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Documenting the legacy and contribution of the
Congregations of Religious Women in Canada,
their mission in health care, and the founding and operation of Catholic hospitals.



Projet de la *Grande* Histoire
des hôpitaux catholiques au Canada

Retracer l'héritage et la contribution des
congrégations de religieuses au Canada,
leur mission en matière de soins de santé ainsi que la fondation et l'exploitation des hôpitaux catholiques.

A Brief History of Hôtel-Dieu de Montréal: 1642-1942

The Second Oldest Hospital in Canada and the United States

by
Charles Gerard

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Hospitals

A BRIEF HISTORY OF
HOTEL-DIEU DE MONTREAL

1642-1942



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**A BRIEF HISTORY OF
HOTEL-DIEU DE MONTREAL**

Charles Gerard
Director of Public Relations
Hotel-Dieu de Montreal

Founded by Jeanne Mance
and served uninterruptedly
by the Religious Hospitallers
of St. Joseph

1942

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FOREWORD

The dramatic, romantic, and epoch-making events which transpired in 1642 at the base of Mount Royal on the north bank of the St. Lawrence River have passed into history as historical facts; they remain present-day realities as spiritual influences. Relatively simple as those events were, it may still be doubted whether their influence upon our civilization in Canada and in the United States could be equalled by any other group of events in the pioneering history of this Continent. Surely, if we measure historical significance by the criterion of persistent effects, today's events in the hospital field and in the field of nursing endeavor, not only in the Catholic world but also in non-Catholic circles, can be traced back to the stirring moment, when Maisonneuve and Jeanne Mance set foot for the first time upon the shores of the St. Lawrence, and founded Ville Marie.

For the Catholic hospital worker, Sister or lay worker, administrator, nurse, or physician, the history of the Hotel-Dieu was to this day an inspiration to heroism and an encouragement to every form of hospital and nursing endeavor. The figures which walk across that primitive stage with its inspiring natural ethnographic and social background are such as one might envy the age in which they lived. We could wish that they were among us today. Maisonneuve, with his courageous and virile boldness in the service of God and his country, and Jeanne Mance, with her

refined, deeply sympathetic but eminently capable administrative personality, are two figures that would stand out in any period of civilized history as giants, as epoch-making personalities in whom the past culminates and from whom the future springs.

For the probable readers of this pamphlet, the figure of Jeanne Mance, lay woman, organizer, administrator, nurse, saint, will occupy the focal point of interest. Strange as it may seem, though she herself always remained a lay person, she was the American foundress of a Sisterhood that has done more than merely write its name upon the pages of human history. The Religious Hospitallers of St. Joseph owe to her, as the founder of the Hotel-Dieu, their first home in the American wilderness; a home, however, which was never permitted to harbor them in their cloistered seclusion, but a home from which radiated physical and spiritual influences for European and Indian, for Religious and lay person, for government official, soldier, or pauper alike—all were welcome in that first home of the Religious Hospitallers, and that home thus became for the souls of that primitive period, the vestibule to heaven.

The Religious Hospitallers of St. Joseph have impressed themselves upon American hospital history to an extent little realized, except by the most penetrating historians. The mere physical development brought about by these Sisters in the enlargement of the Hotel-Dieu, the foundation of nine other hospitals in Canada and nine in the United States, is seemingly a small enough contribution when compared to the approximately thousand institutions of a similar character in these two countries. It must be remembered, however, that subsequently to the organization of the Hotel-Dieu of Montreal, two hundred years elapsed before the seed sown by Jeanne Mance at Montreal

flowered in the new foundation at Kingston, Ontario, and from that time onward the extension of this Sisterhood has been conservatively and solidly rapid. Statistics, therefore, alone do not reveal the meaning of the work of Jeanne Mance and of the Hospitallers. Their real significance seems to lie in the fact that when the great moment of creation of Catholic hospital activity in Montreal and in the Province of Quebec dawned between 1840 and 1850, a period when so many events of significance to Catholic hospital work took place, the Religious Hospitallers not only celebrated their own renaissance, but took their part too in the birth of other Sisterhoods. The Augustinian Hospitallers, it is true, were active in the city of Quebec, but except for the Grey Nuns who had been organized approximately one hundred years after the coming of the Religious Hospitallers, there were no other hospital Sisters at Montreal to set the stride of the new developments, and surely no other Sisterhood whose traditions were radicated in the early history itself of the Province of Quebec and of Canada.

Mr. Charles Gerard's short but historically exact summary of the founding of the Hotel-Dieu and his interpretation of the relations of that foundation to the early history of Canada and of the subsequent history of Catholic hospital work deserve most thoughtful study on the part of any student of the history of hospitals. We are grateful to him for having shown how that early history was permeated by the spirit of Catholicity and particularly by zeal for the betterment of the Indian and the pioneer. The integration of welfare work and spiritual purposes which we seek so constantly today to achieve in the work of the Catholic hospital was already achieved in the days of 1642 by those who at that time carried Christ's Cross and the colors of France to the shores of the

St. Lawrence, there to labor for the well and infirm alike. Today, when our two countries stand shoulder to shoulder in the face of a common threat and in the achievement of a common victory, Mr. Gerard's pamphlet, reprinted from the pages of HOSPITAL PROGRESS, will form a sound link of spiritual unity and will inspire international cooperation in welfare activities which are inspired and transfused by the spirit of Christ and His Church.

Alphonse M. Schwitalla, S.J.

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THE HISTORY OF HOTEL DIEU
DE MONTREAL

Mr. Charles Gerard

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I. THE PLANNING OF THE MISSION

NEWS of wars, reverses, and disappointments appeared together with a dignified announcement about 300 years ago that somewhere in New France another colony was to be founded and dedicated to the Holy Family. Many considered it a folly and the majority in France or anywhere else knew nothing about it. Those who pretended to be interested in this project looked upon this announcement as another case of a hopeless adventure, trying to civilize the "savages" at a time when France was rather comfortably recuperating from terrible wars in Europe.

It is this chaotic and depressing political period of Europe which we must fully appreciate in order to value the contribution and divine sacrifices on the part of the founders of Hotel-Dieu Hospital.

France, during this time, gave leadership to one of the greatest spiritual movements of all times, known as the "Mystical Epoch." Her colleges and monasteries were the birthplaces of our modern universities. Her missionaries sailed to foreign lands and her educational leaders won great fame as philosophers, whose high spiritual qualities were recognized and imitated everywhere. Church and laity united for a rebirth of the

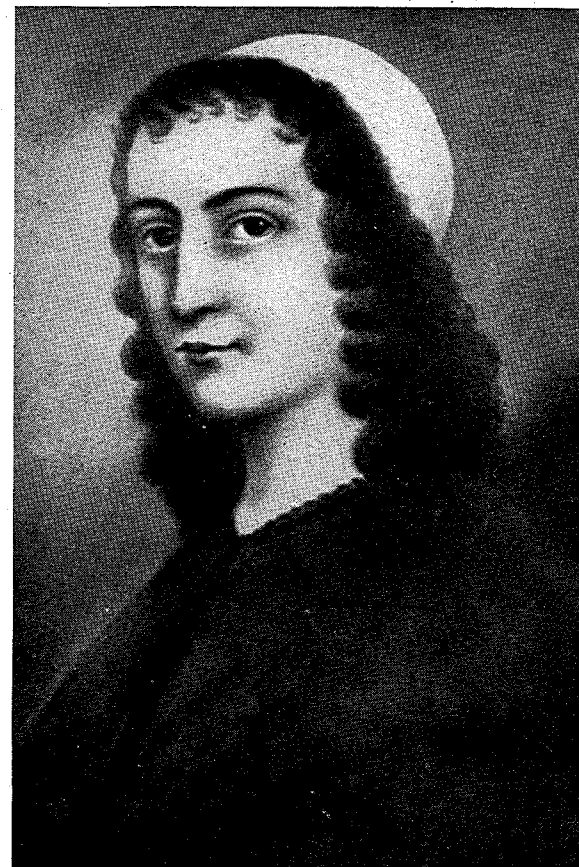
true France and a living Catholicism, not only at home, but far beyond her empire. Names like Jean Jacques Olier, the young priest who had been inspired with the idea to send clergymen to the Island of Montreal, cannot be forgotten by any real Canadian. His work and that of the Sulpician Fathers played no small part in the formation of the Church in Canada and the United States of America.

Beginnings

There are many providential happenings and coincidences, in connection with the realization of God's plan to found a colony on the Island of Montreal in honor of the Holy Virgin. To the Sisters of Hotel-Dieu, who have inherited the ideal task of securing the continuity of this "care for the sick," instituted 300 years ago, the will of God and His divine protection have, during this long period, so often demonstrated themselves, leaving them no doubt that "coincidences" or "unusual meetings of two or three people with the same vision" — as some historians have described it — are in their history nothing less than a part of our Supreme Master's plan to create once more an institute and a place where God's power of healing and comfort could bring relief to those who needed Him.

"Nothing which our founders received could be attached to speculation. All and everything depended upon God," said one of the Sisters during an interview recently.

Everybody of this first pioneer group which formed the nucleus for the new colony was individually possessed by the idea that whatever hardship and sacrifice God demanded from him or her, was necessary for the final triumph over the misconceptions at home — about New France — and the difficulties which awaited them abroad. They were neither overconfident



JEANNE MANCE, FOUNDESS OF HOTEL-DIEU ST-JOSEPH,
MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA, 1642

nor pessimistic about their future problems, as we shall see in the next few chapters by the details and characteristics of the endless arrangements for the formal founding of the society, called "La Compagnie de Montreal," the hazardous crossing of the Atlantic, and the hard struggle which marked the first hundred

years of their existence in "Ville-Marie," as Montreal was then called.

