

CHAPTER XV

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Diocese of Fall River. Beginnings of Catholicity Here. Numerous Strong Parishes With Their History

Fall River is a strong Catholic city, with possibly two-thirds, if not more, of its population members of this faith. It is the cathedral city of the diocese that bears its name, and has twenty large and active parishes, with a number of stately and exceedingly beautiful church edifices, erected at great cost and the admiration of Catholics and non-Catholics alike. To these have been added parochial schools, convents, academies, orphans' homes and, lately, a magnificent hospital. No cathedral has yet been erected, on account of the brief period since the present diocese was formed, but there is every reason to believe that when such a structure does rise here it will be a credit to the city and the Church.

The growth of the Catholic Church here has been almost entirely since the Civil War, though the mass was said in Fall River as early as 1829. This section was then a part of the diocese of Boston, and remained in that see until the erection of the diocese of Providence, in 1872, when it became a part of the charge of the bishop there. The diocese of Fall River was formed March 12, 1904, consisting of Bristol, Barnstable and Dukes counties and the towns of Marion and Mattapoisett, in Plymouth County. Rt. Rev. William Stang was consecrated the first bishop on May 1, 1904, in the cathedral at Providence. The first Episcopal residence here was at the northeast corner of Winter and Cherry streets, from which it was removed to the Job Leonard mansion on Highland avenue in 1905. St. Mary's Church, the oldest Catholic house of worship in the city, was named as the pro-cathedral.

Though it has been impossible to determine accurately when the service of the church was first held here, it is believed to have been in 1829, in the kitchen of a woman named Kennedy, with an altar made of the kitchen table covered with a white cloth. Father Corry, of Taunton, was the celebrant,

and came here at intervals of from one to three months. Two years later, in 1829, the total Catholic population here, according to Bishop Fenwick's diary, was but 20 souls, but by 1832 it is estimated to have increased to 50, including children.

The first attempt at organization appears to have been made toward the end of 1834, and on February 18, 1835, Father Corry purchased from Peter McLarrin 38½ rods of land on Spring street, the site of St. Mary's Church, for \$659.67. In 1837 a small wooden chapel without a cellar was erected and given the name of St. John the Baptist. New vestments were purchased and an altar erected, and the following year Father Corry took up his residence here. He was soon after succeeded by Father Hardy, and in 1840 by Rev. Edward Murphy, who had come here from the Penobscot Indians in Maine. Meanwhile the Catholic population had increased, with the growth of the community, and Fr. Murphy enlarged the church by an extension at the rear, which carried the altar and six pews over the line into Rhode Island, while the rest of the church was in Massachusetts. A basement was also constructed and a day school organized, taught by Michael Hanrahan. A cottage on Spring street was purchased and fitted as a rectory, and in 1847 Father McNulty was sent here as an assistant to Father Murphy, who then had charge of the parish of New Bedford, as well as Fall River.

The congregation grew so rapidly that a new church became a necessity, and soon after 1850 the work of building a basement for the structure was begun about the old building. The cornerstone was laid by Bishop Fenwick August 8, 1852, and the walls, with the exception of that in front, carried up to their present height. The old structure was then sawed in two and removed to the site of the present rectory, on Second street, where services were held till St. Mary's was

completed. The steeple and vestry were not yet built, but aside from these it was as it is now—a granite edifice 126x71, with an interior height of 90 feet and a seating capacity of 2,000. The name was changed to the present title. The old chapel was destroyed by fire July 12, 1856, and from that time services were held in the present church.

The population of the parish continued to increase so rapidly that it was several times divided. The Sisters of Mercy came in 1874 and a parochial school started under their charge, first in their home on Rodman and Fourth streets, and the following year in the chapel, which had been rebuilt after the fire. The present convent was purchased in 1875, and the chapel moved across the street and enlarged for school purposes, where the school has since been held. The cornerstone of a new building better suited for the purposes was laid this spring. Father Murphy, after his long and active service, passed away in Ireland, whither he had gone for his health, July 9, 1887. His remains were brought to this city and placed in the vault beneath the church which he had built, August 1, 1887.

