WEATHERING THE STORMS

The Church at Mid-Century

By 1840 Catholics were no longer a small minority of the population of the United States. Almost 600,000 immigrants, more than half of them Catholics, had poured into the United States during the 1830s. Rivers, canals and turnpikes through the mountains fed the mushrooming cities and made possible new settlements in the wilderness as far west as the Mississippi.

What had seemed a vast wave of immigration in the 1830s more than doubled to a mighty flood in the 1840s with over a million and a half new arrivals, and crested in the 1850s with two and a half million more. Fleeing from starvation, religious persecution and political upheavals, they came chiefly from Ireland and Germany. City populations doubled and tripled in a few years. The populations of some frontier states multiplied as much as seven times.

For the Catholic Church these were years of unprecedented expansion, challenge and growing pains. From one archdiocese and fifteen dioceses in 1837, the Church in the United States grew to seven archdioceses and thirty dioceses in 1853, only sixteen years later. In place of one ecclesiastical province (Baltimore), there were seven: Baltimore, Oregon, Saint Louis, Cincinnati, New Orleans, New York and San Francisco. So vast were the problems attendant on this influx of destitute Catholic immigrants that for at least fifty years, from 1830 to 1880, the overwhelming needs of these newcomers colored the decisions of the American Church. These decisions, in turn, inspired the works undertaken by the Sisters of Charity.

The Plight of the Immigrants

There was some organization to the German Catholic immigration. Facing the handicap of language, they came in groups
bringing tools, skills, and sometimes a little money. Having learned that land on the frontier could be purchased for $1.25 an acre, they banded together to form rural Catholic communities. Those who remained in the cities engaged in trade and formed closely-knit German parishes. To help them preserve their faith and culture, the bishops sought German-speaking priests and sisters. European mission societies, such as the Missionsverein and the Leopoldine Society, gave money for the building of churches and schools. German publishing houses provided newspapers and textbooks in German.

The plight of other immigrants, especially the Irish, was more desperate. Already half-starved, they were packed like cargo in the holds of lumber or cotton ships for a passage of twenty-nine days. If the trip took longer, their ration of bread and water ran out. Typhoid, called “ship fever,” took its toll on almost every trip. Sometimes as many as ten per cent of the passengers died on the way of typhoid or cholera.*

Those who survived arrived in emaciated condition and moved into unwholesome tenements where they easily fell prey to epidemics. A quarter of the Irish who came died within two years of their arrival. Those able to work were at the mercy of unscrupulous contractors, who advertised for more workers than they needed at distant work sites, then cut the promised wages when a surplus of manpower was available. Foremen paid their crews in bad liquor—supposed to increase their stamina for tasks beyond their strength—or in worthless scrip redeemable only for land along the canal or railroad being built. As work sites moved, so did the families of the workers, forging another chain of dependence on their employers. Most of the canals, roads and railroads built prior to the Civil War were carved out by immigrant laborers, predominantly Irish, who were paid the lowest wages and given the most dangerous jobs, such as blasting through rock with gunpowder.

Nativists and “Know-Nothings”

As the number of immigrants increased, Nativist opposition to

*In the last months of 1853, 1,933 passengers died at sea and 457 were sent on landing to barrack hospitals, where most died. One-fourth of the ships arriving from English ports had cholera on board.
the poor and foreign-born concretized into pockets of hardened bigotry directed against the Catholic Church. In Philadelphia, when Bishop Francis P. Kenrick asked that Catholic children in the city's public schools be excused from services using a protestant version of the Bible, ninety-four leaders representing twelve protestant denominations met to form what they called “The American Protestant Association.” The articles of its constitution, in language typical of similar groups in other states, expressed a belief that “Popery” was a system subversive of civil and religious liberty, and proposed to “defend our Protestant Interests” by circulating writings against Catholicism, rousing the community to beware the supposed threats to liberty, and opposing the election of any but native-born protestants to public office.1 The antagonism stirred up by this group erupted in the Philadelphia public riots of May and July 1844, in which thirteen citizens were killed, over fifty wounded, and two Catholic churches as well as the homes of many Catholics burned to the ground.

In a letter to Mother Xavier Clark at Emmitsburg, Sister Gonzaga Grace, sister servant of Saint Joseph's Orphanage, Philadelphia, described their situation:

We are in the midst of frightful dangers; a great portion of our peaceful city is the scene of dreadful riot and bloodshed: two of our churches burned to the ground, St. Michael's up in Kensington this afternoon, and St. Augustine's about half-past nine tonight. St. John's has been guarded since Monday night, and St. Mary's is now surrounded by a strong detachment of the military besides a patrol... Three police officers now guard our Asylum, and we know not at what moment our dear little ones must be roused from their peaceful slumbers to fly for their lives. Threats have been made positively to destroy St. John's tonight; and in consequence the poor Sisters and Orphans have been obliged to retire to some good families for a shelter, because if the church were burned the Asylum would certainly catch...

I am fearful it will be worse tomorrow night. The military are out on duty, but it seems no use. They have burned whole rows of houses, and shot many as they passed along... Do pray very hard, Mother; for what will become of us if the Asylum were attacked? How could we escape with ninety-nine children, seventy of whom would not be able to assist themselves even out of the mob?
Sisters in several cities experienced similar nights of violence during the next decade, but in most the threats did not reach such proportions. Faithful parishioners surrounded the parish buildings ready to fight off the attackers, if necessary; one priest who said early Mass for the sisters appeared in the guise of an old market woman.

To all Catholics who suffered from outbreaks of this kind, or who resented the exaggerations of the public press, the bishops recommended moderation and restraint in imitation of the charity and patience of Christ.

After the Whig defeat of 1852 the American Party, popularly called “Know-Nothings,” was launched. By the mid 1850s they had become a national force in politics, able to win elections and control the legislatures of several states, where they passed laws favoring trustees opposed to the clergy and calling for inspection of convents. In preparation for the elections of 1856 they openly called a national convention, adopted a platform, and supported Millard Fillmore for the presidency. Abraham Lincoln wrote of them at this time:

As a nation we began by declaring that all men are created free and equal. We now practically read it as “all men are created equal, except negroes.” When the Know-Nothings get control it will read, “All men are created equal, except negroes and foreigners and Catholics. When it comes to this, I shall prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty.3

The Community was not spared in the efforts of the Know-Nothings to discredit the Catholic Church. Josephine Bunkley, a convert from Norfolk, Virginia, had applied to enter the Community. After a year’s delay she was admitted on probation. Some months later she left secretly at night, asking in Creagerstown for help to return to her father. He came for her and the Frederick Examiner printed a sensational story of her “unlawful detainment” and “escape.” Later, at her father’s request, Miss Bunkley wrote down her experiences. These were expanded with a large amount of ghost-writing by one Charles Beale, whom she later sued in a New York court because she was not allowed to see what he had given to the printer. Mother Etienne Hall assured the editor of the Frederick Citizen that Miss Bunkley, like all candidates, was free to leave at any time.

Miss Bunkley’s book created a small sensation and then was
forgotten. Indeed, the whole furor of the Know-Nothing movement was upstaged by the vehemence of the slavery debate. The defeat of the American Party was brought about in part by the immigrants they so despised, who cast their votes for Abraham Lincoln.

Coping with Needs on a Larger Scale

The tremendous expansion of the Church strained to the utmost the human resources of the Community. Sisters were in demand everywhere, as works already accepted became much larger than foreseen and the insistent requests of bishops and doctors opened many new fields for service. The criterion for closing a mission became, not so much whether the sisters were needed, as whether they were more needed somewhere else. Already serving in eleven states by 1840, the Community pioneered in six more during these two decades before the Civil War, adding new types of service to those already known.

The Development of Catholic Hospitals

Of all these services, the most significant in these two decades was the development of the Catholic hospital administered by the sisters. Prior to 1840, the Saint Louis Hospital, sometimes known as Sisters’ Hospital, had been the only Catholic hospital staffed by the sisters. The other hospitals in which they worked were under city, state or university auspices.

The withdrawal of the sisters from Maryland General Hospital in 1840, to form a psychiatric hospital of their own in which they could determine policy, marked a turning point in the history of hospitals in the United States. During the next twenty-five years the Daughters of Charity accepted the administration of more than twenty general hospitals, and worked briefly in several others. Fifteen of these hospitals were Catholic, either diocesan-owned or sponsored by the Community. Thirteen of them became enduring Catholic institutions. Several other communities of women also entered the hospital field, serving primarily in Catholic hospitals. The general hospitals opened by the Daughters of Charity at this time were in the cities of Detroit, Washington, Buffalo, Milwaukee,
Troy, New Orleans, Norfolk, Philadelphia, Rochester, Mobile, Boston, Baltimore, Richmond, Donaldsonville, and Los Angeles.

\textit{Detroit}

Saint Mary's Hospital, Detroit, was the first hospital in the state of Michigan and even in the entire Northwest Territory. In 1844 the sisters had opened a school in Detroit. That same year Sister Rebecca Delone, who had nursed in the Saint Louis Hospital, began a small hospital in one of the school buildings. On the first floor six beds were provided for men; on the second, six for women. Fund raising for a new hospital was begun; but before the hospital was completed the 1849 cholera epidemic struck Detroit; all the classrooms had to be turned into hospital wards. The first sister servant, Sister Loyola Ritchie, died in that epidemic. A three-story brick hospital was opened in 1850, with accommodations for over one hundred patients. Other epidemics followed: typhoid in 1851, cholera again in 1854. In 1855 Sister Mary DeSales Tyler, then the sister servant and administrator, began to admit psychiatric patients.