Three separate and individually different forces were responsible for the founding of the new colony, now called the City of Montreal, on the Island of the same name, where the Hotel-Dieu hospital is located. Three patron saints were selected as supreme protectorate over the Institute of the Hospitallers of Saint Joseph and during three hundred years now has this trinity been their greatest and most efficient armor in time of distress. Let us look into this mystery as hospital administrators, doctors, and nurses, but above all as Catholics who, in these times of an everchanging world, are so easily swayed into a gloomy, discouraging mood.

Here is the answer. This is a story of faith, of practical Catholicism, lived and applied by simple, humble people, who lived and laughed. They were devoted to charity — giving their money and lending their hands — (and not vice versa) to all and everything, which God commanded them to do. They relied upon prayer and gave their best. What they received is ample proof of God's blessing upon their work. They asked not for miracles, but for God's guidance. This is the great moral lesson for you and me. And now let us go into our story.

Pioneering

At the beginning of the 17th century France was entertaining high hopes for new colonial enterprises. The City of Quebec had been founded and was developing rather well, spiritually and materially. Missionaries and new settlers were sent out, while others returned with official and unofficial reports about the new territory, which was known as New France. Indians, war dances, and the stories of martyrdom were circulating in the imagination of the people of

France. While many of the adventurers came back with true descriptions of conditions in Canada, others exaggerated and thereby discouraged many colonists in their plans to settle in "Nouvelle France." Society and soldiers, peasantry and sailors, all followed the announcement of arrivals and departures of ships, just as today people watch the great history-making events.

Can we wonder, then, that our heroine, Jeanne Mance, the first Canadian lay nurse and co-founder of the City of Montreal, who was born in the town of Langres (France) in 1606 should have heard about this "strange and wild" country? No, indeed not. For many months she followed intensely all news concerning the new colony. She felt within her soul a divine call to dedicate her life to the task of bringing help to these settlers and their foes alike. She knew the misery of wars and plagues, for in her own countryside, the plateau of Langres, she could still see the ruins and feel the agony of dying or wounded soldiers. Within her heart these problems cried out loudly for a speedy solution. Finally, she disclosed her desire to her spiritual adviser whom she asked for counsel.

The Call of Jeanne Mance

The priest hesitated in his decision. It was a great responsibility for him to advise her on this particular problem. Her family background and tradition had to be considered and conventional barriers had to be overcome.

However, at the age of about thirty years and after many a sleepless night Jeanne Mance was convinced that spiritually she was ready for the task. Her parents had died. Her father, like so many other members of her noble family, had rendered very faithful service to the king and received several distinctions for his loyalty and bravery. The social life which she had tasted

for so many years was not the answer which she sought for her life. To her fell a much higher and nobler duty: the saving and preserving of life, not for the glory of the court of France, but for the divine purpose for which God created all living beings. She wanted to nurse and heal, while nursing was still of help; before infections and epidemics started their march. Jeanne Mance—by intuition—was a nurse, and we can justly call her the first nurse of the New World. It was her iron will and courage which saved many thousands, if not millions of lives. For, had she given up her vocation, when so many were counselling her against going to Canada, the Hospitallers of St. Joseph would not be able to celebrate this spring their 300 years of devoted service to the sick and poor.

From her town priest Jeanne Mance was referred to a Father in Paris, where she received all the information which at that time was available about the new Colony. While in France's capital she heard of "La Compagnie de Montreal," a society which was organized by wealthy and influential people for the colonization of Ville-Marie and in a larger sense the Island of Montreal. The lack of funds would have prevented Jeanne Mance from becoming a member of this "Compagnie," had not Providence interceded. Jeanne was not rich in gold but she could work and do exactly that type of work which at her time not many women without a definite call from God could do; namely, nursing.

While many Sisters of the Church were engaged in this high mission in Europe and abroad, not one girl or lay person, except doctors from the boats or the City of Quebec, cared for the sick and wounded in this new colony. The idea that a girl of her age—at that time—should leave her native soil and comfort for a life of fear and uncertainty, without the protec-

tion and help of an older person of her own sex, was something unheard of. But to Jeanne Mance this was a call of God, so she did not hesitate.

She became one of the most important members of this Company. Her sense of economy and her uncommon administrative abilities proved to be very advantageous for her own work in the hospital as well as for the administration of the Society and later the Town of Ville-Marie. In fact, her financial savings once protected the town from complete ruin. Without her help, the colony would have been without garrison and therefore burned down by the ever attacking Indians.

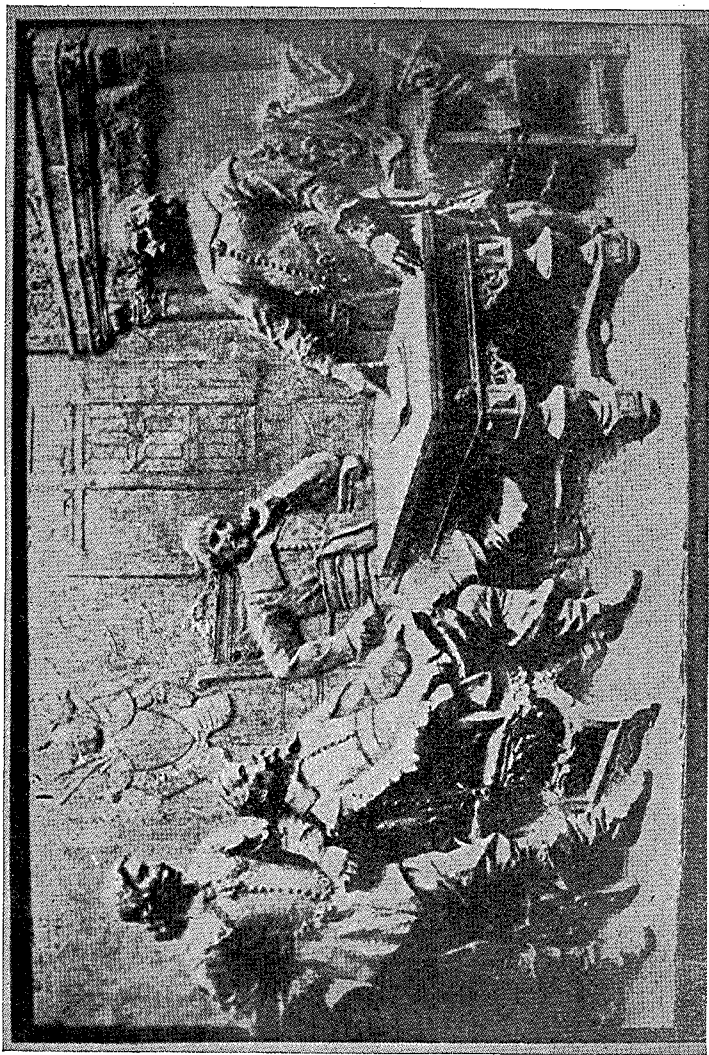
Physically she appeared rather weak and frail; another reason why people—in particular relatives and friends—were against her plan. Her kindness and always friendly disposition, however, made up for this apparent weakness.

While Jeanne Mance was dreaming about a hospital for the settlers, God in His eternal wisdom, set into motion the second force, which was instrumental in the realization of her great project. Mademoiselle Mance had no idea that, besides her, another lady of great wealth and political influence had for some time the ambition to rival a similar charitable work which was taking roots in the City of Quebec. Her name was Madame de Bullion, the widow of the Chancellor of the King of France.

Madame de Bullion

To know Madame de Bullion and her motive for giving all the financial support to Jeanne Mance, which the latter needed in her mission in Canada, is of prime importance for our present generation.

Madame de Bullion was one of France's most generous and devoted Catholics. She understood the true meaning of charity and was willing to use all in her



THE SIGNING OF THE PACT ESTABLISHING THE VILLE MARIE FOUNDATION. — LEFT TO RIGHT:
BARON DE RENTY, BARON DE FANCAMP, ABBE JEAN JACQUES OLIBR, AND JEROME LE ROYER
DE LA DAUVERSIERE

power to further this noble purpose. She achieved this and many other noble tasks, like the one which Jeanne Mance performed so excellently, without asking for any special recognition or special favor from the Church, State, or any individual. To her, wealth was no cause for spectacular announcements in the society columns or for special mentions in Court bulletins, but merely a very useful instrument to bring about a true Christian and social spirit. She foresaw much clearer than most of her rich friends, that charity must begin with our own money and sacrifices instead of the wealth of the other fellow, a conception which is very popular in our own time. There was, of course, no radio announcing her gift. Jeanne Mance and a priest were the only ones who knew her as the giver and patroness of the new hospital. Not that our heroine and "La Compagnie de Montreal" would not have given her this well deserved honor, but because of Madame de Bullion's specific instructions to Jeanne Mance "that her name should not be made known as the benefactress of this new hospital"; hence she used to be called: "the unknown benefactress."

What she did, is and remains for all times one of the outstanding Christian deeds which were needed for the final success of the new enterprise. May many of our own generation follow her example!

Apart from this great financial help, she assisted the new colony in every other way. Whenever Jeanne Mance was in difficulty — be it in Ville-Marie or with the administrative body of the colony which partly rested in France — the invisible hand of the "unknown benefactress" could be felt helping her from remote France. Once, when the Society of Montreal decided to recall the colonists because of the many difficulties encountered, Jeanne Mance returned to her native land and, together with Madame de Bullion, revived the

interest of those members who had left the "home front" so to speak. They soon came back, reorganized and thereby maintained their loyalty to the noble cause for which the society was founded.

