CHAPTER XXXIV

ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY, 1833-1867

I THE UNIVERSITY GROWS

The history of professional instruction west of the Mississippi goes back to the grant of a university charter made by the Missouri legislature, December 28, 1832, to St. Louis College, which thereby became the first institution in that part of the Union to enjoy this educational privilege. Three years later, in 1835, Father Verhaegen, first president of St. Louis University, took up with the Medical Society of St. Louis the project of opening a Medical School in connection with the University. A faculty of eminent St. Louis physicians, among them Dr Beaumont, a practitioner of national reputation, for whom the Beaumont Medical School of St. Louis was to be named, was organized, though it was some years before the school itself opened its doors. But the presence of the teaching staff of the proposed department became at once a recognized feature of the academic and other exercises of the University. On Independence Day, 1838, the Medical Society marched with the student-body and instructors of the University to the court-house to hear the Declaration of Independence read by one of the students and thence to the cathedral to listen to a discourse by Father Van de Velde of the University. The chronicler adds that, the exercises over, the medical professors with other invited guests, among them General Morgan, a hero of the battle of New Orleans, were dined by the fathers of the University. That same year, 1838, the commencement exercises of the University were marked by a baccalaureate procession, the medical staff and other professors marching through the main corridor of the building and thence into the college campus, where the exercises were held.[1]

Instruction in the St. Louis University Medical School was inaugurated in the fall of 1842 in a building erected for the purpose on the north side of Washington Avenue directly west of Tenth Street. The reorganized faculty included such eminent names in the medical profession as those of Daniel Brainard, subsequently founder of Rush Medical College, Chicago, Moses L. Linton, founder in 1843 of the

[1] W H Fanning, *Historical Sketch of St Louis University* (Bulletin of St Louis University, 1908), *Litterae Annuae*, 1838 (A).

St. Louis Medical and Surgical Journal, and Dr. Charles Alexander Pope, later a president of the American Medical Association.[2] The popularity of Dr. Pope when dean of the Medical School caused it to be referred to as "Pope's College." He was a son-in-law of Col. John O'Fallon, one of St. Louis's best known citizens, and it was through his influence that the latter erected in 1850 a stately new building at Seventh and Myrtle Streets in which to house the medical department of St Louis University "This beautiful structure," wrote a contemporary observer, "was built entirely by the munificence of Col. John O'Fallon at an expense of about $80,000. . . The fitting up, museum arrangements and instruments cost Dr Pope at least $30,000 besides" [3] Thus in the early fifties St Louis University was enjoying facilities for medical instruction of the highest order when unlooked for circumstances brought about the loss of this branch of its curriculum In consequence of the Know-Nothing excitement of 1855 it was agreed that year by mutual consent between the University authorities and the officers of the Medical School to dissolve the connection between the two. The "St. Louis Medical College," as the released institution was called, continued its work under a separate charter.

A law department was opened in the fall of 1843 with a matriculation of eighteen students. At its head was Judge Richard Aylett Buckner of Kentucky, a man of high legal attainments and a figure of some prominence in the national politics of the day. He was the controlling and vitalizing influence of the first St. Louis University Law School

[2] A son of Dr Pope, Father John O'Fallon Pope, of the English Province of the Society of Jesus, was for years head of Pope's Hall, Oxford A sister of Father Pope married Col Vaughan, head of the English Catholic family of that name which has given so many distinguished members to the service of the Church Dr Linton was for years the house-physician of St Louis University He was on terms of intimacy with the Jesuit faculty, especially De Smet, who compiled for him the so-called "Linton Album," a unique manuscript record of Jesuit activities in the West (A) A few days previous to his death Dr Linton penned, May 14, 1872, a tribute to the Society of Jesus in the form of a letter addressed to the provincial, Father Thomas O'Neil It begins "I wish to say a few things to the Jesuit Fathers of St Louis Since I entered their hospitable doors thirty years ago, up to the present hour, I have been the recipient of their kindness and benefactions I cannot express my gratitude and therefore shall not attempt it, I wish merely to record it If Almighty God has a heroic and faithful vanguard in the church militant, it is most surely constituted by the Society of Jesus The more I think about this organization, the more I am convinced that there is something miraculous about it" (Cf. Hill, *Historical Sketch of the St. Louis University*, St Louis, 1879, p 112) The Reverend William Greenleaf Eliot, Unitarian clergyman, and founder in 1857 of Washington University, St Louis, was a member of the original board of trustees (1836) of the medical department of St Louis University

[3] Hogan, *Thoughts About St. Louis* (St Louis, 1855), p. 25

during the three years he presided over it and when he died, December 8, 1847, the school passed away with him.[4]

Daniel Webster visited St. Louis for the first and only time in 1837, on which occasion, through the friendly intervention of John F. Darby, mayor of St. Louis, he was received in honor at the Jesuit institution. Father Verhaegen, superior of the midwestern Jesuits and Father Elet, rector of the University, with the members of the faculty welcomed the distinguished guest as he appeared at the Green Street entrance to the college building He passed through two rows of applauding students to a hall where the members of the various faculties were presented to him. Thence he proceeded to the boarders' hall, where he was given a rousing welcome. Seated on a raised platform, he listened to poems and addresses from students in English, Latin, Greek, German, Italian, Spanish, and French. The remarks made by Webster in acknowledging the addresses were worthy of the reputation of America's leading orator, so Darby assures the reader of his *Recollections*.

> Mr Webster arose, as the newspaper reporters would say, "under evident emotion" He made the proper acknowledgment for the compliment paid to him, and said, among other things, that these scenes brought to his mind "his school-boy days and remembrances, when he himself was struggling for intellectual culture and improvement" Then turning to the reverend fathers, he said, "The sculptor and the painter worked upon marble and upon canvas, materials that were perishable, but to them was given the high privilege of working upon that which was immortal." The address was short, but most happy and felicitous and in such a manner and language as could have been delivered only by Daniel Webster.[5]

On the day following the reception there was a Whig gathering and banquet at Lucas's Grove, at which Webster delivered his one political speech west of the Mississippi. Four or five fathers of the University, eager to hear the speaker of the occasion, were in attendance, being shown special courtesy and attention by the presiding officer, Mayor Darby, who gave them places of honor at the banquet table. "No one who witnessed it," wrote Darby, "can ever forget with what deep and riveted attention those reverend and learned men listened to every

---

[4] "Yours of the 12th inst. was received day before yesterday Calculating on removing to St. Louis sometime during the succeeding year and believing that it would be a good location for a law-school, I was anxious to see a law-professorship established in your institution There is a large and flourishing region of country surrounding St. Louis without such advantage, the nearest and perhaps the only one of the kind being at Lexington, Ky That such a one in your city would under proper management, and with professors of proper reputation, succeed, I have no doubt" Buckner to Carrell, October 21, 1843 (A)

[5] Darby, *Personal Recollections* (St Louis, 1880), p 265

word that was uttered by the captivating and powerful speaker. This was the only occasion on which I ever saw the reverend gentlemen attend a political meeting They came to hear the speech of the great Mr. Webster." [6]

The visits of ex-President Van Buren and Charles Dickens, both occurring in 1842, are also incidents of note in the annals of the University Of the reception tendered the famous master of English fiction it is recorded that one eager youth in the enthusiasm of the moment rose from his seat and gave "three cheers for Boz," whereupon the one hundred and fifty students made the room ring to the echoes of what was no doubt the genuine equivalent of the modern college yell. In the course of 1838 two European scientists of note, Joseph N. Nicollet, who became prominent for his exploration of the sources of the Mississippi, and Charles A Geyer, a German naturalist, were frequent callers at the University. Both scientists were lent aid in their researches by the meteorological records of the University and in return initiated some of its professors in the secrets of taxidermy [7]

As early as 1829 steps were taken through the medium of Senator Benton to obtain a congressional subsidy for St. Louis College. Nothing came of this initial attempt. Later, on September 1, 1835, the trustees of the institution in meeting assembled resolved to petition the federal government through Senator Benton for a grant of land as a means of

---

[6] *Idem*, 269

[7] *Litterae Annuae*, 1838 The annalist's Latin rendering of "taxidermy" is curious—"*optima imprimis avium quadrupedumque palea aut canabe secta implendarum methodus*"

"While preparing for this expedition [to the sources of the Mississippi] he [Nicollet] was ably assisted by Dr George Englemann and the Jesuit Fathers of St Louis University He acknowledged this assistance in the following words 'All these altitudes, with the exception of what is south of the entrance of the Ohio, have been referred to the ordinary low water in the Mississippi at St Louis The absolute height of the barometer at this point was not known, and my addressing myself to the reverend fathers, the Jesuits, and engaging them in making meteorological observations, was the first approach toward obtaining it The late Rev Mr Van Sweevelt charged himself with the task, receiving 19 months of observations, made 5 times a day, through the years 1835 and 1836 When Mr. Van Sweevelt was obliged to discontinue, I had the good fortune to find a successor, not less zealous, in Dr Englemann, who followed these observations with a regularity that was unlooked for from a person so occupied, otherwise with professional engagements The years to which these observations refer are 1837, 1838, 1839 and 1840 As for some time the members of the Western Academy have undertaken a regular system of meteorological observations, we have reason to hope that, in some years from this, there will be a definite clearing up of this point" Mary J Klem, "The History of Science in St Louis," *Transactions*, Academy of Science of St Louis, 23 100 (1914)

placing the school on a secure financial basis.[8] No petition for signatures, it would appear, was submitted to the citizens of St. Louis on this occasion as had been done six years before. On December 8, 1836, Benton introduced on leave in the United States senate, it being the second session of the 24th congress, the following bills, to wit. a bill to construct certain fortifications, a bill to provide for the construction of a western armory and arsenal, a bill for the relief of the heirs of General W. M. Eaton, a bill making a grant of land to the University of St. Louis.[9] All of these were read a first time and ordered to a second reading. Among the twelve bills read a second time and referred to appropriate committees, December 15, was the one granting a township of land to "the French University of St. Louis." The bill was referred to the committee on public lands, the chairman of which was Senator Walker of Mississippi. Walker first reported it without amendment on January 30, 1837, and about a year later, January 18, 1838, again reported it, this time unfavorably. Despite the unfavorable report of the committee, the bill was taken up for discussion in the senate on Tuesday, June 5, 1838.

Mr Clay of Alabama thought the bill ought to be postponed There will be many objections to the measure in a constitutional point of view that would present themselves to the minds of gentlemen which he was not going to take up the time of the Senate by going into

Mr Benton advocated the school with much zeal, maintaining that it was the only school in the Union where the living languages were taught

---

[8] Hill, *op cit*, p 51 It would appear that an attempt was made in 1832 to get the measure through Congress The editor of the Cincinnati *Journal*, having under the caption "Perpetuation of Jesuitism" expressed surprise that "the Congress of the United States should grant aid to a Jesuit establishment," was taken to task for his bigotry in the Cincinnati *Catholic Telegraph*, April 14, 1832

[9] The text of the bill is as follows "A Bill to grant a township of land to the French University of St Louis in the State of Missouri. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That there be granted, and the same is hereby granted to the French University of St Louis, in the State of Missouri, one township of land in said state, to be selected in parcels conformably to divisions or subdivisions, out of such public land as shall have been offered at public sale, and that the chartered authorities of said institution cause the said lands to be settled and to sell the same within five years after the passing of this act and to apply the proceeds of said sales to the endowment of the University aforesaid" "I received a letter the other day from the honourable T. H Benton, in which he requests to forward him by 1st opportunity a catalogue (printed) and an account of the last examination, stating that he has brought forward our petition among his earliest measures, thinking the present session more favorable than the preceding Pray hard—*O[mn]ia possibilia sunt credenti* We may, after all, get out of difficulties," Elet to Van de Velde, 1837 (?). (A).

so as to be practically useful. Mr. Benton thought the donation was due to that French institution and said that he saw no constitutional difficulties in the way Mr. Clay of Alabama said he could not understand how we were to grant a whole township of land to a French institution because the languages were taught there He presumed the languages were as well taught and perhaps better in all the other universities of the country. He thought the whole matter should be well considered before final action was taken on it.

Mr King made a statement in relation to the land received by different states for the purposes of education Though the grants were the same, the value, in many instances, varied materially For instance, that of Alabama had been found amply sufficient. In some of the states the land sold higher than in others, because the soil was more appreciated That, he presumed, was the fact in relation to Alabama, though her school land was disposed of at a fortunate period Mr. King was opposed to making any special grant If it were extended to Missouri, he hoped it would be to every other state

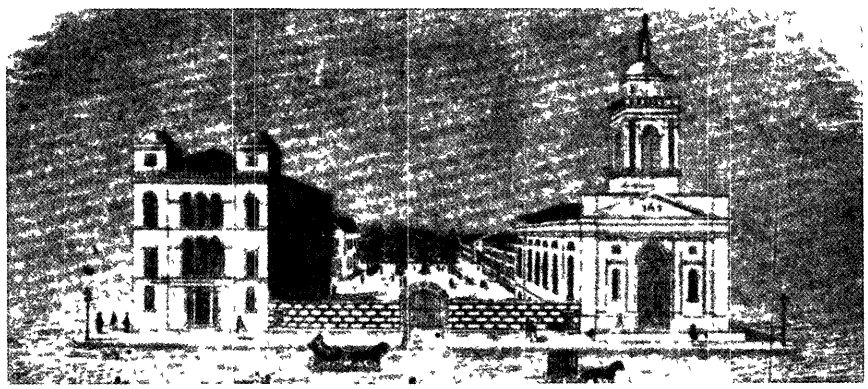
Mr. Benton went into the history of the institution, claiming for it a great superiority over all the schools in the country for the French and Spanish languages. At this school there were young gentlemen from every part of the world, in constant use of their mother tongue, French, Spanish, Italian and others and under such circumstances only could those languages be acquired. If there were schools or colleges in this country, where the languages were as well taught, he did not know them Of the many persons that had learned the languages in these universities, he had never yet known one that had learned them so as to make them of practical utility, that was, to speak them fluently in conversation, and if they were enabled to do so, they must have acquired them somewhere else Mr Benton felt sorry that the gentleman from Alabama (Mr Clay) had made so strenuous an opposition to a measure which was so reasonable in itself

Mr Sevier explained his willingness to vote for the bill In the first place the object was laudable, and in the second, he thought the lands ought to be at the disposal of the states wherein they lie Mr Sevier dwelt for some time on the subject, maintaining that now the public debt was paid, such ought to be the disposition of the public domain The lands were acquired by the common blood and treasure of our ancestors, which the old states hold on to, while those of the new were sold for the common benefit of the whole He would vote for no grant to the old states and was for putting the matter on an equality by holding on to the lands in the new Here we were spending millions to get rid of the Indians in Georgia and were the lands thus acquired sold for the common benefit? Mr Sevier hoped that the bill would be permitted to pass [10]

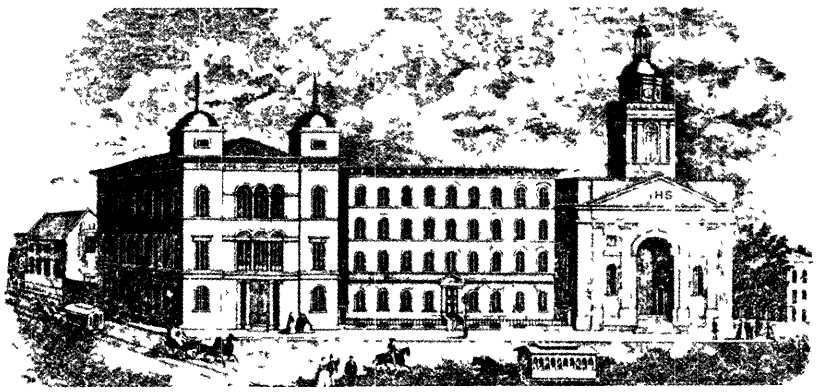
Senator Clay of Alabama, who was particularly insistent in his opposition to the bill, at length called for the yeas and nays on the

[10] Blair and Rives (eds), *Abstract of Congressional Proceedings* (Washington, D C , 1838).