\textit{Washington, D.C.}

In 1846 the former city jail in Judiciary Square was remodeled and opened as the Washington Infirmary, the only hospital in Washington, D.C. This was a District hospital, and the Sisters of Charity were asked to staff it. This they did from 1846 to 1849. After the fall of Fort Sumter in 1861 it was requisitioned as a military hospital; once again the sisters were asked to take charge.

When the Infirmary became a military hospital, Washington was left with no hospital for the civilian population. A group of physicians asked the Daughters of Charity to start a new one. Sister Lucy Gwynn, sister servant of Saint Vincent’s Orphanage, acted as intermediary in the negotiations. A suitable house was found on Capitol Hill—the Nicholson Mansion at the corner of Second and D streets, Southeast—and rented from its current owner, Sarah Carroll Nicholson, widow of the quartermaster general of the Marine Corps. Here Providence Hospital was formally opened on 10 June 1861. Sister Mary Sarah Carroll was sister servant; her
companions were Sisters Mary O'Neill, Mary Vincent Foley and Alphonsa Groell. Doctor Joseph Toner was the house physician, but an unusual policy of open staffing made the hospital wards available to all the physicians of Washington to care for their patients at a charge of $4.00 a week.

Buffalo

When John Timon was named first bishop of Buffalo, New York, he immediately asked for sisters to open a hospital, a school, and an orphanage in his diocese. Sisters Ursula Mattingly and Hieronymo O'Brien were the first administrator and chief nurse; five sailors were the first patients. The hospital could accommodate one hundred patients; the charge for a private room was $4.00 a week. During the 1849 cholera epidemic, the hospital was turned over to the city for the care of the stricken. Of 134 admitted, 82 recovered.

During 1851 seven hundred patients were admitted, and Timon wrote to Emmitsburg asking for an apothecary sister (pharmacist) and one who understood bookkeeping. By this time there were seven sisters serving the hospital. Before long the number had increased to thirteen.

Milwaukee

Bishop J.M. Henni of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, requested and received sisters for a hospital in late 1848. Cholera victims were cared for during the next two years. Then in 1850 a boatload of immigrants brought typhoid to the city. At the mayor's request, the sisters set up a quarantine hospital on Jones Point; here 260 patients were cared for, but only 60 recovered from the disease. In 1858 a new Catholic hospital was built on land at North Point overlooking Lake Michigan, donated by the grateful city. At this time the original Saint John's Infirmary was renamed Saint Mary's Hospital.

Troy

Because so many immigrants arrived with typhoid in 1845, the
people of Troy, New York, erected a temporary barrack hospital for them. Later, when Sisters of Charity came to care for orphans of victims of the epidemic, some immigrants were nursed in a few rooms of the orphanage. A free clinic and dispensary were added, and a hospital opened in 1850. Three years later, records show that there were ten sisters caring for 789 patients.

New Orleans

Sisters of Charity had been serving in Charity Hospital, a state institution for the poor, since 1833; but Bishop Anthony Blanc of New Orleans desired a Catholic hospital for that city. Doctor Warren Stone, Louisiana pioneer in the use of ether, asked for Sisters of Charity to staff a private infirmary he wished to open. Known at first as "Maison de Santé," it opened in 1852 and moved to larger quarters in 1858. It was incorporated under the name of "Hotel Dieu," meaning "House of God"—the name of the large institution in Paris where Vincent de Paul sent his first Daughters and the Ladies of Charity to serve the poor sick. One feature of the New Orleans Hotel Dieu was a special department for the care of slaves, where their masters paid $1.00 a day to procure for them the best of physical care, and the sisters gave them spiritual care and devotedness free of charge.

Norfolk and Portsmouth

When a terrible yellow fever epidemic decimated Virginia in 1855, a desperate call for help came to Emmitsburg from Portsmouth, where all the doctors had died. Sisters were sent to nurse victims of the epidemic in two locations: an isolation hospital for civilians known as the Julappi Hospital and the Naval Hospital. The devotedness of the sisters resulted in a request to open a Catholic hospital in Norfolk. Saint Vincent’s Hospital was commenced in 1857; its name was later changed to DePaul.

Philadelphia

Doctor John D. Bryant of Philadelphia answered the call for
volunteers to care for yellow-fever victims in Portsmouth and Norfolk in 1855. His account of the epidemic was prophetic in blaming the mosquito-infested swamps nearby for the epidemic's virulence. Impressed by the sisters' nursing service, he studied and embraced the Catholic faith after his return to Philadelphia.

Doctor Bryant had been instrumental in the beginnings of a diocesan hospital in Philadelphia in 1849. The board entrusted Saint Joseph's Hospital to the Sisters of Saint Joseph. When they relinquished the hospital in 1859, the Daughters of Charity assumed its administration. At this time the diocese gave full control of the hospital to the sisters. A new wing was added for maternity, medical, surgical, and alcoholic patients. Sister Ursula Mattingly was administrator.

**Rochester**

Bishop Timon had provided a hospital for Buffalo and was eager to do the same for Rochester, New York. In 1857 Sister Hieronymo O'Brien and two companions began Saint Mary's Hospital in two remodeled stone stables. Most of those admitted were charity patients, but some paid eighty cents a week, others one or two dollars, and a few from five to fifteen dollars per week. When a new wing was added in 1858, the average daily census was seventy patients.

**Mobile**

In March of 1852 the sisters responded to an urgent call for nurses at City Hospital, Mobile, Alabama, during a deadly yellow fever epidemic. Bishop Michael Portier supported the city's request that the sisters remain after the epidemic to administer the hospital. Because of government neglect and lack of financial support, the sisters withdrew in 1854, but returned in 1860 under an improved administration.

Bishop Portier also wished to have a Catholic hospital in his diocese. Providence Infirmary was opened in Mobile at the end of 1855. Discontinued for a time, it reopened permanently in 1857.
Boston

Carney Hospital in Boston was founded in 1863 by Andrew Carney to help the poor and sick of the city. Sister Ann Alexis Shorb was the first administrator. The intention of the benefactor was to endow the hospital, but he died before signing the codicil to his will, and so the endowment never became a reality. As a result, Carney has always had a financial struggle to fulfill its mission to help the poor and sick; yet it has continued to do so. An outpatient clinic opened in two frame houses charged a fee of ten cents a visit. The hospital became the setting for advances in medical technology. Famous work on color-blindness was done in the ophthalmic department, opened in 1869. The first ovarieotomy was performed there in 1882, ushering in an era of abdominal surgery and making Carney a favored setting for medical education.

Baltimore

Lady Elizabeth Stafford, granddaughter of Charles Carroll, gave the land on which Saint Agnes Hospital in Baltimore was to be built; the gift which made the building possible was a donation of Charles Dougherty. The hospital opened in 1863 with Sister Mary Ann McAleer as administrator. During and after the Civil War it served the civilian population of Baltimore. For a time towards the end of the nineteenth century it became a sanitarium for the treatment of nervous disorders, specializing in hydrotherapy, before returning to the status of a general hospital.

Richmond

For a few brief years—1838 to 1841—sisters had nursed in the Richmond Medical College Infirmary. In 1860 they returned to health care in Richmond, opening Saint Francis de Sales Infirmary. With the advent of war the number of sisters doubled and the care of the Confederate wounded was separated from the care of civilians in the hospital. When the last of the veterans had been placed in other facilities, the infirmary closed in 1867.
In many of the orphanages, particularly those in out-of-the-way places which had no hospitals, it was customary to receive and care for sick adults in or near the infirmary for the children of the orphanage. This had been done in Troy, New York, as early as 1848; the continuing need had led to the establishment of a separate hospital. It was done in Donaldsonville, Louisiana, where a small hospital was intended as part of the mission as early as 1845. Because the need proved to be smaller than expected, the hospital closed in 1861.

The same custom was followed in the early missions of California. In San Francisco the service was temporary; but in Los Angeles the early infirmary that was part of the Charitable Institution developed into Saint Vincent’s Hospital.

Catholic Psychiatric Hospitals

Mount Hope, Baltimore

The property known as Mount Saint Vincent, where the Sisters of Charity had opened the first Catholic hospital for the mentally ill, was filled to overflowing by 1844. Doctor William H. Stokes, the attending physician from 1842 to 1892, listed eighty-five patients in his annual report for 1842-43, ten of whom were patients with general diseases, the rest with psychiatric illnesses. The report lists thirty-two recoveries among the mentally ill. This was the same year reformer Dorothea Dix went before the Massachusetts legislature deploring conditions in state institutions for the insane: neglect, filth, chains, beatings, also female patients in the care of male attendants of the crudest sort. Miss Dix’s pleas for reform in state institutions would ring across the nation for the next forty years; but already the first Catholic psychiatric hospital was in its fourth year of proving the effectiveness of gentle firmness and respect in healing diseased minds.