Some years ago the City of Montreal, in recognition of the rare qualities of this great Lady, named one of its streets after Madame de Bullion. A very modest vote of thanks, when compared to the beneficial consequences of her kindness toward our forefathers! May we, the grateful citizens of the Metropolis (Montreal) unite in admiration and erect someday a monument to this generous friend of our City, which will be worthy of her large contribution to our Ville-Marie. May God bless our desire and help us to realize such a plan.

Monsieur de la Dauversiere

While Jeanne Mance and Madame de Bullion were pondering over the many problems which had to be solved before final decisions could be reached, there appeared, like the mysterious hand of Providence, the third, and no doubt the greatest force in our "enterprise"; namely, the man whose idealism and faith in God secured the continuity of the work which Jeanne Mance and the "unknown benefactress" had started. In our own language, we would call this man's action: the final touch to a plan which, from the beginning till this very day, has been protected and blessed by God. The name of this gentleman is: Monsieur de La Dauversiere.

It was he, who before and above any other person conceived the idea — during prayer — to found a new Order for nursing nuns and to establish a hospital on the Island of Montreal. To this end he dedicated his own life and that of his family, so that thereby the love and adoration of our Holy Family may increase. What noble and at the same time practical dedication

for a man, who, as a nobleman with many influential friends, could have chosen the "easy road of life."

But he too was God's choice for a definite mission. Monsieur de La Dauversiere was the man of the hour, determined to see Hotel-Dieu Hospital living — existing forever — as a House of God, as its name implies, where the sick and poor could enter and where they could find relief for their suffering bodies and souls. Such was the purpose of his vision. To him, a simple but noble layman, was entrusted a divine task!

Although his own plans for the nursing and medical aid to the new colony were rather complete and under certain conditions would have worked out excellently, God again showed His Will.

Shortly before Jeanne Mance's departure for Canada we find those two strange souls meeting each other after prayer in front of the Church in La Rochelle, a town in northern France. Some people may still call this a "coincidental" meeting, although it must be admitted that it is very "unusual" indeed, that two strange persons from different localities and of different occupations should — and this is my point — meet after prayer without any other intermediary than the common devotion to the same ideal of life, which led them to the steps of the Church. In addition, each of them had a ready plan, inspired by God for the same purpose.

For us who have witnessed the growth of Hotel-Dieu Hospital and for the Hospitalers of Saint Joseph who have received many such "coincidental" blessings in recent times, there is no doubt about the vision and providential union, which brought their three founders together.

Monsieur de La Dauversiere needed Jeanne Mance and both most certainly were in need of material means, which God provided through the generosity of

Madame de Bullion. This is in short the external organization which we find at the time of Jeanne Mance's departure.

But what is the great contribution of Monsieur de La Dauversiere to this divine plan?

Nothing less than, as indicated above, the assurance that the work of such a hospital, as these two generous ladies intended to build, should be continued forever and besides, that a city should grow on the same island, where the name of the Holy Family would be honored as never before, where people of all races — including the Indians — should worship and pray, knowing and trusting God, because of His divine protection and charitable hand, represented through Hotel-Dieu Hospital.

Hospitallers of St. Joseph

In order to fulfill this dream, M. de La Dauversiere about the year 1630 founded a new Order of Hospital Sisters, called the Hospitallers of Saint Joseph, in La Fleche, France. From here aides were to be sent to Jeanne Mance, as soon as their training and equipment was completed.

These Sisters were the answer to Jeanne Mance's greatest problem: What will happen to the poor when I am sick or gone? Jeanne to them, and in particular to M. de La Dauversiere, was like an angel sent from heaven to go ahead of these Sisters and prepare the way for them as a good pioneer. A little later, the settlers and converts among the Indians called her: "The Angel of the New Colony."

II. THE BEGINNINGS OF MONTREAL

JEANNE MANCE, Madame de Bullion, and M. de la Dauversiere, the founder of the Hospitallers of St. Joseph de la Flèche, were in a hopeful mood in June, 1641. All their arrangements for the great trip across the ocean were completed. God himself seemed to have co-ordinated all powers which were working toward the one and only aim they had: The conversion of the Indians to their own — Christian — way of living and the founding of a city where the name of the Holy Family would be honored forever. The hospital, the fort, and even the building of the chapel were merely means to realize this end. For Charity and Chivalry were at that time as much parts of true Catholicism as they are today. And if we look through those records of "La Compagnie de Montréal," we find a symbolic demonstration of how the priest, already in former days, together with the soldier, sailor, and peasant, set about to create new life and to open new land with plow and prayer, while the sword kept watch over the forces of evil and ignorance.

Men like Monsieur Paul de Chomedey, Sieur de Maisonneuve, whom his friends called "a Gentleman of virtue and of heart," who offered his sword to Monsieur de la Dauversiere, understood the true meaning of this mission. He became the leader of this expedition and later, upon recommendation of the Society of Montreal, was appointed first Governor of the Island. Here we find a soldier of courage and a man of faith.

Preparations

Let us return now for an imaginary visit to the harbor of La Rochelle, where the crews of the two boats are already waiting for a favorable wind. The sails are clear and we find the small but determined group of men and women still busily engaged in last minute conversations. Monsieur le Baron de Fancamp, another officer of the Society in his shining uniform, is just giving M. de la Dauversière a list of various items which are still needed for the trip. Baron de Fancamp, too, is wholeheartedly in this cause. He is rich, and as a nobleman exercises great influence whenever and wherever it is needed. He already gave much of his own money to the Society and knows that before long many more sacrifices have to be made. On the Captain's bridge we can see Baron Gaston de Renty, who, with the Society of the Holy Sacrament, forms another link needed for the efficient support of the new colony. Beside him we distinguish Jean Jacques Olier, the founder of the Sulpician Fathers, whose work for the new colony can be compared only with the guiding beam of a lighthouse. In the midst of the greatest darkness and wilderness, we shall later find his priests helping and healing the souls of friend and foe. The high, towering cross which today, from the top of Mount Royal (in Montreal), guides ships and travellers to the Island of Montreal, truly signifies the Christian welcome which Jean Jacques Olier extended through the Sulpician Fathers to the New World.

The sea is still too calm for sailing. Perhaps it should be so . . . at least for a while. Jeanne Mance has just entered her cabin. We can read in the expression of her face the heavy responsibility which rests upon her shoulders. It is not an easy task for a girl of her

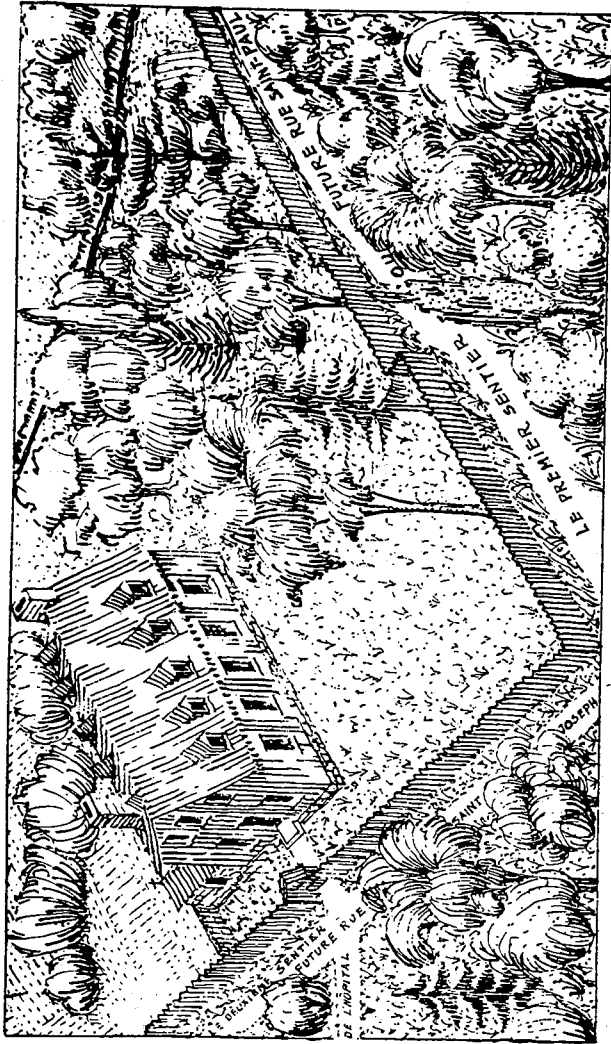


PAUL DE CHOMEDEV, SIEUR DE MAISONNEUVE

age to undertake alone such a trip, which may easily turn into disaster.

There is much coming and going on board of the two vessels. The crews are still busy and settlers whom M. de la Dauversière was able to recruit for the new colony, are just saying good-by to their relatives and friends.