Rev. Christopher Hughes, the present pastor of St. Mary's, succeeded Father Murphy in September, 1887, and under his care the parish has prospered. The church was renovated throughout, statuary, side altars, stained windows, a marble high altar and other notable improvements have been made, additional real estate purchased and the church consecrated in September, 1901.

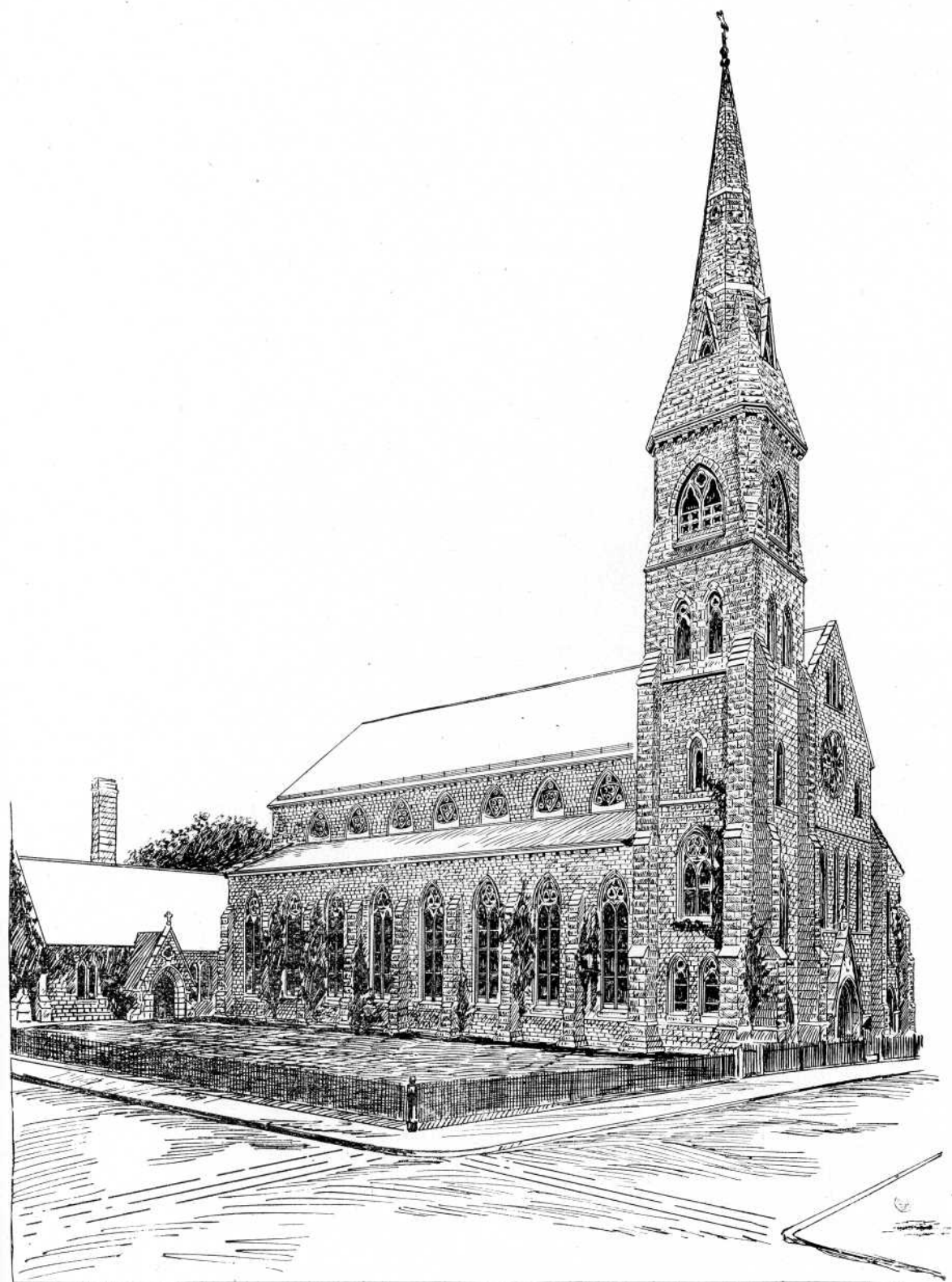
St. Patrick's, as well as other early Catholic parishes, was formed by a division of St. Mary's, and dates from 1873. Rev. John Kelly, the first pastor, said mass in a building known as the "broom factory," which was followed by a temporary wooden church. Fr. Kelly spent years in collecting and self-denial for securing funds for a new edifice, and on September 18, 1881, the cornerstone of the present imposing structure was laid. He died in January, 1885, and was succeeded by Rev. Thomas P. Grace, who was able to open and complete the church in 1889. A parochial school had been opened in 1886, and a convent secured for the Sisters of Mercy in 1887. Rev. Michael J. Cooke, who succeeded Father Grace in 1890, and is still the pastor, rebuilt the school and has laid out much in the improvement of the property.