The move to the eighteen-acre Mount Hope was completed in 1846. That year 22 sisters were caring for 100 patients. By 1847 Stokes reported that 195 patients had been cared for in the insane department, of whom one hundred were discharged, recovered.
the general department 164 patients had been cared for, with 120 recoveries. Thirteen patients had died during the year. A comparison of these results with those of fifteen other institutions for the insane showed that cures of the mentally ill at Mount Hope averaged 71 percent, while the highest percentage elsewhere was 50 percent.4 Doctor Stokes attributed this success to a combination of physical agents, mental and moral treatment, the continual influence of kindness linked with authority, and the policy of asking that mental patients be admitted for a minimum of six months, since they were liable to relapse if removed when beginning to convalesce. Speaking of the importance of kind and tactful attendants, the doctor remarked:

In the Sisters of Charity are associated a combination of qualities, peculiarly and fully adapting them for these important duties. The high percentage of recoveries in this institution is no doubt mainly attributable to their untiring assiduity and devotion, to their perfect self-abandonment and self-sacrificing zeal in the discharge of the duties committed to them. Deeply imbued, as their hearts are, with those principles and feelings, which are the direct emanations and blessed fruits of that enlightened and universal charity, which has its unperishable root in the Christian religion, they also bring to bear those influences which female ingenuity and womanly tenderness can alone devise and apply.5

The values of combining a hospital for the mentally ill with a general hospital, in beautiful grounds and homelike surroundings, were enumerated by Doctor Stokes: The patient is more reconciled to being left in an institution that has not the stigma of being just for “the insane”; resources are available for treating physical problems which generally accompany mental or nervous disorders; and the public observe respectful treatment for the patients and respond with sympathy, better understanding, and a lessening of the prejudices and fears based on ignorance about mental disease.6

By the year 1855, however, the number of psychiatric patients had so increased that the department for general diseases had to be discontinued. To allow for Mount Hope's continuing growth, a large property six miles from Baltimore was purchased. Completed in 1860, the new hospital became a center for the clinical experience and education of doctors and other health professionals interested in psychiatry. Renamed Seton Institute in the twentieth century, the
hospital witnessed the blending of modern psychiatry with Catholic principles in the formation and practice of many leading Catholic psychiatrists.

Saint Vincent's Institution, Saint Louis

In 1858 a second psychiatric hospital was opened by the Daughters of Charity: Saint Vincent's Institution in Saint Louis. A separate unit for mental patients had been part of the Sisters' Hospital in Saint Louis since the addition of a new wing in 1840; but as numbers increased, it became apparent that a special hospital for them was needed. A four-story building was erected in the Soulard Addition. Covered porches extended the length of the hospital on all floors, overlooking a large walled yard which contained walks through a grove of trees. There were eight sisters to care for forty or fifty patients. Doctor John Leavy was the house doctor.

Providence Retreat, Buffalo

Sister Rosaline Brown and her companions from the Sisters Hospital in Buffalo, New York, often sought out the Catholic and other poor patients at the Erie County Poor House. They were kindly received by the administration and permitted to visit all the patients. The sisters saw that the poor were generally well cared for in the county home, except in the department for the mentally ill. Here many were chained to posts or strapped down to the benches, half-naked, treated more like animals than human beings.

When Sister Rosaline spoke of this to Francis Burlando, C.M., director of the Daughters of Charity, he suggested that she begin a campaign to build a hospital for them. "I have no money," she responded. Burlando replied, "But you will have the blessing of God and that of my heart." Bishop Timon approved the plan, a twenty-three acre farm was purchased for $8000, and construction commenced. By the time the building was completed, sufficient funds had been collected to pay for it. Providence Retreat was opened in August 1860 with fifteen patients. The work prospered, serving the people of Buffalo for over eighty years.
Louisiana Retreat, New Orleans

In 1865 a few of the psychiatric patients were removed from the halls of Hotel Dieu, New Orleans, to a small frame house on the outskirts of the city which had formerly served as a school. This was the nucleus of the Louisiana Retreat. Under the leadership of Sister Mary Jane Stokes the hospital was built and enlarged several times, becoming the South’s outstanding psychiatric hospital. When a new hospital was built on the same site, the name was changed to DePaul Sanitarium.

Saint Joseph’s Retreat, Detroit

As early as 1855 there was a unit for psychiatric patients in Saint Mary’s Hospital, Detroit. In 1860 this became a separate institution. Located on Michigan Avenue and named Michigan State Retreat, it was the first psychiatric hospital in Michigan. It was incorporated as Saint Joseph’s Retreat in 1866. The hospital continued to grow and serve the people of Michigan well into the twentieth century.

Saint Vincent’s Hospital, Baltimore

Most of the psychiatric hospitals had a treatment program or a special wing for “inebriates.” The book of instructions on the care of the sick by Sister Matilda Coskery has a section on the treatment of alcoholics, suggesting that Mount Saint Vincent’s may have had such a unit even before it became Mount Hope, in the early 1840s. In other hospitals for the care of the mentally ill, alcoholic units can be identified as early as 1870.

In the early 1870s the alcoholic patients from Mount Hope were removed into a separate facility, Saint Vincent’s Hospital for Inebriates. The experiment was abandoned in 1884 and the separate facility closed.

The wisdom of Doctor Stokes’ combination of psychiatric with general hospital care later began to be rediscovered. After a brief history as a sanitarium for nervous cases, Saint Agnes Hospital in Baltimore became general again, with the program for nervous disorders only one of its offerings. Gradually in the twentieth century the free-standing psychiatric hospitals began to disappear,
to be absorbed again into the general hospital where the patient could be offered a variety of services.

**Foundling Homes and Maternity Hospitals**

Snowballing urban populations in the 1850s and the desperate situation of the poor in the cities—particularly conditions of employment for women and girls—brought to the fore another social problem. This was an increasing number of illegitimate births, rendered worse by the frequent incidence of desperate mothers abandoning their babies—sometimes in hospitals and churches, but often in doorways or alleys. Too many of these infants died, often from lack of prenatal care as well as exposure and malnutrition. Concerned about the conditions which led mothers to such desperation, bishops, pastors and benefactors sought ways in which mothers as well as infants could be helped discreetly.

In Saint Louis the recently widowed Ann Biddle, daughter of philanthropist John Mullanphy, donated land and money for the first Catholic foundling home in the United States. It was to include a "lying-in" or maternity hospital and a wing to care for ten elderly widows. The institution, named Saint Ann's after its benefactress, opened in May of 1853. Sister Felicitas Delone was sister servant and administrator.

Five more foundling and maternity homes were opened in the next seven years: Saint Mary's in Buffalo, Saint Vincent's in New Orleans, Saint Vincent's in Philadelphia, Saint Vincent's in Baltimore, and Saint Ann's in Washington. The latter, begun in 1860, was incorporated in 1863; Abraham Lincoln signed the articles of incorporation. In its early years it occupied the Octagon House, which had been the British Embassy and which later housed vice presidents and other Washington notables.

Charles I. White was pastor of Saint Matthew's Parish in Washington, in which parish the foundling home had its origin. White knew the Community and its traditions well, having often visited Emmitsburg while researching the first biography of Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton—which he had completed in 1852. One of his concerns was the number of suicides among young girls who had no one to help them when they became pregnant.

A similar concern is expressed in the stated purpose of Saint Vincent's, Baltimore: "for foundlings and also to provide for
deserving indigent or unprotected females during their confinement in childbirth.”

All foundlings were brought to these infant homes, which were usually the only ones in the city. Adoptions were not uncommon, either by relatives or Catholic families recommended by their pastors. Deaths, too, were frequent. Many were brought in too ill and undernourished to be placed for adoption; some had been so starved or abused that brain damage was permanent. Epidemics brought in by such children spread where there were so many infants in close contact.

In at least one foundling home—Saint Ann’s, Saint Louis—there was installed a “turn” in the French fashion, where a mother too ashamed or frightened to reveal herself could deposit the baby in a basket in the wall and then rotate the turn, placing the baby on the inside of the building, warm and sheltered. When the turn was activated, a bell sounded inside, letting the sisters know immediately that a baby had arrived. Infants placed in the turn were received in a healthier condition than other foundlings, and were immediately known to be adoptable. The mother, often a live-in housemaid unable to keep her child, could return to work knowing that her baby would be baptized, cared for, educated, and possibly adopted into a good home.

Foundlings not adopted in infancy were kept at the infant home—a true cross-section of the city’s population—until the age of four or five. At that age—or as soon after as space was available—they were transferred to the orphanages of the diocese, which were frequently separated by sex, race, and nationality.

Education at Mid-Century

Prior to 1840, many schools housed orphans and most orphanages contained schools where children of the parish as well as the orphans were educated. Once provided with a building to house the school and orphanage, however, sisters were usually faced with the need to earn or beg to support the establishment. The seven Provincial Councils of Baltimore (1829-1849) stressed the value of Catholic education, encouraged bishops and pastors to establish schools, and urged parents to patronize them. Although there was increasing emphasis on Catholic education, there was as yet little diocesan organization to support these schools. In many
places even parish financial support was lacking or spasmodic, since the parishes themselves were dependent on the meager donations of impoverished immigrants. As a result, sisters developed a system of free schools supported by academies or "select" schools—which offered more advanced education for higher fees and often received boarders.

Free schools without such support were often in church basements or old houses, crowded, unsanitary, even unheated—a severe threat to the health of both sisters and children. It was because of such conditions that the sisters had been withdrawn from Saint Mary's in Albany. The dismayed Catholics of the city held a meeting in which they drew up a resolution stating in part:

We view the departure of the Sisters of Charity as a great calamity and a loss which will be felt by every Catholic, more particularly on account of the education of the rising generation and the loss the Catholic orphans will sustain in being deprived of their motherly care and protection. Resolved—that if arrangements can be made for the return of the Sisters to Albany that we pledge ourselves as Catholics to use all exertions to sustain and support them in a proper manner. 9

When the sisters returned to Albany two years later, in 1846, it was to Saint Joseph's Parish they came, where the pastor erected a suitable building and promised to see to their support. Yet they seem to have helped with their own support, as the works from this time included a select school for girls as well as the orphanage and free school.