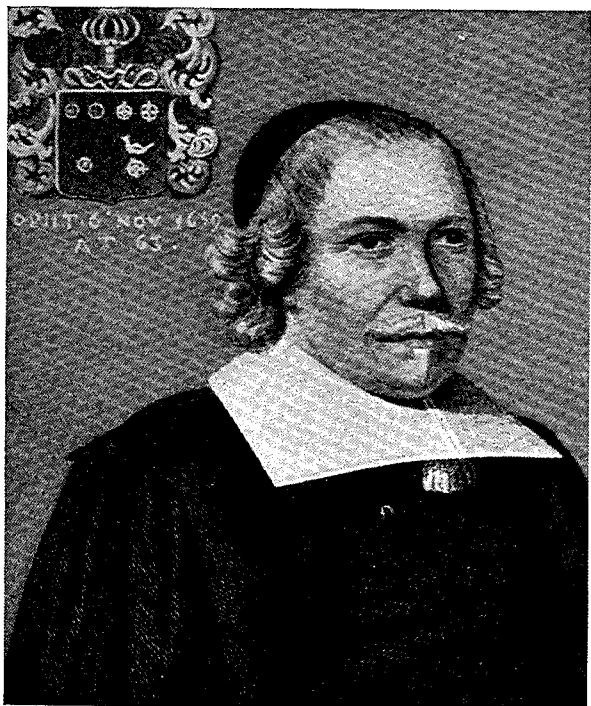
Now, there is some excitement on board of Jeanne Mance's vessel. M. de la Dauversière is hastily making



THE FIRST HOSPITAL OF VILLE-MARIE. THIS WAS THE HOME OF MILLE MANCE, 1645, AND THE ACTUAL ORIGIN OF THE HOTEL-DIEU DE SAINT JOSEPH IN MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA

his way through the crowd, trying to meet Jeanne Mance, who has just come out of her cabin. He seems to have a very important message for her. Here it is: "His agents have informed him that the wives of two settlers and a young girl from Dieppe wanted to join the ship's company and are about to come aboard." What a relief for Jeanne Mance. Her eyes begin to brighten. Her delicate hands reach for her prayer book, as if she is about to thank God for this special grace, "to have one of her own sex with her on the trip." Joyfully she returns once more to the pier to say a last farewell to the ladies, the wives of some of the Gentlemen of La Compagnie who were seeing them off, and very likely also to Marie de la Ferre, that charitable young lady of La Flèche who, with Mlle. Foureau of the same town, has already formed the nucleus of the Hospitallers of St. Joseph. There are tears of joy and a tense feeling of expectancy, for the bells are ringing as usual when ships leave the ancient harbor of La Rochelle. But mingled with the sound of church bells are the shrill, high-pitched commands of officers and crew, telling the passengers to prepare for the final adieu to their beloved France, adieu to their loved ones, and for Jeanne Mance and M. de Maisonneuve, adieu to a splendor and glory which they gladly sacrifice because they know that God is with them and their mission.

A light breeze can be seen developing at the outer edge of the horizon. Our Captain knows that now is the time to set sail. The two boats which leave from La Rochelle (one is sailing from Dieppe), are clearing anchor. From the old pier where we stand, waving and wishing God-speed, we observe on the boat of Jeanne Mance a very moving episode. It is the farewell scene, so to speak, which has become a tradition for France: Our foundress, together with the young girl



JEROME LE ROYER DE LA DAUVERSIÈRE

from Dieppe, and the Ship's company, composed of twelve colonists and the wives of two of them, receive God's divine blessing for a safe journey from the accompanying missionary priest, named de La Place.

Abbé Antoine Faulx, another Missionary Father who is on the boat of Monsieur de Maisonneuve with twenty-five settlers from the district of La Flèche, is still standing on deck, deep in thought, after a strong wind had blown the two ships well out into the open sea. Their storm-defying silhouettes and picturesque colors are a wonderful sight and truly re-

flect the pioneer and missionary spirit of France's most glorious period.

M. de la Dauversière, with a roll of parchment in his hands, now and then looks hopefully into the approaching clouds. He senses the dangers of Atlantic storms as well as the difficulties which await him at home. The paper which his hands hold so firmly is very important. It contains the plan for the settlement of the Island of Montreal, as conceived by the Gentlemen of La Compagnie. With it are also some letters from Jeanne Mance. They are addressed to Mme. de Bullion, via Father Rapine, and other friends, asking for financial and spiritual support of the new colony, which she, with her noble company of daring soldiers and faithful peasants, is about to found.

Money and good will, but above all, faith in the ultimate success of this great mission, were of no small value to M. de la Dauversière and Baron de Fancamp at this time. These letters of Jeanne Mance helped to raise the necessary funds and also they created a greater interest for their common cause in the hearts of those who shared their ideal.

The boats are out of sight and so we have come to the end of our imaginary visit. Each member of La Compagnie — be it in France or on the high seas — is busily engaged in the execution of the "divine plan," each is doing his or her part.

The Voyage

The voyage itself developed into a great trial for Jeanne Mance. Hardly were the boats out of the Bay of Biscay, when a great storm separated them and forced one of the two, that of M. de Maisonneuve, back to La Rochelle, after severely damaging its hull. Darkness and thunder followed the terrifying lightning and howling winds, which made navigation nearly

impossible. The veteran crew members who had made this voyage before were grasping their prayer books and rosaries in those hours of dire distress. Soon nearly all of the ship's company became seasick. There was danger of dysentery and other diseases, due to the limited care of food and poor sanitary facilities.

The captain, the cook, in fact everybody, suffered from the long sleepless nights, and those who were still able to walk and talk straight appeared like heroes after a great battle.

Jeanne Mance, during these fateful hours, was initiated into her future work as a nurse. Although she too was sick and for many days confined to her cabin, whenever she was able to help, she did so in her quiet, dignified manner which became and still is the trade-mark of efficient nursing. Who can doubt that her spiritual and moral greatness, cultivated through countless prayers in her small cabin, was not evident already at this early stage of her work? Upon her trunk she had very likely, during her quiet hours of meditation, placed the picture of Madame de Bullion, her "unknown benefactress." Her intimate assurances of help and encouraging words during her last visit were still ringing in Jeanne's ears.

After the storm followed seven weeks of comparatively quiet sailing. Many of the ship's crew were still weak and weary, but the healing rays of the midsummer sun, with the salty smell of the ocean, provided a sure bait for any sailor or "voyageur" worthy of such a name. Soon they recovered, and we can safely presume that Père de La Place during these peaceful days read many a Mass of thanks, while their ship slowly but with pride approached the entrance of the St. Lawrence River.

Winter in Quebec

Finally, on August 8, 1641, after two months at the mercy of the ocean, our heroine arrived in Quebec. There, behind the ancient ramparts of Fort Saint-Louis, Jeanne Mance met the company from the other boat which had sailed from Dieppe, and together they found a warm welcome from the citizens of France's new outpost.

The "colons" (settlers) from Dieppe, who had arrived somewhat earlier, had partly prepared shelter for their fellow pioneers, and since M. de Maison-neuve's boat did not reach Quebec until late in the season, it was decided to postpone the journey to the Island of Montreal until Spring, 1642.

Quebec, from whence State and Church authorities directed their messengers and missionaries, was the great capital of New France. Here the élite of France met in traditional fashion. . . . Sentries presented arms and high officials, in their colorful uniforms, united for Mass, to pay homage to God and their King. Quebec's harbor was filled with ships, coming and going, bringing in goods from France or trading furs with the Indians. War-scarred canoes and tomtoms served as grim reminders of powerful Indian tribes who were still harassing missionaries and fur traders with tomahawks and poisoned arrows.

The Reverend Father Barthélemy Vimont, Superior General of the Jesuits' Missions in Canada and rector of their college in Quebec, as well as the Governor and other dignitaries of the city, received our first Canadian lay nurse cordially and offered their counsel. After a few days we find her giving instructions — in the absence of M. de Maison-neuve — to her settlers and taking stock of their supplies. It is said that she herself handed out the ammunition which was so



MADAME CLAUDE DE BULLION

important in the future preservation and defence of the new colony.

Soon the people of Quebec realized that this time it was no hunting party or surveying group which planned to take possession of the famous Island which Jacques Cartier first had discovered in 1535. Their local patriotism and perhaps also their fear for the safety of the settlers went even so far as to counsel Jeanne Mance against going to the Island of Montreal at all. Instead they wanted her to stay in Quebec,

where in the meantime she had found some very sincere friends in Madame de la Peltrie, the foundress of the Ursulines in Canada, and the Hospitallers of St. Augustine of Quebec, who had just started their own mission. Jeanne Mance often visited their small hospital and was very grateful for the practical experience she had gained while helping them. The Hospitallers were, according to her own words, "true Religious Sisters of virtue and piety."

Besides these visits and a number of social and business affairs which she had to attend, we find her studying the language and customs of her future patients—the Indians—with the kind assistance of the Jesuit Father Charles Lalemant.

Her anxiety and fear for the safety of her leader, who soon became governor, grew from day to day, until finally, on August 20, M. de Maisonneuve and presumably Jean Poupée, the first doctor of the new colony, appeared with a small crew paddling a canoe into the harbor of Quebec. They had left their boat at Tadoussac (Quebec), where their captain had met a certain Admiral Courpon, an old friend, who, seeing that the unfortunate M. de Maisonneuve had lost his physician through sickness, appointed his personal doctor, named Jean Poupée, to accompany the former to Quebec from whence he came with him to (Montreal) Ville-Marie.

Monsieur de Maisonneuve understood immediately the explanations which Jeanne Mance gave to him regarding the situation in Quebec. Without hesitation he decided to survey his future domain as soon as possible, and categorically refused to accept the Island of Orleans near Quebec City, which was offered to him by the governor as a starting point for his settlement. The authorities in Quebec, in short, were against a separate, independent colony in Nouvelle France.

We see him therefore, on the 15th of October, 1641, inspecting the Island of Montreal, which he found very suitable for his plans. But he too realized then that it was too late to begin with the settlement during that fall. He returned with the governor of Quebec to his winter quarters in that city and on May 8, 1642, began with his company the historic trip to the island of his future residence. Père Vimont, Monsieur de Montmagny, the Governor, and Madame de Puiseaux, a friend of Jeanne Mance, as well as Madame de la Peltrie accompanied the colonists on their journey to the Island of Montreal. The party, under the leadership of M. de Maisonneuve, arrived there on May 17, 1642.