(a)



(b)



(c)

St Louis University, Ninth Street front (a) 1841-1855 Church of St Francis Xavier, opened for divine service, Palm Sunday, 1843 In rear, the original building of 1829 with added wings. At left, two-story structure, 1836, serving successively as college chapel (St. Aloysius), law school, infirmary. From contemporary letter-head (b) 1855-1865. At left, science building (with auditorium) erected in 1855. Contemporary print (c) In middle of group, class-room building erected in 1864. Contemporary print.

24th CONGRESS,
2d SESSION.

S. 13.

IN SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

DECEMBER 12, 1836.

Agreeably to notice, Mr. BENTON asked and obtained leave to bring in the following bill, which was read, and passed to a second reading.

DECEMBER 15, 1836.

Read the second time, and referred to Committee on Public Lands.

JANUARY 27, 1837.

Reported without amendment

A BILL

To grant a township of land to the French University of St Louis, in the State of Missouri.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there be granted, and the same is hereby granted, to the French University of St. Louis, in the State of Missouri, one township of land in said State, to be selected in parcels conformably to sectional divisions or subdivisions, out of such public land as shall have been offered at public sale; and that the chartered authorities of said institution cause the said lands to be selected, and to sell the same within five years after the passing of this act, and to apply the proceeds of said sales to the endowment of the University aforesaid.

From an original copy of the bill in the Archives of the Missouri Province, S J, St Louis

indefinite postponement of the discussion. When these were asked, there were twenty-five yeas and fourteen nays, in other words, almost two-thirds of the senators voted that further discussion of the question be put off to an indefinite period, thus practically shelving Senator Benton's bill. John Calhoun of South Carolina and Henry Clay of Kentucky were among the senators that showed themselves unfriendly to the bill, but Daniel Webster, perhaps with pleasant recollections of his welcome at St. Louis University the year before still fresh in his memory, cast his vote in its favor.[11]

Thus, for once in its history, the University of St. Louis became a topic of debate in the highest legislative body of the land. Political, sectional, perhaps even religious prejudices will explain the failure of this attempt on the part of the devoted senator from Missouri to secure a measure of government aid for the institution. The attempt was never again renewed and the senate debate of June, 1838, soon passed into oblivion It is left unnoticed by Senator Benton himself both in his *Thirty Years' View* and in his *Abridgment of the Debates of Congress.* For one thing, the designation by Benton of the school as "The French University of St. Louis" was infelicitous, suggesting as it did against the fact an institution conducted under foreign auspices and having about it a foreign atmosphere, circumstances not likely to have recommended the plea made by the University for a federal subsidy.

The undergraduate instruction offered by St. Louis University from the earliest years of the institution embraced two courses, the classical and the mercantile or commercial.[12] The classical course, restricted to boarders and half-boarders until the session 1842-1843, embraced five years of Latin, Greek, English and accessory branches and one of philosophy. Latin, Greek, mathematics and philosophy were required of candidates for the degree of bachelor of arts, to which the

[11] *Idem*

[12] The first recorded attempt to systematize the curriculum and formulate definite requirements for graduation was made in 1837 On May 6 of that year the trustees of the University in meeting assembled appointed a committee, of which Father Van de Velde was made chairman, with instructions "to specify the qualifications and acquirements that shall in future be required of the candidates that may apply for the various degrees in the Faculty of Arts" The report, as finally adopted by the board of trustees on July 28, 1838, provided "the Classical Course shall comprehend a competent knowledge of the Greek, Latin and English languages, of Geography, the use of Globes, Ancient and Modern history, Logic and the principles of moral Philosophy, including Ethics and Metaphysics, of Rhetoric and Mathematics, including Arithmetic, Algebra, Plane and Solid Geometry, Trigonometry, Surveying, Mensuration, Conic Sections and the principles of Natural Philosophy" *Record Book of the Proceedings of the Board and Faculty of St Louis University* (D)

classical course ordinarily led.[13] As early as 1836 there were five separate classes in Greek, indicating that the study of this language was on an equal footing with that of Latin. For a few sessions in the early forties two years were required in philosophy, but this arrangement failed to become permanent In the first thirty years of the University or down to the session, 1858-1859, the studies appear to have been organized on something like a departmental basis. Mention is made in the catalogues of the period of the departments of Latin, Greek, French and German, while the professors are designated by their respective subjects of instruction and not, as in later years, by the general name of the class assigned to them. At the close of the session 1857-1858 a change in the nomenclature of the six classes of the classical course was announced. They were to be designated as Philosophy, First Rhetoric, Second Rhetoric, First Grammar, Second Grammar, Third Grammar. As a matter of fact, this nomenclature does not appear ever to have been actually put in use, or if so, it lasted only a year, as in the session 1858-1859 the classes appear with the names they were to bear down to the early eighties, viz Philosophy, Rhetoric, Poetry, First Humanities, Second Humanities, Third Humanities.

The subjects prescribed in the classical course were in general those pursued in that course in Jesuit colleges today. "This course [is] designed to impart a thorough knowledge of English, Greek and Latin languages, of Mental and Moral Philosophy, of pure and mixed Mathematics and of Physical Science." More attention was given to French and Spanish, the first in particular, than was customary in later years in the western Jesuit colleges The large number of Creole students from the southern states, particularly Louisiana, attending St. Louis University prior to the Civil War made French more or less of a living language in the student-body.[14] Moreover, in the earlier days of the University the professors were for the most part of European origin and therefore especially well equipped to teach the modern languages.

During the years 1837-1841 Father Peter Verheyden was professor of architecture and drawing His skill in these departments was some-

[13] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of the St Louis University, Missouri,* August 14, 1839 The practice, previously introduced, of granting the degree of A M to "alumni, who, after having received the degree of A B shall have devoted two years to some literary pursuit," was confirmed and it was further determined to grant the A M to graduates of other colleges on their producing "the diploma of A B and testimonials that, after their graduation, they had devoted at least two years to some literary pursuit" Hill, *op cit*, pp 56-57

[14] "The English is the ordinary language of communication in all the classes, the French and Spanish excepted, but the students speak French and English indiscriminately during the hours of recreation" Cf. *supra,* p 177

times in requisition for practical tasks of importance and he appears to have prepared the plans of the College Church in St Louis as also of the present cathedral of Cincinnati. Fencing as an elegant accomplishment was given the dignity of a regular branch of instruction. In October, 1840, the University authorities took under consideration the erection of a separate building or hall for "boarders learning the art of fencing." Music made its first appearance in 1837. At the eighth annual commencement of the University, held August 2 of that year, a "vaudeville," or operetta for six voices, composed by one of the professors, was a feature of the program It was the first time vocal music had a place in any of the public exercises of the University. The credit of introducing music into the curriculum was due to the scholastic, Maurice Van den Eycken (or Oakley), who was attached to the staff in 1837. In 1838 the Philharmonic Society was organized with Van den Eycken as its first president. Its object was to "add solemnity to the celebration of our religious, national and literary festivals and to afford the qualified student the advantage of performing at the orchestra in a regular band" The brass band of the Philharmonic Society made its first public appearance in the Independence Day exercises of 1838 under the direction of the lay professor, Carriere, formerly of the staff of the Conservatory of Music in Paris. The instruments were a gift to the University from M. De Boey of Antwerp, generous benefactor of his Jesuit countrymen in America. Thereafter the University band lent the attraction of its music to all public appearances of the student-body, especially on commencement day. A newspaper account of the commencement of 1839 commented on the musical part of the program "The French piece, a beautiful little opera, exhibited the musical acquirements of the students, both vocal and instrumental. The full orchestra of the University in the grand overture and in all the other pieces on this occasion performed with great accuracy and with the most effective execution. It was, altogether, one of the richest musical festivals ever got up in the city."

Down to the session 1839-1840 the scholastic year began September 1 and continued to July 31. During the period, 1839-1844, it ran from October 1 to August 16, 1844-1855, from September to July 15; 1855-1860, from the last Monday in August to about July 4; 1860 and subsequently, from the first Monday in September to about July 4. Students who spent the vacation period at the University paid an extra charge of twenty, later thirty dollars. A writer in a local print describes the vacation pleasures of the University boarders·

During the vacation, all those who have no other means of disposing of their time are taken to the country, where with several of the professors

they encamp for several weeks and are taught all the exercises of camp duty and the pursuit of field sports. A few days since in company with the professors and a number of gentlemen from the city, we dined at the present encampment, almost ten miles in the country. The dinner was such an one as the veriest epicure might have been satisfied with, and yet it was all cooked by the students, even to the pastry, the meats were chiefly procured by them from the surrounding forest and prairie At the camp we found between twenty and thirty students, chiefly young men from the South, they had been there about two weeks and a more healthy, happy and lively company could not be found anywhere. They were encamped several miles from any house, rose early and spent a portion of the day in fishing or hunting, and did their own washing and cooking A more complete scene of youthful happiness cannot be conceived [15]

To this account it may be added that Bishop Rosati, whose relations to the University were always marked by the utmost cordiality, was pleased on occasion to visit the students in their summer camp.

In order, so the author of the *Annual Letters* explained, "to stir emulation and penalize the slothful," public oral examinations were introduced at the close of the session 1837-1838. Two days, August 7 and 8, were devoted to these tests, the marks obtainable in them being rated as one-third of the total number on which was based the award of prizes on commencement day. In 1839 the examinations were prolonged so as to cover the period August 2-12. The board of examiners included all the professors of the University together with the president, Father Elet, while Father Krynen discharged the duties of secretary.[16] It would appear that visitors took a hand in the examinations by proposing questions, as one of their number who was present at the examinations of 1841 wrote in the St. Louis *Argus* under the pen-name of "Visitor." "What a trial for a timid youth, let us therefore feel for him and condemn him not on so slight a testimony. But if from among these rises one who, throwing off the shackles of *mauvaise honte*, shows an intimate familiarity with the classics, is at home with Cicero and Homer, and answers readily all questions propounded by visitors, it is enough for the honor of the University, enough for the vanity of the professors, since it evidently shows to what a degree of excellence a youth of *praeclarae indolis* can reach." Father Emig's classes in Latin, Greek and second mathematics and Mr. Verdin's class in algebra passed through the ordeal very creditably, "Visitor" remarking of the latter, "the problems were perplexing ones, but they went through every one with ease and found less difficulty

[15] St Louis *Republican*, September 14, 1838.

[16] *Diarium Universitatis S Ludovici*, August, 1838 (A)

in getting rid of their *radicals* than the British Government does in disposing of theirs" The French class taught by Father Mignard scored a like success. "Questioned by visitors on the rules of participles, the most abstruse of all rules in any language, they were not found in fault, and it was remarked that the pronunciation of some of the Americans was even more perfect than that of some boys of French descent." These public examinations, whatever may be said in their favor, did not survive the experimental stage and with the passing of the early forties no further mention of them occurs in the records of the University.

Day-scholars or "externs," as they were officially designated, were admitted from the beginning, Van Quickenborne's circular prospectus of October 20, 1829, announcing that their tuition would be gratuitous. They were charged, however, five dollars a year for "fuel and servants." In 1833 the authorities of the University decided to raise the annual charge from five to twelve dollars, except in the case of students whose parents had subscribed for the first building. In the first three sessions separate premiums for conduct and diligence were given to the three sharply defined classes of students, boarders, half-boarders and day-scholars. The day-scholars appear to have been carefully segregated from the boarders, in truth the expediency of admitting day-scholars at all remained during several years an open question. For several sessions previous to 1838-1839 no mention is made of this division in the University catalogues or prospectuses. Immediately prior to the opening of the session 1838-1839 it was decided to readmit day-scholars, providing them at the same time with a special prefect of studies and opening up to them the regular classes of the University as also the prizes offered to the students. But the new plan was not immediately put into effect. It was not until the session 1842-1843 that the day-students were placed on an equal footing with the boarders in regard to studies. A University announcement, August 29, 1842, informed the public:

> The causes which have hitherto confined the usefulness of this Establishment almost exclusively to Boarders, are already partially, and will ere long be entirely removed. We feel pleasure, therefore, in announcing to the public that almost equal advantages can now be extended to Boarders, Half-Boarders and Day-scholars In future, they will all study in the same Hall, attend the same Recitation Rooms and derive great benefit from a uniformity of Discipline This change, though frequently solicited by many respectable Parents and Guardians, could not have been effected heretofore without endangering the strict order which ought to be maintained in a literary institution The rules regarding regular attendance at studies and the various

classes could not be enforced as long as access to the University remained so difficult in unfavorable weather [17]

Varying economic conditions in the country are reflected in the terms charged the boarders In the first session 1829-1830 the rate for the boarders was one hundred and twenty dollars, for half-boarders, sixty dollars a year. A few years later the rate for the boarders was advanced to one hundred and fifty dollars, the half-boarders paying seventy-five. These latter breakfasted, dined and studied at the University, but lodged with their parents or guardians in the city or its immediate vicinity. In 1839 the boarders were charged two hundred dollars and the half-boarders one hundred dollars a year. The two hundred dollars covered board and lodging at the University for the full year of twelve months, students who spent the vacations at home being allowed a reduction of twenty. In 1841 the rate for the boarders was reduced to one hundred and fifty. In August, 1842, another reduction was made "in accordance with the distress of the times," the boarders paying only one hundred and thirty, washing and mending of clothes being an extra charge. The half-boarders continued to be charged one hundred. The one hundred and thirty dollar rate for the boarders continued to 1852 when it was raised to one hundred and fifty, at which figure it remained until the sixties.

