity, and it is greatly to be desired.

One of the most ardent wishes of my heart has ever been to see burning brightly in each one of you that *humility* which makes us despise ourselves and be joyfully willing to be despised by others; that *simplicity* which makes us see everything with an eye enlightened by the light of faith; that *charity* which makes us sacrifice ourselves generously for the relief of every misery.

I have never relinquished the hope that the spirit of simplicity would cause you to see in your Bishop, whomsoever he might be, Jesus Christ Himself; in the priests, the Apostles; in your superiors and officers, the Blessed Virgin and the holy women of the Gospel ; in your Sisters, the spouses of our Lord Jesus Christ. The fruit of this will be veneration, respect, and affectionate esteem for every one; while strength, union, and success will crown the whole.

In gathering you together in community life, my highest ambition was to give you the last place among existing Communities, and to entrust to you as Servants of the Poor, the works that could not be performed by other religious Institutes.

I have always cherished the hope that you would one day become so dead to self, that far from envying others, you would rejoice most

heartily in all the good that is done whether elsewhere or in your own Community.

To attain to this, the essential aim of your Institute, the Sisters must, sooner or later, be almost exclusively employed in the visitation of the poor and the sick by day, and in keeping vigil by night...The more closely you arrive at your objective point, the more clearly will you see multiplied in your favor the help and assistance of Divine Providence.

Meanwhile, they shall do all in their power to procure for themselves the happiness of visiting the poor and caring for the sick, devoting to said works of mercy all their free time, as for instance, their holidays, vacations, etc. ....

They shall awaken the interest of the wealthy in favor of their poor, by begging in their homes and by any other means that charity may inspire. Divine Providence will open every heart to them, and will, in time, loosen every purse-string, provided they have the real spirit of their works.

I have the utmost confidence that by spreading broadcast over the land the devotion to Our Lady of Seven Dolors, you will obtain from so good a Mother, a heart full of compassion for

(1) See note page 384.

every misery, and that she will increase your numbers to such an extent that your corporal and spiritual works of mercy may be multiplied a hundredfold.

You will be successful in the accomplishment of your religious duties if you are loyal to the obedience and respect you owe to the authority which governs you. The firmer that authority, the greater your security. Contrariwise, the weaker the authority governing the Institute, the graver the danger of your relaxation.....

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SMALLPOX.— CIRCULAR LETTER OF MGR. BOURGET ON THE OCCASION OF HIS PATRONAL FEAST.— LETTER TO SISTER JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART. — ELECTIONS. — DEATH OF MR. OLIVIER BERTHELET. — REGULAR VISITATION OF THE DISTANT MISSIONS. — GOLDEN JUBILEE OF MGR. BOURGET.—DEATH OF THE VERY REVEREND CANON A. E. TRUTEAU.

1872

January. — Smallpox breaks out in our city. Mgr. Bourget is happy to see that our Sisters remain steadfast at their posts of devotedness and charity.

February 1. — In reply to the good wishes presented him on the occasion of his patronal feast, Mgr. Bourget addresses the following letter to the different religious communities.

CIRCULAR

OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL
TO THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES OF HIS DIOCESE.

Montreal, February 1, 1872.

My dear Daughters:

Every year, you kindly unite with me in celebrating the dear feast of my holy patron. Your fervent prayers, holy communions

and other religious exercises, together with your loving good wishes, mount heavenward this day like an incense of agreeable odor in honor of our glorious martyr, and obtain for me his powerful help.

On my part, I fail not in my bounden duty to supplicate most humbly our great saint, to reward your filial piety by giving you an abundant share in the heroic virtues which rendered him so illustrious in the Church Militant, and which merited for him so powerful a credit in the Church Triumphant wherein he entered this day centuries ago. Most of all do I beseech him for that *spirit of sacrifice* both for you and for me,— that noble spirit which distinguished him in so illustrious a manner.

St. Ignatius received that *spirit of sacrifice* with the blessing Our Lord bestowed upon him in his childhood; he developed it in the school of St. John, and he exercised it in the Chair of St. Peter, at Antioch. That spirit of sacrifice, thus drawn from a source all-divine, enlightened at the school of the apostle of charity, inflamed by the sacred fire consuming the heart of the Prince of the Apostles, could bring forth naught but celestial ardor..... Hence, nothing more marvellous than its influence upon this blessed disciple of the Apostles.

It animated him in a high degree with the good spirit *which gave him a perfect knowledge of all that might be useful to him* for the honor of God and the salvation of his neighbor. It inspired him with so great a detachment from himself and from the world, that *he had no desire, no affection for things visible and temporal, because he placed all his happiness in possessing Jesus Christ.* It penetrated him with so ardent a love for our Lord that he was wholly consumed. So entirely did his great heart become the tabernacle of God, who engraved His Name thereon in letters of gold, that he was ordinarily known as the Bearer of God.

That spirit armed him with infinite patience and unalterable charity for his cruel persecutors, as is proved in the beautiful extract we read in his letter to the Romans: *From Syria to Rome, I fight against beasts on land and sea. Night and day, I am bound with ten leopards, that is to say, with ten soldiers who guard me and who become more ferocious in proportion to the good we do them.*

That spirit penetrated him with sentiments of such profound humility as to make him deem himself among the number of sinners, the greatest enemies of God. *Their iniquity*, he said, *instructs me* and affords me many useful lessons; *but for all that I am not justified.*

That spirit inflamed him with a burning desire *to be devoured by wild beasts*, and fearing lest they might spare him, he was resolved to enrage them so as to be more surely torn to pieces by their cruel fangs.