True to his famous words: ". . . And even if each tree on that Island of Montreal should be a savage, I would have to go there. God has commanded us." Monsieur de Maisonneuve was where God and La Compagnie wanted him to be.

Founding of Ville-Marie

It was late in the afternoon when they came near the island. The small flotilla of two boats (a three-master and a flat-bottom barge which was also equipped for sailing) had just arrived at the same historic site where Champlain, in 1611, had put up his tent. A clearing in the midst of the virgin forest which covered the Island of Montreal at that time, provided a safe and comfortable camping ground for our party.

Some, in particular, Jeanne Mance, were still gazing at the beauty of the surrounding shoreline, while the settlers unloaded the boats or prepared the tents. Here and there one of the men paused only long enough to dig up some earth and compare its smell and color with that of his "chère patrie," the Normandy or Brittany. It was a busy afternoon. M. de Maisonneuve,

with the governor and the ladies, went about to investigate the various clearings amongst the high, towering pines and cedars which, with their deep green crowns, gave this virgin island an impregnable atmosphere of security and prosperity. The small river near their landing place supplied clean drinking water, and before the sun set, one could see our grateful voyageurs kneeling once more to thank God for their first meal which they were about to take on the soil of their destiny. It was an impressive picture. The quaint little rosaries and crosses, brought from France, glittering in the golden evening sun, which gradually disappeared with the playful shadows of ancient trees; trees which were only marked by Indians and the sometimes too heavy burden of ice and snow. Soon the sentries for the night were posted and the boats securely anchored. The fires in front of the tents became smokier and smaller, until even the lonely musketeer on the outskirts of the encampment knew that sleep and dreams were preparing the tired "colons" and their leaders for another glorious day. We can still imagine his feelings during that night, for we know that those charming melodies of old France and the lofty hymns of praise which, from the approaching boats, that afternoon rose to heaven, had left their eternal echoes in the sacred enclosure of these groves. There, in the dark and peaceful forest and upon the gently rolling meadows covered with beautiful flowers, lay the fulfillment of his own dream. He saw it. For him and all those soundly asleep in the sturdy tents, it had become a reality.

The hours passed swiftly that night. Very early in the morning the camp resembled a hive humming with activity. Like the bees collecting their honey, so each member of the joyful party helped to carry wood, stones, or other supplies which they brought along for

the construction of the fort and the barracks, but above all, for an altar.

The ladies were busy, too. Jeanne Mance and her friends gathered flowers or were engaged in unpacking their jewelry cases, which contained some very valuable souvenirs from France. This was the day to look at them and to wear their best garments, whose perfume was a sweet reminder of the social life which they had left behind. It was the official and first celebration of Holy Mass at the foot of Mount Royal.

The men had just finished the rough woodwork of the altar when Jeanne Mance arrived, with white linen, bleached and pressed in France.

The First Mass

Together these kind ladies decorated the first altar with their most precious pearls and their gold and silver, as a symbol of their devotion and gratitude to God. The sun had risen again from behind those endless forests, and one could see and feel its healing rays waking up the birds and trees, and gently taking into the clouds the dew which had still covered the grass. By now everybody was ready for the glorious and memorable procession which Père Vimont led from the camp to the hastily built altar on top of the nearby hill. Those deep and melodious notes of the "colons" blended harmoniously with the sweet and clear voices of the few ladies. The last words of *Veni Creator* rang out of the wilderness as a solemn reminder to savage and soil that from now on this island had become a sacred place of worship.

Then Père Vimont celebrated Holy Mass "to ask from God a happy beginning for this work," as he said later. After the ceremony, during a short discourse which remains for all times one of the most prophetic and inspiring sermons to French Canadians, he re-

minded his people of their great mission as Catholics and colonists, as men and women who believed in God and whose faith could not be shaken under any circumstances, no matter how adverse these might be.

The Holy Sacrament was still exposed when the camp fires on that day began to send their yellowish red flames up to heaven. A historic day had come to an end. Ville Marie, the future City of Montreal, was born.

The Governor of Quebec and his party, except Madame de la Peltrie, soon left the Island. The inhabitants of this small village turned to their ploughs and their axes, without fear, knowing that Providence had prepared their future. Monsieur de Maisonneuve himself had felled the first tree on the island. The muskets rested peacefully in the Fort, while fences were erected around the houses. Jeanne Mance, during these first months, had a small, but separate place within the fort, where she dispensed such medical aid as was required. It was, so to speak, the first step to a hospital.

However, during the spring of 1643, the Indians returned to their annual hunting and fishing grounds. Life in the young colony, and in particular in the small but somewhat "larger" hospital which Jeanne Mance had by now constructed, had changed considerably. There were no more late evenings, when the songs and friendly calls of settlers could be heard on the other side of the river. Gone were the refreshing walks of our heroine into the silent forest or upon the hills, where she used to pick berries and gather herbs.

III. TRIALS OF THE FIRST HOSPITAL

FOR the first time Jeanne Mance felt the burning pain of her soldier patients, wounded by the poisoned arrows of the Iroquois. The plague and other diseases in France, which filled the hospitals in Paris, had somewhat prepared her for the worst. But over there, many doctors and nurses with "proper" training and instruments, and above all, within well heated hospitals, could combine their efforts and knowledge to meet any emergency. What a contrast! Here in the wilderness, where the water often froze on the table, behind a very hastily erected fence, at the foot of Mont Royal, there were carried to her bleeding and often fatally injured patients. Jeanne Mance and her helpers — the women of the first settlement — hearing the cries for help, immediately rushed out of the doors of the newly constructed hospital, which was a separate wooden structure, about 60 by 24 ft., connected with an oratory built of stone. Then and there, practical charity and real sacrifice intimately united with the Church as one great force, healing and comforting body and soul. The physical size of the two buildings or their appearance did not matter. Alone the action within held the answer to Life or Death!

La Compagnie de Montreal had sent some furniture, beds, and other equipment with much needed medical supplies for our heroine, so that soon even in appearance everybody could recognize the place as a "Hotel-Dieu," or House of God. The small crosses in the corners and near the beds, the rosaries and prayer books brought from France, provided great comfort

and strength, and the strong smell of cleansing solutions together with the spotless, white linen indicated "professional care." Large marble mortars with heavy pestles, which were used for grinding and mixing herbs and drugs, could not fail but impress the Governor and other high dignitaries from Quebec, visiting the Island from time to time. Some of these old containers can still be seen in Hotel-Dieu's historical collection.

A Balanced Diet

Its stables filled with two oxen, three cows, and twenty sheep, donated by "La Compagnie," increased the new hospital's independence in no small degree. For proper and wholesome food, drink, and shelter were even then considered of prime importance to the efficient functioning of a complete hospital service. Its meals may not have had the final touch of a learned dietitian as in our days, but they surely were popular for their tastiness and "generous quantities." It must have been a nicely balanced menu, if we judge by the long list of supplies which each boat brought for Jeanne Mance. No wonder that until not so long ago Hotel-Dieu's fame amongst the poor and hungry was based upon two outstanding facts: good food served generously and a hearty welcome to the sick and suffering. There were no charges or bills for patients. The administrator's system of economy and the charitable hand of Madame du Bullion looked after that part of the "cure."

The permanent danger from the Iroquois necessitated — during day and night — a military watch around the hospital. Under such conditions life in the first Hotel-Dieu became in every respect a community affair.

Soldiers on watch became part of the personnel, their wives and sweethearts helped too, whenever they



SISTER MORIN, 1649-1730

were needed. The tolling of the small bell (which is still in the possession of Hotel-Dieu) arousing the community to danger or telling them of the passing of one of their friends, could be heard in each block-house. And with it started a series of questions, mostly answered by those who asked them. "For whom is that?" "Is it a fire?" "Are the savages back again?" These three simple, direct questions dominated for many years the life of the young colony. Hardly had a settler started out into the woods to find a new opening where he could begin plowing, when the shrill war cries of the Indians would tell the soldiers in Ville Marie that their comrade was either wounded or killed.

An Emergency

On such a day, about the year 1652, our first hospital on the Island of Montreal resembled a very busy place. Shall you and I once more return in spirit to Ville Marie and mingle with the crowd which assembles just now in front of the main entrance to the hospital?

Look at their faces, hard and grim. There are by now more women than men. Nearly all of the latter are still out helping the soldiers. The shooting is not so far off; very likely just behind the hill which can be seen from where we and about twenty-five women and children stand. The gate of the outer fence is still closed, but the soldiers nearby are preparing for the return of a wounded comrade. We can see it. They run back and forth from the hospital to the one corner, near the tower which guards the fence where a sort of "field ambulance station" has hastily been erected. There they take bandages and linen sheets, water and blankets from the storeroom of the hospital. A few minutes later we hear the crowd whispering: She is coming! Can you see her? There they go!

Jeanne is just going over with her hands full of small bottles and instruments, following Jean Pouppe, the Monsieur le docteur of the hospital, who had a few minutes earlier — at the sound of the bell — interrupted his usual visit to the sick in the block-houses of the settlement. It is 10 a. m. Everybody in Ville Marie is busy and most of its inhabitants are near the hospital, looking anxiously over its surrounding fence, watching the expected arrival of some of the wounded men. Of course, by now it is clear that the attackers were many more in numbers than at first presumed. The Governor, M. de Maisonneuve, prepared Jeanne Mance and Dr. Pouppe with the words: "It will be a hard day for you." The crowd, in the meantime, is getting nervous. No sign of the men yet? No, is the answer. The women mention the name Major Lambert Closse, and we can see how their faces radiate with new hope. "Yes, he has gone immediately," said one of the watch.