The commencement exercises were held partly in the University chapel and partly on the playgrounds, where a huge tent was stretched over the audience. A baccalaureate procession featured the occasion The program was generally of formidable proportions, the idea having been, it would seem, so to arrange it as to enable the largest possible number of students to appear individually before the public. One easily understands that at the commencement of 1839, "owing to the length of the exercises, it was found necessary to omit the 'English Debate,' the 'German Dialogue' and the 'Latin Oration.' "

Independence Day exercises at the University included for several years a procession of the faculty and student-body to the Court House where the Declaration of Independence was read by one of the students and an oration delivered by another, after which the procession proceeded to the cathedral where appropriate services were held. In 1838 the day was ushered in by a "federal salute" from a small field-piece under the direction of the students. At 9 o'clock the procession formed, there being in line the staffs of the schools of divinity and medicine, the professors of the various departments, the students in uniform, among whom were the Philalethic and Philharmonic Societies, "conspicuous with their banners, scarfs and instruments." Heading the pro-

[17] *Catalogue of St Louis University*, August, 1842

cession was the Hibernian Benevolent Society with banner and band. Down Green Street to Main and thence to Olive the procession moved to the court-house on Broadway, where the Declaration of Independence was read by Lewis Carneal of Cincinnati and an address delivered by John Posey of Louisiana, both students of the University. From the court-house the procession proceeded by Market and Third Streets to the cathedral on Walnut Street, dedicated only four years before and the pride of Catholic St. Louis Here Father Van de Velde of the University delivered a discourse on "The Nature of True Liberty," after which Bishop Rosati solemnly intoned the Te Deum.[18] This, so a contemporary account noted, was "executed under the direction of Signor Marallano, by the joint musical talent of the Cathedral, the University and of several Amateurs of the city, who had volunteered their services for the occasion." Both at the court-house and in the cathedral, the student band of the University, under the direction of Professor Carriere, discoursed music appropriate to the occasion. The exercises at the court-house were held, not as one might suppose, on the steps of the building but within, which led a newspaper-writer who described the scene "to regret the smallness of the Court room, for not a tithe of the people present could get within the house or within ear-shot of the proceedings." In 1840 the Declaration of Independence was read with remarkable effect by Alfred H. Kernion, who on his entrance into the University four years before was quite unfamiliar with English. "Every part of the room was crowded to suffocation, yet the young orator apparently without effort, was distinctly heard and read the Declaration with a clearness and correctness of emphasis which we have never heard excelled by anyone." In 1841 the Independence Day exercises of the University were held not in the court-house but in Concert Hall and a few years later they ceased being attended with the public ceremony and display which had made of them one of the most interesting civic demonstrations of the day.[19]

From the first days of the University a large proportion, in most years the majority, of the boarders came from the South. Father Kenney, Visitor of the Missouri Mission in 1832, directed that a father be sent "yearly at the commencement of Spring to Lower Louisiana to visit the parents of our boarders, settle accounts, buy provisions of sugar and coffee and wine, and also get a supply or increase of boarders." [20] A visit of Van de Velde to the South in the spring of 1832 had helped to swell notably the list of registrants. Thereafter the dispatch of a faculty member to the South at intervals of a year or so

[18] *Litterae Annuae*, 1838 (A)

[19] *Idem.*

[20] De Theux to Dzierozynski, October 22, 1832. (B).

was a recognized University practice. "Father Elet started for Louisiana on the 14th inst. [December, 1834]. He will spend the winter in the South and try to collect what is due to the Institution. Times are hard in St. Louis and money is scarce." [21] Failure to send a representative to Louisiana reacted at once with unfavorable result on the registration, as happened in 1836. "The number of our boarders has somewhat decreased, but it is owing to a circumstance which we anticipated and which we control. No Father went down to Louisiana last fall and parents do not like to send their children up the river unless accompanied by a trusty person." [22] The opening of St. Charles College in Grand Coteau, Louisiana, in 1836 by a group of French Jesuits was accompanied by a falling off in the number of southern boarders at St. Louis University. The author of the *Litterae Annuae* for that year was at pains to note that, with Grand Coteau now in the field, St. Louis faced the loss of the patronage she had hitherto enjoyed on the part of southern youth, while in 1839 Verhaegen informed his favorite correspondent, Father McSherry "It seems that we will never get more than the average number of 130. Lower Louisiana sends but few, but Missouri and Illinois have become more liberal. This circumstance I anticipated with regard to Louisiana, as soon as I heard that the Society had a college in Grand Coteau. The tide will naturally flow in that direction, but the same good will be produced and this should satisfy us." [23] During the forties the number of students at St. Louis University from the southern states and Mexico kept on increasing until in 1850 they were again in the majority. Bishop Van de Velde of Chicago, a guest of honor at the commencement exercises of that year, noted in his diary under date of July 7-14 "About fifty of the boarders accompanied by two of the Professors left for the South on the steamboat Amaranth; others went in other directions. Between thirty and forty, chiefly Creoles and Mexicans, have to spend their vacation-time at the Institution, and in the neighborhood, where different measures are adopted for the purpose of diverting and amusing them." [24]

The large number of students entered from the southern states, Mexico and Cuba made it necessary for the University to maintain a permanent agency in New Orleans. The duties of agents at this point were discharged by Messrs. Byrne and Sloe, later by P. Huchet Kernion, at a still later period by the firm of Elder and Doerring, and on the death of Doerring by Thomas Elder and Co. The University's

---

[21] Verhaegen to McSherry, December 22, 1834 (B)

[22] Verhaegen to McSherry, May 14, 1836 (B)

[23] Same to same, April 8, 1839 (B).

[24] Bishop Van de Velde's diary in McGovern, *The Catholic Church in Chicago*, p. 122.

agent at the end of the thirties for the "upper part of Illinois and for Wisconsin and Iowa Territories" was the well-known Dominican missionary, the Reverend Samuel Mazzuchelli, with address at Galena and later at Burlington, Iowa Territory.[25] Other agents besides those regularly representing the University could be commissioned by parents to negotiate financial matters between their sons and the institution. To cite the notice carried for many years in the University prospectus "Parents who live at a distance are requested to appoint an agent in St. Louis or New Orleans, who must be answerable for the payment of all expenses and to whom the children may be directed on leaving the University." [26]

An attempt at hazing made towards the end of 1836 by a group of northern students at the expense of some of their fellow-students from Mexico had a nearly tragic outcome. The incident, as told by the

[25] *Catalogue of St Louis University*, 1839, p 16.

[26] *Idem*, p 15 The correspondence of Doering and Elder with the University is preserved in the University archives Besides collecting students' accounts they directed new registrants to St Louis Some typical passages follow "We introduce to you through this medium five young Mexicans who are presented to us by the very respectable house of Messers Cramer and Co in this city who act as agents and guardians for these youths (Juan de la Vina, Francisco Garcia, Bernardino Garcia, Valente Paras, Clemente Paras) These young gentlemen will enter your institution as students and we hope to hear favorable accounts of their progress" (May 1, 1850) "This will be handed to you by Master Theodore Camus a youth of 14 who will become a student of your institution He is son of T Camus, Esq who lives opposite to the lower part of the city Mr Camus desires his son to be carefully examined and placed in his classes and wishes him to study French, English, Spanish, Greek, Latin, Philosophy, Surveying, Mercantile Book-keeping, Music on the violin and drawing—in fact he desires that he receive a thorough education He requests me to say that he wishes his son immediately removed from college to some place in the event of any epidemic appearing among the Students, and should he become dangerously sick he wishes you to telegraph us and he wishes his son to write to him at least twice during each month" (September 21, 1852) "This morning I gave a letter of introduction to a couple of Creole youths of Avoyelles Parish who will depart for your classic halls within a day or two They are named Jerome Ducoté aged 18 and Evariste Joffrion aged 15 years, and their parents desire us to recommend them to your special tutorage and request that they be allowed no privileges without your sanction Their agents here, Messrs C Pasquier and Co have promised to send us a check for $100 as an advance (say $50 for each)" (April 22, 1853) Joffrion lived to be president of a bank in Avoyelles, La "We have this day given a letter of introduction to Dorcy [Dorsé] Mayeux of Avoyelles, La aged about 20 years who goes with two younger brothers to your University. We growled a little at the age of this student but as he is said to possess first-rate credentials from his parish priest, we presume there will be no difficulty in admitting him and indeed Dr Linton [physician to St Louis University], (who has just stepped in to say good-bye), assured us there will be none" (March 18, 1854) The above correspondence was addressed to Father Druyts, president of St Louis University (D).

president, Father Elet, in a letter to Father Van de Velde, is a side-light on student-life of the day

A very singular occurrence took place at the University on Friday last A prodigious quantity of snow had fallen on the day previous Our Missourians and acclimated Louisianians to the number of about 20 were inspired, no doubt by the black spirit, to roll in the snow all those who had arrived in Missouri from the South since last winter. Some good-natured boys as O'Connell, the two Commageres and some others after some debate, cheerfully submitted to this strange ceremony, and seemed to enjoy the joke like the rest. But our Spaniards were not so easily wrought into compliance. They made serious objections, but our Missourians insisted on their submission, alledging that it was a custom of long standing and as such demanded respect and obedience on their part But nought would do The Spaniards remained obstinate, they declared that they would never consent to take the baptism of snow In vain was it urged that it was a kind of naturalisation act by which they would become true Missourians, they persisted in their refusal Our baptists finding that the means which they considered fair took no effect, had recourse to violence Peter Corlis boldly stepped up and attacked Argornedo Upon which the latter drew his knife and slightly wounded his aggressor in the arm One of our ceremonious fellows interfered and endeavored to wrest the knife from Argornedo Then Lopez and Medina with drawn knives came to the assistance of Argornedo, but were stopped by the prefect, who by this time had recovered from a kind of illusion which had made him believe all the time that it was mere fun At night I gave both parties a severe lecture in presence of all the students, required mutual pardon and ordered all dirk-knives to be given up within 24 hours under pain of dismission All is settled again though I dread some exaggerations in the letters of the Spaniards to their agents in New Orleans [27] Guijeno and Regil are well-behaved boys, but as they arrived here just before winter, they are somewhat disheartened by the severity of the climate Caution their agents against any complaint arising from that source as next spring their gloomy spirits will disappear [28]

The vicissitudes that befell the University property from its grant by Jeremiah Connor to Bishop Du Bourg for educational purposes to its final acquisition by Father Van Quickenborne as a site for his new institution, have already been detailed (*supra*, Chap. IX, § 2). The property was bounded by Washington Avenue, Ninth Street, Christy Avenue or Green Street and a line running between Tenth and Eleventh Streets. Tenth Street was never laid out through the college grounds, Jeremiah Connor's deed of conveyance of October 15, 1821, to Du

[27] Father Elet's fears were realized Lopez complained to his agent in New Orleans and was withdrawn by him from the University

[28] Elet to Van de Velde, December 20, 1836. (A).

Bourg having secured to the University "the privilege of using the street as a part of said square." This privilege was confirmed by the city charter of 1843 which enjoined that "the mayor and city council shall not establish or open a street, lane, avenue or alley through the grounds lying or being situated between Ninth street and Eleventh street and Washington Avenue and Green street, without the written consent of the proprietors of St Louis University, so long as the building now used as a university remains thereon" [29]

When the first building went up in 1829, it stood isolated in suburban loneliness, for the city-limits ran two squares to the east along the line of Seventh Street. An advertisement dated 1834 directs attention to the advantage of altitude enjoyed by the University grounds "The amenity and salubrity of its site on the heights of the City of St. Louis, removed from any occasion of dissipation, are peculiarly favorable to the application of the students." [30] The original building, forty by fifty, stood at the north end of the property, between Ninth and Tenth Streets, facing south An east wing forty by forty was begun in the spring of 1832 and a west wing, forty-two by forty, was constructed in the summer of 1833. In 1836 work was begun on a two-story brick building, eighty by thirty-four, located along the Washington Avenue side of the property, between Ninth and Tenth Streets. On the first floor was the University chapel, dedicated in the course of 1837, while on the upper floor were the museum, chemical laboratory, Philalethic Hall and museum of sculpture and painting, one of four large rooms being assigned to each [31] In 1838 the University grounds were enclosed by a wall nine feet in height, part wood and part stone.[32] Pleasant walks and gardens were provided for the faculty and ample playgrounds for the students. The generosity of two Belgian benefactors, the Bishop of Namur and M. De Boey of Antwerp, made possible the furnishing and decoration of the chapel. From M. De Boey, moreover, had come a donation of ten thousand florins ($4,000) with which the cost of construction of the new building was largely met. In this structure, under the name of St. Aloysius Chapel, were held religious services not only for the students, but also for the Irish and German Catholics of the northern parts of the city, before the

---

[29] An attempt made in 1881 by the city to open Tenth Street north of Washington Avenue was resisted with success by the University in the Circuit Court of St Louis. The case is cited as 56,484 and the brief of Madill and Ralston, attorneys for the University, was issued in a printed brochure of sixty-one pages (D)

[30] *The Metropolitan Catholic Calendar and Laity's Directory* (1834), p 98

[31] *Litterae Annuae,* 1837

[32] *Idem,* 1838.

churches of St. Francis Xavier and St. Joseph began to serve their needs. In later years the chapel building housed the Law School and afterwards, the infirmary.