In his longing impatience for suffering he exclaims: *Let fire, let the cross, let the wild beasts, let the breaking of my bones, the disloeation of my members, the crushing of my whole body, let all the torments of the demon overwhelm me, provided I enjoy Jesus Christ.* High and clear above the frightful roaring of the lions, his last words gave testimony to his spirit of sacrifice. Intrepidly facing the furious beasts crouching for the fatal leap, he exultingly cries: *I am the wheat of Christ! In the jaws of lions shall I be ground into the purest flour.*

Such is the spirit of sacrifice as personified in St. Ignatius, the martyr. That spirit permeated every faculty of his noble soul, every member of his saintly body. It enlightened, inflamed, transformed and rendered his ardent desires so vehement. It moved him with as much strength as suavity, to sacrifice all for Jesus Christ whom he loved with so passionate an ardor. It made him brave every danger. It rendered him firm and unshaken in every trial, and caused him to undergo suffering of all kinds with transports of joy. It acted so powerfully on the impulses of his

soul that he forgot self, to think only of God and the interests of His Church. It inspired him to pen those admirable letters, imperishable witnesses even to this day of his courage, his generosity, his magnanimity.

Saint Ignatius bequeathed that indomitable spirit of sacrifice to the children of the Church and to us by right of inheritance. He invites us on his beautiful festival day, to walk in his glorious footsteps, and he prays that we may be his faithful imitators....

May St. Ignatius impart to us all, the divine blessing he received in his early childhood and which he so preciously guarded throughout his long life. May that holy blessing flow forth abundantly upon your novitiates, your hospices of charity and your houses of education, that therein may reign forever, peace and prosperity, and the abundance of every good, both spiritual and temporal....

LETTER TO SISTER JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART, VANCOUVER, WASH.

Montreal, May 21, 1872.

My dear Daughter:

I received your kind letter of April 21, a few days ago, and I thank you, your dear Sisters and your poor, with all my heart, for the fervent prayers you so kindly offered for me. I consider them very helpful both for my soul and body, and I beg you to continue praying for me. I feel somewhat better, although I still suffer from an intestinal disturbance which causes me some annoyance and threatens to become chronic. It will be whatever God pleases; and consequently, I am perfectly resigned, it seems to me. No matter what happens, it must always be for the best since God wills it so....

I am pleased at all times to learn how Divine Providence showers its abundant blessings upon your works, and I unite with you in praising it and humbly supplicating it to continue the wonderful protection it has deigned to grant you at all times.

I see that to the many precious favors He has already accorded you, God has added another, since He sends you good subjects, and bestows the grace of religious vocation in sufficient numbers to justify you in opening a novitiate. I most heartily rejoice in this, for there will never be enough charity anywhere to relieve all the unfortunate, nor enough consecrated hands to assuage all their needs.

I willingly take my share of the graces wherewith Our Lord favors you. You gave Him all you had, as far at least, as was possible to human frailty. He, in return, gives all He has and is, insofar as a God so great can give Himself to a creature so small. In this intimate union, you can but be consumed in the holy ardor of charity; because the more you love Him, the more will you feel the need of loving Him better and better ....

We must not overlook, however, the necessity of doing all things through the spirit of obedience, that one must fulfil the duties of one's state and for that reason one's strength must be conserved; that in all things there is a just medium between two extremes. Consequently, that one must mortify one's self just so much and no more; eat as much as is required and no more; sleep as long as is necessary, and no more...

With my whole heart I bless your good Sisters and all their works of charity. Pray, and have others pray for me, who am always,

Your most devoted Servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

July 22. — Mgr. Bourget presides at the elections. They result as follows: Sister Caron, Superior General; Sisters Philomena, Mary of the Holy Ghost and Mary Godfrey, Assistants General; Sister of the Immaculate Conception, Secretary General; Sister Theresa of Jesus, Treasurer General.

September 25. — Death of Mr Olivier Berthelet, Commander of the Order of Pius IX, and noted benefactor of our Institute.

On the same day, the departure of Mother Caron for the West, whither she goes to visit our missions of Oregon and the Rocky Mountains.

October 15. — Celebration, at the Providence Asylum, of the Golden Jubilee of priesthood of our illustrious Founder, Mgr. Bourget.

December 28. — At the Providence Asylum, the death of the Very Reverend Canon A. F. Truteau, Vicar General and Ecclesiastical Superior of our Community.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MGR. FABRE IS NAMED COADJUTOR TO MGR. BOURGET. — HIS FIRST VISIT TO THE COMMUNITY.— RETURN OF MOTHER CARON FROM A JOURNEY TO THE WEST.— INAUGURATION OF THE WORK OF THE INSANE.— LETTER OF MGR. BOURGET TO THE BISHOP OF NESQUALLY.

1873

April 1. — The Very Reverend Canon Edward Charles Fabre is proclaimed Bishop of Gratianopolis and Coadjutor of Mgr. Bourget.

May 1.— Consecration of Mgr. Fabre. The ceremony takes place in the Church of the Gésu.

May 9. — The new Bishop visits the Community.

October 14. — Mother Caron returns after a one year's absence in our Western Missions.

October 25. — Inauguration of the Work of the Insane at Hochelaga. (1)

November 9. — Although the following letter is addressed to Bishop A. M. A. Blanchet, Bishop of Nesqually, we reproduce it here as an historical note.

(1) The real foundation of said Work of the Insane dates back to the origin of our Institute. It was exercised by our venerated Mother Gamelin even before her entrance into religion. (See p. 377, 1. 4)

LETTER TO MGR. BLANCHET, BISHOP OF NESQUALLY.

Montreal, December 9, 1873.

