

to come to Montreal. Urged by the bishops of Kingston and of Montreal they take over the spiritual charge of Catholics in Bytown and the Ottawa Valley.

In 1847 Rev. Father Guigues, O.M.I., is chosen first bishop of Ottawa. One of his first steps, the very year after his appointment, though the organization of an immense diocese seemed to call for all his attention, is to open a college for higher studies. So backward necessarily was education among Catholics in this part of the country that the Bishop was constrained to call upon his fellow religious, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the only priests on the spot, to supply both professors and resources for the proposed establishment.

Nothing, perhaps, was farther from the dreams of the Oblate Fathers than an undertaking, the magnitude of whose consequences they certainly were unable to foresee. From the Middle Ages down, the numerous renowned Universities of the Old World, of which Popes and Princes were happy to be patrons and protectors, owed existence and development, for the most part, to Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits and other religious bodies. The Congregation of the Oblates was too young to entertain ambition of this nature. The express, if not the sole, object of their Institute was to preach missions to populations most bereft of the benefits of religion. The accomplishment of this object seemed to call for all their resources. They were just then on the threshold of that remarkable expansion which in a few years multiplied their establishments not only at home, but abroad throughout Canada, the United States, England, Ireland, the Northwest of America, Texas, Italy, Spain, Germany, Ceylon, South and West Africa and Western Australia. But the time was come when the Oblates of Mary Immaculate would be obliged, in America at least, to accept their share of the work in the interests of the higher education. To this effect, Bishop Guigues was the instrument to further the designs of Providence. By him was cast into a soil long prepared, the germ of the future Catholic University which in its turn would not lack patrons and protectors.

The first College was a poor affair, located somewhere near the present Cathedral. The fact that from its class-rooms issued