New units were added at intervals to the University group of buildings. In 1845, during Father Carrell's administration as president, a large three-story structure of brick was erected along the Green Street front of the property directly west of the main building. The parish school, which had previously held its classes in the basement of the new church, now began to occupy the second story of the Green Street building while the first was utilized for a students' wardrobe and an infirmary and the third, for a dormitory.[33] Accommodations for the students were still further enlarged by the purchase in 1849 of the old quarters of the University School of Medicine on the north side of Washington Avenue west of Tenth.[34] Here was opened a hall for the junior students with dormitory and study-room. The lack of an auditorium of capacity sufficient to accommodate the friends of the institution on commencement day and other academic occasions had long been felt. With a view to supply this need Father Druyts began in 1853 the erection of a three-story building, sixty by a hundred and thirty, at Washington Avenue and Ninth Street, the length being along the Washington Avenue side. The building was finished in 1855. On the first or lowest floor was the students' chapel and study-hall, on the second, the museum and the library, and on the third, the auditorium with a seating capacity of twelve hundred.[35] In 1856-1857 the artist,

[33] Hogan, *Thoughts about St Louis*, p 50

[34] Erected in 1842 This first medical building of St Louis University was the scene of a riot on February 22, 1844, when some boys at play accidentally discovered the vault which contained the remains of dissected bodies A mob broke into the building and demolished its valuable furnishings and equipment J Thomas Scharf, *History of St Louis and County* (Philadelphia, 1883), 2 1836

[35] Hogan, *op cit*, p 50

[35] "You see the building fever has infected us as well as our neighbors Really, the plan and purpose of the new edifice justify the outlay of $35,000, but the knowing ones say that by selling land (or lots near the city) to cover the expense, we prove but indifferent business men Be it so The Irish say that 'Dominus Vobiscum' never starved At any rate we shall have a hall for Dr Brownson when he comes again to strengthen and unfold the Catholic element of St Louis" W S Murphy to Brownson, May 27, 1854 Cited in Henry F Brownson, *Orestes A Brownson's Middle Life from 1845 to 1855* (Detroit, 1899), p 514

In January, 1859, Brownson gave a series of lectures in the new University Hall to members of the Catholic Institute, of which Father Smarius was president at the time He was tendered and accepted the hospitality of the University during his stay in the city, "Brownson accordingly lectured there in January, making his home with the Jesuits and becoming well acquainted with many of the ablest members of the Missouri Province The impression made on him by these Fathers

Leon Pomaréde, painted on the walls of the auditorium a series of frescoes allegorical in character, which were pronounced in competent quarters to be among the finest specimens of this kind of art to be seen in the West [36]

The year 1849 is noteworthy in the annals of St. Louis for two major calamities. On May 17 fire broke out among the steamers along the river front, reducing scores of them to ashes and thence spreading its trail of destruction over several city blocks De Smet wrote to a friend

> We have had a dreadful calamity in St Louis Such a scene of desolation no man here has ever witnessed—about five hundred houses are lying in ruins and are still smoking The cathedral and orphan asylum were in great danger We carried the library and all the furniture of the Archbishop to safe places and I conducted all the little orphans to our college Truly the scourge of God is over this people Fire has done its work and sickness has snatched hundreds from our midst Since some time public prayers have been said every evening in our churches and novenas said in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus [37]

Of far greater violence than the cholera visitations of 1832 and 1834, the one of 1849 took its toll of lives among all classes of the population. That the faculty and student-body of St. Louis University passed through the crisis unscathed has always been considered a memorable incident in the history of the institution. In August, by which time the violence of the plague had notably abated, De Smet supplied to one of his correspondents a graphic account of what had occurred

> Since my return St Louis has suffered severely by fire and sickness and often have I thanked kind Providence that you were not here. More than

---

in general was that, whereas the fathers of the Maryland province appeared to be fashioned after the Italian or Acquaviva type, the others took more after the Spanish or Loyola model Perhaps this might partly be accounted for by the fact that in one there was a large Italian element and in the other more of the Belgian and Netherland Hence in these he thought he found more marked individuality and greater force and freedom of thought as well as more sympathy with his views of Church and State and his opposition to the philosophical teaching in vogue" Henry F Brownson, *Orestes A Brownson's Latter Life, from 1856 to 1876* (Detroit, 1900), p 139 Father De Blieck, probably alone of the St Louis Jesuits of the time, was in sympathy with certain views of Brownson in philosophy which were later regarded as unsound

[36] The University catalogue for 1858-1859 contains a description in detail of the Pomaréde frescoes

[37] De Smet to Sister Mary Ignatius Joseph, May 22, 1849 (A).

one tenth [?] of our population have died within five months The number of burials is now reduced to an average of 20 per day and we confidently expect to be soon entirely free from cholera, if it leaves us at all at this season. The reason of this great mortality is easily accounted for Imagine a city of 70,000 inhabitants crowded and packed together in new brick houses—in the dampest and worst drained prairie in existence, undulating, imperfectly drained and interspersed with sink-holes and stagnant waters The city has hardly a sewer, and in the new streets, mostly unpaved, all the offal of the houses runs out or is thrown out in the omnipresent mud, where it soon ferments, sheds an unmitigated aroma upon the general atmosphere, and gives the people the cholera and many other kinds of diseases Add to this that out of the center of the corporate limits is a dirty pond, a mile or more in circumference Around this natural "slop-bowl," at short intervals, you find breweries, distilleries, oil and white lead factories, flour-mills and many private residences of Irish and Germans—into this pond goes everything foul—this settles the opinion as to the real cause of all the dreadful mortality here [38] The Lord, in His infinite goodness, has spared our University Seven of our Fathers were night and day, for months together, among the dead and dying We had about two hundred students in our house. Fourteen corpses in one day were laid off in front and back of our college and not a single case within our walls All the students assembled and made a vow to the Blessed Virgin to present her statue with a silver crown, if protected They showed an unbounded confidence and approached frequently the Holy Table. The event proved hitherto that their vows and prayer have been acceptable.[39]

In the event not a student or professor was touched by the dread epidemic. When the students returned to the University to begin the session 1849-1850, they lost no time in redeeming the vow which they had made at the instance of Father Isidore Boudreaux, director of

[38] Chouteau's pond, an artificial body of water formed through the damming-up of Mill Creek, the *Petite Rivière* of the early French It was named for Col Auguste Chouteau, who succeeded in acquiring all the property abutting on it Once a charming spot and favorite haunt for the pleasure-seekers of early St Louis, it later became a menace to public health and was drained in the fifties The buildings of Cupples Station cover its site

[39] De Smet to ?, August 20, 1849 (A) "June 28 [1849]. The Cholera is steadily on the increase in the city and rages with peculiar violence around St Louis College, yet all the boarders, thanks to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, are in good health, not one of them has been stricken with that plague or with any other disease Today nearly all the pupils were sent to their parents without the usual examinations and distribution of premiums taking place Before leaving, all with two or three exceptions, went to Holy Communion" *Diarium P. Ministri* (D) Cf also Stella M Drumm, "Cholera Epidemics in St Louis," in *Glimpses of the Past* (Missouri Historical Society, St Louis), 3·45-76 (1936).

the students' sodality.[40] Father De Smet was present at the ceremony of decorating the Virgin's statue with a silver crown and described it with his usual vivid touch.[41]

§ 2. THE COLLEGE CHURCH AND PARISH

The Jesuits of St. Louis were without a parochial church of their own until the opening of St. Francis Xavier's, "The College Church," in 1843.[42] Prior to that date they were lending their services to Bishop Rosati as preachers and confessors in his cathedral and as substitutes for the cathedral clergy in the discharge of sick-calls during the absence

---

[40] On the north wall of the College Church was placed a tablet (since removed to the new College Church on Grand Ave) bearing the inscription

S M. O. P N.
In Memoriam insignis beneficii
per MARIAM accepti
A D 1849, Grassante hic peste qua prope
sex millia civium, paucos intra menses,
interierunt, Rector, Professores ac Alumni
hujus Universitatis, in tanto vitae discrimine
constituti, ad MARIAM, Matrem DEI, Matrem
Hominum confugerunt, votoque sese obstrinxerunt
decorandi imaginem ejus corona argentea, si
ad unum omnes incolumes servarentur Placuit
Divino Filio tanta in Divinam Matrem
fiducia Etenim exitiosa pestis, vetante MARIA,
muros Universitatis invadere non fuit ausa
et tota mirante civitate, e ducentis et pluribus
convictoribus, ne unus quidem lue infectus fuit
Grati MARIAE Filii

[41] For De Smet's account cf *The Queen's Work* (St Louis), 6 38

[42] Bishop Du Bourg, while eager to see the Jesuits open a college in St Louis, insisted that they were not to ask for a parish church in that city. When in St Louis for the last time (May, 1826) he wrote in this sense both to Bishop Rosati and Father Van Quickenborne Du Bourg à Van Quickenborne, May, 1826 (A) "It is greatly to be hoped that they [the Jesuits] will some day establish a college and church on the property I am giving them in St Louis But oppose always their having a parish, for fear of bringing in a source of dissensions I have told the Father [Van Quickenborne] so, he appreciates my reasons, but comes back to the subject now and then and though he has promised me not to insist on the matter any longer, I fear nevertheless he may forget his promise" Du Bourg à Rosati, May 11, 1826 (C) Bishop Rosati, however, offered no objection on this score "When I was at the Barrens two years Bishop Rosati told me that in case he should be titular bishop of St Louis, he would be glad that we should have on that College Lot [Washington Avenue and Ninth] a college with a parochial church. When he was here, he adhered to the same resolution." Van Quickenborne to Dzierozynski, February 12, 1828 (A) Two passages from letters addressed to Bishop Rosati, one by Father Edmund Saulnier, rector of the St. Louis Cathedral,

of the latter from the city. In 1835 Fathers Verhaegen, Elet and Van de Velde were taking turns regularly as cathedral preachers, while Father Smedts was hearing confessions weekly in the same church.[43] The year following Elet was preaching in the cathedral in English and Helias in German. The sermons of the fathers sometimes drew large crowds, as in 1836, when people flocked to the cathedral even from the outskirts of the city to attend an evening course, carrying lanterns with them as no system of public lighting then existed[44] Verhaegen, who was then residing at the cathedral in the capacity of administrator of the diocese, tells of a sermon which he preached in that church on All Saints Day, 1840

In the evening I preached on purgatory More than 3000 persons, so I am told, came to hear me and many more had to go away, not being able to get into the church If I could give my instructions in the evening, I believe they would with God's grace accomplish considerable good A num-

---

the other by Father François Niel, a former rector of the same cathedral, writing from Paris, are of interest in this connection

"These gentlemen are going to have a church and they have spread a rumor in town that the English speaking people shall soon have an English priest there who will preach to them every Sunday Beware! *Principus obsta sero medicina paratur*" "I [Niel] heard a report that the Jesuits are going to build a church If this be true, and if you give them permission, you will incur the danger of preaching to empty pews in your Cathedral You destroy the parish of St Louis Bishop Du Bourg, although half a Jesuit himself, often told me at St Louis that in the deed of the donation of the land where they built their college, he had made the condition, that they should have a chapel only for their pupils, to the exclusion of the general public Beware! You will create for yourself a lot of difficulties, if you permit them to have a church. I foresee the time, when the Cathedral will be deserted, when the only occupation of the Bishop in St Louis shall be to give confirmation, and when he can have only two or three diocesan priests" Cited in *SLCHR*, 4 12 No stipulation that the Jesuits were not to have a parish church is to be found in any of the deeds of the Washington Avenue property Bishop Rosati's attitude on the question has already been indicated When in 1826 certain persons in St Louis were alarmed over the rumor that the Jesuits were to take over the parish there the prelate wrote to Father Saulnier "The Jesuits do not want to accept the parish of St Louis, so the people who were worked up over that were simply mistaken" Bishop Rosati's Diary, January 26, 1826, in *SLCHR*, 4 170 F S Holweck, "The Language Question in the Old Cathedral of St Louis," in *SLCHR*, 2 17, writes "The Flemings of Florissant learned English much faster than the French of the diocesan clergy *Hinc illae lacrimae* This is the reason why Father Saulnier wrote to Bishop Rosati that 'all the Flemings who have ever come to St Louis have caused trouble'" Rosati's friendly attitude to the Jesuits was well known, culminating in his appointing Verhaegen administrator of the diocese on his departure for Rome and naming him *dignissimus* in a *terna* which he submitted to Propaganda for his successor in the see of St. Louis

[43] *Catalogus Missionis Missourianae*, 1835.

[44] *Litterae Annuae*, 1835. (A).

ber of Protestants have been to see me, asking for books to read and four of them are now being prepared to enter the church [45]

In April, 1841, Verhaegen was carrying out his plan of a course of evening lectures in the cathedral. He wrote on the subject to Bishop Rosati

Thanks be to God, my health is excellent I have been able to give a familiar instruction every morning and three lectures, chiefly for Protestants, at night In the morning from 150 to 200 have been in attendance at the instructions, while at night I have had 2000 to 3000 hearers From what they tell me, these lectures have done an immense amount of good They have produced many conversions and inspired a number of persons with a desire and determination to receive instruction The local press has spoken of them in very flattering terms The Protestants have found our Lent too short, I have found it longer than usual May God be blessed and may His be all the glory of the efforts I have made to combat error and vindicate the truth I believe I can say that piety is on the increase and I see more clearly every day that St Louis offers a fertile field for pious, zealous and well-trained missionaries [46]

As late as 1840 preaching at St. Louis Cathedral was still partly in French. "The French sermons," Verhaegen reported that year to Bishop Rosati, then in Europe, "are poorly attended and religion suffers in consequence. If Monseigneur could bring back with him a good French preacher for his Cathedral, he would fill a great void. As to the English preaching, I cannot myself complain of my audience —but I cannot any longer conceal from you the fact that if, on my departure from the episcopal residence, some competent English or Irish priest does not replace me, religion will be very much the loser." [47]

The small number of priests at the University, entailing as it did

[45] Verhaegen à Rosati, 1840 (C) Verhaegen overestimated the number of his hearers With both seating and standing-room used to capacity, the old St Louis Cathedral will scarcely hold twelve hundred

[46] Verhaegen à Rosati, April 19, 1841 (C)

[47] Verhaegen à Rosati, July 8, 1840 (C) The story of the gradual elimination of French from the cathedral pulpit is told interestingly by F S Holweck, "The Language Question in the Old Cathedral of St Louis," in *SLCHR*, 2 4-17 In 1842 Bishop Kenrick abolished French at the morning services altogether, fearing that the English-speaking members of the cathedral congregation might be drawn entirely to the new College Church, which was then in process of construction and in which the preaching was to be entirely in English French sermons, however, continued to be given in the cathedral in the afternoon after vespers, but in the course of the forties these also were abolished and the language of the founders of St Louis ceased to be heard in the cathedral pulpit

long hours in the class-room and other burdensome collegiate duties, made their attendance at the cathedral for preaching and other ministerial duties less frequent than under other circumstances might have been the case. Already in November, 1823, Bishop Du Bourg in offering his episcopal college to the Jesuits had stipulated for the personal attendance of the fathers at solemn ceremonies in the cathedral. Six years later, when they took up residence in St Louis for the first time, the question of lending aid to the diocesan clergy became an occasion of disagreement between Father Van Quickenborne and Father Edmund Saulnier, rector of the cathedral. The latter complained, November, 1830, to Father Dzierozynski, the Maryland superior, that the St. Louis Jesuits declined to lend him due assistance in conducting the cathedral services. Bishop Rosati, so Saulnier alleged, was under the necessity of celebrating two Masses on Sundays notwithstanding the fact that there were six Jesuit fathers resident at the college. On the other hand, Van Quickenborne had recently explained his position to the Maryland superior, declaring that the fathers, being engaged in teaching during the week, needed relaxation on Sundays and could not therefore be reasonably expected to engage on those days in the trying functions of the ministry. While Van Quickenborne's explanation was on the whole a valid one, Father Roothaan was of the opinion that neither Van Quickenborne nor his successor as superior of the Missouri Mission, Father De Theux, went as far as the circumstances allowed in meeting the Bishop's wishes. What arrangement was felt to be practicable was indicated in a letter addressed by Verhaegen to Bishop Rosati, March 26, 1831, at which time Van Quickenborne was still superior:

> Aware as you are of our willingness to render your Lordship every service in our power compatible with our occupations, I am sure you will appreciate the liberty I respectfully take to inform you that we can manage to absent ourselves from the College only on those days on which your Lordship celebrates Mass *in pontificalibus*, that is, according to our calculation only eight or ten times a year This engagement Rev Father Superior makes with you after having inquired of us what each of us could do To do more would be beyond our power [48]

That Bishop Rosati himself did not fail to appreciate the position of the Jesuits is clear from a letter which he wrote for publication under date of March 6, 1832

---

[48] Van Quickenborne to Dzierozynski, September 17, 1830, Saulnier to Dzierozynski, November 4, 1830 (B) Verhaegen à Rosati, March 26, 1831 (C) Cf also *supra*, Chap. XV, § 1

Dear Sir,—I have lately seen, in one of our public prints, that some people, from motives best known to themselves, would fain make it appear that there exist in Missouri two parties, the one *Jesuitical*, and the other Anti-Jesuitical When writers offer to their readers nothing but a repetition of old calumnies and misrepresentations, which have been a thousand times refuted, the indignant silence of the abused Catholic cannot, or at least, should not be construed into a concession of the grounds on which his character is assailed by such as pretend to say the last word and write the last syllable, but when new slanders are held forth to the public, silence will not always prove the allegations to be false, because they pass unnoticed by those against whom they are made Wherefore, you will oblige me by informing the public, through your highly valuable paper, that the greatest union has always existed between the Society and myself and the secular priests of my Diocese We live on terms of a truly affectionate amity, and, linked together by the profession of the same faith, we actually join, as we have done ever since the arrival of the Fathers in Missouri, our unwearied efforts for the propagation of our holy religion If, owing to their literary pursuits and domestic occupations, incumbent on all who are entrusted with the education of a large number of pupils, they cannot devote, at St. Louis, a considerable portion of their time to the duties of the sacred ministry, no sinister suspicion should arise from an impossibility of which I am perfectly aware and thoroughly convinced I sincerely applaud and highly value their exertions, while they prove to the public, that proportionally to the increase of their members, they cheerfully extend the sphere of the services which they render to me, and to those under my spiritual care [49]

From the time Bishop Rosati penned this letter up to the opening of St. Xavier Church in 1843 some of the priests attached to the University were regularly detailed to fill the cathedral pulpit on Sundays and other occasions. This ministry did not grow less burdensome with time and in 1839 Verhaegen again laid before Rosati the hardship it entailed on the fathers employed in teaching

They [the fathers] are few in number, they have from four to five hours of teaching every day, they are in general weak in health, while those who are competent to preach at the Cathedral are unfortunately of a constitution anything but robust Besides, I believe, Monseigneur, that the English preaching suffers much in consequence, and that it is very expedient, not to say *very necessary* for the welfare of our holy religion in St Louis that there be an American priest at the Cathedral to give *consecutive* instructions This gentleman would make himself doubly useful by assuming the

[49] *Catholic Telegraph* (Cincinnati), March 24, 1832 Rosati wrote to Cardinal Cappellani, Prefect of the Propaganda, April 5, 1831 "I PP. Gesuiti occupati nel loro collegio non possono venire secondo quel che mi hanno significato a predicare che cinque o sei volte l'anno Bisogna dunque che mi sottometta a portare il peso io stesso e faccia quel che posso" Kenrick Seminary Archives.

spiritual direction of the boarding-school of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, which more than any other external ministry weighs heavily on our shoulders Deign, Monseigneur, to reflect on what I have just set down and to arrange things in such a wise that those who are already overburdened at home may no longer have reason to complain of external functions of the ministry imposed upon them [50]

As late as 1841 Father Verhaegen was still preaching at the cathedral, where his sermons attracted large crowds. Assisting him in this function was Father Van Sweevelt, a young Belgian, whose untimely death in 1841 was a great shock to his religious brethren Verhaegen sent news of it to Bishop Rosati

On my return from Louisiana I found a very sad vacancy at the University. The zealous and learned Father Van Sweevelt was no more Stricken, so it appears, with apoplexy, he was found dead in his bed The attack must have been a sudden one, occurring during sleep, for there were no indications of any struggle, even the least For a space of four hours, during which some of our people had occasion to enter his room, he was thought to be asleep What a loss! It is irreparable He was the only one who could replace me at the convent and the hospital, and who was ready to assist me in preaching at the Cathedral For the present, I find myself left to my own resources No more help from the College, and I do not wonder at this, for ever since this distressing accident Father Van de Velde has lost all energy He has fallen into a languor and we fear even for his life May God preserve us from a misfortune which would be worse even than the other. I shudder to think of it The good Father, obedient as a child, has gone on a trip. I hope the change of air will bring about the result we so earnestly look for. You will understand, Monseigneur, that under these circumstances, my presence at the University becomes almost indispensable [51]

Father Verhaegen was apparently the last of the Jesuit fathers to be regularly employed as preacher in the cathedral. With the organization of St. Francis Xavier's parish in the early forties, their services as preachers found ample room for exercise in their own parochial church.

The first services for the college parish, as the Jesuit parish came to be known throughout St. Louis, were held in the University chapel, better known under the name of St Aloysius, which was built in 1835 on the Washington Avenue side of the University premises [52] Here

---

[50] Verhaegen à Rosati, August 4, 1839 (C)

[51] Father Judocus Van Sweevelt was born in Belgium, February 27, 1804, entered the Society of Jesus, November 27, 1828, and died at St Louis University, May 10, 1841.

[52] Cf *supra*, Chap XIX, § 3

in 1837 there was Mass on Sunday, with an English sermon at 9 o'clock and another Mass with German sermon at 11 o'clock. French sermons were preached only on occasion, for even at this early date French, as a language of current use, had lost its importance in the city. In 1839 four of the University fathers, Van de Velde, Krynen, Van Sweevelt and Carrell were preachers in St. Aloysius Chapel. The capacity of this edifice, meant primarily for the student-body, by no means met the needs of the rapidly growing Irish and German population of North St. Louis. The question of churches for the two elements soon became a pressing one, to be settled by the erection of St. Francis Xavier's for the English-speaking and St. Joseph's for the German-speaking worshippers

When in 1839 the problem of providing more room for the growing number of the University students was under consideration by the vice-provincial and his consultors, Father Carrell advised the erection of a parish church with basement, which latter could be used for college purposes. A little later, when the erection of a parish church had been determined on, Father Van de Velde suggested that it be built on the south end of the University grounds, facing Washington Avenue. In the event Carrell's recommendation rather than Van de Velde's was acted upon The new church, which had a basement, was built at the northeast corner of the University grounds, Ninth Street and Christy Avenue. On March 13, 1840, a meeting of Catholic residents in the neighborhood of the University was held in St. Aloysius Chapel to deliberate on ways and means towards the erection of a new church.[53] The great majority of the names on the subscription-list opened to secure funds for the project were Irish, indicating that the parish was largely made up of that nationality. Among the subscribers from the French and native American elements were a Mrs. Chouteau, Emilie Chouteau, M. P. Le Duc, Julius De Mun, L. A. Benoist, James H. Lucas, Wilson Primm, John O'Fallon, Ann Biddle, John F. Darby, Richard Graham, William P. Clark, George Rogers Clark, Lewis M. Clark and Dr. Farrar.[54] On March 23 ground was broken for the new church and on Sunday, April 12, the corner-stone was laid by Bishop Rosati, Father Elet, rector of the University, addressing the assembled people from the east balcony of the main University building.[55] On Easter Sunday, 1843, the church, under the name of St. Francis Xavier, was opened for divine service. It was an imposing edifice in the classic style and from its first days down to its dismantling in 1890, after the University had been moved to another site, remained a

[53] *Diarium Universitatis S Ludovici*, 1837-1841 (A).
[54] (D).
[55] *Diarium Universitatis S. Ludovici.* (A).

favorite shrine of devotion for the Catholic residents of St. Louis, to whom it was familiarly known as the College Church. A contemporary description of the church has come down to us

This is one of the most beautiful buildings for public worship in the whole valley of the Mississippi It is 67 feet front by 127 feet deep and its height to the top of the pediment is 60 feet The front represents a triumphal arch, adorned with four Ionic pilasters four feet wide bearing a full entablature and pediment, its style is taken chiefly from the theatre of Marcellus at Rome. The bases, caps, architraves, imposts and archivolts are exquisitely wrought in fine white limestone Its basement is constructed of massive blocks of hammered blue limestone, the rest of the front is built of the best pressed brick, an irregular octagon belfry of brick, finished in the form of a dome and surmounted with a lanthern of cast iron, imitated from [the] Choragic monument of Lysicrates at Athens, rises eighty feet above the ridge of the roof.

The interior of the church is in the style of the Incantada at Thessalonica, it contains two tiers of galleries, furnished with seats in Amphitheatrical form, the first tier is supported by Corinthian columns and the second by Antae, sustaining figures, the whole rising to the height of thirty-two feet. The Sanctuary is composed of six columns, supporting a semi-circular dome, which is enriched with octagon Caissons and Flowers The spaces between the columns in the rear of the sanctuary are ornamented with three large paintings representing scenes of the crucifixion on Mount Calvary. The platform of the altar is elevated five feet above the floor, the altar is ornamented with a tabernacle in the form of the ark of the Covenant, with a cherub on either side The pulpit is movable, so as to be placed in any position that may best suit the orator and audience The ceiling is arched and rises in the centre to the height of forty feet above the floor, it is richly ornamented with Lacunaria [56]

The interior finishing of the church was in keeping with its fine architectural design. Paintings and statues of merit adorned the walls, some of them gifts from Father Roothaan, others brought by Father De Smet from Belgium. Great throngs gathered to view these works of Catholic art when they were first put in place. The five altars were the work of Paschal Lincetti, a coadjutor-brother attached to the Uni-

[56] *The Valley of the Mississippi illustrated in a series of views Edited by Lewis Foulk Thomas, Painted and Lithographed by J C. Wild. Accompanied with Historical Description* (St Louis, 1841), p 35 According to this authority the church was planned by Father Peter Verheyden, S J , pastor of the College Church, 1839-1842. Charles Dickens, who saw the church while in process of erection, 1842, wrote in his *American Notes*, Chap XII "The architect of this building is one of the Reverend Fathers of the school and the works proceed under his sole direction " Three altars designed and built by Brother Lincetti are now in the basement chapel of the present College Church, Grand and Lindell Boulevards.

versity. Under one of the altars rested the body of St. Florentine, which Father Van de Velde brought from Rome in 1842.

In 1838 there were, so contemporary records seem to indicate, only two parish schools in the diocese of St. Louis, one at St Charles for boys, which was taught by Brother Michael Hoey, S.J., and the other at Florissant, also for boys, which was conducted by Brother Cornelius O'Leary, S J.[57] The first parish school for girls in St Louis was the one attached to St. Francis Xavier's. It was opened May 8, 1843, by a group of Sisters of Charity who had arrived in the city Low Sunday of that year from their headquarters in Emmitsburg, Md. This congregation of sisters had been established in St. Louis since 1828, when they came to assume charge of the hospital founded through the munificence of John Mullanphy. Later they took in hand the direction of St. Philomena's Orphan Asylum and Free School at Fifth and Walnut Streets in the cathedral parish, and of St Mary's Female Orphan Asylum at Biddle and Tenth Streets. St. Xavier's parish school for girls, first known as St. Vincent's Free School, was a success from the start. It opened in temporary quarters with one hundred and thirty pupils, the new school-building at Tenth and St. Charles Streets, which was built on property donated by Mrs. Ann Hunt, not being at the moment ready for occupancy. In 1845 the average number of pupils in attendance was two hundred and eighty, the teaching-staff consisting of five sisters. Attached to St. Vincent's was a select or pay school, the revenue of which went to the support of the free school. Under the skillful direction of Sister Olympia St. Vincent's Free School, or "Sister Olympia's School," as it came to be known, became an important factor in the upgrowth of St. Louis Catholicity. July 14, 1843, the Rt. Rev. M. J. Spalding, Bishop of Louisville, lectured in the new St. Xavier Church for its benefit.[58]

St. Xavier's parish school for boys was in a sense an outgrowth of the day-school department of St. Louis University. At first the

---

[57] *The Metropolitan Catholic Almanac* for 1838 lists only two In 1847 Van de Velde informed the French Association of the Propagation of the Faith that there were four "free schools" in St Louis, two of them being for children of both sexes. "They are the first schools of that sort established in the west of the United States We are now building one for children of both sexes in Cincinnati Many other Bishops have followed our example " Van de Velde à O P F , December 12, 1847. Archives, *L'Oeuvre de la Propagation de la Foi* As a matter of fact the parochial schools of St Charles and Florissant, though probably not organized on a strictly parochial basis, antedated those of St Louis. Cf *supra*, Chap VII, § 1, 2

[58] *Metropolitan Catholic Almanac*, 1845. Under date of October, 1842, a diary kept by an official of the University records that a New Orleans boy was sent by his parents to St. Louis "1200 miles away," that he might attend the St. Xavier Free School, the fame of which had penetrated to the South. (A).

day-scholars of the institution were not admitted to the classical course, but were merely given instruction of a rather elementary kind in the usual branches of an English or mercantile education. Later, in 1842, they were admitted on an equal or almost equal footing with the boarders to all the educational opportunities of the University. At the same time provision was to be made for poor boys unable to meet the expense of a collegiate education, as a circular issued from the University August 29, 1842, informed the public. "It is not intended, however, to exclude from the benefits of a good education such as are unable to defray the expense of a collegiate course. Some of the gentlemen connected with the Institution will devote themselves to the gratuitous education of such children and a spacious hall is now being fitted up for their accommodation within the precincts of the University, but unconnected with the apartments appropriated to the use of the pupils that pursue the course of collegiate studies" [59] In pursuance, accordingly, of the announcement thus made, an "English Male Free School" was opened towards the end of 1842 in the basement of St. Francis Xavier's Church, then just nearing completion. Here classes were held until the erection in 1845 of a large three-story building on Christy Avenue immediately west of the main University building The first teachers in the boys' school were Jesuit scholastics. In 1844 Father Arnold Damen was in charge of the school, assisted by Hugh Russell, Francis Horstmann, Ignatius Maes and George Watson, all of the Society of Jesus. In 1848 Father Damen was still conducting the school, with Mr. Van den Hurck, S.J., Brother Thomas O'Donnell and others as assistants. The average attendance in 1851 was about three hundred and fifty, in which year the Jesuit instructors were relieved by Brothers of the Christian Schools.[60]

---

[59] *Catalogue St Louis University,* August, 1842

[60] *Catholic Metropolitan Almanac,* 1846-1851 "A large and handsome three-story building 93 x 40 feet is being erected for the use of this school on the University premises It will be completed before the end of the present year, 1845" "There was question of preparing school-rooms for extern scholars The College was unable to meet the expenses, meanwhile the boys to the number of more than two hundred were attending Protestant schools at the risk of losing the faith and suffering harm in their morals Kindling with pious zeal, Mr Damen offered his services to complete the job He begged alms from our citizens and when others had no heart for the work, he finished it up without any expense whatever to the College Now as some of the inhabitants had contributed not money but labor, he had to deal at times with the carpenters and other workmen by way of giving them directions But whatever he did, was done with the approval of Father Rector The young man who by his own enterprise had rescued almost three hundred boys from the said schools or from the streets to train them up in letters and religion seems to me to be deserving of the highest praise" Verhaegen ad Roothaan, July 13, 1843 (AA).