The average American in the 1840s received just a year and a half of schooling in a lifetime. Child labor—sometimes ten to fifteen hours a day—was common. This made education almost an impossibility for the children of the poor, who had chores and the care of younger children if not working in factories. The free schools, an open-handed response to these realities, were available to all children who chose to come, when they could come. There were no restrictions of religion, age, nationality or race except where state laws forbade the education of Negroes. Children came when they were able, stayed home when they had to help at home, and learned as much as they could or desired to before they were put out to work. Those whose families could afford it paid five cents for pens and a fee for the cost of winter fuel.

Between 1840 and 1860 the Community opened twenty-eight
schools and twenty-four orphanages. Many were in the ten states already served by the sisters; but others were in six new states: Alabama, Michigan, Wisconsin, Mississippi, Illinois, and California. Among the new schools were free schools in English and German in Saint Louis; one in French and English at Bouligny near New Orleans; a school for the deaf near Emmitsburg; and a school for free Negro girls in Mobile. While most were for girls only, in some places the sisters maintained separate primary schools for small boys who, after learning basic skills, moved on to schools taught by schoolmasters.

By 1860 the sisters were teaching in Catholic girls' schools in Emmitsburg and Baltimore in Maryland; in Albany, Troy, Syracuse, Utica, and Buffalo in New York; in New Orleans, Donaldsonville, and Baton Rouge in Louisiana; in Natchez, Mississippi; in Alton and La Salle, Illinois; in San Francisco, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles, California; as well as in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Wilmington, Detroit, Milwaukee, Richmond, and Saint Louis. In some cities they conducted three or four schools in as many parishes.

Although economic necessity called for academies or select schools to support free schools, the preference of the Community was for free or affordable education for the poor. Where parents wanted an academy but no free school attached to it, the tendency was to withdraw the sisters. This happened in Norfolk and Martinsburg, Virginia, and later in Baton Rouge.

**The Academy at Emmitsburg**

The academy founded by Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton at Emmitsburg continued to flourish. Well known for its success in imparting "a Christian and virtuous education" while fostering intellectual growth and refinement, the academy drew boarders from as far away as Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Louisiana, the Carolinas, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Sister Raphael Smith, who in 1847 had succeeded Sister Margaret George as directress of the academy, was to continue in that position for almost forty years, endearing herself to girls from all parts of the country. Samuel Cooper's prophecy—that the community and school established by the sisters in Emmitsburg would extend their influence throughout the whole
The number of boarders had passed the hundred mark, necessitating expansion. The number of sisters in formation was also high in these years. During the 1840s the chapel was completed and consecrated; the Brute building was added, as well as a larger sisters’ residence, a Children of Mary chapel, a new bakehouse, refectory, infirmary, and mill house. A gift from William Seton, Elizabeth’s son, helped erect a mortuary chapel for her remains; this was begun in 1845. What had been Saint Francis Xavier School for little boys—between Saint Joseph’s and Mount Saint Mary’s—was renamed Saint Lazare House and became a dispensary where food and clothing were prepared, stored, and distributed to the poor. By 1849 four sisters were employed there, serving twenty to thirty poor persons each day.

In order to place the sisters’ residence and the Brute building near the chapel, it was necessary to move the White House in which Mother Seton and the early Community had lived. Mother Xavier Clark—who had served as Mother Seton’s assistant—had it moved, renovated, and used to house twenty—later forty—orphans brought from homes staffed by the sisters to be educated at the academy and prepared for careers as teachers or governesses. Several sisters shared this home with the girls and helped them with their studies. The academy and free school at Emmitsburg also played a role in the apostolic formation of young sisters. After their novitiate, many remained for several years to help in the academy and elementary schools, completing and enriching their own education while assisting experienced teachers from whom they could learn teaching methods.

**Technical Schools**

One significant step forward in Catholic education came about—strangely enough—because overcrowding in orphanages had led to “placing out” girls at too early an age. “Placing out” was not adoption, nor even foster-home placement; rather, it was a form of indenture or apprenticeship in which girls of ten or twelve years were placed in private homes, where frequently they were overworked, seldom educated, and sometimes physically abused. In their distress they had nowhere to turn except to the home of their youth. Here the sisters received them lovingly, though sometimes in
defiance of the rules set up by the board. Stories the girls told revealed the need for a placement that would prepare them for independence, teach them marketable skills, and provide a home in which they would be secure, even when temporarily unemployed.

The answer was the technical or industrial school, where girls twelve to eighteen could live and be taught basic education, while learning to sew, launder, cook, keep house, even do fancy needlework and dressmaking. One unique feature of these schools was that they were self-supporting even while the girls were learning; the trousseaus, layettes, shirts, or soldiers’ uniforms made by the sisters and students were the sole support of the institution.

The earliest of these technical schools were: Saint Philomena’s in Saint Louis (1846), Saint John’s Industrial School, Utica (1848), and Saint Elizabeth’s House of Industry in New Orleans (1855). Others followed: Saint Joseph House of Industry, Baltimore, in 1865; and House of the Guardian Angel in Saint Louis, which began as an orphanage in 1859, but soon evolved into a half-orphanage and technical school because sewing was its main source of income.

Changes in Child Care

Early Catholic orphanages in the United States were concerned primarily with girls, and were parish-based. Overcrowding caused several trends in the larger cities: the shift from several parish orphanages to one or two diocesan ones, separation of smaller from larger children, and, as the sisters had been requesting since Mother Seton’s time, boys from girls.

Many of the new orphanages accepted by the Community in mid-century were, from the start, diocesan rather than parochial. Examples were: Saint Patrick’s in Rochester, 1845; Saint Rose’s in Milwaukee, 1846; Saint Mary’s in Natchez, 1847; Saint Mary’s in Troy, 1848; Saint Mary’s in Norfolk, after the yellow fever epidemic of 1848; Saint Vincent’s in Buffalo, 1848; Roman Catholic Orphanage in San Francisco, 1852; and the Los Angeles Charitable Institution, 1856. Others represented the trends to centralization and separation of age groups, rather than a beginning in care of orphans in their respective cities. Such were: Saint Mary’s, Saint Louis in 1843; Saint Vincent’s in Albany, 1846; and Saint Vincent’s Home in Philadelphia, 1855.

All the children’s homes named above were for girls; some had
a small school attached to the orphanage, which later became separated from it. In smaller cities there were missions opened primarily as schools where a few orphans lived with the sisters. Such were Saint Vincent’s in Donaldsonville, Louisiana, where the space previously used for the seminary was used to house orphans after 1850; the Maison des Cinq Plaies (House of Five Wounds) in Bouligny near New Orleans, 1854, where five orphans were cared for in a day school for French-speaking children; Saint Vincent’s in La Salle, Illinois in 1855; and Saint Vincent’s in Santa Barbara, California, where the orphans were primarily Indian children, in 1857.

Care of Orphan Boys

In the early part of the century boys had not been numerous in orphanages. Frequently other provisions were made for them. The by-laws of Saint Vincent’s Orphanage in Washington (1825) specified that, while both boys and girls were to be cared for, the Sisters of Charity were to have charge of the girls. The first two orphans in Boston in 1832 were a brother and sister. Bishop Fenwick brought the girl to the sisters and took the boy into his own home. It was only by exception that the sisters cared for boys of school age.

Where such exceptions were made the arrangement was understood to be temporary, until other arrangements could be made. On those terms some new orphanages, including or exclusively for boys, were accepted after 1840: Saint Mary’s, Mobile for both boys and girls in 1841; Saint Vincent’s in Baltimore for boys in 1841; the German Male Asylum in Cincinnati in 1842; Saint Vincent’s Orphanage in San Rafael, California, in 1855.

Boys were generally apprenticed at age eight to ten. For some, bishops paid board at good schools. Archbishop Kenrick of Saint Louis brought in the Viatorian Fathers to open a boarding school where the boys of Cathedral Orphanage—and others—could be educated.

But few bishops had funds for such programs, and few technical schools for boys were in existence. As dependent boys became more numerous, the tendency grew in some dioceses to leave the boys longer in the orphanage. This gave rise to problems—not only discipline problems, but even moral ones, especially where the boys’ and girls’ orphanage was really one, separated only by a wall, as in New
York. Some bishops tried to alleviate the problem by hiring laymen or assigning priests or Saint Vincent de Paul Society volunteers to take charge of the orphan boys. Others provided separate facilities for boys, and removed those of school age into the care of others.

But other bishops ignored the problem, leaving the sisters to struggle with the dual role of full-time teachers as well as housemothers to hundreds of boys and girls, in overcrowded situations, with no hired help. Regional visitatrixes were sent to remonstrate with these bishops, to remind them of their promises to make other arrangements for the older boys, sometimes to no avail. Such was the case in New York, where Bishop John Hughes was keeping the orphanage boys well into their teens, in the hope that some of them would be candidates for the seminary he planned. Numbers far exceeded the two hundred fifty the orphanage had been built to accommodate. There seemed to be no age limit for the boys the home was expected to house. When Daniel Ferry—who had left at the age of fourteen to study for the priesthood in Rome—returned to the diocese seriously ill at the age of twenty-one, he was again sent to the orphanage for care. Hughes was not alone in this; other bishops, too, seemed to have forgotten that the care of male orphans by the sisters had been agreed upon as a temporary concession.

