

Pioneer Social Work

For four years Marguerite found herself sadly needed as a social worker among the bachelor artizan-soldiers of the fort and the newcomers (about a hundred) who began to take up land and build their homes on what was to be St. Paul street. Then too she had to organize the girls, who had come over with her, and to help them to manage their households. In the spring of 1657 she was helped by the settlers she had aided, to lay the stone foundations of the first Bonsecours church, which she wished to be a place of pious pilgrimage and also, according to Montgolfier, a meeting place for the young women whom she especially desired to organize. Although the work was suspended that autumn, she had the satisfaction of seeing the little shrine erected in 1675—the first stone church in Montreal—and opened as a place of pilgrimage and a chapel of ease for the Sulpicians who still have charge today.

The Sulpician "Seigneurs"

In July, 1657, the long expected Sulpicians arrived to be the permanent resident clergy and to relieve the Jesuits, who by agreement had the care of the Mission until the congregation of priests founded in 1642 especially for the Montreal venture, by Jean Jacques Olier, at St. Sulpice in Paris, had been trained. The Abbe Olier would have come himself but he died on April 2, 1657, shortly before their departure. It must be remembered that Olier was, with De la Dauversiere, the co-founder of the Company of Montreal, whose members had maintained the upkeep of the settlement out of their private pockets, not for gain but to rear up a young church at Ville Marie which