Fathers Carrell and Elet writing in 1844 to the Father General spoke in high commendation of the good that was being accomplished by the recently opened parish schools

Everything connected with our free schools is calculated to give edification—they are the admiration of the whole city and the consolation of our community. The Bishop shed tears of joy when on the Feast of St Aloysius he gave the Holy Communion to 300 of these happy children of the two schools.[61]

The good done there [St Louis University] is considerable especially in the free school and the church It is touching to see the pious and zealous Father Dahmen [Damen] enter the church at the head of 300 children (all in uniforms which this good Father has procured for them with the aid of some charitable Ladies) They show by their conduct that they are well instructed in the faith and that the faith inspires them A short time ago a second free school was opened for the German children These are, the children from whom we choose from time to time a certain number conspicuous for talent and piety to admit them into the regular course, in this manner we shall prepare candidates for the sacred ministry My very Reverend Father, you cannot encourage these schools too much. They must be established everywhere, for as long as poor Catholic children are educated in protestant schools apostasies will be frequent. Now it was the opinion of Bishop England of happy memory that in the United States of America the number of apostasies is greater than that of conversions. A line or two from your Paternity to Father Dahmen would greatly encourage him to continue with the same zeal the good work to which he has so generously devoted himself.[62]

Father Murphy on arriving in St. Louis in 1851 to take up the duties of vice-provincial was likewise impressed by the work being done in the church

The two pastors [Damen and Loretan] are very zealous and prudent The piety of the parishioners and of the two Congregations [sodalities] is remarkable for this country. A new arrangement this year permits us to leave more than a third of the church to the poor at the last Mass. You know, Reverend Father, that it is the custom in America to reserve the pews during the high Mass for those who have rented them. Without this the priests are without means of support. The non-payers have now 20 pews and a tribune for 300 persons I have never seen anywhere in America so many communions of men. What a fine meeting every Sunday evening of the Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart! When I think of New York, these things strike me with peculiar force It is all because Ours are allowed free play and their influence is very great Their knowledge of

[61] Carrell to Roothaan, August 2, 1844 (AA)
[62] Elet à Roothaan, December 23, 1844 (AA)

English amazes me more and more every day, not only do they speak and write well but some preach perfectly. This is what I had been told at New York and elsewhere [63]

Similar testimony to the activities of the college church was given by Bishop Van de Velde of Chicago in a report of the early fifties to Propaganda "In St. Francis Xavier's Church [St. Louis] there are more confessions, communions and especially conversions of non-Catholics than in the other churches, the preachers draw better, there are sodalities of young men and girls who come from every part of the city, an Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and a Confraternity of the Living Rosary, all of which are sources of great edification to the faithful and do not exist in the other churches." In 1856 Father Verdin, rector of St. Louis University, noted that there were five Masses at the high altar on Sundays and feast days, the church being crowded at every Mass. Communions on Sundays numbered five hundred, on the First Friday and on the feasts of the Blessed Virgin, about two hundred. On Sundays and feast days there were at least two sermons. "I say, and it is the truth, the church is our joy and our glory." Father Wippern witnessed in 1856 "The sermons given in our church produce great fruit as one may infer from the immense crowds of people and the use made of the sacraments, which is extraordinary for this part of the country." [64]

Especially popular with the worshippers at St Xavier's was the Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary [65] Founded in Paris, this association had spread to the United States and was in particular favor with the middlewestern Jesuits, who introduced it everywhere into their churches, colleges and Indian missions. It was to be found at St. Xavier's in St. Louis as also at St. Xavier's in Cincinnati, among the students of Bardstown and the Indians of Sugar Creek Father De Theux wrote from Cincinnati to Father Van Assche at Florissant "Reverend Mr. de Goesbriand, Pastor of Louisville, Ohio, [*sic*] told me that he had established the Archconfraternity of the most pure Heart of Mary in his parish and that within two years he had doubled the number of his communicants. The end of the Archconfraternity is to obtain the conversion of sinners and all sorts of infidels

---

[63] Murphy à Roothaan, October 8, 1851 (AA)

[64] Verdin ad Beckx, February, 1856, Wippern ad Beckx, January 23, 1856 (AA).

[65] The Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was founded in 1836 by the Abbé Des Genettes, pastor of Notre Dame des Victoires in Paris It was erected into a confraternity by Gregory XVI, April 24, 1838 Beringer, *Die Ablaesse* (Paderborn, 1887), p. 754.

throughout the world. During the course of last May 80,000 men and 120,000 women had their names enrolled in it at Paris. Should your Reverence wish to have it established in your church, [Rev.] Mr. de Goesbriand has power to establish it throughout the U. S. F. Rect. [Father Rector] intends to have it established in the [students'] chapel and afterwards in the church." [66] The Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was introduced at St. Xavier's in St. Louis apparently by Father Gleizal, who was its director in 1844. He was succeeded in the charge in 1846 by Father Arnold Damen, pastor of the church during the decade 1847-1857.

The Young Men's, sometimes called the Gentlemen's Sodality, was organized by Father Damen about 1848. As originally planned, it was to be recruited from among alumni or former students of the University living in St. Louis, but no such restriction on its membership was subsequently enforced. It became in actual development a select group of Catholic laymen of the city, especially such as had a professional or equivalent standing. On its register, as a contemporary record indicates, were "lawyers, doctors, bankers, merchants, agents and engineers." The influence in the community of such a body of representative and God-fearing Christian gentlemen could not but be a positive one. Father Wippern said in 1851: "They make our religion everywhere known and communicate a Catholic spirit to the entire city." [67] According to another witness they became "apostles bringing back a great number of others to the practice of their religious duties." Father De Smet wrote of the organization in 1856. "It contains the élite of the town to the number of 300 gentlemen of all ranks of society. It is a unique example for the United States. All the bishops who assisted at this Provincial Council [St. Louis] were witnesses of the zeal of the Sodalists and of the great good resulting therefrom for the entire town and they expressed aloud their admiration at it." [68] Though the Gentlemen's Sodality was thus proving itself an influence for good throughout the city, it labored under the inconvenience of having to draw its membership from the other parishes of the city, the pastors of which sometimes felt that this worked to the disadvantage of their own congregations. Such was the case in 1850 when four of the diocesan priests of the city, Father Melchiors among them, joined

---

[66] De Theux to Van Assche, October 16, 1842 (AA).

[67] Wippern ad Roothaan, January 21, 1851 (AA)

[68] De Smet à Beckx, May 13, 1856 (AA). William Linton, editor of the *Western Tablet*, a Chicago Catholic weekly, wrote to Father Druyts, December 19, 1853 "Give my best respects to Father Damen, tell him that I think of the Sodality every Sunday at 9 o'clock and would give almost anything to transport myself to the Chapel, where I have been used to be at that hour" (A)

in protest against the continuance of the Gentlemen's Sodality on the plan according to which it was being conducted. The difficulty thus inherent in the sodality's plan was never satisfactorily adjusted as long as the organization lasted.

Father Damen's obvious success in the parish continued to elicit generous comment from his associates in their correspondence with the Father General. Father Murphy wrote in 1853

> The great good being done in our church is a subject of edification to the whole town The people say openly that at St Xavier's there is always some new devotion to maintain the fervor and nourish the piety of the faithful. Confessions are also very numerous, there is always something as a matter of fact to electrify the most indifferent Father Damen, a Hollander, is the soul of it all. A zealous worker, ardent and courageous by nature, with robust health and gifted with uncommon eloquence, he suffices for everything and carries everything along with him. He has, too, the talent of gaining the good-will of the secular clergy and securing their cooperation Many Protestants owe their conversion to him [69]

The following estimate of Damen by De Smet belongs to 1856

> Reverend Father Provincial has asked the Consultors to say a word to your Paternity about Father Damen because of certain, in my opinion, erroneous ideas about him which have been communicated to you As pastor and missionary in a large American city I think you would be hard put to it to find his equal in the whole country. For many years he has been working with indefatigable zeal, much edification and abundant and consoling fruit in the vineyard of the Lord. He has introduced several pious works in St. Louis with great success—several charitable institutions owe to him their existence and support—the number of conversions he has worked among Protestants and unbelievers is very large—he has brought back to the holy practices of religion a great multitude of Catholics who were weak and unsteady in the Faith He possesses the esteem, the respect and the admiration of most Catholics of the city—the rich readily draw on their purses to help him in his acts of charity and his holy enterprises The rich also have need of counsel, sometimes much more than the poor, and they address themselves by preference to him, which sometimes gives rise to talk and gives a little umbrage. Just now good Father Damen is contemplating the erection of an industrial school under the care of the Sisters of Mercy as an offset to the schools of this kind among the Protestants, who do so much to pervert the children of the Catholic poor He has been engaged on this venture scarcely two months and the subscription-list already amounts to more than sixteen thousand dollars With four thousand dollars more, which he expects he can obtain before long, this religious house will be founded and

[69] Murphy à Beckx, December 8, 1853. (AA).

so two hundred children at least will be snatched from the hands of the sectaries.[70]

Father Damen left St. Louis in the spring of 1857 for Chicago to repeat there on a still larger scale the program of work he had carried through in his first field of labor. A few months after his departure Father Gleizal was installed for the second time as pastor at St. Xavier's, but ill-health soon necessitated his removal, his place being taken in 1858 by Father Cornelius Smarius, who had been filling the post of prefect of studies in St. Louis University. Smarius was already a preacher of obvious promise and his sermons at St. Xavier's filled the church to overflowing. But ill-health made it necessary for him to be relieved of his pastorship, which was assigned to Father John O'Neill. The new incumbent lacked the brilliant parts of his predecessor, but the parish apparently did not suffer in his hands. "He is not a very well-informed man," wrote Father Coosemans, his rector, "nor a very eloquent one, it is true, any more than he is without his private defects; yet he is a man full of zeal and attentive to his religious duties and he gives instructions that are familiar but solid." Complaint having been made that Father O'Neill was not the right sort of man for the church, Coosemans observed "When you consider the fruits of salvation produced in our church during this year, you must admit that if, humanly speaking, he is not the man for the church, the Lord has known very well how to make use of this instrument to accomplish his designs." [71] Some months later, after noting of O'Neill that he had not Smarius's talent and did not draw equally well as a preacher, Coosemans went on to say, "but the good is done with less noise and solid piety has gained rather than lost by the change." For a number of years Father O'Neill, as Father Damen before him, had been giving instructions on Christian doctrine in the parish school and church and they were given well. "Now he walks in the footsteps of Father Damen by fidelity to his

[70] De Smet à Beckx, May 13, 1856 (AA) "The winter has been a very severe one The kitchen for the poor or 'Soup House' started and supported by Father Damen has fed a great number of families One can say that he is at the head of the charities of St Louis" Murphy à Roothaan, February 15, 1852 (AA) "Father Damen had two attacks of apoplexy—he rather overworked himself. He is very well at present For a little while they prevented him from preaching and hearing confessions. He is not idle, in a fortnight he has collected about twelve thousand dollars to commence an industrial school under the Sisters of Mercy for poor and young girls It was much needed in St Louis to counteract the doings of the enemies of the church who stretch every nerve to take in Catholic children" De Smet to Congiato, April 20, 1856 (A)

[71] Coosemans à Beckx, June 25, 1861 (AA)

pastoral duties and by zeal in the exercise of the sacred ministry." [72] Someone having written with a touch of disparagement of Father O'Neill that he was once "a business man," Father Murphy, with his usual incisiveness, made this comment: "I am surprised any one should have called attention to that in this country of ours where people inquire not what a person was but who and what he is here and now." [73]

§ 3. THE COLLEGE FARM

The tract of suburban property known as the College Farm, which St. Louis University acquired in 1836, touches the history of the institution at many points. The early prospectuses of the University invite attention to the advantages which it enjoyed by reason of its secluded position "in the western suburb of the city, airy and salubrious." [74] But in the mid-thirties a change came over this locality, the former quiet of which began to disappear before the numerous buildings erected or in process of erection in that part of suburban St. Louis. "Property is selling enormously high in St. Louis," wrote Father Carrell in September, 1836, to a friend in the East. "The grounds all around the University (which one year ago stood solitary) have been sold as high as $95 per foot—and buildings are going up in every direction." [75] Though Seventh Street continued to be the western boundary of the city as late as 1841, building operations were being carried on beyond that line as early as 1836, in which year the University trustees, deeming that the work of the institution could no longer be satisfactorily carried on under the changed conditions, took under consideration its removal to another site. On May 3 of that year the Board of Trustees appointed Fathers Verhaegen, Elet and De Theux a committee to select a new location for the University buildings.[76] They were on the point of signing papers for the purchase, at one hundred dollars an acre, of two hundred and fifty acres situated on the Bellefontaine Road, when opportunity arose to acquire a more desirable tract situated close to the purchase first contemplated.[77] This tract, lying "four miles northward of the court-house in the city of St. Louis," was conveyed June 23, 1836, by its owner, Lewis Meriwether Clark, son of General William Clark, to St. Louis University for a consideration of thirty thousand dollars. Two days after the purchase Father Verhaegen announced to Father McSherry in Maryland the news of the "grand acquisition," as

[72] Coosemans ad Beckx, October 23, 1861 (AA)
[73] Murphy ad Beckx, August 14, 1861 (AA)
[74] *Catalogue of St. Louis University*, 1839.
[75] Carrell to Frenaye, September 8, 1836, in *RACHS*, 14 68
[76] Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
[77] *Litterae Annuae*, 1836.

he called it "We have concluded on disposing of the property and buildings which we own at St. Louis and transferring the institution to one of the most handsome situations in our vicinity. It is a highly improved farm, comprising 400 acres of land, about three miles north of the city on the Bellefontaine road, generally known as Major O'Fallon's place. We bought it for $30,000." [78]

The history of the new University property as a real-estate holding dates back to the first days of St. Louis. The tract, as acquired by the Jesuits in 1836 and known thereafter as the College or Fount Hill Farm, consisted of seven distinct parcels of land which had already passed through various hands from the time they were first allotted by the Spanish government out of the royal demesne. The title to one of these parcels of land was vested at one time in the founder of the city, Pierre Laclede Liguest. On December 10, 1768, before a notary, M. Labuesciere, "personally appeared M. Pierre Laclede Liguest, Merchant, residing at the Post of St. Louis in the French part of Illinois," to convey to Jacques Noisé, in exchange for other property, "a piece of ground, two arpents wide by forty arpents deep, situated in the cul-de-sac of the Grand Prairie." The Grand or Big Prairie formed part of the Common Fields of St. Louis. In later years, when St. Louis University was called upon to defend in court its title to the College Farm, a copy of the contract between Laclede and Noisé was among the documents appealed to in adjudicating the case Other historic names to be met with as those of principals, trustees or witnesses in the transfer deeds and other documents that entered into the chain of title of the College Farm, are those of Auguste Chouteau, co-founder with Laclede of St. Louis, who testified in 1831 that the Noisé tract was under cultivation as early as 1791, Ramsay Crooks, fur-trader, explorer and one of the founders with John Jacob Astor of the American Fur Company; Albert Gallatin, who gave his name to one of the three forks of the Missouri River in southern Montana, Edward Bates, attorney-general in Lincoln's cabinet, Col. John O'Fallon and his brother, Benjamin O'Fallon, and General William Clark, of the Lewis and Clark expedition. It was Lewis Meriwether Clark, eldest son of General Clark, who conveyed the College Farm

[78] Verhaegen to McSherry, June 25, 1836 (B) The actual extent of the property was 370 95 acres or 6402 x 1980 feet. (D). In 1857 Col. John O'Fallon gave a quit-claim to St Louis University for any interest he might have had in the College Farm According to carefully-drawn plats made by Van de Velde, while treasurer of the University, the actual extent of the College Farm at the time of purchase was as follows section between the Bellefontaine Road and the Mississippi, 193 95 acres, section south of Road, 177 acres, total 370 95 acres In 1849, when the section toward the river was sold to Dr Hall, 6 2 acres had been lost, presumably by the eating in of the river.

property to St. Louis University, he having acquired the bulk of it from Benjamin O'Fallon, to whom it had been transferred by his brother, John.

