

CHAPTER XXXIII

ST. XAVIER COLLEGE, CINCINNATI

§ I. THE ATHENAEUM

On or about December 24, 1788, Matthias Denham and Robert Patterson with a party of twenty-six landed on the north bank of the Ohio River at what is now the foot of Sycamore Street in the city of Cincinnati. Their purpose was to form a settlement and they proceeded at once to give it effect. Denham, Patterson and John Filson, schoolmaster and author, had become joint proprietors of a tract of seven hundred and forty acres which Denham had originally obtained from John Cleves Symmes at the price of about fifteen cents (in specie) an acre or some hundred and eleven dollars for the entire tract. Filson disappeared from the party before it reached its destination and was never heard of afterwards, having in all probability been murdered by Indians. His one-third interest in the land was thereupon assumed by Israel Ludlow, a surveyor, who laid out the town in streets and lots. The limits of the town, as originally surveyed, were Eastern Row, (Broadway), Western Row (Central Avenue), Seventh Street, and the river front. A thick forest growth covered the ground and the street corners had perforce to be blazed on trees. As the town lay opposite the mouth of the Licking River, it was given the name of Losantiville, a grotesque coinage from Latin, Greek and French elements. Two years later, in 1790, General Arthur St. Clair, while on a visit to the new settlement to lay out Hamilton County, took offence, so the tradition runs, at its outlandish name, which was in consequence changed to Cincinnati in honor of the influential society of one-time Revolutionary officers and soldiers known as the Order of the Cincinnati¹

The first Mass in Cincinnati was celebrated in 1811 in the house of Michael Scott by the Dominican, Father Edward Fenwick, whose far-flung and indefatigable ministry fills out the first chapter, an absorbing one, in the history of the Church in Ohio. The Scott house was on the west side of Walnut midway between Third and Fourth Streets. The first Catholic church was erected under the title of St. Patrick in 1818 at what is now the northwest corner of Vine and Liberty Streets, then

¹ Howe, *Historical Collection of Ohio* (Cincinnati, 1902), I 747 *et seq*

outside the town in a district known as the Northern Liberties, and the first Mass was said in it on Easter Sunday, April 11, 1819. In 1821 Pius VII erected Cincinnati into an episcopal see with the aforementioned Father Edward Fenwick as the first incumbent, the new diocese including all of Ohio and Michigan Territory. He was consecrated by Bishop Flaget in the Dominican church of St. Rose's, Kentucky, in January, 1822, and in the following March was installed as bishop in the humble Catholic chapel in the Northern Liberties.

When I arrived in Cincinnati to take possession of my See, I was obliged to rent two rooms, one for myself, the other for the missionaries who accompanied me. The same day I had to send to market for our first meal, no arrangement whatever having been made for the board and lodging of the Bishop. I scarcely had a penny. The long journey of 300 English miles which I had just finished ate up the money which the good souls of St. Rose had given me as a voluntary subscription, and the little (in paper money) which I had left over lost half its value when I crossed the Ohio. There was no church, not even a chapel, in Cincinnati. I had to have recourse to a collection. The proceeds were not sufficient for my purpose and so I had to buy on credit a piece of ground of modest dimensions on which to build a wooden church fifty by thirty feet in size. I am thus beyond dispute the poorest of all Catholic bishops as also the one with the largest diocese, if you except Louisiana and Nova Scotia.²

The lot on which Bishop Fenwick erected his first cathedral was situated on the west side of Sycamore Street between Sixth and Seventh. The need of a larger edifice for the growing Catholic population of Cincinnati was soon felt and a new and substantial structure of brick was accordingly built on ground adjacent to the site of the first church. The architect of the new cathedral was Michael Scott, in whose house Bishop Fenwick had celebrated the first Mass in Cincinnati. The cathedral was regarded in its day as one of the most imposing structures the town could boast though its dimensions were modest enough, for it was only fifty feet wide by one hundred and ten in depth. Its cost, including the organ, was ten or twelve thousand dollars. It was opened for divine service on June 29, 1826, and dedicated on December 17 of the same year. It was adorned with paintings presented by Cardinal Fesch, Napoleon's uncle, to Bishop Fenwick on the occasion of the latter's visit to Rome in 1824, a particularly fine painting of Our Lady of the Rosary by the Flemish artist, Verschoot, being suspended above the main altar.

