

Above these, reached by a separate staircase, are the rooms for strangers visiting the city and preferring the seclusion and privacy of the Convent to the publicity of a hotel or boarding-house, or for those who may desire to spend quietly a few days in recollection and prayer, or for any who may wish to make a retreat either under the direction of a confessor or the Sisters. These are the north and west sides of the building. On the east side, corresponding with the chapel, is the entrance to the procuratrix's office. Here are transacted business dealings with the outside world. A revolving shelf is in the grate large enough to hold a barrel of flour, though provisions are usually received through the grate within the kitchen-door in the basement.

From the hall of the main entrance we pass through the door of the cloister, which opens into a similar hall. We enter first the Nuns' refectory to the left, a large airy room with long pine tables painted and grained; the reader's desk is at the far end of the room, and behind it a serving pantry with opening at either end, from which the meals are conveyed by two sisters as they are passed in from the kitchen. In the tables are drawers, each containing plate, cup and saucer, knife, fork and spoon, with a square of coarse linen. These pieces of linen, spread before each nun, take the place of a tablecloth. "It must be a labor attending to so much dishwashing."

"It is quite simple. A basin of water and towel are passed down the table and each cleanses her own dishes." "They are not easily broken?" and I am laughingly handed for my inspection the granite plate and the heavy delf. "The dishes upon which meat is served of course go to the kitchen." "The duties are changed every week, and the dignified appellation of Dishwasher occurs opposite each nun's name in turn, as do all the different duties." "Then you have no lay nuns?" "Yes, but that does not dispense the choir nuns from such labor. Our foundress insists upon labor—that is our ordinary penance; the choir nuns sweep, cook, wash, iron, scrub; there is no distinction in the labor." "Why lay nuns then?" "That necessary duties may not suffer from the interruptions consequent on the recital of the Divine Office. The lay nuns who, by the

way, wear a black habit, do not recite the Office, neither is a superior education required of them, nor is a dowry exacted from them."

"Do you ever have recreation at your meals?" "No, that is an offering we made to St. Joseph that he might help us in our temporal needs."

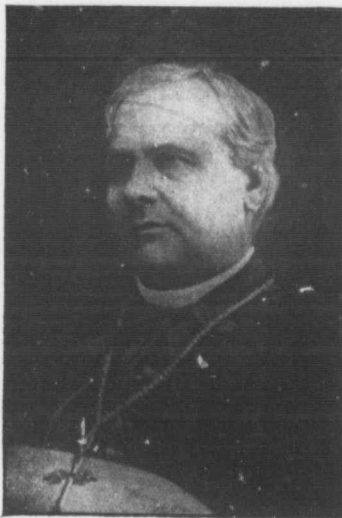
We cross the hall to the laundry, where I see the apparatus used in washing, drying, ironing and mangling. The engine and furnace room is beyond the laundry. Above is the attendant's room with separate entrance and staircase, the meals being passed in from the cloister through a window.

"We laundry nearly all the altar linens in the city. We make, too, the altar breads for the diocese." This industry has since grown to large dimensions. Boxes are specially made to hold the different sizes, and are sent often great distances, the Sisters' make being popular even outside the diocese.

We then crossed to the kitchen on the east side, where a large revolving shelf is in the grate to receive supplies. At this wicket the Sisters are solicited by all kinds of necessity, and too often idleness, for meals. Some are grateful, others bold and impudent, loudly clamoring for better food than is known to the Convent table. "But there are places especially provided for such people; you with your own pressing needs should not be taxed in this way?" "We cannot turn the

hungry away so long as we have anything to feed them," is, as I think, the too magnanimous reply.

We now pass upstairs, and leaving the linen room enter a workroom where soutanes are made. The Sisters' work gives universal satisfaction, the soutanes, even for the altar boys, being properly fitted, and the work of the neatest description. Single orders are sometimes given by parents proud to have a child serving on the altar, and often contracts are filled for the sanctuary boys of a particular church. We pass the procuratrix's office I mentioned before, and then I get my first and last view of the chapel as seen from within the cloister. The interior and exterior chapel form an L, with the altar situate in the angle facing the longer arm, which is the Nuns' chapel. The windows are on the side next the street, their colored lights proclaiming the



MONSIGNOR LA ROCQUE.