In October 1845 the Council of the Community decided to take a firmer stand by asking all the bishops to make provisions for male orphans—since the Rule adopted by Mother Seton in 1812 called the sisters expressly to the care of “young persons of their sex.” Concessions which had been necessary in pioneer times, when only Sisters of Charity were available for active service, were no longer needed; other active communities of men and women, and several apostolic lay organizations, were at the service of the Church in the United States.

The decision of the Council was conveyed to bishops in whose dioceses the sisters were caring for male orphans by means of the regional visitatrixes. Visiting the bishops personally to explain the situation and the rationale, these visitatrixes asked that boys over the age of five be separated from girls in the orphanages; also that the care of these older boys be confided to others; or, if others could not be found to manage the boys’ orphanage, that separate living quarters be provided for the sisters, and that other persons be hired for the immediate supervision of the boys.

Most of the bishops saw the request as regrettable but reasonable.
Those in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Baltimore, and Saint Louis found others to take over the care of the boys. Bishop Portier of Mobile asked for a little more time, as he was expecting the arrival of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart in his diocese; the transfer took place in 1847.

Bishop Hughes of New York responded that the boys were a mere handful—one hundred thirty-to forty preadolescents—"mere infants." At about the same time the Truth Teller, New York's Catholic newspaper, was boasting of their proficiency in philosophy and Greek. Catholic historians and Hughes' biographer agree that he saw in this request an opportunity to achieve what he had long desired for New York: a diocesan community of Sisters of Charity.

**Bishops and the Community**

In the early 1840s Bishop Benedict Flaget of Louisville was one of the oldest and most respected of American bishops. He who had brought the Rule of Saint Vincent to the Sisters of Charity in the United States urged them to seek again the affiliation of their Community with the one founded by Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac in France in 1633—a union which could not be effected during the Napoleonic era. On one occasion Father Francis Burlando, C.M., traveling from Ohio to New Orleans on the same steamer with several Sisters of Charity, suggested to them, while delayed in Louisville, a visit to the venerable bishop. As they knelt to receive his blessing, Flaget embraced Burlando and said to him, "You are a Lazarist; do all you can to unite these sisters to the children of Saint Vincent."

Others among the hierarchy agreed with him. Bishops Maréchal of Baltimore and Chanche of Natchez, both Sulpicians like Flaget, desired the affiliation. Vincentian bishops Rosati of Saint Louis and Timon of Buffalo first thought the idea impracticable, but later favored it. Archbishop Samuel Eccleston of Baltimore had met with Deloul and the Council at Saint Joseph's several times prior to 1840 to seek means of bringing the Community in the United States into the pattern of and into union with the Community in Europe.

But while some bishops looked upon the Church from its international aspect, others—with equal zeal for the Church—thought more in terms of the local church in their own dioceses. As destitute Catholic immigrants swarmed into the cities and fell victim to the
ravages of epidemics, bishops were hard pressed to meet the needs for care of the sick, the orphans, the schoolchildren. Concentrating on these needs within their own dioceses, some bishops preferred to develop diocesan communities of sisters. Flaget himself had supported David and Nerinkx in the foundations of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth and the Sisters of Loretto, as early as 1812. Bishop John England of Charleston, South Carolina, procured the Rule of Saint Vincent from Bishop Flaget in order to found in his diocese in 1841 the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy. Bishop Pius Miles of Nashville, Tennessee, having secured some Sisters of Charity of Nazareth from Kentucky for a school and orphanage, asked for six of them to be the nucleus of a diocesan community in Nashville. His request was granted; however, this community, lacking support, later transferred to the Kansas Territory and became the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.

Many religious communities agreed when bishops requested "a few sisters" to form into new communities potential recruits from their dioceses. Bishop Hughes had long been known to favor diocesan government for religious communities. On 5 December 1842, when sending suggestions for the agenda of the Third Provincial Council, Hughes wrote to Archbishop Eccleston:

> Again, altho it is a matter perhaps foreign to the deliberations of the Council as such, still, I think the numbers of the Sisters of Charity who are far removed from their centre, the Mother House, would seem to call for a modification in their system. 12

The "modification" he desired, revealed in a letter to Father Deluol in 1846, was to erect into a separate community the fifty-two or more sisters then serving in the diocese of New York, with the bishop himself as their superior general. He desired to begin his diocesan community, not with four or six sisters, as other bishops had done, but with 20 percent of the Community.

Father Deluol replied 17 June 1846, speaking for the Council of the Community:

> We may be mistaken, but we consider this step of yours as calculated to inflict a deep and dangerous wound on the community, and if the example be imitated, and every bishop in the Union had the same right, we would consider it mortal. Appointed as we are to watch over the conservation and promote the welfare of the community, we can neither approve of nor even connive at the measure.
Therefore, we consider it our bounden duty to recall to the Mother House all the Sisters of Charity who are actually in your diocese...\textsuperscript{13}

In his letter to the sisters, Deluol explained why the Council had arrived at this decision:

It would not be for its (the Community's) good to parcel it out. This has never been allowed in France, where the Sisters of Charity have existed for upward of two hundred years. This was refused thirty years ago to the Venerable Bishop Flaget of Kentucky, by Bishop Dubois and Mother Seton. This we cannot ourselves allow...\textsuperscript{14}

He then gave the sisters freedom to choose between the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph and the new community to be formed in New York, allowing them a month to deliberate prayerfully.

There is some evidence that Bishop Hughes tried to influence the decision of the sisters in favor of the New York community by withholding information from them. For example, when he communicated to the sisters the verdict concerning boys' orphanages, the conditions under which the sisters might retain supervision of them with the help of hired assistants seems to have been omitted. Hughes later admitted that he had told them also that the orphans would be totally abandoned if they left, when in fact he did have a contingency plan in case all the sisters had chosen to leave. Without knowledge of these facts, the sisters were placed in the position of either totally abandoning their poor or transferring to a diocesan community. Faced with such a painful choice, more than half of them chose to remain in New York.\textsuperscript{15}

From the New York beginnings, other diocesan communities of Sisters of Charity followed. In 1854 Honoria Conway, a thirty-nine-year-old novice in New York, volunteered to go with Bishop Thomas Connolly to New Brunswick, Canada, where she became the first mother general of the Sisters of Charity of Saint John. In 1856 four sisters from the New York community were given as the foundation stones to the Sisters of Charity of Halifax, Nova Scotia. In response to the appeal of Bishop James Roosevelt Bayley, step-nephew of Mother Seton, two more sisters from New York formed the nucleus of the diocesan Sisters of Charity in New Jersey in 1859.
Affiliation with the International Community

Devastated by the blow which, like a thunderbolt, had divided the Community of which he had charge, Deluol sought with even greater urgency to effect the affiliation of the American sisters with those of France. In a letter to Jean-Baptist Etienne, C.M., superior general of the Vincentians and the Daughters of Charity, he urged that the union was necessary for the very survival of the American community, and outlined the steps he had already taken to achieve it:

The first step I took to carry it out was to discuss it with Father Timon, now Bishop of Buffalo. I next wrote to my Superior General, Father de Courson, to urge him to speak to you about it, but his applications to you remained unsuccessful. Some time later, I requested the Bishop of Natchez [J.J. Chanche] to take up the good work. He did so, but his first efforts were fruitless. I urged him not to lose courage, considering that the designs of God almost invariably encounter obstacles in the beginning, obstacles which to the eyes of human wisdom appear insurmountable. After renewed attempts, he had the consolation of announcing to me what he knew would cheer the heart of his old professor of Theology and former Superior, namely, that you at last favorably received my petition. May God be praised! May He who began this work, perfect it. 16

Etienne, like Saint Vincent de Paul, believed in working slowly until God's will was clearly evident. He wrote to Mariano Maller, C.M., then provincial of the Vincentians in the United States, telling him to visit both Baltimore and Emmitsburg, speak with the archbishop and the sisters there, and then to report, in person, his findings to the superior general.

In October 1849 Maller visited Emmitsburg and spoke with the sisters, who received him with a joyful Te Deum. Later that same month he wrote to Mother Etienne from Baltimore:

I have seen nearly all the Sisters of this city. I am happy to find the same good dispositions everywhere. Thanks be to God! The Archbishop seems very much satisfied; also Father Deluol... 17

In this consultation of the sisters Maller was fulfilling the conditions of Article XIII of the Constitution, which provided that for decisions of importance, those “within two-days’ journey” of the
Mother House should be considered the “natural delegates” of all the sisters. On his way east from Perryville, Missouri, he had spoken with bishops of Saint Louis, Cincinnati and Wheeling, telling them of the proposed affiliation and the right of the Vincentian superior to appoint confessors for the sisters, if the union should be realized. All those he spoke with were in favor of the affiliation with the international Community.