It was he who defended the hospital so gallantly on July 26, 1651, when two hundred Iroquois attacked it. He was outnumbered — 200 to 16 — and had to fight from six o'clock in the morning till six at night, losing only one of his men.

Unfortunately this great victory did not bring the long desired peace which was needed for the progressive development of the colony. On the contrary, it was after this battle that the hospital and all houses not within the walls of the fort had to be temporarily evacuated.

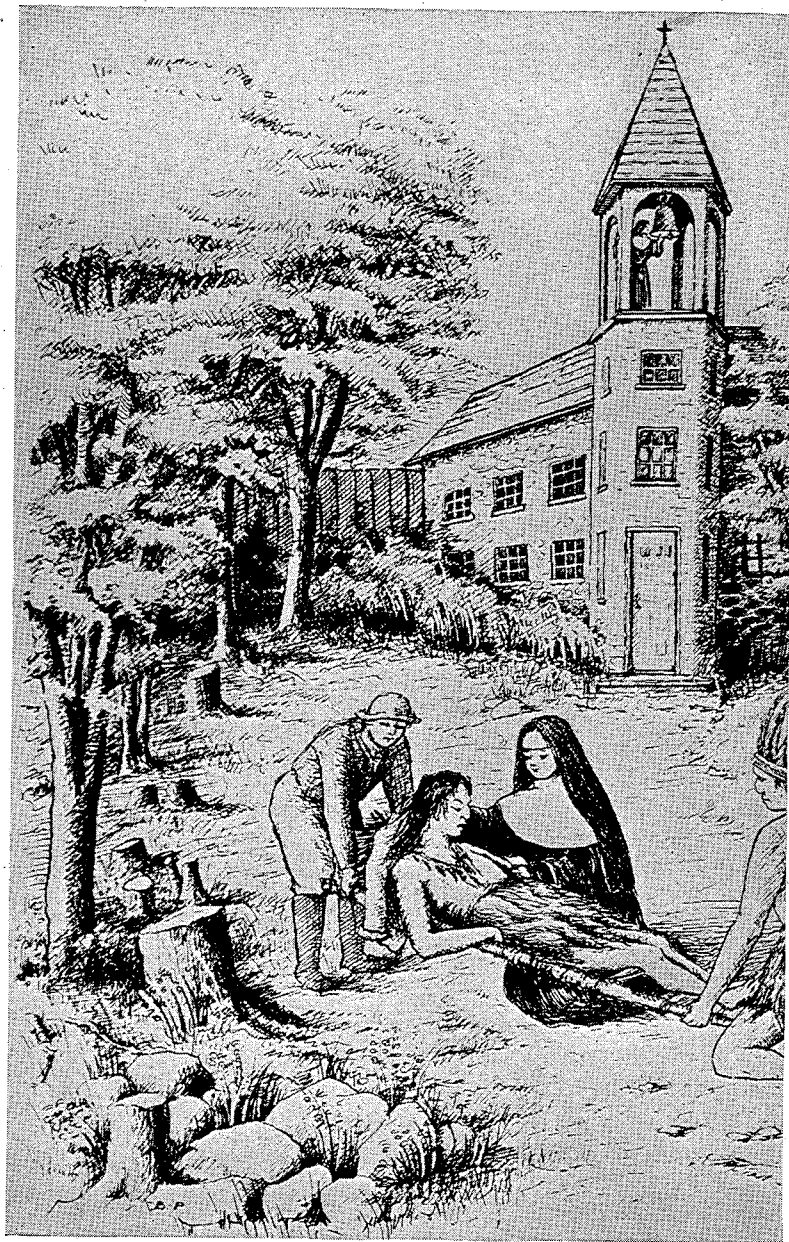
Priest, Doctor, and Nurse

The people around us know all about it. Their hope lies with Jeanne Mance and the doctor. These two appear somewhat worried but not confused. Everything is in readiness for the emergency. Even

the hospital, which a few days before had been empty, was again prepared to receive patients. The priest, Father Ragueneau, in front of the small chapel, is about to join those waiting at the entrance of the outer wall. He knows that these men who live as Christians do not want to die without the comforting assistance of the Church. None are strangers to him. Ville Marie is too small, too Christian, and too much like one family to escape his kind attention. After all, it is the Church and the hospital, which created it. Many of these children whom we see and hear around us, calling their parents or crying for hunger and fear, were baptized by him, with Jeanne Mance as god-mother. She knows each one of them by name, for most likely she assisted at their birth.

So, while brave soldiers protected their fellow men, and defended their newly won farmlands, however small they were, these women, under the leadership of Jeanne Mance, united for action at a moment's notice to help nurse and dress their wounds.

Suddenly a loud military command from one of the soldiers tells us that the gate will be opened and that all of us should look for shelter in case the poisoned arrows follow our wounded and therefore retreating men. We can plainly see two bleeding faces creeping down the small path which leads to the gate. One seems to be that of our Huron convert, who so faithfully stands by our side, and the other is soon recognized by his wife, who is waiting with us for his safe return. Between them, wrapped in an overcoat, they carry a seemingly lifeless bundle. Is it the missing settler who first met the Iroquois that day? The doctor signals for more help and soon all of us do something; kindle fires for more hot water, bring our reserves of liquor and wine, even help the men as soon as they approach the gates, reaching safety.



CARING FOR THE WOUNDED INDIANS

A Fallen Hero

Now they are with us. Their dying comrade is still able to pray with Father while the others lie moaning and bleeding under the tree until the first dressings are applied. Jeanne Mance works fast. Hardly has Jean Pouppe removed the last splinters from the arrows when she, with her delicate hands, starts gently washing and cleansing the wounds. The dressing is about to begin. With motherly care she covers each cut until at last her patient feels that she has done her part. One of the two men is carried home by friends, the other into the hospital and the third, their beloved comrade in arms and fellow at the plow, is dead. There was no help for him, except Father's praying hand. His scalp was cut and his eyes and face savagely burned with a torch. He was the first one they treated, but still too late. His body is later removed to the chapel, where we all pay homage to a hero and friend who gave his life in our defense.

The others return in the afternoon and three more have to stay in the hospital after a "field dressing." Shortly before the bell tolls for vespers, its slow and solemn voice rings out in woe for the fallen son of Ville Marie. Jeanne Mance, the Governor, and many others who had worked and fought with him, pray for his soul.

The women and children have gone home with their tired musketeers. Within and around the hospital peace has returned. We too return to our blockhouse and discuss on our way home the events of the closing day. Another attack was beaten off.

Life in the settlement varied greatly, depending upon the season and the new crews which La Compagnie could send from France. It was not all gloom, as some sources have pictured it. In fact, the good

humor and the wine imported from France helped a great deal in strengthening the morale of these first pioneers.

Sunday Gatherings

Apart from the joyful arrival of ships, there was a rather well developed social activity. Sunday, more than any other day in the week, saw the colonists exchanging visits and ideas, be it in front of their homes or on the banks of the St. Lawrence River, wherever they had decided upon, after Mass, in the morning. Holy Mass and those little chats in front of the church door determined the program for their Sunday. Jeanne Mance, as usual, saw many of her friends or was once more accepting the responsibility of a godmother. Small groups of men not far from the church — we may presume they were in a respectful distance from their priest — talked very loudly about his official announcement made in front of the church right after Mass. It contained news from France and he spoke of some changes within the colony itself. There was work to be done on the fort, and some houses which the Indians had burned down, had to be rebuilt. All this was part of a service which the priest, as a true Father of the settlement, had to perform. He directed the activities and thoughts of his sheep and they in turn trusted him, realizing that his experience and goodwill were the key to their own happiness. Without this all-round leadership of the Church, we can safely assume Montreal would never have become the largest city of Canada.

The courage and wisdom shown by the priests and other administrators of the colony was bound to make a favorable impression upon the members of "La Compagnie" in France and all those who at times became doubtful and pessimistic regarding the real purpose and success of the settlement. As a matter of fact,

whenever there was such a crisis, Jeanne Mance herself, as cofoundress of Ville Marie and its first lady, who, together with the Governor, Monsieur de Maisonneuve, not only decided questions pertaining to her hospital but the whole new colony, saw to it that a solution was found. The health of her settlers was naturally her first concern, but she also cared for their social and economic problems. She co-ordinated the various responsible forces, and bought with her own funds necessities which those pioneers needed in order to stay in Ville Marie. When once in 1649 some discrediting rumors about Ville Marie circulated in Quebec and France, Jeanne Mance did not wait for authorities at home to deny them, but went straight to their source. From Quebec, without further delay, she sailed for France, where she met Madame de Bullion and a mere handful of other loyal members of "La Compagnie," led by Monsieur de la Dauversiere. Baron de Renty had died on April 24, 1649, at the age of 37. The situation was indeed grave. The existence of Ville Marie (Montreal) and her hospital depended upon the outcome of her visit. Her objectives were: a reorganization of the "home front," composed of the "Associates of our Lady" (Associés de Notre Dame) who remained faithful to their pledged cause, and a meeting with Madame de Bullion, whose loyalty could never be doubted. She wanted to give her a full explanation of her work and the progress of the hospital.

On March 21, 1650, the said Society was reorganized and Monsieur Olier became its director, while Monsieur Segulier was officially appointed its secretary. The heavy burden of "Procureur" or general manager was still left upon the shoulders of Monsieur Le Royer de la Dauversiere. Jeanne Mance's energetic appeal for more members and greater sacrifices was not in

vain. Soon new funds were secured. Madame de Bullion readily gave more than ever before and La Compagnie too — on March 8, 1650 — donated 200 acres of land on the Island of Montreal to Hotel-Dieu.

