

things existing at "the Point". Sister McMullen who was then Superior proceeded thither and after a brief examination of the premises, applied to the authorities for permission to act. This being all too readily granted, she spoke as follows to the community, during recreation, on that very evening:

"Sisters, I have seen a sight to-day that I shall never forget. I went to Point St. Charles and found hundreds of people lying dead huddled together. The stench emanating from them is too much for the strongest constitution. The atmosphere is impregnated with it, the air is filled with the groans of the sufferers. Death in its most appalling form is there. Those who cry aloud in their agony are strangers, but their hands are outstretched to us for relief. Sisters, the plague is contagious!"

Here it is recorded that the venerable superior burst into tears, as she continued:

"In sending you there I am signing your death-warrant; but you are free to accept or refuse."

Did any one falter! Some were young in the very morning of life, others already injured by long years of labor. Not one hesitated. By common consent, the entire community volunteered for service at the fever sheds. It then, became the duty of the Superior to select eight, whom she considered as best suited for the work. They proceeded at once to the sheds filled with "heaps of human beings, who with distorted faces and discolored bodies" lay piled upon each other, the dead and the living, indiscriminately. One of the Sisters relates, how nearly fainting herself, she advanced, fearing to fall upon the sufferers. Attracted by the frantic gestures of one poor man, she found that he was pillowed upon corpses.

The labors of the religious during the ensuing weeks can be better imagined than described, in reducing that chaos into order, in separating the living from the dead, in purifying, cleaning and providing suitable accomodation for the numberless sufferers. It was herculean task and amongst surroundings so loathsome that even the strongest men found them insupportable. Thirty of those heroic daughters of Madame d'Youville were stricken with the plague and thirteen of their number died.

The "black" Sisters of Providence, likewise dear and familiar to the citizens of Montreal, came to fill the depleted ranks of the "grey" nuns and when they in turn were worn out with that appalling ministry, the Hospitallers of the Hotel Dieu, dispensed from their vow of seclusion came forth to take their place at the bedside of the