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The Oldest Living Sister of Charity.

GEO. BARTON IN DONALDHOE'S.

If nobility of character, earnestness and purity of purpose, great natural executive ability, together with unaffected piety and humility, count for anything in this uncertain world, Sister Mary Gonzaga of Philadelphia will rank high in the bright galaxy of women whose lives have illumined the history of Catholic Sisterhoods in the United States. Sister Gonzaga has a remarkably long and eventful history. Celebrating her golden jubilee more than eighteen years ago, she can look back over a series of years in the course of which she has been teacher, nurse, Mother Superior, head of a large orphan asylum, and the executive of a great military hospital, where nearly fifty thousand sick and wounded soldiers received the self-sacrificing attention of a staff of forty Sisters of Charity. Sister Gonzaga, who is credited with being the oldest living Sister of Charity in the United States, is now spending the tranquil evening of a busy

and eventful life, as the Mother Emeritus of St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum, one of the magnificent charities of the City of Brotherly Love.

This venerable woman's name in the world was Mary Agnes Grace. She came from a respected Baltimore family, and was born in that city in 1812. In December, 1823, she was sent to St. Joseph's Academy, Emmitsburg, Maryland, and the four years she spent in this institution helped to make that certain foundation upon which her subsequent successful career was built. She had early conceived the idea of retiring from the world and devoting her life entirely to the service of God. Accordingly on March 11, 1827, she was received into the community of the Sisters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul. In April, 1828, in company with Sister Stanislaus McGinnis and Sister Lucy Ignatius, Sister Gonzaga went to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, to open a school. On the 25th of March, 1830, she made her holy vows, and two months later was sent to Philadelphia to St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum, with which her future years were to be so intimately connected.