Dear Bishop:

I received the beautiful letter you sent me by Mother Caron, dated September 26, and I reply by the three new Sisters who are leaving for the interesting missions of Oregon.

I feel confident that Divine Providence has blessed the visit just made by the Superior General to her daughters in the missions entrusted to your pastoral solicitude. Mother Caron is so humble, so charitable, so good and devoted, that all her steps and all her proceedings are stamped with the seal of success. Since her return she is hard at work; everything is going ahead and everything prospers.

What Mother Caron has told me about the works being done in your diocese, fills me with astonishment, and impels me to bless Divine Providence with you for the success of so many and such beautiful works which enhance the glory of religion on the slopes of the Pacific Coast.

You are my senior in age; but as I am your elder brother in the episcopacy, I must depart first. Should the Father of Mercies receive me

well, I promise not to forget you, nor the souls confided to your care, nor your Sisters, nor your works.

I recommend myself most earnestly to your fervent prayers. In the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, I remain,

Your most devoted Father and Servant,

†. Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

First Record of the regular visitations.— Death of Sister Vincent.— Letter to the Sisters of Vancouver.— Direction of the City Hospital confided to the Community.

1874

May 6.— Our Founder, the Right Reverend Bishop, suggests the idea of keeping a register for the verbal processes drawn up by the Superior General during the course of her regular visit.

July 7.— Death of our good Sister Vincent, née Madeleine Durand, the second of the seven Foundress Mothers of our Community. From the year 1836, she had consecrated herself to the service of the poor in Madame Gamelin's Hospice. She contributed immensely to the support of the humble refuge of our venerated Mother. Later on, she labored no less to promote the interests, both spiritual and temporal, of the Institute. She was admirable above all for her religious simplicity, and her spirit of faith.

September 8.— Monseigneur Bourget entrusts the following letter to Sisters Mary Theresa, Peter Claver, Francis Regis and Mary Denise, who leave Montreal to found a Hospital at Portland, Oregon.

LETTER TO THE SISTERS AT VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON,

September 7, 1874.

The Bishop of Montreal could not let the Sisters of Providence, who are going to found a Hospital at Portland, Oregon, depart from Montreal, without sending a blessing and a greeting to the Sisters of Vancouver, Washington.

His happiness is increased daily by the account of the abundant benedictions Our Lady of Seven Dolors deigns to shower upon her Daughters, who are consecrated to the service of her Divine Son in the person of the poor and of the sick.

He forms, without ceasing, the most ardent wishes that they may advance constantly in the way of religious perfection, by faithfully observing their Constitutions out of pure love, by living in that spirit of simplicity, humility, and charity the practice of which they embraced when entering the Institute of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, and in never giving way to relaxation in the accomplishment of the duties of their holy state.

He trusts that Divine Providence may increase their number more and more by sending them subjects well qualified for the works, and

who by their solid virtue will cause the Community to flourish for the greater glory of God and the greater good of their neighbor.

He earnestly implores Divine Providence ever to be pleased to conduct, strengthen, and enlighten his Daughters, that they may be, at all times, worthy instruments of its designs of goodness and mercy in favor of all the afflicted.

He ardently desires that they may all be of one heart and one soul, to labor to the very end, to the perfection of their works, and thus arrive at the enjoyment of immense rewards in a happy Eternity, where he hopes to see them all, one day, laden with merits and crowned with glory.

Montreal, on the great and holy solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lady, Mother and Mistress, the eighth day of September, eighteen hundred and seventy-four.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

November 9.— Smallpox spreads terror throughout Montreal. The Community accepts the direction of the Isolation Hospital erected by the City at the mountain on account of the epidemic.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LETTER TO SISTER JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART. — JUBILEE.— VISIT OF THE PAPAL DELEGATE.— CANONICAL ERECTION OF THE ST. JOHN OF GOD HOSPITAL AT LONG POINT.

1875

LETTER TO SISTER JOSEPH OF THE SACRED HEART, AT VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON.

Montreal, May 5, 1875.

My dear Daughter :

I received your letter of April twelfth yesterday, and it pleases me greatly to see you always so full of ardor for the perfection of your works of charity.

It seems to me decidedly wrong to lose courage in the hard trials of life. You have experienced more than once that we are never better off than when we are at the end of everything. Never yet have I heard it said that you were reduced to the extremity of eating grass ; still, before you left for Oregon, you had taken the resolution to do this should necessity compel you to do so.

When I wrote to the Archbishop of San Francisco, I thought I did my very best to incline

him to be favorable to you. However, I cannot assure you, that I succeeded in getting his permission for you to make the collection in question; for I do know that his churches and communities being heavily in debt, it is only when he cannot very well refuse that he allows collections to be made.

Neither am I very certain that the Sacred Heart will be favorable to you, as I know well that you rob It whenever you can... But it appears that you rely for that, as well as for a good many other things, upon His kindness and goodness. After all, the Reverend Father Resther is not exceedingly angry with you for stealing from his sister (1). He must be very good, indeed; but we should not be surprised: he is a Jesuit!

I am happy to know that, little by little, your enterprises succeed well; you have splendid feasts, you build, you collect, you give, you receive, in fine, you do as is done every where else; hence you are not succumbing. Therefore, have courage!

This leads me to believe that you are all leading a most regular and altogether religious life. Ah, yes! I hope so. You observe your holy rule exactly, not according to the letter only,

(1) This refers to an oil painting of the Sacred Heart given by the Reverend Father to his own sister, Sister Peter Claver.

but above all, according to the spirit. Therefore, you have, I am firmly convinced, the spirit of charity, humility, and simplicity; you live together in perfect harmony, and neither discord nor division ever arise to disturb within your hearts that holy joy which is one of the most beautiful fruits of the Holy Ghost.

