

After a novitiate of eighteen months, Rose Philippine was preparing to take her vows when she was hindered doing so by a formal prohibition from her father, not out of any anti-religious feeling, but merely out of worldly wisdom. The fatal year 1789 was at hand, and M. Duchesne foresaw that the religious institutions would be amongst the first victims of revolutionary violence. Accordingly she remained as a novice at the convent.

At the beginning of 1791, by order of Government, the community were expelled from their convent, and Rose Philippine was obliged to lay aside the religious habit and return to her own home.

After a short absence from Grenoble, Mlle Duchesne found that her former Convent of Ste Marie-d'en-Haut had been turned into a prison, and that noble ladies, grand seigneurs, religious and priests were confined there in hourly expectation of being sent to the scaffold. To succor them spiritually and materially, she formed with other friends a society known as the Ladies of Mercy, and, as one of her associates records, "she did not hesitate to perform for the prisoners the duties of the humblest servant, and amid many perils, she sought out proscribed priests and brought them to administer the last sacraments to the dying.

After some five years of revolution, France began to grow weary of bloodshed and anarchy, and the re-establishment of religion was now the dearest wish of every Catholic heart. Mlle Duchesne felt an intense longing to see her beloved cloister of Ste Marie-d'en-Haut restored. With that eminently practical turn of hers, she brought the powerful political influence of her family to bear on the Government, and to such a good purpose that on the 10th of December, 1801, the Convent of Ste Marie-d'en-Haut was assigned to her at a rental of eight hundred francs.

Her first care was to reassemble the former religious of the convent, but this, after ten years of dispersion and secularization, was no easy matter. After many negotia-