



ORIGIN OF THE SISTERS OF ST. ANN



"Mother," she said one day, "I do so want to wear a frilled cap like the Sisters. Will you not let me go and be one of them?"

"My child, wearing the frilled cap does not make the nun. That is a childish and unworthy motive for so holy a calling."

Day after day the child coaxed, and always her mother treated the subject as a child's whim. Finally, to put an end to these importunities, she called on Mother Mary Ann. "I am rather confused at troubling you for a fancy of my daughter's, but she gives me no peace with her entreaties to have me ask you to receive her. I am sure she does not know what becoming a religious means, because she is only fourteen and plays more than she works."

Looking into the eager, smiling face with her soul-penetrating eyes, Mother Mary Ann asked, "What is your wish, my child?"

"To wear a frilled cap and dress like you," was the guileless answer.

The good widowed mother felt she could sink through the floor with mortification at this childish admission, but the wise Mother General smiled approvingly; she could read deeper. In the clear, animated eyes of the young applicant, she saw that this attraction for a sombre garb and veiled head rather than for gay beribboned attire—as inexplicable as the preference of the violet for shady places—was the germinating seed of a vocation, irresistibly pushed forward in the garden of Convent life.

Admitted into her wished-for element, the girl of fourteen accepted the rule gaily. Rising before five at all seasons, obeying a bell which twenty times a day notified her to go from prayer to work, and from school to recreation; going through a sort of apprenticeship in the many occupations which fill a Sister's daily programme; accepting agreeably the contradictions which mould character—such were the exercises of this young novice during two years. So congenial were they to her that she took them upon herself forever.

A few years later, she came to Vancouver Island where, as Sister Mary Bonsecours, she gave the fruit of this training for forty-five years. The orphans, especially, reaped the biggest part of this harvest. The native and half-breed children, also, received a plentiful share. In pre-trained-nurse times, this up-and-doing Sister ministered much in the houses of the sick. Later on, the Victoria and Alaska hospitals knew the skill of her hands and the compassion of her heart.

Convent rule is conducive to long life. This professed of sixteen lived to celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of her taking the vows, known as a "Sister's Golden Jubilee." The event took place in Victoria. St.