² Victor O'Daniel, *Life of Bishop Fenwick* (Washington, 1920), pp. 234-239, *Ann. Prop.*, 2: 89. The house rented by Bishop Fenwick on his arrival in Cincinnati after his consecration stood at Ludlow and Lawrence Streets.

The opening of a seminary and college next occupied the Bishop's attention. He wrote to the officials of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith

Adjoining the cathedral is a small piece of ground, where I intend to build my seminary, but it does not belong to me and I cannot get possession of it for less than four thousand dollars. However, I shall purchase it in a few days, with a view to building thereon my long-desired seminary, without which I cannot hope to effect anything of permanent value. I might, indeed, without a seminary, obtain some priests from Europe from time to time, but they would always be too few in number to answer all the needs of the mission. Besides, I should be obliged to support them for two or three years in order to allow them time to learn English, etc. With a seminary, I do not lose those who come from Europe while at the same time I form a native clergy, bred to the customs of the country, accustomed to the hardships and well acquainted with the language, etc. Moreover, I shall be able to convert the seminary into a college and in this manner obtain means to better our condition and set up other establishments, useful or necessary. I shall thus exert some influence in the instruction and education of the youth of this state, a thing that would redound greatly to the advantage of religion. In a word, gentlemen, with a seminary the prospect before me is very consoling, without one, the future holds out nothing but distress. I am, then, fully determined to direct all my efforts to this end and to delay no longer. I shall begin accordingly by buying shortly the plot of ground of which I have spoken, using for this purpose money I already have as well as a part of the sum which you have had the goodness to assign to me, I shall then take in hand the construction of the necessary buildings. I can secure some young men, European and American, who have made their humanities, so that, as soon as the building is finished and even before, I shall have seven or eight seminarians. I shall employ them first in teaching the rudiments of Latin to a few children in age from fourteen to sixteen, having every reason to expect that this feature of my plan will prove a success, but I tremble when I consider the expense. The balance of the sum will not suffice for the construction of the building, and yet I shall, at the same time, be obliged to furnish board and lodging to the seminarians and perhaps most of the children, all this will probably put obstacles in the way of building the college. Nevertheless, with the example of the Bishop of Bardstown before me, I am going to commence. I confide myself to the care of Divine Providence and of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith and I trust that neither the one nor the other will abandon me.³

An account of the opening on May 11, 1829, of Bishop Fenwick's seminary in the old frame church that stood alongside the new cathedral was penned by his secretary, Father Cliteur

³ *Ann Prop*, 4 504, 505

I have the pleasure to announce to you that at last we have a Seminary in Cincinnati. It was to have been opened on the 15th of March, but owing to unforeseen circumstances, the opening took place only on the 11th of May. After the *Veni Creator* and Mass, Monseigneur read the regulations and made an address to the new seminarians. The Seminary has been dedicated to St. Francis Xavier, whose name it will bear. There are four seminarians, all clerics studying theology, who are regularly given one lesson a day, and six young men who are taught Latin; we hope their number increase by the arrival of some young men whom we expect from Europe. To judge from the start it has made, the institution promises excellent results. The discipline, patterned after the best European model and modified only to the degree called for by the customs of the country, is already in full force, and some missionaries from abroad, on passing through here recently, expressed their astonishment at the progress made in so short a time. Besides the prayers recited for all the benefactors of the Mission, they recite here every day and in common a special prayer for the members of the Propagation of the Faith, to whom almost exclusively the Seminary owes its existence.⁴

Admiration for the missionary zeal of St. Francis Xavier was more than once expressed by Bishop Fenwick and it was no doubt his desire to leave to the future priests of his diocese the inspiration of the saint's memory and example that led him to dedicate his seminary to the great apostle of the Indies. Only more means and missionaries, Father Reese wrote, were needed "to see again the glorious days of St. Francis Xavier in Ohio and Michigan."⁵ The prayer which the Bishop's seminarians recited daily for their benefactors in Europe ran as follows:

Let us pray for those associated in Europe for the propagation of the faith
 O Lord, Thou, who, where two or three are gathered together in Thy name, art in the midst of them, be also, we beseech Thee, with all those who in Europe constitute the Association for the Propagation of Thy Faith, grant that their efforts may bear abundant fruit and that faith in Thee may increase everywhere, bestow on those so associated, in reward for their generosity and zeal, happiness temporal as well as eternal. Saint Francis Xavier, pray for them.⁶