From this point events moved quickly. Maller went to Paris and made his report to Etienne in person. At the Motherhouse in Paris on 18 July 1849 the Council of the Daughters of Charity considered the request for affiliation that had come from the Sisters of Charity in the United States, through Mother Etienne Hall. Maller wrote from Paris to Mother Etienne:

A Sister who knew nothing about your Community has been repeatedly favored by the Almighty with the most extraordinary favors. In different visions of the Blessed Virgin and of our Blessed Father St. Vincent she was told that there was a community in a certain country which would join the community of the Sisters of Charity in France. 18

The sister referred to is Catherine Labouré, the seer of the Miraculous Medal, to whom Our Lady said in 1830:

When the Rule shall be in vigor, another Community will come to be joined to your own. This is not customary, but I also very much love this Community, and you are to say that they are to be received. God will bless them and they will enjoy great peace. And thus your Community will become very large. 19

The decision of the Council in Paris was favorable, but it was to be another whole year before the union of the two Communities would be effected. The Emmitsburg Council Book records under date of 25 March 1850:

On this day the renewal of the Vows has taken place in this house and we hope generally throughout the United States...The Sisters have used the same formula which is used yearly by the Daughters of Charity throughout the world, and having made the vow of Obedience to the Venerable Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, they have thereby, as far as in them lies, consummated the Union with the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, contemplated for some time previous, and approved by the
Archbishop of Baltimore [Eccleston] and by the Protector of the Constitutions [Deluol] and by the then Superior General of the Sisters [also Fr. Deluol].

In a circular addressed to the Sisters of the United States 1 November 1850, the formal date of the Union, Etienne wrote:

...a nominal union and one of friendship does not suffice. You yourselves have already understood that life should come to you from the source... You are grafted on the tree planted by the Holy Founder, in order to receive sap from it, that you may bear fruit... Your union with the Mother House, my very dear Sisters, requires that you become Daughters of Charity absolutely like those of Paris, Madrid, Turin, Rome, Posen, Warsaw, Leopoldstadt, Mexico, Syria, Turkey, Greece, Algiers, Egypt, Brazil, China...

After laying the basis for the new administration by appointing Mother Etienne Hall as visitatrix and confirming the members of her Council in their respective offices, Father Etienne named Mariano Maller as the first director of the new province of the United States. This formal erection of the province sealed the affiliation of the Emmitsburg community with the international Community of the Daughters of Charity.

Four sisters were sent from Emmitsburg to France in 1850 to become imbued with the spirit and practices of the Community. They were Sisters Vincentia Repplier, Valentine Latouraudais, Ann de Sales Farren, and Marie Louise Caulfield (who spoke French fluently and had been chosen to be trained as the first secretary of the new province—an office she held for almost half a century). These four were followed in 1851 by Mother Etienne Hall and Sister Ann Simeon Norris.

During a retreat for sister servants held at Emmitsburg in October 1850, the four who had recently returned from France modeled for all the blue habit and white cornette they had donned in France, soon to be worn by sisters all over the United States. On 7 December the sisters of the Central House (as Saint Joseph’s was now called) adopted the “French costume.” Sisters on the missions requested it gradually, so that all in a city changed the same day.

On 9 May 1850 Father Etienne wrote to Maller:

I bless God for the manner in which He has disposed the minds of my new Daughters! I did not expect that the unanimity of sentiments could be so complete.
The unanimity was not quite complete. Six sisters preferred to form a new diocesan community rather than be united to the international Community of Daughters of Charity. They were accepted by Bishop John B. Purcell 25 March 1852 and became the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati. From this community other diocesan groups of Sisters of Charity were derived: In 1859 the first postulants of the Convent Station, New Jersey, Sisters of Charity made their novitiate in Cincinnati. In 1870 five sisters were sent from Cincinnati to form the nucleus of another community of Sisters of Charity of Greensburg, Pennsylvania.

Effects of the Union

The most obvious result of the affiliation of the American Sisters of Charity with the international Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul was the change to the blue habit and white cornette, so familiar in other parts of the world. Another evident result was a change in vocabulary: “visitatrix” instead of “Mother”; “seminary” for “novitiate”; “directress” instead of “mistress of novices”; “house” in place of “convent”—a term which had rarely been used by the sisters.

But the obvious results are seldom the important ones. The most significant effect of the union was the one intended by Deluol: the stability in the Church that would free the Community from being internally threatened by outside influences. The privilege of exemption preserved the Community in the secular status affirmed by annual vows as it had been handed down from Vincent and Louise, Dubois and Elizabeth Seton. This stability guaranteed the preservation and promotion of the Vincentian spirit under the spiritual direction of the Vincentians, and safeguarded the sisters from interference by bishops in the internal direction of the Company.

Perhaps the most unexpected result for the sisters was their greater voice in their own destiny. In former years the priest-superior had had, in effect, the final voice in all matters except elections. The Vincentian director's role is more of an advisory one: instructing the sisters on Canon law, searching out information and enunciating principles to guide them in decision-making, providing spiritual guidance more than administrative leadership. Their choice of obedience to the superior general of the Congregation of the Mission gave to the sisters a unity of spirit with one another and
with Daughters of Charity throughout the world, as well as the
liberty needed to develop self-reliance and preserve the integrity of
the Community's unique character and spirit.

For all the sisters involved, both those who chose to be daughters
of the local Church and those who made the move towards the
Church universal, these years of sifting were painful ones. There
could be no turning back to things as they had been. Those who
united with the international Daughters of Charity had to relin­
quish the dear black habit and some treasured customs. Those who
joined the diocesan communities severed their roots with “Home”
and renounced the hope of being missioned back to the Valley. All
suffered the anguish of separation from dear friends and loved
companions of former years.

The fruit of this suffering was that all these communities of
Sisters of Charity grew in numbers and were fruitful in the service
of the Church. Sharing still Mother Seton's love for God's children
and His will, they could look forward with her to that Eternity of
which she wrote:

Surely the next blessing in our future existence to that of being near
the Source of perfection will be the enjoyment of one another's
society. No separation: but free communication of affection,
unshackled by the why's and wherefores of this world.23

The Call to California

In January 1848 Jim Marshall identified the sparkle in the water
at Sutter's Mill in California as “GOLD!” The echoes drifted down
the current of the American River to resound throughout the
Sacramento Valley. The wind carried the sound over the mountains,
across the plains, and even beyond the seas. In an incredibly short
time the world had taken up the cry: “There's gold in California!”

Within a few years five hundred towns were hastily constructed;
the population of California jumped from fourteen thousand to
two hundred sixty-four thousand. The sleepy pueblo of Yerba
Buena awoke to find itself a boisterous metropolis, the seaport to
the gold fields. San Francisco, born of golden dreams, glittered even
in its infancy.

But few golden dreams came true. Seekers of wealth found
instead poverty and disease. Asiatic cholera struck, killing over one
ravages of epidemics, bishops were hard pressed to meet the needs for care of the sick, the orphans, the schoolchildren. Concentrating on these needs within their own dioceses, some bishops preferred to develop diocesan communities of sisters. Flaget himself had supported David and Nerinkx in the foundations of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth and the Sisters of Loretto, as early as 1812. Bishop John England of Charleston, South Carolina, procured the Rule of Saint Vincent from Bishop Flaget in order to found in his diocese in 1841 the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy. Bishop Pius Miles of Nashville, Tennessee, having secured some Sisters of Charity of Nazareth from Kentucky for a school and orphanage, asked for six of them to be the nucleus of a diocesan community in Nashville. His request was granted; however, this community, lacking support, later transferred to the Kansas Territory and became the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.

Many religious communities agreed when bishops requested “a few sisters” to form into new communities potential recruits from their dioceses. Bishop Hughes had long been known to favor diocesan government for religious communities. On 5 December 1842, when sending suggestions for the agenda of the Third Provincial Council, Hughes wrote to Archbishop Eccleston:

Again, altho it is a matter perhaps foreign to the deliberations of the Council as such, still, I think the numbers of the Sisters of Charity who are far removed from their centre, the Mother House, would seem to call for a modification in their system. 12

The “modification” he desired, revealed in a letter to Father Deluol in 1846, was to erect into a separate community the fifty-two or more sisters then serving in the diocese of New York, with the bishop himself as their superior general. He desired to begin his diocesan community, not with four or six sisters, as other bishops had done, but with 20 percent of the Community.

Father Deluol replied 17 June 1846, speaking for the Council of the Community:

We may be mistaken, but we consider this step of yours as calculated to inflict a deep and dangerous wound on the community, and if the example be imitated, and every bishop in the Union had the same right, we would consider it mortal. Appointed as we are to watch over the conservation and promote the welfare of the community, we can neither approve of nor even connive at the measure.
Therefore, we consider it our bounden duty to recall to the Mother House all the Sisters of Charity who are actually in your diocese...\textsuperscript{13}

In his letter to the sisters, Deluol explained why the Council had arrived at this decision:

It would not be for its (the Community's) good to parcel it out. This has never been allowed in France, where the Sisters of Charity have existed for upward of two hundred years. This was refused thirty years ago to the Venerable Bishop Flaget of Kentucky, by Bishop Dubois and Mother Seton. This we cannot ourselves allow...\textsuperscript{14}

He then gave the sisters freedom to choose between the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph and the new community to be formed in New York, allowing them a month to deliberate prayerfully.