To-morrow, we shall celebrate the feast of the Holy Ghost, the Author of all perfect gifts, and the Sanctifier of all souls predestined to glory. We shall place ourselves again, in the school of that Great Master with an ardent and sincere desire of profiting better of His grand and important lessons. It would certainly be a dishonor to Him to have had us for His disciples for so many long years, if we have learned little or nothing at His school.... Under a Master, so great, so good, so wise, who teaches not only the science of the Saints, but Who gives the talent and the capacity for acquiring that science, let us hope that eventually, we shall make some progress in the way of the interior life, in the paths of true holiness.

I am glad to know that His Lordship, the Bishop of Nesqually keeps well and hopes to live long. It is in accordance with the designs of Providence that Founders of religious orders should attain a ripe old age in order to carry

to a successful issue all their holy undertakings and to give them the finishing touches.....

Tell your good Sisters that I do not forget them before God. In return, I sincerely trust they will remember me, daily in their fervent prayers.

Of each and every one of you, I am,

Your most devoted servant,

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

July 4.— Opening of the Jubilee exercises at the Providence Asylum.

July 7.— Visit of Monseigneur Roncetti, Papal Ablegate.

October 27.— Monseigneur Bourget canonically erects the St. John of God Hospital at Long Point, by the following decree.

DECREE

OF HIS LORDSHIP, THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL ERECTING THE ST. JOHN OF GOD HOSPITAL AT LONG POINT.

IGNACE BOURGET, BY THE MERCY OF GOD AND THE GRACE OF THE HOLY, APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF MONTREAL, ETC., ETC.

To whomsoever these presents may concern, greetings and blessings in Our Lord.

We have always made it our duty, our very dear Brethren, to keep you informed of all the

good done by Divine Providence, in our diocese, for the spread of religion and the relief of human misery. With this in mind, we have bound ourselves to make known the commencement of new works whenever occasion offers, and to invite you to contribute to this establishment as far as it may be in your power.

Our intention in appealing to you for said various enterprises was, to enlist your generous sympathy and to make you share in the merits connected with them. By your earnest co-operation, we have been enabled to establish both in our city and the surrounding country, numberless institutions whose aim is to relieve much of the human suffering so thickly strewn along life's pathway.

To-day, we venture again to address you in behalf of the Hospital for the Insane which has arisen, almost by enchantment, before your eyes, and to awaken your interest. In all simplicity and confidence, we shall tell you, in the first place, why it was built; secondly, why it should be blessed; and thirdly, why it is placed under the patronage of St. John of God.

We deem it our duty to declare to you before all else, that in permitting the Sisters of Providence to enter into an agreement with the Government, for the care of the Insane, we were animated by the thought that it is our duty to

provide our unfortunate brethren with mothers who would attend them with a tenderness truly maternal. How often, alas! are those poor afflicted beings torn from the midst of their families and deprived of the care which is theirs by every right, both human and divine! It becomes imperative upon us, therefore, to give them mothers whom religion has prepared to replace those given them by nature.

I

WHY A NEW BUILDING IS ERECTED FOR THE INSANE.

The principal reason is that the Hospital for the Insane at Beauport has become too small for the increasing number of patients committed there. No fault is found with the Asylum in itself; on the contrary, it has acquired a well merited reputation through the skill of its medical corps, the charity of its management, the numerous cures effected, and the excellent care given the patients.

Moreover, the government, aware of the over-crowded condition of the Asylum at Beauport, availed itself of the one opened under our auspices in one of the old military barracks in St. John's Parish, Dorchester Street. For many years past,

mentally deranged patients have been received there and cared for with the utmost solicitude and the greatest compassion.

The present foundation is, likewise, made to respond in some sort to the anxiety of many excellent families, who keenly feel the distance separating them from their afflicted relatives, the impossibility of visiting them more or less frequently to console and encourage them in their misfortune, and lastly, of being deprived of the sad satisfaction of hearing from their dear ones occasionally.

The Sisters of Providence, to whom the public owes the construction of the present establishment, understand existing conditions well. Into those respectable abodes whither charity frequently led their footsteps and gave them free entry, they had often been the witnesses of harrowing scenes, when a separation was rendered inevitable by the demented condition of a devoted father, a cherished mother, or a beloved child, who must be removed by force from the tender embraces of loved ones to be entrusted to the care of utter strangers....

Prompted by sentiments of commiseration for such grief-stricken people, the said Sisters of Providence most generously contributed their services in accepting the Government contract, and

in binding themselves to construct this new institution on a magnificent site located at the very gates of our city, and easy of access to all.

Besides, the Sisters, in common with their charitable Foundress Mother, the esteemed Madame Gamelin, have been inspired from the very beginning with an ardent desire of devoting themselves to the care of the insane. In their different houses in the city and elsewhere, they have always managed to carry on in a modest way, the work so dear to their hearts.

There is nothing surprising, therefore, in the fact that they eagerly accept the Government's offer, and in constructing this hospital for the insane, they are doing a work which will be to the glory of our religion and the honor of our country. A glance at that immense edifice, measuring five hundred and seventy feet in length, and a rapid survey of its solidity, elegance and convenience, will prove the effectiveness of the Sisters' good will.

That which also proves their good will in raising a building so vast and spacious that it could easily stand for a sumptuous palace, is the disinterestedness with which the Sisters accepted the conditions offered them. They agree to furnish board, lodging, clothing, heat and light to as many insane patients as the Government may be

pleased to send them (three hundred and over), in consideration of the sum of one hundred dollars a year per capita. The building alone will cost, when completed, the sum of $175,000. And in order to secure this enormous amount, many loans had to be made at a rate of interest more or less high. In all this, the Sisters have been accused, time and again, of rashness and imprudence.

