

## ORIGIN OF THE SISTERS OF ST. ANN

never forgot her rapt devotion. Her piety was of the amiable kind, which never obtrudes itself, but leaves pleasing and fruitful impressions, and makes religion attractive.

Such had been the childhood of Marie Esther Blondin; without doubt good St. Ann saw in it a reflection of that of her own daughter, Mary.

Surrounded by tender home care and lending herself to the harmless pastimes of her environment, Miss Blondin attained her twenty-fourth year. At that time her health required a change of air, and Heaven directed her to Vandreuil. Here she first met Miss Susan Pinault, with whom, as it has been said, she for several years conducted a select boarding-school for young girls. With identical aims in serving God and imparting Christian education, the two young women united in the common enterprise and tacitly vowed themselves to religious teaching. Like the sisters, Martha and Mary, they worked and prayed in accord. The third part of their income was given to works of charity. The sick, the needy, and the indigent widow soon learned to bless these beneficent educators.

Leading, as they did, a life which so much resembled that of nuns, it seems to us that the most natural course of these excellent women would have been to join one of the established Orders. There were several from which to choose. But God wanted the Order of St. Ann on the American Continent, and He reserved them for the undertaking. He slowly prepared conditions so that these, His agents, might be worthy of their model, St. Ann, the Immaculate Maid's teacher.

God's intentions gradually dawned on Miss Blondin. His voice became more distinct, more imperative; but the undertaking appalled her. Humility shrank from its sublimity; limited means feared its financial phase.

Courage and trust in Providence are the unfailing channels through which saints bring about God's purposes. Miss Blondin had these. The financial element was supplied by Miss Susan Pinault. She had withdrawn from teaching and left the Select Boarding School under Miss Blondin's control some years before her friend had penetrated the Divine Will in her regard, but upon hearing of the inception of St. Ann's Institute, she offered her thousands to the good project, and solicited admission among its probationists. Miss Susan Pinault was then forty-four years of age and used to a life of independence and ease. Moreover, she had indulged her taste for rich apparel. It would already have meant considerable renunciation to be a life boarder with the Sisters, in return for the sum of money which she unrestrictedly placed in their hands.