The parish of the Sacred Heart was formed from St. Mary's parish soon after the erection of the diocese of Providence, and land for the church on Linden street was purchased by Fr. Murphy of St. Mary's in 1872. Plans for an edifice were prepared, but after the appointment of Rev. Francis Quinn in January, 1873, these were discarded and new ones drawn, on which the erection of the present church was soon after begun. Rev. Mathias McCabe, the present pastor, when appointed in the autumn of 1874, found the building not half done and the parish in debt \$80,000. The church was completed and dedicated in September, 1883. In 1886 a large brick schoolhouse was erected and placed in charge of the Sisters of the Union of the Sacred Heart, but not entirely finished until 1893.

The parish of St. Joseph's was formed in 1873, on the same day as St. Patrick's, with Rev. William Bric the first pastor. Land was purchased, a temporary wooden church erected and the cornerstone of the present edifice laid August 15, 1880. Fr. Bric died August 7, 1880, and was succeeded by Rev. Andrew Brady, who lived until shortly before the completion of the church, a fine brick building, which was dedicated May 30, 1885. Rev. Bernard Boylan, who succeeded Fr. Brady, is still the pastor. Somerset was a mission of the parish until 1877.

St. Louis' parish was formed in May, 1885, also from St. Mary's, and the first mass was said on the 24th of that month, in the old thread mill at the corner of Mulberry and Division streets. The cornerstone of the present structure, which faces the South Park, was laid October 18, 1885, and within a year the basement was completed and occupied. The church was dedicated May 11, 1890. Rev. Louis Deady, the first pastor, remained until the fall of 1896, and saw the erection of the church, the parochial residence and the Holy Name Institute, at an approximate cost of \$80,000. Rev. James H. Fogarty, the present pastor, has been in charge since 1885. St. Louis parish has a handsome brick parochial school, situated on Division street.

St. Vincent's Orphanage.—The St. Vincent's Home Corporation was granted a charter by the Commonwealth on February 7, 1889, "for the purpose of caring, maintaining and educating indigent children." The St. Vincent's Home, as it is popularly known, was founded in 1885, while Fall River was a part of the diocese of Providence, under the



St. Mary's Church

episcopate of Rt. Rev. Thomas F. Hendrickson, D. D. Bishop Hendrickson's successor, Rt. Rev. Matthew Harkins, D. D., was the first corporate president of St. Vincent's, Rev. Bernard Boylan its first treasurer and the late Gilbert P. Cuttle its first clerk. Cornelius S. Greene has been vice-president of the home from its inception. Rt. Rev. William Stang, D. D., Bishop of Fall River, is now president and treasurer, Rev. Bernard F. McCahill clerk, and Rev. Mortimer Downing resident chaplain of the home. Rev. Mr. Downing is also supervisor of Catholic charities for the Fall River diocese. The orphanage is located on North Main street, opposite Baldwin street, at Steep Brook. The grounds consist of several acres, beautifully