But ignoring such accusations, in their earnest and sincere desire to found an establishment commensurate with their humane feelings for the welfare of the insane, zeal for the honor of religion, and the good credit of the Government, the Sisters went right on. They rely implicitly upon Divine Providence which has guarded, guided and shielded them to the present time.

They have, moreover, counted somewhat on the liberality of the Government, which could not but be flattered by the splendid building erected in its name and for its service; and the administration will, no doubt, come to their aid by indemnifying them for the generous sacrifices they have made in the carrying out of their benevolent designs.

The Sisters have likewise placed some reliance in the many respectable families of wealth and refinement, so deeply interested in the prosperity

of an establishment which offers them so many and such priceless advantages for their own near and dear ones, their relatives, friends and fellow-citizens. Considering the many hardships that must of necessity be entailed upon our frail and delicate Sisters in caring for the latter, the former will, most assuredly, appreciate at its full value all the nobility and grandeur of such sacrifices....

And now, what means should the Government and the public take in acknowledgment of the immense services rendered the country by the Sisters, who have naught but their hands and hearts to bring to the successful accomplishment of their works? Without any ulterior motive, we shall presume the liberty of expressing the thought we have in mind.

We reclaim for the Sisters, neither gifts nor subscriptions, but we do solicit free loans for a certain number of years....Every one can easily understand that if the struggling institution be free from the obligation of paying interest on loans .... the principal will be the sooner reimbursed. Under these conditions, the community that has already performed such a brilliant enterprise, will be enabled to construct still vaster edifices, the need whereof is even now being keenly felt.

May our very modest suggestion meet the approval of our Honorable Ministers and Legislators who are already filled with commendable zeal for the public welfare....

May it be accepted in the same manner by our esteemed fellow-citizens who, by the favor of Divine Providence, are blessed with a full share of the goods of this world, and who are destined to perform an incalculable amount of Christian benovelence by disposing of their surplus in behalf of this work of mercy, for which, religion, fatherland, and suffering humanity will ever hold their names in grateful benediction!

Let us all, dearly beloved Brethren, petition the Father of Mercies from whom every good and perfect gift proceeds, that many may be inspired to come to our assistance...

II

WHY THE HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE SHOULD BE BLESSED.

It is the invariable custom of Holy Mother Church, as you know, dearly beloved Brethren, to bless everything that is destined for her own use and that of her children; because sin, on entering the world, spread the noxious vapor of its contagion

over all things we are obliged to make use of in the daily needs of life, and their contact would be hurtful to us without this blessing of the Church. Hence, we see all good Christians recurring to this Holy Mother and begging her to bless their habitations....

Nothing is more touching than the prayers used by the Church in blessing the homes wherin her children are to dwell in this land of exile while awaiting their entrance into their Heavenly country.

Bless, O Lord God Almighty, this place, that there may abide therein health, purity, victory (over all the passions), strength, humility, goodness, meekness, the fulfilment of the law, and thanksgiving to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and grant that this blessing may rest on this place and upon those who dwell therein now and forevermore, world without end. Amen.

Oh! what rich treasures of grace flow from the Heart of God into the bosom of Christian families through the prayers of the Church; for we may not doubt, that said prayers, being those of the Church, are always most agreeable to God.

Hence, if the ordinary laymen feel the need of drawing down the blessings of Heaven upon their dwellings, can we doubt that the Communities

should manifest even more eagerness to have blessed, sanctified, and consecrated, their Hospices specially dedicated to charity and piety!...

This explains in a few words why the present Hospital for the Insane, erected by the good Sisters of Charity, should be blessed with special solemnity....Nor should we be astonished to see the Church doing violence to Heaven as it were, by its prayers and touching ceremonies. On bended knee, we invoke the Holy Ghost, the Author of all good gifts, supplicating Him most humbly to take possession of the new building, to govern, protect, and defend it forever.

The ground whereon stands the new home for the insane is blessed in like manner, so that the spirits of evil may not venture near. The house itself is then blessed by a special prayer that God, thrice Holy, may dwell therein for all time with His angels and saints.

A solemn procession winds about while harmonious hymns and sacred canticles are sung, and the Pontiff of the Lord sprinkles holy water everywhere to drive away the demons that they may not harm by their secret wiles ..... any one living in the house.

While these hallowed rites are performed, Heaven hearkens attentively, myriads of angels

and saints descend, the Lord makes His presence felt by the unction of His grace; the spectators are deeply moved and affected by so grand a sight; minds are enlightened by rays of celestial light; and all hearts are inflamed with renewed ardor. In fine, everything indicates that God is propitious and favorable, and that He deigns to take the new establishment under His powerful protection. Ah! how good He is to those who love Him and sacrifice all things to please Him!

Among the different prayers recited during this beautiful ceremony, there is one which especially merits your attention. Among other graces, the Church beseeches the angels, spirits of light, to take up their abode within these sacred precincts, and to guard, protect, and defend all its inhabitants.

We should here note that if the angels are with us in all places to inspire us with lively confidence, they should, above all, fill us with strength, sweetness, and consolation, when there are dangers to be encountered, sacrifices to be borne or sufferings to be endured. In such times of difficulty, we instinctively turn to our good angel, as did young Tobias when he saw himself in danger of being devoured by a monster of the deep....

It is therefore of the utmost importance that this establishment be entrusted to the good angels who will watch over it and its inmates night and day. How comforting such a thought will be to those who are to be its visible guardian angels!