The farm was in shape a rough parallelogram running N.W.S.E. and extending about a mile and a fourth in one direction and between a third and a half-mile in the other. The east line ran parallel with the present Grand Boulevard, not yet laid out in 1836, and at a distance of about five hundred feet to the west of that thoroughfare. Both east and west lines began at the Mississippi River and extended back to about the present Blair Street. Adjoining the property on the west was the fine estate of Colonel John O'Fallon, now O'Fallon Park, while the land to the east belonged to Major John Dougherty, well-known trader and Indian agent.

"In the whole state of Missouri," declare the *Annual Letters* for 1836, "there is no site better adapted for a college." The property possessed indeed every natural advantage for the purpose intended. Between the Mississippi and a small stream intersecting the farm and called in the early deeds Gengras River but later Harlem Creek, was a stretch of timber about one hundred and twelve acres in extent. As wood was becoming scarce in St. Louis, the prospect of felling the trees and shipping them down the river to the city for fuel is noted by the annalist for 1836 as a distinct advantage of the new purchase. Gengras River connected with the Mississippi at both ends, which fact was said to account for the abundant fish found in its waters. Between the Gengras and Bellefontaine Road were some eighty acres of prairie or meadow-land, which rose to a gentle declivity before reaching the road South of the road the land continued to slope upward affording a splendid and far-reaching view of the Mississippi River and the Illinois shore. Bellefontaine Road, at this stage of its course identical with the Broadway of today, which thus traversed the College Farm in a northwesterly direction from the city, was the public highway connecting the city with Fort Bellefontaine on the Missouri. Laid out in the period of the Spanish occupation, it is rich in historical associations of pioneer St. Louis. Whatever buildings were on the College Farm at the time of its acquisition by St. Louis University stood some yards off the line of the Bellefontaine Road and to its left as one looked away from the city. First, there was Lewis Meriwether Clark's dwelling-house with its shaded walk leading down to the road. To the left of the house was a mill built by Benjamin O'Fallon and some wooden cabins for the hired help and slaves. To the right, at some distance off, were the stables, and between these and the house, an ample vegetable-garden with its own well as also a large-sized cistern to impound the rain-water from the house. Behind

the latter was an apple and peach orchard and an extensive field for wheat or potatoes. One descriptive detail of the annalist must not be overlooked. From the hill-side behind the house a spring of perfectly clear, wholesome water flowed steadily and through underground pipes constantly renewed the water in a large circular-shaped fish-pond constructed out of the living rock. From this spring, so it would appear, the property acquired its name of Fount Hill Farm [79]

How the College Farm property and its vicinity impressed the visitor to St Louis, appears from a paragraph written by Edward Flagg, a young journalist of Louisville, who visited St. Louis and its vicinity in 1838:

By far the most delightful drive in the vicinity of St Louis is that of four or five miles in its northern suburbs, along the river bottom The road, emerging from the streets of the city through one of its finest sections, and leaving the "Big Mound" upon the right, sweeps off for several miles upon a succession of broad plateaux, rolling up from the water's edge. To the left lies an extensive range of heights, surmounted by ancient mounds and crowned with groves of the shrub-oak, which afford a delightful shade to the road running below. Along this elevated ridge beautiful country-seats with graceful piazzas and green Venetian blinds are caught from time to time glancing through the shrubbery, while to the right smooth meadows spread themselves away to the heavy belt of forest which margins the Mississippi. Among these pleasant villas the little white farm-cottage, formerly the residence of Mr Clark, beneath the hills, surrounded by its handsome grounds, and gardens, and glittering fish-ponds, partly shrouded by the broad leaved catalpa, the willow, the acacia, and other ornamental trees, presents, perhaps, the rarest instance of natural beauty adorned by refined taste. A visit to this delightful spot during my stay in St Louis informed me of the fact that within as well as abroad, the hand of education and refinement had not been idle. Paintings, busts, medallions, Indian curiosities, etc., tastefully arranged around the walls and shelves of an elegant library, presented a feast to the visitor as rare in the Far West as it is agreeable to a cultivated mind. Near the cottage is the intended site of the building of the St Louis Catholic University, a lofty and commanding spot A considerable tract has been purchased, at a cost of thirty-thousand dollars, but the design of removal from the city has, for the present, been relinquished Immediately adjoining is situated the stately villa of Colonel O'Fallon, with its highly cultivated gardens and its beautiful park sweeping off in the rear. In a very few years this must become one of the most delightful spots in the West For its elegant grounds, its green and hot houses, and its exotic and indigenous plants, it is, perhaps, already unequalled west of Cincinnati No expense, attention or taste will be wanting to render it all of which the spot is capable [80]

[79] *Litterae Annuae*, 1836 (A).

[80] R. G. Thwaites (ed.), *Western Travels*, 26 259

Before the end of 1836 the authorities of St. Louis University had proceeded to carry out the intention they had in view in acquiring the College Farm, which was to afford a new site for the University buildings.[81] Stone was quarried on the farm premises and the foundations were dug, when circumstances brought about the sudden and permanent abandonment of the original plan. What those circumstances were is told in a letter written in 1850 by Bishop Van de Velde of Chicago, the former Jesuit father of St. Louis University, to Archbishop Kenrick of St. Louis·

It cannot be said that the idea of establishing a Convictus or College for Boarders on the farm (or, in case the farm was sold, somewhere else in the neighborhood of the city) was *ever abandoned* It is certain that the farm was bought principally, I might say exclusively, for the purpose of building a college on it. The foundations were dug (as may still be seen), the stone was quarried and cut, and the day had been appointed by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Rosati to lay the corner-stone with *éclat*, when the Undertaker [contractor] and myself were seized with the bilious fever.[82] The kind Bishop came to see me frequently during my illness, and said that he would not perform the ceremony unless I was present However, the ceremony was postponed In the meantime the Undertaker died, and we have ever looked on that circumstance as an interposition of Providence to save us from utter ruin The farm was bought during the time of the speculation fever, and it was then our intention to sell the whole or the greater part of the property in the city and with the proceeds to make the 2nd and 3rd payments for the farm (the first having been made cash down when the deed was delivered). All the money we could muster went to the first payment, and I had begun to borrow money at 10 per cent to feed the Undertaker and his men. We had then six months before us, and no doubt on our minds of being able to effect the sale of the city property. All at once a crisis takes place, bankruptcies are announced in all directions,

[81] Soon after acquiring the farm Verhaegen sought to reimburse the University to some extent for the purchase-price by disposing of a part of the timber "The farm is almost in order. I have bought four horses and several cows and calves The mill is in operation and good Father Helias has advertised the fact to the neighbors You may see the following sign fastened to a tree 'Our mill is in operation Active and faithful attention will be paid to the business' I have six wood-cutters at work, and count on selling more than a thousand cords of wood this winter if the speculation succeeds" Verhaegen to Rosati, November, 1836 (C)

[82] These incidents occurred before the end of 1836 "Our Fathers were obliged to look out for a handsome spot for a new college 2 or 3 miles from the city They lately purchased a handsome farm from the son of Genl Clark for $30,000 and have already commenced the foundation 200 by 62 ft Of course they cannot sell the present University and grounds valued at $65,000 for one or more years as they could not give possession before that time The property is unincumbered but they would rather not mortgage it—however, if there is no other way to get money they will do so" Carrell to Frenaye, September 8, 1836, in *RACHS*, 14·60

everybody becomes alarmed, property sinks to less than one-half, perhaps one-third of its former value, and we had no alternative left but to send Father De Smet to Europe to effect a loan in order to pay for the farm and save our credit [83] The loan was effected and then it was resolved to keep the whole property in the city, and, if at any time we should be able to sell the farm to advantage, and thus to cancel the debt in Europe, to reserve a few acres (I think 10 or 20), in order to build a College on it for boarders, and to keep the College in the city for a scholasticate and Day-school, or, for this purpose, if the whole farm should be sold, to buy some few acres in the city. There was even question for a considerable time of purchasing a Villa or College for the small boarders, in order to have these separated from the larger ones [84]

As agent for the trustees of St. Louis University, De Smet negotiated August 17, 1837, at Termonde in Belgium, a loan of one hundred thousand francs at five per cent from Madame de Ghyseghem, and another loan of twenty-five thousand francs at the same rate from her daughter, Mlle. Elizabeth de Ghyseghem. With the money thus obtained, the payment of the twenty-five thousand dollars due on the College Farm was made within two years of the date of purchase, a first payment of five thousand having been made at the time the property was acquired. The Ghyseghem debt was liquidated in May, 1849, in response to instructions from Father Roothaan that the obligation be lifted as soon as possible, even by the immediate sale of the College Farm. As this was daily increasing in value and could not be sold except at a sacrifice, a loan was obtained by Father Van de Velde from a St. Louis bank and the Ghyseghem debt thereby paid off.[85]

Though the property known as the College Farm failed to be utilized for the purpose for which it was bought, it was put to good use as the college villa. From 1837 to 1847 one or more fathers with a few coadjutor-brothers resided on it, but without forming a community distinct from that of St. Louis University. Father James Busschots was the first one to be stationed at the Farm in the capacity of superior or minister. He was succeeded after a year of office by Father John Schoenmakers, who held the post until commissioned in 1847 to start the Osage Mission. As early as 1837 the professors of St. Louis University, both scholastics and fathers, were accustomed to

---

[83] In this detail Van de Velde appears to be in error De Smet was not sent to Belgium to negotiate the loan in question He had been living there since 1833, returning to Missouri only in December, 1837 The financial crisis to which Van de Velde makes allusion was the panic of 1837

[84] Van de Velde to Kenrick, February 28, 1850 (A)

[85] De Staerke à Elet, May 5, 1849 (A)

spend their recreation-days at the Farm. Sometimes the University boarders were lodged there for a week or so. Sometimes, too, the sick ones among them were sent there to recuperate. For a period of years the boarders who did not return to their homes during the summer vacations spent this season at the College Farm. In 1837 the college laundry was transferred to the Farm to the great gain, so the annalist is at pains to state, of discipline. In the same year, too, a solid bridge of oak was built over the Gengras River, thus joining the meadow and the woods.

Not long after the property was acquired one of the rooms of the Clark house was converted into a chapel, named for St. Francis Xavier, whence the villa came to be designated the Farm (*praedium*) or Residence of St. Francis Xavier.[86] Sunday services were held in the chapel for the farm-hands and women employed in the laundry, as also for near-by residents. Bishop Rosati suggested the building of a chapel for the convenience of the little congregation, but the suggestion was never acted upon, unless St. Thomas Church, built by the fathers in the seventies on College Street, be considered the realization of the Bishop's idea. With the exception of the scholastic year 1841-1842, during which a class of first-year philosophers were lodged at the Farm, thus converted into a scholasticate (*Scholasticatus ad Sti. Francisci Xaverii praedium*), the property served only farm and villa purposes down to 1847 when it was rented out on lease to one Weishaupt. From that date until the opening for a second time of a scholasticate at the Farm in 1859, there were no Jesuits residing on the place. In 1849 the entire section of the property between Bellefontaine Road and the Mississippi, comprising 187¾ acres, was sold to a Dr. Hall.[87] Thence-

[86] *Litterae Annuae*, 1837 (A).

[87] "The Penrose claim has been decided in favor of the claimants by the Supreme Court at Washington We must lose of course from 40 to 50 acres—we are sorry your Paternity is not with us at present, for it appears from the extract from the [Missouri] *Republican*, [February 3, 1850] which I take the liberty of sending you, that a compensation might perhaps be obtained by Congress, under the same plea of Capt Bissell's" (De Smet to Van de Velde, February 4, 1850 [A]) "Of this farm there still remains to us about 80 arpents, of which thirty must be kept for the future boarding-school The separation between boarders and day-scholars has become absolutely necessary on account of the serious inconveniences that arise from having them together —Fifty arpents will be either leased or sold" De Smet à Roothaan, February 2, 1850 (A) The effect of the decision in the suit Penrose vs Bissell, according to the St Louis journal cited by De Smet, was to establish the principle that a "prior Spanish grant though subsequently confirmed holds against a New Madrid location" As the decision involved financial loss to individuals who were holding the land in question by government patents accepted in good faith, the suggestion was made that Congress indemnify such individuals for losses incurred.

forth that part of the old College Farm, which fell within the limits of the district subsequently known as Lowell, was given over by degrees to factories, refineries and other features of modern industrial centers. The portion of the College Farm south of the Bellefontaine Road was also gradually diminished by sale and, in one or two instances, by the unfavorable issues of lawsuits until in 1870 it comprised only thirty-eight acres These were valued at the time by the tax-assessor at twenty-two hundred dollars an acre or eighty-three thousand, six hundred dollars for the entire tract. This remnant was held until 1903 when it was finally disposed of by the University authorities.