Two and a half years later than the opening of the Seminary of St. Francis Xavier Bishop Fenwick's college, known as the Athenaeum, began its first session, Monday, October 17, 1831. It was housed in a building erected for the purpose on Sycamore Street in the same block with the cathedral and some fifteen or twenty yards north of it. The college building was "two and a half stories high, with an ample and

⁴ *Ann Prop*, 4 516, 517

⁵ O'Daniel, *op cit*, 368

⁶ *Idem*, 356.

well lighted basement, and one hundred and twenty or thirty feet long by fifty in width ” Later a building serving the purposes both of seminary and episcopal residence was erected between the cathedral and the college Alpheus White, a convert to the Church, and prominent among the pioneer architects of Cincinnati, drew the plans of both college and seminary, the three buildings together presenting a rather impressive appearance so as to be generally reckoned among the architectural attractions of the city. The college and seminary were each surmounted by a tower topped with a gilded cross.⁷

§ 2. TRANSFER OF THE ATHENAEUM TO THE JESUITS

The first association of the Society of Jesus with the city of Cincinnati may be said to date from the letter addressed by Bishop Fenwick, then installed a little over a year in his episcopal see, to his cousin, Father Enoch Fenwick, a Jesuit of Georgetown College. The letter was written May 7, 1823, at which time Father Van Quickenborne and his party were already *en route* to the West.

I understand some of your brethren are about going to St Louis into Bishop Du Bourg's diocese I rejoice at the news and I know much good is done by them I wish I could hear of some of them coming into my diocese where nearly as much can be done. I flatter myself, however, with the pleasure of seeing them one day established in my neighboring state and of our becoming good neighbors to each other, notwithstanding any former disagreement I wish to know when your gentlemen will set out on their noble and generous expedition You will, I hope, direct them to stop with me on their way down the Ohio, as I suppose they will take that route. I shall be happy to see them and to furnish them all the refreshment, aid and support they may need and that may be in my power⁸

The Jesuit emigrants of 1823 passed by Cincinnati in their broad-horn boats without disembarking, an adventure which no doubt they

⁷ *Idem*, 392 Fenwick's Athenaeum of 1831, after being in use as a college building for sixty years, was demolished in 1891 to make room for the new St Xavier College The ground of the "engine-house" adjoining the Athenaeum on the north was bought by the Jesuits from Bishop Purcell in 1847 On this property stood in later years what was known as the Carrell building

⁸ (B) In 1825 Father Stephen T. Badin, acting as vicar-general for Bishop Fenwick made an appeal to the English Jesuits to open a house in the diocese of Cincinnati Said Father Sewell, the provincial, in answer "I should be happy if I could find any zealous missionaries for Dr Fenwick's diocese, but at present we are so distressed for want of men, that it is impossible, and from what we hear from America I fear much that Georgetown College will soon be of no service to that country" Badin to Fenwick, April 19, 1826 (1) Cited in Lamott, *History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, 1821-1921* (Cincinnati, 1921), p 226

thought it more prudent to forego. Two years later, in October, 1825, Father Theodore De Theux and Brother John O'Connor, while on their way from Maryland to reenforce the embarrassed Jesuit colony at Florissant, journeyed through Cincinnati, being, it would seem, the first members of their order to set foot in the city. In 1831 another party of Jesuits travelling from the East to St. Louis reached the metropolis of Ohio. It consisted of Father Peter Kenney, Visitor of the Jesuit houses in North America, Father McSherry, his assistant, and Father James Oliver Van de Velde, who was to join the teaching-staff of St. Louis College. Eager to reach their destination shortly, they spent but a single day in Cincinnati, where they were entertained by Bishop Fenwick. The latter was most anxious to engage the services of Van de Velde as president of the Athenaeum and petitioned Kenney to this effect. Under the circumstances it was an impossible request, for nowhere were the services of Van de Velde more urgently needed than at St. Louis College, to which he had been assigned. How Fenwick's recently erected buildings impressed Van de Velde is set down in letters addressed by him to a friend in the East