There is some evidence that Bishop Hughes tried to influence the decision of the sisters in favor of the New York community by withholding information from them. For example, when he communicated to the sisters the verdict concerning boys' orphanages, the conditions under which the sisters might retain supervision of them with the help of hired assistants seems to have been omitted. Hughes later admitted that he had told them also that the orphans would be totally abandoned if they left, when in fact he did have a contingency plan in case all the sisters had chosen to leave. Without knowledge of these facts, the sisters were placed in the position of either totally abandoning their poor or transferring to a diocesan community. Faced with such a painful choice, more than half of them chose to remain in New York.\textsuperscript{15}

From the New York beginnings, other diocesan communities of Sisters of Charity followed. In 1854 Honoria Conway, a thirty-nine-year-old novice in New York, volunteered to go with Bishop Thomas Connolly to New Brunswick, Canada, where she became the first mother general of the Sisters of Charity of Saint John. In 1856 four sisters from the New York community were given as the foundation stones to the Sisters of Charity of Halifax, Nova Scotia. In response to the appeal of Bishop James Roosevelt Bayley, step-nephew of Mother Seton, two more sisters from New York formed the nucleus of the diocesan Sisters of Charity in New Jersey in 1859.
with Daughters of Charity throughout the world, as well as the liberty needed to develop self-reliance and preserve the integrity of the Community's unique character and spirit.

For all the sisters involved, both those who chose to be daughters of the local Church and those who made the move towards the Church universal, these years of sifting were painful ones. There could be no turning back to things as they had been. Those who united with the international Daughters of Charity had to relinquish the dear black habit and some treasured customs. Those who joined the diocesan communities severed their roots with "Home" and renounced the hope of being missioned back to the Valley. All suffered the anguish of separation from dear friends and loved companions of former years.

The fruit of this suffering was that all these communities of Sisters of Charity grew in numbers and were fruitful in the service of the Church. Sharing still Mother Seton's love for God's children and His will, they could look forward with her to that Eternity of which she wrote:

Surely the next blessing in our future existence to that of being near the Source of perfection will be the enjoyment of one another's society. No separation: but free communication of affection, unshackled by the whys and wherefores of this world. 23

The Call to California

In January 1848 Jim Marshall identified the sparkle in the water at Sutter's Mill in California as "GOLD!" The echoes drifted down the current of the American River to resound throughout the Sacramento Valley. The wind carried the sound over the mountains, across the plains, and even beyond the seas. In an incredibly short time the world had taken up the cry: "There's gold in California!"

Within a few years five hundred towns were hastily constructed; the population of California jumped from fourteen thousand to two hundred sixty-four thousand. The sleepy pueblo of Yerba Buena awoke to find itself a boisterous metropolis, the seaport to the gold fields. San Francisco, born of golden dreams, glittered even in its infancy.

But few golden dreams came true. Seekers of wealth found instead poverty and disease. Asiatic cholera struck, killing over one
thousand in three months. An orphanage was immediately needed to care for children of the victims.

At the time of the First Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1852, San Francisco was raised to the the rank of an ecclesiastical province. After the Council, Archbishop Joseph Alemany of San Francisco visited Emmitsburg to plead for Daughters of Charity for his new archdiocese. He wanted schools, an orphanage, perhaps a hospital. Sisters were promised, but their departure was delayed until they could be clothed in the blue habit and white cornette of the international Community.

On 17 June 1852 seven sisters began the long journey by sea to California. Sister Francis Assisiim McEnnis was sister servant, accompanied by Sisters Fidelis Buckley, Honorine Goodman, Sebastian Doyle, Bernice Williams, Mary Ignatia Greene, and Corsina McKay. The crowded steamer Ohio took them south to the shabby port of Colón in Panama. From here, in tropical heat intensified by heavy rains, they crossed the Isthmus on mules, following a trail that wound up rugged mountains, along steep precipices, and then down treacherous muddy slopes to the Pacific port of Panama City. Sister Corsina's capricious mule separated her from her companions several times, once dashing up the mountain into a trackless marsh far from the trail. With rain falling in torrents around her, she gave voice to her desolation in the psalm she had so often intoned for vespers at Emmitsburg: “By the waters of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion...” The driver of the baggage wagon found her by the sound of her singing and tied the troublesome mule to his wagon for the remainder of the journey.

Crossing the Isthmus took three weeks. Accommodations, primitive at best, were totally inadequate for the numbers making their way to California, and the crowded conditions were aggravated by the long wait for places on ships—whose crews had often deserted and headed for the mining camps. Outbreaks of cholera, typhoid, malaria, and yellow fever decimated the bands of travelers. Sister Honorine was so ill she had to be carried on a litter the last few miles to Panama City, where she died the following day. Sister Mary Ignatia then became ill and died two days later. Sister Corsina caught the fever, but slowly recovered. When the Golden Gate finally sailed on 5 August, five sisters were on board instead of the original seven. The sisters were fortunate to have lost only two of their number. Crossing Panama at the same time with a company
of soldiers and their families bound for Oregon, Captain Ulysses Grant lost more than one hundred of his party to the diseases of the Isthmus.

San Francisco

Arriving in San Francisco 18 August 1852, the sisters were welcomed to Saint Patrick’s Parish by the pastor, Father John Maginnis, and fifteen orphan girls who were to be under their care. The house prepared for them was a shanty like the others that dotted the sand hills; the furniture consisted of wooden stools fashioned by Father Maginnis and hard cots with pillows made of goats’ hair. During the day these cots were stacked to make room for the school. The wind piled up sand before window and door; the rain interfered with cooking unless an umbrella was held over the stove; and the frogs, as Archbishop Alemany remarked, helped sing the Sunday benediction. The district was called “Happy Valley.”

In addition to their orphans, the sisters had at first fifty, and by the end of the term, ninety girls in Saint Vincent’s School. Maginnis and an Irish schoolmaster named Barry taught the boys.

Pleased with his five sisters, the archbishop was soon asking for more. By 1854 a train was running across the Isthmus of Panama, so that the second band, led by Sister Frederica McGrath, was spared the ordeal of the mule ride over the mountains. After the arrival of the second group, the teaching of smaller boys was confided to the sisters, making a new school building more necessary than ever. Removing his gold cross and chain, Archbishop Alemany gave the first contribution toward the school on Jessie Street. In 1858 the school opened with an enrollment of seventy-five orphans and over three hundred day scholars. The building, later the site of the Palace Hotel, housed at this time both the school and the Roman Catholic Orphanage.

San Rafael

Across the bay in San Rafael, a rancher named Don Timoteo Murphy bequeathed to the archbishop three hundred acres of land, on condition that a school be built there before 11 January 1855. Alemany asked Sister Francis Assisium to meet the stipulation so
that the bequest would not be lost. Superiors in Emmitsburg agreed; so Sisters Francis and Corsina were rowed by four Indians across the bay to see the property and choose a site. A two-story frame building was erected and Sister Corsina with two lay helpers and four orphan girls opened the school 2 January 1855, thus claiming the bequest with nine days to spare!

Pupils were few, as the site was too remote. There was no priest in the vicinity, so sister and children could not participate in the Eucharist unless they made an all-day trip by rowboat across the bay to San Francisco. In September 1855 the Community transferred the property back to the archbishop, who withdrew the twenty-eight boys from the Market Street orphanage and placed them in San Rafael under the care of Father Robert A. Maurice. Besides these boys, who formed the nucleus of Saint Vincent's Orphanage, forty pupils continued in the free school, taught by Father Maginnis's sister.

Los Angeles

A third group of Daughters of Charity arrived in San Francisco 14 November 1855, after an uneventful three-week journey from New York. They had come at the request of Thaddeus Amat, C.M., newly appointed bishop of Monterey, a diocese which included all the southern half of California. The six sisters destined for Los Angeles sailed on the Sea Bird to San Pedro and completed their journey in a wagon, arriving in Los Angeles 6 January 1856.

Sister Mary Scholastica Logsdon was sister servant of the group. Her five companions were: Sisters Ann Gillen, Corsina McKay—transferred from San Francisco—Clara Sisnero, Angelita Mombrado, and Francisca Fernandez. The last three girls the bishop had brought from his native Barcelona, by way of the Motherhouse in Paris, where they were introduced as postulants, then left at Emmitsburg for a five-month seminary before their departure for California. Their formation was hampered by the fact that they had learned little French in Paris and less English in America, and their companions had not yet learned Spanish. By the end of May Francisca had decided to return to Spain; after a few years Clara followed her. Sister Angelita, however, served sixty-seven years in the Community.

The house chosen for the Los Angeles Charitable Institution (or house of charity) was a frame building set in twelve acres of
orchard and vineyard, located at the corner of Macy and Alameda. The cost was $8000. The sisters moved in with seven orphans and began a day school, which by June had one hundred twenty girls. Blaise Raho, C.M., pastor of the old Plaza Church, taught the boys. It was soon necessary to replace the frame house with a larger two-story brick building. The first Orphans' Fair was held in October 1856; this became one of the big annual social events, always held on a "steamer day" since the monthly steamers brought the only ice with which to make ice cream.

Sister Scholastica's letters back to superiors at Emmitsburg gave glimpses of how the works progressed. During 1856 the vineyards earned $600. When a piano was donated, Sister Corsina gave music lessons. Father Raho brought a very sick man to the sisters, saying he would die without care. For want of space for a hospital, Sister Ann cleared out the tool shed by the garden gate and made it into a sick room where she tended her first patient until he recovered.

In May 1857 Sister Scholastica wrote that the population of Los Angeles had reached six thousand—fifteen thousand counting the surrounding towns and ranches. "There is no hospital in lower California. We will begin one next spring if you send two sisters in November." The sisters for the Santa Barbara foundation were expected at that time. In October she wrote again that they could buy a house and lot for the hospital for $3000.