§ 4. THE FIFTIES AND SIXTIES

The presidency of St. Louis University from the beginning of the forties down to the close of the Civil War was held in succession by Fathers Van de Velde, Carrell, Druyts, Verdin, Coosemans and Thomas O'Neil. John Lesperance, who had known them all, touched off graphically some of their characteristic traits in a notable contribution to a St. Louis daily on occasion of the University semi-centennial in 1879.[88] Van de Velde and Carrell were later raised to episcopal rank, the former occupying the see of Chicago, the latter that of Covington in Kentucky. Under Van de Velde, a product of the best classical training and perfectly at home in the leading European languages, not to say in English also, which he learned to use with admirable propriety and skill, the academic standards of the University were set high. Carrell was also a gentleman of culture and address, but he lacked the scholarship of the Americanized Belgian who had preceded him. He lacked, too, Van de Velde's warmth and affability, his manner being austere even to the point of severity. The first two years of his administration saw a marked decline in student-registration, fewer than eighty being on the roll at the close of the session 1844-1845. Some saw or thought they saw an explanation in the "stern notions of rule and authority with which he governed." [89] More likely widespread economic depression furnished the real explanation. At all events, a visit of Father Gleizal to the South to canvass for students was attended with good results and before Carrell retired from office the registration had notably improved. Under Father Druyts, his successor, it went on improving, reaching in 1856 a total for intern and extern students of three hundred and twenty-one. In the early sixties the number of students fell off considerably owing to the Civil War and other circumstances, but with the passing of the great struggle it showed sudden and rapid increase, as

[88] St Louis *Republican*, September 14, 1879

[89] Hill, *Historical Sketch of the St Louis University*, p 87.

many as three hundred and seventy-six being registered during the scholastic year 1865-1866. Meantime the number of interns or boarders declined steadily and at the end of the seventies they constituted only one-third of the student-body.

With the accession of Father Druyts to the presidency in 1847 the University took a distinct step forward. For the preceding twelve years he had been employed in the institution as professor or disciplinarian laying up thereby a rich fund of experience which he was now able to put to excellent account. His contacts with the student-body met with happy response and high regard for him as a gentleman and a priest was evidenced on every side. "No trying or adverse event," it was said of him, "could disturb his perfect equanimity or lessen his complete self-possession" [90] Everywhere through the records and correspondence of the day there breathes a uniform esteem and reverence for the personality of Father Druyts. In the beginning of the session 1854-1855 he was relieved of office and sent to Florissant for a makeshift tertianship with a view to preparing him to take up the duties of the vice-provincialship.

Father John Verdin, American-born of Alsatian-Irish stock, and a student at the University eight days after it opened under Jesuit management in 1829, was only thirty-two when his superiors made the experiment of putting him at the head of the University in succession to Father Druyts. The experiment succeeded The University flourished under his direction and in the fall of 1855 the high-water mark, one hundred and eighty-eight, of intern registration in the history of the institution was reached. John Verdin's chief asset as an educator was a gift of understanding and managing young men, in the language of the present-day campus he was an excellent dean of men. At the same time the executive tasks that fell to him as a university head were not slighted. Father Verdin was later superior of the Jesuit community at Bardstown, which he piloted securely through the critical days of the Civil War.

Father Coosemans, who took over the presidency of St Louis University from Verdin on March 19, 1859, was the most humble and diffident of men; but once assigned an executive position he discharged it with firmness and on the highest supernatural plane. His manner, somewhat austere and aloof from ordinary human interests, was not calculated to win the sympathies of the young, at Bardstown where he was rector, 1854-1857, difficulties with the student-body necessitated his removal. From St. Louis he wrote to Father Beckx that his appointment to the presidency was anything but agreeable to the students

[90] *Idem.*, p 69.

and to the friends of Father Verdin and that not a little discontent on his account smouldered among them for the rest of the scholastic year. "Permit me to express to you once more my sincere conviction that I do not possess the talents requisite for a rector. . . . Where there is question of advancing the interests of a college, the experience of Bardstown has sufficiently proved that I am not the man. Nevertheless, as long as God will wish to keep me in the office for the punishment of my sins and those of others, I shall try to be resigned to His will, hoping with patience for the happy moment when He will release me from this position." [91] On July 16, 1862, Father Coosemans became vice-provincial of Missouri. Despite the poor opinion he entertained of his fitness for the position, there is nothing to indicate that his three years' tenure of the presidency of the University did not succeed to the satisfaction of all concerned.

With the opening of the session 1858-1859 the classical and commercial courses of the University were separated, distinct class-rooms and professors being assigned to each.[92] Moreover, it was arranged that all subjects of study assigned to a given class, say poetry, should be taught by one and the same professor. The curriculum of the four years' commercial course was considerably strengthened, graduates therefrom being required to pass satisfactory examinations in higher rhetoric, the elements of logic and moral philosophy, algebra, geometry, surveying, chemistry, physics, and astronomy. The introduction of this so-called commercial or English course into Jesuit colleges in the United States was brought about by pressure of circumstances. The *Ratio Studiorum* of the Society of Jesus postulates only a single curriculum of studies, the traditional classical course that obtained for generations in the schools of Europe. But Jesuit instruction is obviously not immune from the operation of the law of supply and demand. From the first days of the Society's schools in the United States there was a demand, growing with the years, for a merely business and English education in behalf of students who (or whose parents) were averse to the conventional classical course. Hence Jesuit schools had to equip themselves to meet this call or else suffer to a serious extent in loss of patronage.

The type of mercantile or English course thus devised to satisfy contemporary needs was often of a superior kind as exemplified in the one introduced at St. Louis University towards the end of the fifties. But a serious difficulty was involved in the process, these business and English classes could not be provided with Jesuit professors when the latter had the classical students to instruct. The result was that numer-

[91] Coosemans à Beckx, July 18, 1859. (AA).

[92] Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

ous lay professors had to be employed with a consequent financial burden placed upon the school. As a solution of the problem some saw nothing else to do but discontinue commercial classes altogether. Father Druyts, when vice-provincial, was ready to proceed to this measure. Speaking of the burdensome activities of the vice-province, he said in a letter to Father Beckx, January 1, 1860 "The greater glory of God demands that we do not recoil, on the contrary that we go ahead, a thing we might be able to do, even with our meagre numbers, if it were not for the double course of studies [classical and commercial] in our Colleges, a result of which is that we are forced to employ a great number of professors." [93] Father Druyts then expressed the hope that the Father Visitor might perhaps authorize in the General's name the discontinuance of the commercial course in some of the colleges of the vice-province. Two or more years later Father Sopranis did promulgate certain provisions in regard to the commercial course.[94]

Father Thomas O'Neil, who was called to the rectorship of St Louis University in succession to Father Coosemans in July, 1862, had behind him administrative experience gained at Bardstown, where he was president for a space of two years and where he saw the last class of the Jesuit institution graduated at the outbreak of the Civil War. He was a man of clear head and excellent practical judgment. Though without marked address or any power of public speaking, he was well equipped with the learning of the schools, for he was one of the first Missouri Jesuits privileged to pass through all the stages of the elaborate training with which the Society outfits its members. His tastes and interests were at all times scholastic and scientific rather than literary and he had a special bent to theology. "So purely intellectual did he always appear to be," wrote Lesperance, "that I thought he would be entirely reserved as a professor of the exact sciences and his success as an administrator has therefore been a pleasant surprise." Father O'Neil was a native-born Irishman, who sat as a boy on the benches of St. Louis University where he imbibed an Americanism that was ever afterwards an integral factor in his outlook on men and things.

In August, 1863, Father O'Neil reported to Father Beckx that attendance at the University was disappointing, for which condition he assigned four reasons: (1) the proximity of the free or parochial school, which adjoined the college buildings in the same city block. The ragged youngsters who frequented the less select institution answered to inquiring passersby that they were attending the "College School." (2) The college buildings were of forbidding aspect. The nine-foot wall that

[93] Druyts à Beckx, January 1, 1860. (AA).

[94] Sopranis ad Beckx, May 14, 1862. (AA). For Sopranis's regulations in regard to the commercial course, cf. *supra*, Chap. XXXI, § 2.

enclosed them suggested a "public prison" rather than an institution of learning. (3) Class-rooms were inadequate and uninviting. With the spacious class-rooms of recently erected public school buildings in St. Louis attracting students, something new must be supplied. (4) It was difficult to manage the boarders and in general to enforce discipline in view of the narrowness and congestion of the college premises. If students were punished for infractions of discipline, they made complaint and were forthwith sent by their parents to other institutions. A boarding-school alone might be conducted satisfactorily under the existing circumstances, but hardly a boarding and day-school together. This last difficulty Father O'Neil thought could be met only by building in the county for the boarders alone, but for this there were no available funds.[95] In any case, a new class-room building could and should be erected. Father O'Neil's wishes in this respect were realized. A four-story building, eighty by forty, containing ten commodious class-rooms and a dormitory on the fourth floor, was begun in the spring of 1864 and occupied by the following autumn. It faced east on Ninth Street, occupying the space between the church and the large exhibition-hall erected by Father Druyts in 1855.

The erection of the class-room building solved only one of the problems that beset the University, it hardly affected the larger question which was now raised and of which Father O'Neil gave a hint in his letter to the General, the question whether the University should remain on its actual site or seek new quarters. Opinion among the provincial consultors was unanimous that a new site should be looked for. Moreover, in the fall of 1866 Father Coosemans and his assistant, Father Keller, were submitting to the General a rather radical plan. They would transfer the St. Louis boarding-school to Bardstown and conduct in St. Louis a day-school only, but on a new and attractive site. Only a quarter of a century before Father Keller, who appears to have been the originator of the plan, was a clever Bavarian immigrant-boy getting his education in the halls of St. Louis University. He said in a letter to Father Beckx.

> Let us put at Bardstown the one and only boarding-school for the whole Province, and here in the city a college without a boarding-school. . . . I should indeed far more willingly give up the college at Bardstown, I should like to see the boarding-school elsewhere, but by no means two boarding-schools We must have one, for it is a necessary evil, but not such as the one here in St. Louis, rather, a large one, worthy of our Society, in which everything is so well-ordered as to satisfy everybody, students, parents and the public. We could put up such a school at Bardstown, we

[95] O'Neil ad Beckx, August 25, 1863 (AA)

ought to put it up as soon as possible and on such a scale as to accommodate even five hundred boarders unless we are willing to take second place in the education of youth, we who up to this were taking the lead But we must buckle ourselves to the task, we must act strenuously, nor should they whose duty it is to defend the Society's name if not to add to its lustre merely follow events or wait for things to present themselves of their own accord, as it were, and ready made An enterprise of importance and one not to be taken in hand inconsiderately, an enterprise glorious for religion, worthy of the Society, and productive of untold good to souls if only it be successfully carried out With this object in view we must buy property at once, a whole square in that section which is soon to become the center of the city, I say at once for the price of real-estate in that very beautiful and healthy district is going up every day I say a whole square, for our cities are so laid out that all our streets intersect at right angles and offer square spaces for construction of houses—hence our college would have four streets as boundaries nor would there be any adjoining building not ours situated on the property On the ground thus purchased the entire building would be constructed by degrees according to some first-class and regular plan so that part would harmonize with part and everything together form a single whole [96]

Less than a year later Father Coosemans was giving Father Beckx the reasons why the transfer of the *convictus* or boarding-school from St. Louis to Bardstown was on further consideration deemed inadvisable

As to the project of transferring the St. Louis boarding-school to Bardstown, I believe it subject to too many inconveniences to allow of its execution, and here I only express, I believe, the unanimous opinion of my Consultors, for although this plan was proposed by Father Keller and myself to your Paternity after our interview with Bishop Lavialle, more mature reflexion on the consequences of this measure made us change our opinion and declare that resort ought not to be had to it for the following reasons

a) This boarding-school being the only one in the Province and forming the *Collegium maximum* of the Province ought to continue to be where it has been up to the present, in the state of Missouri, which is the center and the cradle of the Province On the other hand, Bardstown is, I may say, on the territorial frontier of the Province

b) It is very likely that the Archbishop of St Louis would be greatly dissatisfied with this change. He refused the request of the administrator of the Louisville diocese, Dr Spalding, that he interest himself in the fortunes of St. Joseph's College and say a word in its favor when he should be in Rome.

c) Even though Archbishop Kenrick agreed to this change, which he would do only with regret, this measure would provoke discontent and com-

[96] Keller ad Beckx, October 18, 1866 (AA).

plaint on the part of the inhabitants of Missouri and especially of St Louis, who would not be disposed to send their children to Kentucky.[97]

Though the boarding-school was thus to remain in St. Louis, Father Keller's plan of buying property in the west end of the city as a new home for the day-school was eventually carried out. Grand Avenue or Boulevard, important cross-town thoroughfare of present-day St. Louis, was only a mud-road in the sixties. On its western side between Lindell Avenue and Baker or, as it subsequently came to be called, Pine Street, were the inviting grounds of Lindell's Grove, an amusement garden of the day. Directly across on the east side of Grand was the site of historic Camp Jackson The Grove, finding its way into the real-estate market, won favor with the University authorities as a satisfactory location for the proposed new buildings It was accordingly acquired, at least in part, May 25, 1867, by the University from its owners for a consideration of fifty-two thousand, six hundred dollars.[98] The property measured four hundred and forty-six feet on Grand and three hundred on Lindell. At a later date a tract of three hundred and seventy-six acres subsequently known as College View and situated on the edge of what is now the St. Louis suburb of Jennings was purchased for seventy-six thousand dollars as a site for the boarding-school.[99]

Meantime the University had become a recognized centre of moral and cultural influence in the West, and, through the medium of its boarding department, in the South also. The French families identified with the frontier period of St. Louis history probably without exception gave it their patronage for the education of their sons while the non-Catholic American element represented by the Forsyths, Clarks, Kennerlys and others, was not inconspicuous in the student-body.

All our Creole families have passed through the University—the Chouteaus, Papins, Labeaumes, Sanguinets, Chenies, Sarpys, Bosserons, Lucases, Saugrains, Benoists, Roziers, Tessons, Bertholds, Desloges, Brazeaus, Vallees, Provencheres, Pratts, Soulards, Leducs, and the Garesches. Among other honored names I recall the Carrs, the Knapps, the Welshes, the Von Phuls, the Donovans, the Conroys, the Hunts, the Griffins, the Farishes, the Darbys, the Lanes, the Rices, the Barretts, the Yores, the Clemenses, the Finneys, the Garlands, the Forsyths, the Kellys, the Lokers, the Lintons, the Frosts, the Turners, the Wilkinsons, the Grahams, the Kennedys, and the Chambers [100]

[97] Coosemans à Beckx, August 2, 1867. (AA)

[98] Hill, *op cit*, p 99 *Land Record Book, St Louis U.* (D)

[99] Hill, *op cit*, p 102 *Record Book of the Proceedings of the Board and Faculty of St Louis University* (D).

[100] St Louis *Republican*, September 14, 1879 The University student register for the period 1828-1860 shows among others the following names Charles P.