III

Why this home for the insane is erected into a hospital dedicated to St. John of God.

Our new home for the insane is blessed that it may be, under the protection of the Blessed of the celestial courts, a holy house, by the solid virtues that must be practiced therein....

The reason for which this hospital is placed under the protection of St John of God is, that this admirable saint was, by the special design of Providence, treated like a madman, and, as such, confined in an asylum for the insane. Here are the reasons for his committment:

He had abandoned himself in his younger years to certain irregularities; assisting one day by chance at a sermon, he was filled with the liveliest compunction for his many misdeeds. Overcome by his emotion, he began to sigh and lament and shed torrents of tears, crying

out most piteously meanwhile : « Mercy, O Lord, have mercy upon me a vile sinner ! » Whereupon he was arrested as one bereft of his senses, and confined in the Hospital for the Insane. As he continued his extraordinary demonstrations of sorrow and repentance, a long and cruel scourging was inflicted upon him to bring him back to his senses.... All through the execution of the brutal sentence, John of God never ceased to exclaim : «Strike my rebellious body. It is but just that it should suffer for all the evil it has caused. »

Yet, that man whom the world despised as a fool, stood full of wisdom before God. From the moment of his entrance into the world, he had been favored with the choicest blessings. His birth had been heralded with the sound of bells rung by invisible hands, and the splendor of his holiness had been manifested by a dazzling light shining above the house wherein he was born. As soon as he entered into the possession of his inheritance, he sold all his goods and distributed the price amongst the prisoners. He afterwards founded hospitals with alms he received from the weathy, and established an Order of Hospitaller Brothers for the care of the sick. During a terrible conflagration which reduced one of his Hospitals to ashes, he was seen braving every danger,

running back and forth amid the raging flames for more than half an hour, rescuing his dear patients, even carrying them on his shoulders to a place of safety. At the point of death, after being fortified by the Last Sacraments, he arose from his bed, clothed himself in his garments, knelt down and expired in the act of kissing his crucifix. He remained immovable in that same posture for six hours, to the amazement of the entire city, whose inhabitants flocked to witness the marvel.

From these striking facts, you will easily conclude, our very dear Brethren, how God delighted to honor this admirable saint who was so enamored of humiliations. One of his greatest glories now in Heaven is to be honored on earth as the protector of Hospitals for the Insane. Consider, then, how well the new hospital must prosper under his protection. As far as we know, our institution is the first of its kind in this country to be dedicated to that tender friend of the poor. The foundation under his care, therefore, will be permanent and flourishing, notwithstanding the enormous difficulties still to be surmounted. Animated with the greatest confidence in the Divine Goodness, and the powerful credit our saint enjoys in Heaven, we shall proceed to the completion of a Hospital that will be the glory and honor of religion in our land.

For these reasons, the holy Name of God invoking, and with the advice of our venerable confreres, the Canons of our Cathedral, we have enacted, regulated and decreed, enacting, regulating and decreeing that which follows:

1. We erect, under the title of the *St. John of God Hospital*, the Home for the Insane constructed at Long Point under the Governmental direction of the Province of Quebec, by our very dear Daughters, the Sisters of Providence.

2. St. John of God, under the rite of double minor assigned by the rubrics, shall be especially honored in said Hospital.....

3. The feast day of the Saint, fixed by the Roman calendar for the eighth day of March, shall be celebrated as a Community festival. There shall be general communion, and the Mass either Low or Solemn High, shall be offered for the ever increasing prosperity of the new Hospital.

4. The chapel, and the whole Hospital as well, shall be dedicated to St. John of God, in order to foster and stimulate devotion to him. It shall not be permitted, however, to make a commemoration of him in quality of patron either at the office or at the Mass. But his invocation shall be added to the patron Saints whom the

Sisters invoke every day after the Community Mass.

5. Every Sunday and Holyday of Obligation, Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament shall be sung and all the customary religious exercises of piety shall be followed as at the Mother House of the Community.

6. The Most Holy Sacrament may be preserved in the said chapel, provided a lamp be kept burning night and day, and that all the rules prescribed by the Church concerning oratories are faithfully observed.

7. The Easter Communions shall be made in the said chapel, by the residents, owing to the difficulties of repairing to the Parish Church for the performance of said Easter duty.

8. Apart from the records and registers of the Hospital kept in due form, a memorial tablet shall be exposed in a conspicuous place, containing the names of the benefactors who contributed to said Hospital, or who aided the Sisters to liquidate the debts incurred in its construction.

9. For the said benefactors, living or dead, twelve low Masses a year or one a month shall be offered. Moreover, in the daily suffrages of the Community, all benefactors shall be especially

remembered for continued prosperity in this world and for eternal rest in the next.

May the Divine Heart of Jesus, who, during His Passion willed to pass for a fool and a madman at the Court of Herod, shower torrents of graces upon this Hospital consecrated to Him, in reparation for so horrible a blasphemy !

May the Holy Mother of God, the Virgin pure and undefiled, crush beneath her immaculate foot the frightful monsters who would hold in their satanic power the bodies and souls of the unfortunate victims sheltered in this Asylum of Charity !

May all the angels and saints, especially St. John of God, assist, protect, and defend this merciful refuge thrown open for the relief of the deplorable miseries entailed by the loss of the light of reason !

The present decree shall be read at the beginning of the ceremony of the blessing of the said Hospice of St. John of God, to-morrow, October twenty-eighth, at two o'clock in the afternoon, and shall be consigned thereafter to the archives of the above named institution.

Given at Montreal, this twenty-seventh day of the month of October, in the year eighteen

hundred and seventy-five, under our sign and seal and the countersign of our secretary. (1)

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal.