In addition to these successes, Jeanne Mance on the 28th of October, 1650, arrived at Ville Marie with a solemn and — for the future of her colony — most important promise from Monsieur Olier. He had told her that as soon as, in her opinion, the time was opportune, he would send some of his priests to Montreal.

With her came a few men who knew how to clear land and some girls who could help her in the hospital. This additional help and also a large amount of ammunition became especially important on such days as we have described before, when the Indians descended upon the colony with torch and arrow. Neither Major Lambert Closse nor the other heroes after him could have been successful without the reinforcements and material means which Jeanne Mance alone could secure from France.

Her work and her word were Madame de Bullion's only security for the many thousands of pounds which she gave to the hospital.

The Colony Is Saved

During the summer of 1651, the attacks of the Iroquois became very fierce. The defenders lost many men and it was obvious that the Indians were preparing themselves for an all-out assault in the near future. The only solution was: another trip to France by the Governor, to appeal for more soldiers for the defense. To raise more recruits, Monsieur de Maisonneuve needed a large sum of money and also some time. There were neither funds nor very much time left to save the settlement. Everybody except Jeanne

Mance considered the chances for a successful survival of the young colony as very slight. Monsieur de Maisonneuve, when leaving for France on November 5, 1651, left little hope with Jeanne for his return. He knew perhaps more about the difficulties of getting new recruits, and to find a hundred of them was certainly no easy task. But here again we see Jeanne Mance successfully playing her part as "Mother of the Colony," in the best interests of Ville Marie and Hotel-Dieu. Seeing the danger so clearly, she did not hesitate to give Monsieur de Maisonneuve 22,000 pounds which were actually funds entrusted to her for Hotel-Dieu. Without this generous and, as events later showed, wise action, which involved a certain amount of independence and courage on Jeanne's part, no reinforcements would have reached Montreal in time to save the settlement. Apart from these 22,000 pounds, Madame de Bullion, who, of course, gladly approved her decision, donated another 20,000 pounds for the same cause when the Governor of Montreal visited her upon his arrival in France. In this way the money needed for the security of Montreal was raised. Recruiting could begin and, thanks to the untiring efforts of Monsieur de la Dauversiere, this too ended satisfactorily, although it took longer than expected by Jeanne Mance and Major Lambert Closse, who replaced Monsieur de Maisonneuve during the latter's absence.

On September 22, 1653, our heroine welcomed the Governor and his party upon his arrival in Quebec. With him came also Marguerite Bourgeoys, who became not only a very intimate friend of Jeanne Mance, but the first and unforgettable school teacher of Nouvelle France.

Now, life once more could continue in Ville Marie with new hope for everybody. Soon the first "real"

hospital became too small. Casualties, accidents and in general the growth of the colony made an increasingly greater demand upon Jeanne Mance's charitable services than at first anticipated. So, in the spring of 1654 another hospital, the second Hotel-Dieu, was built and occupied by Jeanne Mance. This building, constructed of wood, plaster, and stone, measured about 80 ft. in length, was 30 ft. wide, and 20 ft. high.

About the same time (1654) the construction of a new church, close to the hospital, was also begun. Two years later, the name of St. Joseph, in whose honor the cornerstone was laid, appeared more than ever before as the center of devotion and prayer within its walls.

Life became more peaceful in Ville Marie, its inhabitants, always loyal to God and their devoted leaders of Church and State, developed the land which for years had been their field of battle with the Iroquois. Monsieur de Maisonneuve ceded Jeanne Mance more land in recognition of her kindness in having twice saved Ville Marie, and the hospital continued its march of progress without serious interruption, except for the danger of fires from surrounding houses.

Spiritual Leaders

Jeanne Mance and Monsieur de Maisonneuve soon felt that this was the best time for Monsieur Olier to realize his own spiritual plans for the Island of Montreal. Their desire to have his Saint-Sulpician Fathers in Ville Marie developed rapidly into a formal request, when Jeanne Mance heard of their Superior's sickness. Her personal letter to Monsieur Olier, however, brought no immediate result. She was equally anxious to have the Hospitallers of St. Joseph, who, in the meantime, prepared themselves in La Fleche, come to Canada, so that God's divine plan could be carried out while she was still able actively to assist.

IV. THE SERVICE AND GROWTH OF HOTEL-DIEU

THERE was not much time to be lost. Jeanne Mance knew it better than any other person of the settlement. The Fathers of La Compagnie de Saint-Sulpice and the Hospitallers of St. Joseph simply had to come to Montreal as soon as possible.

While the Governor, M. de Maisonneuve, did his best during his visit to France to prepare for the departure of both the Fathers and the Hospitallers, our heroine, Jeanne Mance, on January 28, 1657, suffered a serious accident when she fell on the ice of the St. Lawrence River. A severe fracture of the right forearm developed into such a complicated case that her physician, Dr. Etienne Bouchard, and another in Quebec City, advised her to go to France for a further examination and possible treatment.

Jeanne at first hesitated. Then, after the arrival of her Governor with four spiritual sons of Monsieur Olier in Ville Marie, and the definite news that the Hospitallers of St. Joseph were soon ready to come, she decided to make another trip to France, not forgetting the future temporal needs of the Sisters in whose hands she wanted to entrust her own work. Another appeal to Madame de Bullion for help, a personal visit to the Sisters, and the cure of her arm were her objectives. On September 29, 1658, Jeanne Mance, with the blessings of Monsieur de Queylus, the Superior of the Saint Sulpician Mission in Montreal, left for France. Monsieur Gabriel Souart, the first priest of Ville Marie, and two other Sulpician Missionaries, Monsieur Dominique Gallinier and Monsieur Antoine d'Allet, under the able guidance of their

Superior, began immediately after their arrival the transformation of Ville Marie from a missionary post into a parish. For two years they occupied two rooms within the hospital, until the arrival of the Hospitaliers in 1659.

Jeanne Mance was accompanied by Marguerite Bourgeoys, who, like our heroine, needed more help for her educational work amongst the settlers. They arrived in La Flèche on December 24, 1658.

Success and a Miracle

After the celebration of Christmas with the Sisters of Hotel-Dieu of La Flèche and a meeting with Monsieur de la Dauversiere, neither Jeanne Mance nor Marguerite Bourgeoys were in doubt about their main objective. Both knew that they would soon return to Canada with the first Hospitaliers of St. Joseph at their side. Their talks about the hospital and the grateful settlers, about the need for more help in every way, were not in vain, apart from the fact that the Sisters in La Flèche realized themselves that the time had actually come for a final decision.

By now Jeanne Mance was strong enough to travel again. Marguerite Bourgeoys had gone to the Champagne while the former stayed in Paris for various visits. She also consulted the Chief Surgeon of the King regarding her arm. But nobody was able to help her. Then, on February 2, the Feast of the Purification of the Holy Virgin, she decided to visit the Seminary of the Sulpician Fathers. She knew that Monsieur Olier had died on April 2, 1657, and was informed that his heart was piously preserved in a special leaden container within the Seminary. After her conference with Monsieur de Bretonvilliers, the successor to Monsieur Olier, she attended Mass, unaware of the great miracle which God seemed to have in store for her. Her own words describe best what happened:

After having held the small container with the heart of M. Olier in my left hand and while meditating upon the graces which God had granted through this saintly heart, I placed it upon my right hand which was still completely covered with bandages and was held in place by a sling, whereupon I immediately felt that my hand became free and that it could carry without support the leaden container wherein the heart was preserved; the use of my hand had returned at that moment.

After thanking God for having granted her this great favor, Jeanne continued her visits in the capitol of France. Madame de Bullion received her as seldom before. Rejoicing with her about the miraculous healing of her arm and the joyful news about the decision arrived at in La Flèche, she gave Mlle. Mance the sum of 22,000 pounds, of which 20,000 pounds were to be invested to produce a yearly pension of 1000 pounds for the maintenance of the four Sisters who were soon to go to Montreal, and the rest was to be used to cover the expenses of that profitable voyage of her protégé. Besides these gifts, an unknown benefactress gave her several valuable ornaments which she could use in the decoration of the new parish church of Ville Marie.

Finally on March 29, 1659, the memorable contract was signed between Mlle. Mance and M. de la Dauversiere, stipulating "That the 'Associates' (the Members of the Society of our Lady of Montreal) should send — without delay three Hospitaliers and one servant from the Order of Hospitaliers of La Flèche to Montreal, and none from any other community; further, that Mlle. Mance should remain the chief administrator of the hospital for the rest of her life" and "that regular daily prayers should be offered by the Sisters for their founders and patrons, etc." Then

it became clear to all that from now on the future development of Ville Marie and its hospital was assured.

The First Sisters

Who were those first Sisters chosen by their founder to go to Ville Marie? Their names and deeds are too well known by now, to be dwelt upon at great length on this occasion: Mother Judith Moreau de Bresoles, Sister Catherine Mace, and Sister Marie Maillet. Who has not heard of them? These were the first and territorially most advanced hospital missionaries in Nouvelle France. To them fell the great task to keep up and to extend the good work of Jeanne Mance.