St. Vincent Home

situated between the street and Taunton Great River, and picturesquely variegated with hill and vale, trees, shrubbery and water. The site of the home at the time of purchase was a pleasure garden known as "Forest Hill," and otherwise known as "Ashley's Grove." The wooden buildings on the grounds served the purpose of the orphanage until 1894, when the present brick structure, an up-to-date building with all modern appointments and belongings, was erected at a cost approximating \$75,000. The home is now entirely free from debt, due to the energy of Rev. Cornelius Kelly, who for several years managed the collection of the liquidation funds, and to the generosity of the priests and people of the diocese. St. Vincent's is in charge of the Sisters of Mercy and shelters between 240 and 260 children; its first manager and superintendent was Sister Magdalen, and on her death the vacancy was filled by the appointment of Sister Mechtilde, the present incumbent.

Ste. Anne's parish* was the first French religious organization formed here—in 1869, two years after the immigration of the Cana-

dians to this city began in earnest. The records of St. Mary's Church, the parent church, show no French names previous to 1862, but in that year the baptismal book bears the names of Elise Levallee (Levallee) and James Goslin, probably an Anglicized form of Jacques Gosselin; in 1863, Thomas de Courcy; in 1864, Agatha Dubois and Albert Dubois. There is no French christening in 1865, but six in 1866, 13 in 1867, a large number in 1868, increasing again to a considerable extent in 1869, when Ste. Anne's parish was formed. Thus the beginning of French immigration to Fall River may be traced to some time after the War of the Secession, about 1867.

If Canada is nowadays a prosperous country, almost as much, proportionately, it is said, as the United States, it was not so some forty years ago. Operatives were paid very low wages, and it is no wonder that, hearing of high salaries awarded to people of their crafts in the States, they crossed the boundary line.

They came, one by one, two by two, and finally by the score, and Mr. Dubuque's valuable work on the origin of the French colony in Fall River states that they numbered about 3,000 in 1869.

Rev. A. J. Derbuel, formerly pastor at West Boylston and afterwards appointed curate at St. Mary's Church in 1868, was the first French priest who attended to the Canadians of Fall River. His name appears in St. Mary's records from the 1st of September to the 21st of October of that year. The Rev. Olivier Verdier, also a French missionary, continued his work, but only for a short time, as he died in 1869. A third French priest, M. F. Le Breton, signed the register October 22, 1869. That same year l'Abbe Paul Romain-Louis-Adrien de Montaubricq (honorary canon of Bordeaux), a descendant of a noble family in France, arrived in Fall River, and naturally all grandsons and granddaughters of France, so dear to all French Canadians, flocked around him. He was already the pastor of the French population, and might have severed at once from the Irish one, by renting a hall or some large house, where he could assemble with his people. But he thought it was best not to part as yet from St. Mary's and to enjoy for a little while longer her generous hospitality. His name appears in St. Mary's records for the first time August 2, 1869, and for the last October 23 of the same year. Courteous

*From a paper contributed by Rev. Paul V. Charland, O. P. of Ste. Anne's.



Ste. Anne's Church

always, as all members of the French nobility, nevertheless he failed in some respects, the old people say. As he was a great speaker, he happened sometimes to expatiate just a little bit too much in his sermons, and consequently his mass was hardly finished when it was time for another to begin. The work consisted first in establishing a new parish, a thorough French parish, and in building a church; the latter was erected at the corner of Hunter and Hope streets, where the schools of Ste. Anne are now located. It is said that, in the course of the construction, he met with an accident which might have proved fatal, but that he escaped without any serious harm, because of his having invoked the Good Saint. Through gratitude, he had the church dedicated to her sacred name. A part of the foundations only remain at present, and these have been used as a support for another wall. There remains only an entire ruin of what should have been kept as a vivid souvenir of bygone days.