By Monseigneur,

J. O. Paré, Canon, Secretary.

October 28.— The new Hospital is solemnly blessed by Monseigneur Bourget. A great number of clergymen, physicians, and other notables, assist at the imposing ceremony.

(1) As this mandate already forms a part of the archives of our houses, we have suppressed certain parts. The context may be readily inferred by the portions herewith reproduced.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CIRCULAR LETTER ON THE RELIGIOUS SPIRIT.— SERIOUS ILLNESS OF MONSEIGNEUR BOURGET.— HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE BISHOPRIC OF MONTREAL.— LAST MANDATE OF HIS LORSHIP.

1876

February 22.— In a touching circular letter, Monseigneur Bourget enumerates the abundant and salutary effects of the religious spirit (1). We refrain from reproducing the text of the document here, as the subject matter has already been treated in the preceding chapters.

June.— Monseigneur Bourget is stricken with a serious illness. He solicits the Holy See for his withdrawal from his position as Bishop of Montreal.

July 11.— In a letter addressed to all the Houses of the Institute, Mother Caron, our Superior General requests special prayers for the restoration to health of our venerable Bishop.

September 8. — The last mandate of Mgr. Bourget to his diocesans. His Lordship therein announces his retirement and the advent of his successor to the Bishopric of Montreal.

N.B. The Holy See confers upon our illustrious Founder, the title of Archbishop of Martianopolis.

September 17.— The text of the mandate announcing the resignation of Mgr. Bourget is communicated to the Sisters.

(1) This circular is inserted in our book entitled "Deux Retraites," on page 552.

N.B. This mandate, dated September eighth, was read in the Community on September seventeenth, which fell that year on the third Sunday of the month, Feast of Our Lady of Seven Dolors. The coincidence is very remarkable. For thirty-three years our venerated Father had devoted himself to our formation as Daughters of the Mother of Sorrows; and he had, as it were, impregnated our vocation as Sisters of Charity with this beautiful devotion so cherished by our Foundress Mother. Surely, no other day could better inspire us with the superhuman resignation we needed, save the one whereon the Church bids us to honor the Dolors of our afflicted Mother, whom our beloved Bishop had always taught us to seek at the Foot of the Cross. The remembrance of his wise teaching in this our supreme hour of bitter sacrifice, served to counterbalance the immense weight of our sorrowful agony. The separation, though not as yet that caused by actual death, was nevertheless the fearsome prelude. Moreover, the episcopal authority and jurisdiction of Mgr. Bourget was very dear to us; hence, the extreme grief of the Community at being deprived of his wise direction, can be better imagined than described.

The following lines addressed by Mother Caron, Superior General, to the entire Institute on this mournful event, embody the sentiments of each one of the members(1).

"Notwithstanding all the services rendered us by our venerated Father Founder, notwithstanding all the gratitude we owe him, we must submit to the will of God and recognize the Lord's Chosen One in the new Bishop of Montreal.... For no matter what permission, or counsel, or privilege depending on the Ordinary is required, we must

(1) Letter of September 26, 1876.

hereafter address ourselves to the new Bishop. To this, I will add, that Monseigneur Fabre being allied through family connections with our Foundress Mother, it is but natural that we should confide in him with filial devotedness."

"With regard to our venerated Founder, my very dear Sisters, we have duties to fulfil. It were needless for me to recall all that he has done for our Community. God alone knows the agonies, the cares and solicitudes we have caused him. But we know enough to assure him of our constant and undying gratitude. By his instruction, his counsels, and his writings, he has traced for us our line of duty. Those writings are most carefully preserved, and when published, will form many volumes. Destined by God to be the Founder of our Institute, he received special inspirations, which he faithfully transmitted to us. His word should ever be most sacred to us, and we should conform to that blessed word in our mode of life, in our manner of acting, and in the government of all our houses. ....."

According to the testimony of good Mother Caron, the writings of Monseigneur Bourget, when published, will form many volumes. We close the present, — the first of the series, — with the words our illustrious Founder used every time he took his leave of us:

I bless you, and I bless all your works.

———:::———

FIRST SUPPLEMENT.

Houses of the Institute existing at the time of Mgr. Bourget's retirement from office in 1876.

Providence Asylum.	Foundation :	1843
Hospice St. Joseph.	"	1844
Prov. St. Isidore, Long Point.	"	1846
Prov. N. D. des 7 Douleurs, Laprairie.	"	1846
Prov. Saint Elizabeth.	"	1849
Institution for the Deaf Mutes.	"	1851
Prov. St. Paul.	"	1853
St. Alexis Orphanage, Montreal.	"	1853
St. Joseph's Orphanage, Burlington.	"	1854
Prov. St. Henri, Mascouche.	"	1854
Prov. St. Charles, Joliette.	"	1855
Primary School, St. Vincent de Paul.	"	1855
Providence of the Holy Angels, Vancouver, Washington.	"	1856
St. Joseph's Hospital, Vancouver, Wash.	"	1858
Prov. St. Vincent de Paul, Ile Jésus.	"	1858
Prov. St. Ignace, Coteau du Lac.	"	1863
St. Vincent's Academy, Walla Walla.	"	1864
Providence of the Holy Family, St. Ignatius, Montana.	Foundation :	1864
Prov. St. Joseph, Three Rivers.	"	1864
Sacred Heart Primary School, Fullum Street.	"	1868
Prov. Our Lady of Seven Dolors, Tulalip, Wn.	"	1868
Prov. St. Joseph, Coteau St. Louis.	"	1868

Prov. St. Louis, Winooski, Vermont.	"	1869
Prov. St. Victor, Beloeil.	"	1869
Prov. Notre Dame, L'Assomption.	"	1870
Prov. St. Ursule.	"	1870
Hospice St. Anne, Yamachiche.	"	1871
St. Patrick's Hospital, Missoula, Montana.	"	1873
Prov. of the Sacred Heart, Fort Colville, now Ward, Washington.	"	1873
Prov. St. Joseph, Lanoraie.	"	1874
St. Vincent's Hospital, Portland, Oregon.	"	1875
St. John of God Hospital, Long Point.	"	1875
St. Joseph's Academy, North Yakima, Wash.	"	1875
Prov. Our Lady of the S. H, Cowlitz, Wash.	"	1875

N. B. — About this period, our Community was obliged to abandon the establishments of Chili, Ontario, and Sorel, besides several other houses opened temporarily during times of epidemics or for other reasons.

