



THE CALL TO VICTORIA, B.C.



followed on Monday by lessons in the three "R's." No time was lost in preliminaries, such as building and fitting a school; the cabin, 20x10, with a partition across dividing it in two apartments, was as satisfactory to the four nuns who honoured it with the name of "Convent," as it was to the children who were happy to call it "their school."

Success and content were the rewards of labour and poverty. The demands in teaching and caring for the sick increased. Moreover, the elementary programme which the Bishop had mapped out as sufficing the needs of natives and half-breeds, had suddenly been brought to higher requirements by the unexpected influx of population caused by the discovery of gold in Cariboo, while His Lordship was on his Eastern tour.

The situation was at once made known to the Administration at the Mother House—which was now at St. Jacques, P.Q.—and urgent request was made for recruits. Negotiations were slow, for we must remember that it took four months for an answer to come from Montreal to this far Western city. Seventeen months elapsed between the coming of the first Sisters and that of two more, who swelled the Victoria Convent to a community of six.

The new comers were Sisters Mary Bonsecours and Mary Providence, already introduced to us in their sixteenth year at the time of their consecration to God. Sister Mary Providence was not to have come to the Western missions; she was far too promising and valuable to St. Ann's Eastern convents to be spared there, and her talents too exceptional to be sacrificed in a pioneer country. So decided those who sat in Council to appoint workers for the far, far distant country, but the higher Council of the Ruler of our destinies over-ruled this reasoning.

St. Ann's counsellors fixed their choice on Sister Mary Elizabeth, a first cousin of Mrs. J. Sadlier, the well-known authoress. Sister inherited the same literary gift and liked to give it expression by writing holy themes and spiritual books. Loving her Sisterhood above all things, as all its members should, she wished to see it win a great name, and being young and holding authorship in high esteem, she thought this might be done through publishing books. Being enthusiastic on the point, one day at the mid-day recreation when the Sisters were talking in happy vein, as is their way, the conversation fell on the Saints and the great things done in the old Orders. Sister Mary Elizabeth broke out with the innocent exclamation, "How I wish our community would do something in the line of learning to bring it before the world!"