This little chapel was the mother-church of several others, and one cannot help being amazed at the wonderful expansion of French Catholicity in this city.

At the Flint Village, where the gorgeous Church of Notre Dame de Lourdes now stands adorned with the still more gorgeous painting by Cremonini, lived a large group of the so-called "Frenchies." They were far away from Ste. Anne's and, besides, the church was getting too small for the ever increasing population. At last they decided to have a new house of worship built, and also a priest of their own nationality. Local history here gives many a detail showing the deep attachment of the "Frenchies" to their mother language. "Frenchies" may perhaps like to talk business or anything else in English, but, as Bishop Stang says his prayers in German and acknowledges the fact freely, so they insist upon their right that, being French, their religion should be French. Their patriotism was so great that it was only after great difficulties and contests which the Holy See had to settle that a second church was finally established in July, 1874, at the Flint Village, and Rev. P. J. B. Bedard appointed pastor.

On December 3, 1887, twelve or thirteen years later, a third parish was founded at Bowenville, and called St. Matthew, after the patron saint of Bishop Harkins of Providence.

The parish of Ste. Anne did not seem to be impoverished by this continual output of her own wealth. New children were constantly being added to her, and so much so that hardly two years later she was able to organize a fourth congregation at the Globe, where Father Delemarre's beautiful church now basks in the sunshine. Some six or seven years more and St. John the Baptist of Maplewood is created (1899). The church is not yet completed, when St. Roch, the Benjamin child of the old Ste. Anne, is brought to life. This may not be the "end of it." The French population of Fall River, which amounted to three thousand in 1870, as may be seen above, has gradually increased to thirty-five—some say forty—thousand people, and, although the old Mother Ste. Anne has been divided into five or six parts, there is always more left to offer to some curate to guard and protect.

Were one making a speech or indulging in poetry instead of writing dry history, he might here add a few comments in regard to the generosity and liberality of the French population, but facts are better and speak for themselves.

To buy extensive lots, build churches, rectories, parochial schools, academies and hospitals; to tear down the old structures in order to erect better ones, and, in fact, masterpieces of architecture, and at the same time support financially the priests, and school teachers by the score, besides the sisters, never to complain of giving too much, that continually denotes a spirit of devotedness and liberality which is inherent to a remarkable degree in the French. It has been asked often by outsiders or passers-by how the new Ste. Anne's Church could possibly have been constructed, because so many, especially from New York or large cities, judging from appearances, deem its cost to be about a million dollars. In fact, it is hardly one-half of this sum, but half a million dollars, considering the average condition of the people, mostly all laborers, is a not insignificant amount. Not one of the priests of this city who does not give his most heartfelt thanks to the fathers, mothers, sons and daughters, who have given spontaneously, year after year, and week after week, part of their limited earnings, for the welfare and advancement of this parish and the glory of God. Referring to the question asked by the passer-by, "Who built Ste. Anne's Church," the beauti-

ful monument which calls forth so much praise and admiration, this is the only truthful answer: "It is the factory boy and the factory girl."

Since the first missionaries of Ste. Anne Derbuel, Verdier and Montaubricq were succeeded by the Rev. Fathers Briscoe and Clarke, the latter now at St. Theresa's, in Providence. Especially to the first Dominican pioneers, who gave such a powerful impulse to this parish, the Fathers Mothon, Esteva, Sauval, Therien, Cormevais. Father Sauval met with great success at Ste. Anne's, and was devoted to his parishioners. With ever increasing zeal he felt both for their spiritual and temporal affairs, with ability in business matters, and energy and firm hope in the future. He built five or six parochial schools and the Academy on Park street; the ideal lot where Ste. Anne's Church and rectory are now located, and constructed the rectory and part of the foundations of the new church. Rev. Father Raymond A. Grolleau, the present pastor of Ste. Anne's, carried on the good work. What seemed an impossibility after Father Sauval's death, an impossibility for a score of years and maybe half a century, viz.: the continuation and completion of the church he made feasible at his first arrival in this city. The completion of the church demanded an expense of about \$300,000, but he feared nothing, and so persuasive was his pleading that none had any objections, neither the bishop, the Rt. Rev. Matthew Harkins, nor the parishioners, notwithstanding all they had already done for their parish.