The letter of October 1858 was filled with news. The bishop wanted sisters for San Juan Bautista and San Gabriel. Sister Ann's hospital had thirteen patients. The first stage had arrived and been greeted with cannon, having made its way from Saint Louis to Los Angeles in twenty-one days. The ladies had a tea party for the orphans, which netted $610.50.

The little hospital opened by Sister Ann was in the former home of Don Aguilar, a four-room adobe house near the Plaza. There were eight cots provided for patients, two for the three sisters. Water was brought from the river and the linens washed on the riverbank. An Indian boy and girl did the cooking. Milk was scarce, as California cows were unaccustomed to being milked. The hospital was recognized as the county hospital, since it was the only one in southern California. On 29 May 1858 its administration was separated from that of the Charitable Institution which housed the orphanage and school. From this nucleus Saint Vincent's Hospital grew, expanding in several successive locations, taking a leadership role in the medical history of southern California.
Santa Barbara

Sister Melanie Mullane was sent as sister servant of the new house in Santa Barbara, one hundred miles up the coast from Los Angeles. With Sisters Andrea Gibbs and Angelita Mombrado she traveled by steamer, arriving in Santa Barbara 8 January 1858. Sister Andrea taught school, baked bread three times a week, and did the wash on Saturdays. Sister Angelita taught sewing and served as a very inexperienced cook and housekeeper. Saint Vincent’s Institution, as they called their mission, cared for orphans and taught the children of ranchers from Santa Barbara, Santa Ynez, and the surrounding mountains. Some of the children boarded; others arrived on ponies or in ox carts. Most of the orphans were neglected Indian children brought by the pastor, James Vila.

Sister Melanie had arrived in a tubercular condition, aggravated by the ocean voyage. The dampness of their first home in Santa Barbara caused her illnesses to become more frequent and severe. In a beautiful letter to Burlando she reported on the progress of the mission and revealed her own condition. Sent to Sister Ann’s hospital in Los Angeles, she was too ill to recover. A month had passed before the next steamer brought to her young companions in Santa Barbara the news of her death. She was twenty-seven years of age.

The Los Angeles Seminary

In the autumn of 1858 Amat sailed to Rome, stopping in Paris on the way to see the superior general and the superioress of the Daughters of Charity. In January 1859 Sister Scholastica wrote: “I hear by the Bishop’s letters that he is quite in hopes of having a seminary in his diocese in time.”27 In June she reported to Burlando:

The Bishop says he had the promise of Our Most Honored Mother for a seminary in his diocese. He will bring two Vincentians and five Sisters from Paris for San Juan Bautista or San Gabriel. San Juan Bautista is said to be a fine flourishing place settled mostly by Irish... Will you come be our director and Sister Ann Simeon our Visitatrix?”26
Sister Teresa Fox, California’s first Daughter of Charity, traveled across the Isthmus to enter the Community at Emmitsburg in 1859. An Australian by birth, she had lived in San Francisco before coming south to teach music at the Charitable Institution in Los Angeles.

But few could be expected to make such a difficult journey. As early as 1858, Amat had sought the approval of major superiors in Paris for the opening of a seminary for the formation of Daughters of Charity in his diocese, to be followed by the establishment of a province of the Daughters of Charity in the West. Burlando, provincial director for the Daughters of the United States, hesitated to support the plan, fearing that the bishop had in mind a diocesan community. Amat reassured him that this was not his intention, but only the formation of a separate province. This promise of the bishop and the increasing difficulty of travel by sea because of the wartime blockades led Burlando and the Council to give full support to the project. Burlando wrote to Sister Scholastica Logsdon 12 November 1860 that she was to be the directress of the new seminary, which would be housed in the Los Angeles Charitable Institution.

The seminary was opened 1 May 1861, and three days later six girls were admitted, ranging in age from sixteen to twenty years. One came from Santa Barbara, one from San Francisco, and the other four from Los Angeles. While these were being formed in the spirit of the Company, others were received as postulants and being prepared for the seminary. The formation program was further enriched by the arrival of a group of Vincentians under the leadership of John Asmuth, who was also appointed sub-director of the Daughters of Charity. This had been suggested by Sister Scholastica, who wrote to Burlando that the missions of California were becoming too important to be managed by letter. The Vincentians helped the sisters in other ways, not the least of which was acting as intermediaries in the dispute with the bishops over land tenure. Asmuth wrote to Etienne, the superior general, 28 February 1865, asking him to obtain the necessary exemption so that the sisters could hold corporate title to their own property.

The California seminary remained in existence from 1861 to 1870, forming during that time almost seventy young sisters for service in the western missions. At one point Sister Scholastica was named as visitatrix for the province being considered. Several factors appear to have been at work in the decision to close the
The Blossoming of the West

While war was devastating the land east of the Mississippi River, the growth of the West continued. Gold from California and silver from Nevada traveled east to help finance the war and build the railroad that would unite the country. News of the war and the report of Lincoln’s assassination were carried west in the pouch of the pony express rider.

For the Community in the West it was also a period of expansion, made possible by the local formation of young Daughters of Charity in the Los Angeles seminary. The first of the new missions opened were in the Monterey-Los Angeles Diocese; both were opened in 1862.

San Juan Bautista

The old mission of San Juan Bautista was an exchange station on the route between San Francisco and Los Angeles, and so was a growing community. Father Anthony Ubach, the pastor, wanted an orphanage and a school. Three sisters were sent; they lived in the cloister of the old mission and held classes in a room behind the sacristies. With orphanage, boarders, and day school combined, there were only forty-five pupils. Having no basis of financial
support, the work faltered; debts were high. Drought added to the financial difficulties. In 1869 the service of the sisters there was discontinued.

_Santa Cruz_

Also commenced in 1862 was the School of the Holy Cross in Santa Cruz. Sister Corsina McKay was the first sister servant of the school, which was begun in the old adobe Eagle Hotel, originally part of the Santa Cruz Mission. The building was two and a half stories high, with porches across the front at two levels. An orphanage later was added to the work of the school, which continued to serve the people of Santa Cruz for over eighty years.

_Petaluma_

The first outlying mission opened in the San Francisco Archdiocese, Saint Vincent School in Petaluma, was begun in a stable by two lay teachers in 1859 and entrusted to the Daughters of Charity in 1867. Sister Angela Noyland was the sister servant. By this time the day school was in a small frame house. At the request of both pastor and parents an inexpensive boarding school was opened. However, the house was too small for this, and the debt on the property high. With no prospect of building or enlarging to take in boarders, there was little hope of paying off the debt. The sisters withdrew in 1885, and the school was again confided to lay teachers.

_Virginia City, Nevada_

The discovery of silver in Nevada in 1859 gave rise to the boom town of Virginia City on the steep slopes of Mount Davidson. By 1864 the population had reached fifteen thousand. Father Patrick Manogue, the young Irish pastor who had himself been a miner in California, asked for sisters for an orphanage and a school. Sisters Frederica McGrath, Xavier Schauer, and Elizabeth Russell commenced the mission in October 1864. By October 18 there were ninety children in school; but storms and blizzards forced the school to close for much of the winter. By the following July,
however, there were twenty-five orphans and boarders and one hundred twelve in the school. Five of the boarders, twenty of the pupils were kept free of charge.

Their first winter was a challenge. The orphanage was a brick building not yet completed; only one room was finished. Furnished with a stove, table, bench, two chairs, a rough cabinet, and a “water bowl”—which had to be carried to the dump to be emptied—it served as home to three sisters and twelve orphans and as classroom, also, for the entire school. All slept in the loft above, reached by an outside stairway covered with ice and snow for most of the winter, as one blizzard followed another. Summer was worse, with dust settling on everything, laundry dirty before it was dry, and water, hauled from the Washoe Valley, like liquid mud and so scarce that cleanliness was a forgotten luxury.

As the Comstock bonanza continued, additions were made to the buildings on H Street; soon there were two large and two small brick buildings in the complex that comprised the first Catholic school and orphanage in Nevada. From 1867 to 1872 the school and orphanage received aid from the state; but most of the income was from tuition, the proceeds of annual orphans’ fairs, and the help of the parish conference of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society, which counted five hundred members.

In addition to their work at home, the sisters made regular visits to care for the sick and poor in Virginia City, Gold Hill, and other settlements scattered up and down Six Mile Canyon. They held religion classes for public school children and some adults, including members of neighboring Indian tribes—Washoes, Shoshones and particularly the Paiutes, whose encampment of wickiups was clustered just outside the city.

While the West had been blossoming into an era of order and prosperity, the rest of the nation was torn by the Civil War and its bitter results. The sisters in California and Nevada endured hardships of their own; but these were far from the wartime experiences of their companions in other parts of the nation.
Sister Gonzaga Grace was in charge of the Daughters of Charity who provided the nursing care at the West Philadelphia hospital known as Satterlee. It covered 15 acres, cared for as many as 4500 wounded at a time.

The surgeon general requested 100 sisters to nurse the wounded aboard the transports. At White House Landing in Virginia the wounded waited for boats to carry them north to hospitals.

Sister Mary Thomas went to New Orleans to beg from General Butler food for her orphans in Natchez.

From 1861 to 1865 Sisters nursed in the Gratiot Street Prison and two other military prisons in St. Louis and Alton.

Sisters nursed on battlefields from Manassas and Antietam to Florida and Louisiana, ...and in field stations behind the lines.

"It was a sister who came to me when I was unable to help myself, in an old barn near Gettysburg, where I was. She dressed my wounds and gave me a drink and took care of me until I came here."

A soldier at Satterlee Hospital.