Before their departure Sister Judith de Bresoles was appointed Superior with Sister Mace as her assistant, while Sister Maillet took charge of the Depository. All was well and ready for their departure when suddenly, like so many times before, everything appeared to be lost and the whole plan threatened to become a fiasco. First, M. de la Dauversiere took sick, then some competitive forces tried to discourage the new colonization efforts and later even riots broke out with the sole aim of preventing the departure of these Sisters who were eager to be on their way. Jeanne Mance and Marguerite Bourgeoys waited patiently in La Rochelle. With them were some Sulpician Fathers, who followed those already busily engaged in the Parish of Ville Marie, and four other girls who accompanied Mlle. Bourgeoys to Montreal. All were inspired by the same love and devotion to the Holy Family. Their ship, the St. Andre, prepared to sail.

M. de la Dauversiere, standing for the last time on the bridge of this ship, asked God's holy blessing upon the work of his foundation in Montreal. Who could have imagined at that time that soon he was to

sail himself — not into the wilderness of Canada — but along the waters of Eternal Peace.

This scene of departure became famous because it really marked the beginning of the work of the Hospitallers of Saint-Joseph upon this Continent. Far beyond this, it represents until this day, and let us hope for all time to come, the transformation of the hard-working, faithful M. de la Dauversiere, who worried and suffered most of his life for his spiritual daughters, into a spirit whose force and guidance can still be felt wherever there is a Hospitaller of St. Joseph, a true Catholic and a generous and charitable heart. His earthly ship was thus launched.

M. de la Dauversiere Dies

On November 6, 1659, at the age of nearly 63 years, this great founder of Hotel-Dieu died at La Flèche, just as he lived and worked all his life: in poverty and with the unshaken faith that God would continue, through the Sisters, the development of his beloved Institute.

The trip of the St. Andre from La Rochelle to Canada again proved very difficult. The St. Andre left La Rochelle on July 2, 1659, and did not arrive in Quebec until September 7 of the same year. Typhoid fever and other diseases had severely and in some cases fatally attacked the ship's company, so that our first Hospitallers were kept on "day and night duty" for many weeks.

Hospitallers Arrive

After a short stay in Quebec, we find Mother de Bresoles, on October 2, 1659, being officially installed as Superior of the small but most promising Community.

Life within the hospital and Ville Marie was marked by the great faith and patience which distinguished the early Sisters from France. Inspired and aided by their chief administrator — Jeanne Mance — they prepared their own medicines from herbs grown in their beautiful cloister gardens. The Sisters accepted the hardship and suffering of Canadian winters and the repeated attacks of Indians in the same heroic manner as their leader, “the Angel of the Colony,” whose health, after the accident, gave great concern to the Sisters and the colony. Although she still remained very active in the hospital and social life of the Community of Ville Marie, those about her realized that she was nearing the end of her earthly journey.

However, not before performing another great and historically important act did our heroine close her eyes forever.

Once more, as new dangers approached, she saved the colony with the money entrusted to her and for the last time she went to France with the Governor, M. de Maisonneuve, to make another personal appeal for funds and new recruits to Madame de Bullion and the members of the Society of Montreal.

During this final visit to France, Jeanne Mance, on March 9, 1663, also took part in the ceremony which transferred all legal rights and privileges of the Society of Montreal to the “Gentlemen of the Seminary of Saint Sulpice of Paris.” This act, seen in the true light of our present-day knowledge of the events of her time, once and for all gave to Jeanne Mance the assurance that her hospital and the new settlement would live forever.

Jeanne Mance Goes to God

After her return to Canada, her health gave rise to even greater anxiety amongst the Sisters who saw their

beloved foundress during her daily walks and later nursed her, who above anyone else had cared all her life for others. Finally, on June 18, 1673, at 10 p.m., Mlle. Jeanne Mance followed M. de la Dauversiere into Eternity, deeply regretted and sincerely enshrined in the hearts of all citizens of Ville Marie.

What this first Canadian lay nurse did for the Hospitallers of St. Joseph, for Ville Marie, and in the end for Canada and the United States, can hardly be exaggerated. She not only laid the foundation for one hospital and its various functions — technically and socially — but she also, as a lay nurse, initiated a social service during her many visits of sickbeds in block houses and tents, which deserves our highest admiration. A true pioneer, a devout Catholic, and an heroic woman had left this world.

May her courage and faith continue to guide and inspire all those who so generously follow her brilliant example of charity and whose prayers and services are dedicated to the sick and poor.

In our story we are now entering a new period in the life of the Hospitallers of Saint Joseph. Their charity and kindness toward the sick and suffering, and the ever increasing demand upon their services would fill many more pages in this series. Many books and articles were published in recent years, paying tribute to this later period, so that I will not attempt at this time to repeat or tell in greater detail their glorious story. Instead, let us briefly review this period in its relation to the continued growth and scientific progress of the hospital, although we must keep in mind the great spiritual conquest which at all times has accompanied the charitable service of these Sisters.

For many years the Hospitallers worked in close cooperation with their Mother House in La Flèche.

They took care of all sick and wounded within the vicinity of Montreal, even from the district around Lake Champlain (in 1756) and from Belle-Riviere (Ohio). Three large fires within forty years, plagues and epidemics, endangered more than once the very existence of this only hospital of Ville Marie. But in spite of all hardship, Hotel-Dieu served for nearly two centuries as the only military and civil hospital on the Island of Montreal.

At the end of the sixteenth century the settlement had grown considerably and a number of girls from Ville Marie were ready to dedicate their lives to the noble task of the Hospitallers. They took their places besides those who until that time had come from France.

Congregation Recognized

The Institute in the meantime also won full recognition from the Church and State, and the "Congregation of the Daughters of St. Joseph" had already become (on January 8, 1666), through Papal decree, the "Institute of Religious Hospitallers of Saint Joseph," governed by the rules of Saint Augustine.

The Sisters, in the year 1677, took complete charge of all administrative matters concerning the hospital, although their gratitude toward the "Gentlemen of Montreal" found at all times a sincere expression in their cordial relations and mutual assistance.

In 1760 the French rule in Canada had ended. The King of England became its sovereign and between the years 1776 and 1777 the wards and cloister gardens of Hotel-Dieu were filled with wounded soldiers. All races and creeds were represented. The American Declaration of Independence and its consequences kept Hotel-Dieu busier than ever.

Under these circumstances there was, of course, not much time for the Sisters to think of new foundations

or an extension of their Order on this Continent. Both regimes, the French and the English, appreciated the voluntary charitable service which they received from Hotel-Dieu and always treated the Sisters during these troublesome years with the greatest respect. Some figures of this period aptly illustrate their work and sacrifices, if we keep in mind that all medical supplies had to be imported from overseas.

Between 1776 and 1777 more than two thousand English soldiers were treated within its walls.

From 1760 to 1860 the Sisters nursed nearly 87,400 patients, and to bring this figure up to date and also as a matter of comparison, I should like to say here that from 1860 to 1939 nearly 261,900 sick found a friendly welcome at the doors of Hotel-Dieu.

Not until the beginning of the nineteenth century had these poor Sisters time and means enough to think of another foundation outside of Montreal. A list of their various houses, with the date of their foundation, may help us to realize the rapid growth which began in 1845 and has continued until this very day.

Foundations in Canada

- Hotel-Dieu of Kingston, Ontario (1845).
- Hotel-Dieu, Chatham, New Brunswick (1865).
- Hotel-Dieu, St. Basile, New Brunswick (1875).
- Hotel-Dieu, Arthabaska, Quebec (1884).
- Two hospitals at Campbellton, New Brunswick and one at Windsor, Ontario, followed in 1888.
- Hotel-Dieu, Tracadie, New Brunswick (1890).
- Cornwall's Hotel Dieu was founded in 1897.
- Hotel-Dieu, Valle de Lourdes, New Brunswick (1931).
- Hotel-Dieu, Barrhead, Alberta (1940).

Foundations in the U. S. A.

- Fanny Allen Hospital, Winooski, Vermont (1894).

St. Bernard's Hospital, Chicago, Illinois (1903).
Hotel-Dieu, Polson, Montana (1916).
St. Joseph's Hospital, Hartford, Wisconsin (1920).
Bishop de Goesbriand Hospital, Burlington, Vermont (1924).
Community Hospital, New London, Wisconsin (1926).

Langlade County Memorial Hospital, Antigo, Wisconsin (1933).

St. George's Hospital, Chicago, Illinois (1939).

Hôtel-Dieu, Van Buren, Maine (1939).

Toward the middle of the nineteenth century the old buildings on St. Paul Street became too small. Ville Marie soon changed into a real city and was called Montreal. In 1861 Hotel-Dieu's present hospital, with about 350 beds, was constructed and later on improved and enlarged by various additional wings.

300 Years of Service

This year, the Hospitallers of St. Joseph celebrate their three hundredth anniversary with the opening of their latest "wing," named after their venerable founder, M. de la Dauversiere. With these new facilities, Hotel-Dieu of Montreal can accommodate about six hundred beds and its Hospitallers, under the able leadership of their Superior, Reverend Mother Allard, and in cooperation with their medical staff and nurses can, without interruption, continue their historic march of progress. So far the highlights of Hotel-Dieu's development.

Many interesting people, prominent in the history of France, Canada, and the U. S. A. have contributed to its growth and happiness. The Hospitallers are fully aware of this fact. Names like "Fanny Allen" mean to them a history as glorious as any of the earlier days. Governors and heroes have come to this shrine

of Catholic Charity to pay tribute to the heroines of the past and admire the courage and faith, the spiritual and professional perfection which dominates within those ancient walls of Hotel-Dieu.

A wonderful museum, with a priceless historic collection, may some day show you, when you visit these Sisters in Montreal, how Providence has so successfully guided them and their City to the realization of every detail contained in the now famous visionary plans of its beloved founders, M. de la Dauversiere, Jeanne Mance, and Madame de Bullion. May their names live forever!