Ste. Anne's Church was dedicated on July 4, 1906, and its doors are now thrown open to the public in general, when every one visiting this magnificent structure will readily pronounce it a masterly piece of work. Some churches may seem to some more elaborate, more ornamental (more theatre-like), but considering the style which has been adopted, the old Roman Byzantine, and remembering also the limited means of the people, every connoisseur will acknowledge that nothing better, even nothing else could have been done.

The completion of Ste. Anne's Church calls forth improvements from all sides. Quite recently the Dominican Sisters of the Academy on Park street, formerly only ten or twelve, now numbering fifty, decided to considerably enlarge their establishment,

and with this end in view have bought a lot of land adjoining their own, at the same time making plans for an extensive addition.

What is no longer a plan or an idle dream, but an attractive reality, is Ste. Anne's Rectory, now being constructed in a line with the vestry of the church, and built in the same style and materials as the church itself. Whoever will look at its size, its costly rough or face-hammered blue marble of Vermont, its fine gables and turrets and porches and other different details, will certainly congratulate the Dominican Fathers for their deep sense of aesthetics, and their love of the beautiful, if he is told that they intend to pay for that house, almost a palace, out of their own financial resources.

Ste. Anne's Hospital, built and paid for by the Dominican Sisters of Charity of Tours, France, was dedicated February 4, 1906, with elaborate ceremonies in the presence of an immense gathering of clergymen, lawyers, city officials, headed by Mayor John T. Coughlin, religio-military societies and members of all professions. This hospital was suggested by Rev. Father Grolleau a few years ago. He had seen in his native land of France some of the finest institutions of that kind in the world, in charge of Sisters who were trained nurses, and he had had many an opportunity to appreciate the excellent work done by these women. After long negotiations with the Sisters, he succeeded in bringing them here with enough of their own funds to realize his dream of a fine hospital. With considerable difficulty he purchased from the Messrs. Jonathan and James Chace, of Providence, the lot of land he coveted, just opposite his church, on the right hand side of Middle street—an ideal location for the purpose for which he intended it. The building is four stories high, with the basement, and covers an area of 11,824 square feet. Its appearance is imposing, even in its embryo form, for in accordance with the complete plans which have been drawn, additions will be made as soon as there is a demand for them. At present the structure is composed of three sections, one on Middle street, extending 183 feet long, another on South Main street, extending 198 feet, and the third one on Oliver street, measuring 100 feet.

It belongs to no special style of architecture, except the gables, built in Flemish

style, really Spanish style, since this has been copied from the Spanish by the Flemish architects. Except this little ornamentation, the general lines are very simple, and an inspection of the interior will at once prove that the whole building has been devised in view of its usefulness.

Space, light and air and the arrangements for the heating, the lighting and ventilation are perfect. There are five wards for the sick, two for the men and three for the women, one of each class for the medical and the others for surgical cases. There are also about forty private rooms, and some suites with a sleeping room, a combination sitting and dining room, a toilet room, with bath and all the accessories. The operating room is one of the best appointed in the country, and many a doctor says it is surpassed by none. The fourth floor will not be completed for some time, but, minus this floor, Ste. Anne's Hospital can easily accommodate from 100 to 125 patients. The Sisters in charge are at present Reverend Mother Marguerite, president; Sister Gonzague, secretary of the corporation, registered druggist and trained nurse of exceptional ability; Sisters Madeleine, Camille, Aquilin, Matthieu, Flora, Theotime, Jeanne, Marguerite, all professional nurses, or "infirmieres," as they are called in France. Professional nurses, among whom is Miss Amilie Despins, formerly of the Union Hospital of this city, are giving their help to the institution, and a number of Sisters are to come from the old country.