Cincinnati, October 14, 1831 The good Bishop came to our hotel this morning to invite us to dine with him It happens well, for this is a day of abstinence. We went there accordingly at about one o'clock p m After dinner we visited the Church and the College The Church, the only Catholic one at present in the city, and called the Cathedral, is an edifice fine enough for this country It is built of brick and is of Gothic style The interior is well ornamented. There is a fine painting above the altar, and two others, one on each side of the first mentioned, besides six more between the windows, presented to the Bishop by Cardinal Fesch There is also another painting which had formerly served as altar-piece at the college of Bornheim In front of the communion railing there is a stone which can be raised, under which there is a vault destined for the sepulture of Bishops and priests. Two priests have been laid there Mr De Clcteur, a Belgian, and the first priest ordained by Bishop Fenwick and Mr Munos, a Spaniard, his vicar-general, a man of the greatest talent, and formerly confessor to the King of Spain The College called Athenaeum is a building somewhat similar to the Church, but of modern style It has, like the Church, a small turret or steeple, which looks very pretty The Bishop's house, which is rather small, joins the two other buildings The whole, taken together, presents an imposing sight The College is ample enough to receive a large number of students The rooms are large, but the dormitory, though spacious, does not admit enough fresh air The boys will suffer from this cause in the summer. There is a printing establishment attached to the College Next week will be published the first religious paper under the name of the *Catholic Telegraph*.

Cincinnati, October 15, 1831. I must state that the College is 130

feet long and fifty feet wide and that the Church has about the same dimensions Only ten years ago there was here neither Church nor any resident priest At present there are priests in divers parts of the State of Ohio and the Bishop has fifteen or sixteen young men who are preparing for the priesthood in his seminary Of the number three are Belgians As they were not introduced to me, although I wished to see them, I did not become acquainted with any of them Perhaps they suspected that I might want to make Jesuits of them, if such was the case, the suspicions were not well founded ⁹

Within a year of the visit of Father Van de Velde and his companions to Cincinnati, Bishop Fenwick was dead, at Wooster, Ohio, September 26, 1832, having been stricken by cholera while returning home after a visitation of his diocese No more edifying chapter in the story of the Catholic Church's development in the United States is told than the one which records the apostolic labors of this prelate for the upbuilding of the diocese of Cincinnati, the vast reaches of which, as originally organized, he covered in toilsome journeys that brought him as far afield as Detroit, Sault Ste. Marie, Mackinac and Green Bay. For his coadjutor and successor in Cincinnati he had recommended Father Peter Kenney, one of the Jesuit travellers whom he entertained at his episcopal residence the year before his death. From Detroit he wrote on August 22, 1832, to his metropolitan, Archbishop Whitfield of Baltimore

In Ohio our prospects are also consoling Religion and piety are on the increase in most parts of the State, conversions frequent My business and labours increase, while my health and all my faculties seem to fail me I therefore feel and see the propriety and even necessity of soliciting the common Father of the faithful to grant me a coadjutor who may be prepared to succeed me at my death and carry on the works I have been entrusted with. I hope and request your Grace will unite with me in that petition and use your interest and intercession for me at the Court of Rome. Upon serious and frequent reflection on the subject, I find no one in America of my acquaintance so well qualified to succeed me in the See of Cincinnati as Rev. Mr. Kenny, the Provincial or Superior of the Jesuits of Maryland I do not know his Christian name or I should mention it His talents, zeal and piety claim my fullest confidence, and I am persuaded he would not only secure the prosperity of my diocese [and] the confidence and satisfaction of all my clergy, but would much promote the cause of religion, the honor of God and the prosperity even of his own Order (the Society of Jesus) by being placed at Cincinnati, as it would be a central point between the eastern and western provinces of that Society in the United States His

⁹ *WL*, 10 121, 122 Translation of Van de Velde's letters from French originals by Father Gustave Kernion, S J

eloquence and learning and piety would no doubt command respect and confidence from all denominations and contribute much to increase the flock of Christ in these western states¹⁰

In a letter to Bishop Rosati, dated a day later than his communication to Whitfield, Fenwick sought to enlist the aid of the St. Louis prelate also in his effort to have Kenney appointed Coadjutor-bishop of Cincinnati.¹¹ Two lists of names for the coadjutorship of Cincinnati appear to have been transmitted to Rome. On the first list, besides Father Kenney, were Reverend John Hughes of Philadelphia and Reverend Doctor John B. Purcell, president of Mount St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, Maryland. On the second list, in addition to Doctor Purcell, were Fathers Dubuisson and McSherry, both of the Society of Jesus, the last named being superior of the Maryland province. Father Roothaan's protest against the appointment of any of the three Jesuits was heard by the Holy See, the choice of which fell on Doctor Purcell. He was consecrated in Baltimore by Archbishop Whitfield, and installed in his see of Cincinnati the following November by the venerable Bishop Flaget, who had consecrated his predecessor.¹²

