



ORIGIN OF THE SISTERS OF ST. ANN



"Such a determination is most weighty," said the Bishop, "and requires mature deliberation as well as the moral certainty that it is the will of God."

"I know that my project is beyond any means of mine, either natural or supernatural, but I believe that God wants me to be His instrument and I am ready for any sacrifice. I cannot rest satisfied unless I try to do something towards promoting this new organization."

"I advise you to examine, study, and discuss every aspect of your proposed religious undertaking that you may find out if your resolution springs from mere human enthusiasm, or from the Holy Ghost. Your primary duty is to weigh all things well. Meanwhile, you may associate pious young women with your work."

Miss Blondin took her leave of the Bishop in the following words, now so treasured by the hundreds who have since called her their Mother-Foundress: "I am not deceived as to the trials and labours which await me in the new path I feel myself called to tread, but Almighty God, so rich in His benefits, has never forsaken those who place their trust in His Providence."

Encouraged by His Lordship's approval, Miss Blondin returned to Vandreuil and resumed her duties at the head of the Young Ladies' Boarding and Day School. This "Pension" had been opened by Miss Susan Pinault in 1833. Becoming more and more favourably known, its increasing roll made an assistant necessary. But Miss Pinault would accept only one whose chief motive, like hers, was to give religion the foremost place in the system of education. Miss Esther Blondin was this desirable person. She had been recommended by two Sisters of the Congregation who had received hospitality at the Pension.

Miss Blondin's resolve to open a novitiate in which she would be the first probationist for the projected Order, made no perceptible change in the school schedule, but the directress made known her intention of forming into a religious body the young ladies who wished to consecrate their lives to God by placing their natural abilities at the service of the young, the sick, and the poor, through the vows of religion.

The invitation met a much felt need and found fervid response. The long warring struggles in the Atlantic Provinces being now over, the construction period began. Schools and charitable institutions were erected in towns and villages with an activity and zeal which would have surpassed the means of the impoverished inhabitants, had not their esteem for learning prevailed over every difficulty.