The corps of physicians and surgeons, or "the staff," was well selected. In May, 1906, it was composed as follows: President, Dr. P. A. A. Collett; vice-president, Dr. George L. Richards; secretary, Dr. J. E. Huard. Attending surgeons: Drs. J. E. Lanoie, J. B. Trainor, J. A. Barre, A. I. Connell, H. G. Wilbur, A. C. Lewis. Attending physicians: Drs. P. A. A. Collet, H. A. Rosa, S. V. Merritt, F. de B. Bergeron, J. P. A. Garneau, M. A. Blanchette. Specialists: Genito-urinary and skin diseases, Drs. George E. Luther and A. Fecteau; ear, nose and throat, Drs. G. L. Richards and J. E. Huard; eyes, Drs. A. St. George and O. H. Jackson; children's diseases, Drs. Michael Kelly and J. S. Leboeuf; orthopedic surgeons, Dr. P. T. Crispo and E. F. Curry; pathologist, Dr. Mary W. Marvell; bacteriologist, Dr. D. R. Ryder; anaesthetists, Dr. F. H. Beckett, P. J. A. Dufault, J. D. Beauparlant and J. E. Mer-

cier; dentists, Drs. T. P. Sullivan and J. Homer Barre. Consulting physicians: Drs. S. J. Kelly, John W. Coughlin, J. B. Chagnon, George S. Eddy, William H. Butler, A. S. MacKnight and Thomas F. Gunning. Consulting surgeons: Drs. A. W. Buck, R. W. Jackson, Dwight E. Cone, W. T. Learned, Ubald J. Paquin, of New Bedford, and Joao Pitta, also of New Bedford; Drs. Garceau and Jones, of Boston.

Before long an addition to the hospital will be made, when the Ste. Anne's old Rectory is moved across Middle street to the lot in front of the south wing of the building, where it will be remodeled and turned into a boarding house for young women who work in mills or commercial establishments and whose parents do not live here.

The Dominican Fathers have other plans in mind which they will propose later on. They have already made of what a few years ago consisted only of vacant lots and swamps one of the finest spots of the city.

Notre Dame de Lourdes is probably the most powerful French Roman Catholic parish in the United States. It was formed in 1874 by a division of the parish of Ste. Anne, then the only French Catholic church in the city, and has grown rapidly with the phenomenal increase in the French population in the eastern section. Rev. Pierre Jean-Baptiste Bedard was the first pastor and was greatly beloved by his people, with whom he remained until his death, in 1884. He was succeeded after a year by the Rev. J. M. LaFlamme, and in 1888 by Rev. J. A. Prevost, the present pastor. The first church was a frame structure, which stood on Bassett street, on ground now partly occupied by St. Joseph's Orphanage. It was destroyed by fire in November, 1893, but after a few months it was possible to hold services in the basement of the present beautiful church, which had been begun in 1891. This basement has since been used as a place of worship, but it is expected that the main auditorium will be ready for occupancy in September. The church is of granite, of imposing architecture and will represent a total cost of \$300,000. The style is pure Corinthian and without a pillar in the whole vast church, allowing an unobstructed view of the altar. There are no galleries, except a small one in the rear for the choir and organ. The ceiling is adorned with a beautiful painting of the Last Judgment, by Ludovic Cremonini, a celebrated Roman artist, who has also paint-

ed an allegory of the Holy Rosary for the rotunda, one of the Immaculate Conception for the arch between the sanctuary and the nave, and other subjects for general decoration. The stucco work was done by another Italian artist, Signor Castagnoli. The splendid new rectory on Eastern avenue and Bassett street was completed in 1897 at a cost of \$30,000.