By Bishop Purcell, former seminary professor and president, both seminary and college were felt at once to be supreme factors in the prosperity of his diocese. He lectured on theology to the seminarians and assumed immediate direction of the Athenaeum as president. That institution in its early years met with gratifying success. A noteworthy feature about it was the large proportion of non-Catholic students in attendance. In December, 1832, very few of the sixty students registered were of the Faith. How the college was regarded by the non-Catholic public may be gathered from an estimate of it that appeared in a contemporary survey of education in Cincinnati

¹⁰ O'Daniel, *op cit*, 421 Cf *supra*, Chap X, § 4. Archbishop Whitfield on receiving Bishop Fenwick's request for the appointment of Father Kenney as his coadjutor conferred with Father Mulledy, rector of Georgetown College, who gave the information that Kenney as a professed member of the Society of Jesus could not accept the appointment unless commanded to do so by the Holy See. Besides, Kenney (according to Whitefield) had already declined the coadjutorship of Dublin. Whitfield to Rosati, December 12, 1832 (C).

¹¹ Fenwick to Rosati, August 23, 1832 (C)

¹² "Hughes and he [Purcell] with Kenney were in the first list. Another was sent out with the names of Dubuisson (marked as the very last choice) and McSherry. The General of the Jesuits objected to his three members and the Cardinals chose Purcell, believing him to be the one most likely to serve you and not willing just now to take Hughes from Philadelphia." Letter of Bishop England in Mary Agnes McCann, *Archbishop Purcell and the Archdiocese of Cincinnati* (Washington, 1918), p. 13.

A good school [the Athenaeum] was organized with a sufficient number of teachers to attend closely to all the pupils, both during their hours of study and recreation. This feature, in which most of our prominent seminaries are defective, gave the school a reputation which induced a number of Protestants to prefer it to any of our other schools for the education of their sons. It had then become (as it has since continued in the West) an established rule, that teachers should not be allowed to punish pupils for any fault. The consequence was that such a degree of lawlessness prevailed in our schools as to deprive them of much of their usefulness. The arrangement of subordinate teachers in numbers sufficient to keep every pupil constantly in view served as a substitute for the old-fashioned discipline by the rod and ferule, and caused the Athenaeum to become a popular and flourishing school.¹³

The prospectus of the school for 1837 included in its list of references such well-known names as those of General William Henry Harrison, future president of the United States, Bellamy Storer, and Nicholas Longworth.

In the late thirties the Athenaeum declined from its early prosperity and even suspended classes at the close of the session 1838-1839. With cries for ministerial help reaching him from every quarter of his diocese, it became increasingly difficult for Bishop Purcell to maintain at the college a corps of clergymen with the requisite training and leisure to carry on the work of education. He determined therefore to offer the institution to the Society of Jesus. On the occasion of a visit to Stonyhurst in England in the summer of 1838 the prelate made overtures to this effect to the English Jesuits, who pleaded lack of the necessary professors for extending their educational labors to America.¹⁴ Later, at Rome, he took up the matter directly with Father Roothaan, the latter writing in December, 1839, to Father Verhaegen "[Bishop] Purcell petitions the Society to take over his college. Bishop Reze [of Detroit] makes a similar request. What does your Reverence think? and which of the two colleges do you prefer? The harvest is great."¹⁵ Verhaegen's answer is dated March 12, 1840. "I realize that our Society will do much good in Cincinnati college as also in the college begun by Bishop Reze in Detroit, but your Paternity knows that we cannot provide both colleges with professors. If your Paternity were to send four competent men, we could add to them four younger men and some coadjutor brothers. This number would suffice for the two

¹³ John P. Foote, *Schools of Cincinnati and its Vicinity* (Cincinnati, 1855)

¹⁴ ——— ad Roothaan, August 6, 1838 (AA) Bishop Purcell was at this time considering a property of his in Brown County as a site for the proposed college

¹⁵ Roothaan ad Verhaegen, December 26, 1839 (AA)

colleges together, at least for a beginning. And if both colleges cannot be accepted by the Society, acceptance should be made of one of the two."¹⁶ Some two months later came Father Roothaan's decision for Cincinnati. "As to the Rocky Mountain Missions and the colleges of Cincinnati and Detroit, I hope to be able to send this year not indeed as many trained men as your Reverence desires, but at any rate some, say, two or three. Cincinnati holds out some promise, not so Detroit. Cincinnati is consequently to be preferred."¹⁷