SECOND SUPPLEMENT.

On page 115, we read that Mgr. Bourget seemed to fear the extinction of our Community. In justification of his dread, we regret having given only a partial list of the personnel. The complete list of the names of the Sisters of the Institute is herewith appended, together with the Houses forming the Institute at that date: viz, Providence Asylum, Hospice St. Joseph, House St, Isidore, of Long Point, Hospice Laprairie.

LIST OF THE PERSONNEL OF THE ENTIRE INSTITUTE.
—JUNE 26, 1847. (1)—

Mother Gamelin

Sister	Madeleine Durand	— Sister	Vincent
"	*Marguerite Thibodeau*	— "	*Imm. Conception*
"	Emily Caron	— "	Caron
"	*Agathe Séné*	— "	*Zotique*
"	*Justine Michon*	— "	*M. of the 7 Dolors*
"	*Victoire Larocque*	— "	*Larocque*
"	Edesse Marchesseault	— "	Genevieve
"	*Ursule Leblanc*	— "	*M. of the Crucifix*
"	*Clemence Robert*	— "	*La Nativité*
"	Emily Séné	— "	Emily
"	*Hemenegilde Choquet*	— "	*Élizabeth*
"	*Esther Pariseau*	— "	*Joseph S. H.*
"	*Justine Talon-l'Esperance*	— "	*Alph. Rodriguez*
"	Cephyse Dorion	— "	Amable
"	*Cleophée Legault*	— "	*Janviere*
"	*Catherine Brady*	— "	*L'Assomption*
"	*Cleophée Têtu*	— "	*Therese of Jesus*
"	*Cesarie Gadbois*	— "	*Ignace de Loyola*

NOVICES — PROFESSION OF JULY 21, 1847.— (2)

Sister	*Sophie Longtin* (3)	— Sister	*John Baptist*
"	*Margaret Walsh* (3)	— "	*Bridget*

(1) The names in Italics indicate the Sisters who nursed the typhoid fever patients. (See p. 125, 126).

(2) Sisters Wilson and Ladouceur, ill with typhus, pronounced their vows in the Infirmary.

(3) She is still living,— in 1910 — and counts sixty-five years of vocation.

"	*Henrietta Wilson*	—	" *Wilson*
"	*Susan Ladouceur*	—	" *Augustine*
"	Victoire Bourbonniere	—	" Philomena
"	*Eliza Morrison*	—	" *Patrick*
"	*Desange Lamothe*	—	" *Praxede*

OTHER NOVICES

Sister	*Margaret Boissonneault* (1)	— Sister	*L'Assomption*
"	*Flore Hudon*	— "	*L'Annonciation*
"	*Theotist Bricault-Lamarche*	— "	*Charles*
"	*Mathilde Davignon*	— "	*Madeleine*
"	Zenaide Thompson	— "	L'Ange Gardien
"	Marguerite Delisle	— "	Frs. Xavier
"	*Zoe Masson*	— "	*Stanislaus*
"	Clotilde Fournier	— "	Alexis
"	Marguerite Lefebvre (2)		
"	*Olympe Guy*	— "	*Antoine*
"	*Vitaline Dufort* (3)	— "	*Rose de Lima*
"	Elizabeth Cloutier	— "	La Purification
"	*Elizabeth Caron*	— "	*Thomas*
"	Christine Lamoureux		
"	*Marie Rousseau*		
"	*Julie Parizeau*	— "	*Martin*
"	*Angelique Belouin*		

(1) After the death of Sister Brady.

(2) Obliged to go home, she came back in 1852, and made profession in 1854, taking the name Sister L'Assomption.

(3) She is still living—in 1910—and counts sixty-four years of vocation.

POSTULANTS.

Sister Luce Heroux
" Celina Viau (1)
" *Bridget Ennis* — *Sister Catherine*
" *Cesarie Wattier* — " *La Visitation*
" *Albine Gadbois* — " *Marie de Bonsecour*
" *Françoise Lyman* — " *Marguerite*

To the above list we must add the names of four young girls who were of great assistance to the Sisters in the care of the poor and the sick, during the entire period of the epidemic. Later on they became Sisters of Providence, and are still living at the present time — 1910 —. They number respectively, from fifty-six to sixty-three years of religious life. Their names are as follows: Rose de Lima Joncas (Sister Helen); Perpetua B. Dufort (Sister Mary of the Infant Jesus); Sophie Moreau (Sister Agathe); and Catherine Whittaker (Sister Euphrasie).

N.B.— The number of emigrants who died of the typhus in 1847 is estimated at 13,850: 5,293 died at sea: 3,389 at Grosse-Isle: 1,137 at Quebec: 3,862 at Montreal: 130 at Lachine and 39 at St. Johns. This number forms about one-seventh of the total immigration in 1847.

(1) Sisters Lamoureux, Rousseau, Heroux and Viau returned home.

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