Connected with the parish is the orphanage of St. Joseph, which cares for 350 children, and occupies a large structure built in 1893; the Jesus Marie Convent, dating from 1877, and a large and commodious parochial school and college, completed in 1898, at a cost of \$75,000. This was organized in 1882 and is situated on Bassett street, near Ashton. It has 1,100 pupils.

The Church of the Blessed Sacrament, formerly St. Dominic's, was started as a mission of Ste. Anne's, and was founded by the Dominicans. P. Gillant, O. P., was the first pastor and was succeeded in 1892 by Rev. L. O. Massicotte. The cornerstone of the present handsome church on Townsend hill was laid July 4, 1902. Rev. D. V. Delamarre is in charge.

St. Roch's dates from May, 1899, when it was started by Rev. J. E. Th. Giguere, the present pastor. The first mass was held in the hall of the Ligue des Patriotes. Land has since been bought and a frame church erected on Pine street.

Santo Christo parish (Portuguese) was founded by Rev. Fr. Neves in 1891. It was attended from New Bedford until July, 1892, when the Rev. C. A. Martens became pastor. He was followed in June, 1898, by Rev. F. S. Mesquita, who is still in charge. The contract for the construction of the basement of a new church was recently awarded.

St. Michael's started as a mission of Santo Christo. The basement for a church was opened in 1896. The pastor is Rev. Manuel C. Grilla.

The other Catholic parishes here are Espirito Santo (Portuguese) and Madonna de Rosario (Italian). St. Stanislaus Catholic (Polish) Church is located on Rockland street and has a commodious parochial school on the same street. Another Polish church known as the Independent Polish Catholic Church is located on West Globe street.

SS. Peter and Paul's parish was formed in April, 1882, with Rev. Patrick Doyle the first pastor. For nearly a year mass was

said in a large store until the first church, a frame structure, was ready for occupancy. The cornerstone of the present edifice was laid June 7, 1896, and the church dedicated March 25, 1900.

Father Doyle died in the summer of 1893 and was succeeded by Rev. Bernard F. McCahill, the present pastor.

The Immaculate Conception parish was also formed in April, 1882, with Rev. Owen Kiernan the first pastor. Land was bought at once and the cornerstone of the present structure laid April 14, 1883. Rev. Cornelius McSweeney is the pastor.

St. Mathieu's parish was organized in the fall of 1886. Rev. J. A. Payan, the first priest, bought the site of the church the following year, and soon after began the construction of the basement. The cornerstone was laid September 3, 1893, and the building dedicated September 20, 1896. Rev. L. A. Casgrain, who succeeded Fr. Payan, was pastor from 1888 till February, 1895, when he was followed by Rev. J. G. Levalle, who is still in charge.

The parish of St. John Baptiste, on Stafford road, is comparatively new. It is in charge of Rev. H. J. Musselly.

St. Williams parish, named as a delicate compliment to Bishop William Stang, it is said, was organized in May, 1905, with Rev. Patrick McGee in charge. A church is under construction.

The Convent and Academy of the Holy Union of the Sacred Hearts, on Prospect street, under the care of the Sisters of that name, was established in 1886, when the Sisters bought the property, erected an academy building and took charge of the Sacred Heart parochial school. They now have 18 members and 12 novitiates, with 550 pupils in the school and about 80 in the academy. A new building of brick and stone, three stories in height, is being erected, and when completed will furnish accommodations for 150 pupils.

The Sisters of St. Joseph, numbering 25, who came here in 1902, have three houses, the principal one on Tremont street, and instruct about 1,200 pupils in the St. Roch's, St. Mathieu's, Blessed Sacrament and Maplewood parochial schools. Land has been purchased at Townsend Hill for the erection of a home for the Sisters.

Other convents are those of the Ladies of Jesus-Mary, of Our Lady of Perpetual Succor and the Dominican Sisters.