Cincinnati was in truth an inviting field for Catholic education as Father William Stack Murphy, writing from St. Mary's College, Kentucky, in October, 1840, sought to impress upon the General

Father Chazelle as well as Father McElroy, who is coming to see us in the month of April, think that the location [of the Athenaeum] is not suited for a boarding-school, but I am told there is question of moving the institution later into the country. A fine field, a great field is open to their zeal in Cincinnati, the "Queen City," with a population of 60,000 souls, which is steadily increasing, and in Ohio, the *chef-d'oeuvre* of American colonization, without slaves and without assassins, containing within its limits the elite of the German and Irish immigrants and almost now getting the advantage over the old states. Alongside so formidable a neighbor our Kentucky keeps up only by the abundance and variety of its products, its more favorable climate and position and its connections with the South.¹⁸

In the summer of 1840 Father Verhaegen entered into negotiations with Bishop Purcell for the transfer of his college.

A few months ago I received a letter from our very Rev. Father General inquiring of me whether it would be possible for our Vice-province to send some members to Cincinnati to take charge of the college, which you, Right Reverend Sir, had offered to his Paternity. In my answer to said letter I stated, that, left to ourselves, we could not embark on the undertaking, which would necessarily require the exertions of some of our most competent and efficient professors to ensure success, but that if his Paternity would send me some Fathers from Europe, I thought that the requisite arrangements could be made. In his last letter Fr. General promises me two or three members, and after intimating to me that he made something like a promise to you (*Illmus & Rmus Epus Cincinnatiensis aliquam promissionem accepit*), he recommended this enterprise to me. You conceive, Right Reverend Sir, that before the arrival of the promised assistance we cannot comply with the desire which you have so kindly manifested to Fr. General, and I deem it necessary that I should be thoroughly acquainted with your views on the subject before I take any step. If, therefore, nothing has oc-

¹⁶ Verhaegen ad Roothaan, March 12, 1840 (AA)

¹⁷ Roothaan ad Verhaegen, May 16, 1840 (AA)

¹⁸ Murphy à Roothaan, October 10, 1840 (AA)

curred to change your mind in relation to this important affair, please to inform me of it, and during the ensuing vacation one of our FF [Fathers] will pay you a visit and learn from you in person everything we ought to know in regard to the affair in question ¹⁹

There could be no doubt of the cordiality of the response returned to Verhaegen's letter by the Bishop of Cincinnati

Cincinnati, 17 August, 1840

Your letter of the 10th inst has just reached me and I lose no time in telling you of the joy which it has afforded me. There is no mistake *about* or *within* the matter—Ohio with a population of 160 or 170,000 souls and Cincinnati with 45,000, double what it had ten years ago, are worthy of an University conducted by the Society of Jesus, which I have ever revered and loved with devotedness and sincerity. I need not tell you of the place which this state occupies in the map of the United States and its immense resources of every description. It could furnish *three hundred pupils* and still find a plenty to spare for Kentucky, if wanted, and for Missouri, if it did not laugh at the idea of wanting buckeye patronage, when its numerous youth are not capable of being accommodated at home. But this is all neither here nor there. Then to the point.

I propose then, V. Revd. and Dear Friend, *to give you up forever*, on condition that they should *ever* be held sacred for church and school, the College, Seminary and Church, with the real estate on which these buildings, which I now occupy, are located—that you may have there a college and a parish church to be served by your Society in perpetuity. This property is about two-hundred feet square to the best of my knowledge without including an engine house which I have rented for my (part) support. The College is in good repair, at present, having been newly shingled (*on tin*, its former covering) since I have been here. In it is a new cabinet of Natural Philosophy, which I have imported from France, for two thousand dollars, and which should be yours.

The Pews of the Church (Cathedral) now rent for, I think, 2500 dollars. And we are in treaty for a lot, on which we propose to commence a new Cathedral. Your acceptance, right off, of the present one, would be the very thing we want to push ahead this *essential* project for a new Church. For God's sake do not throw difficulties in the way and say wait, wait, for if you think fit to employ them, I can employ under your direction, as Teachers in the College, in Cincinnati, *twelve* seminarians—and even one or two French priests, whom I expect from over the water, this month or next, to remain with you until you could dispense with their services, or until they should know English enough to be useful in the Missions. The school would be well patronized here after the first clamor of the heretics would be put back—down their own throats.

¹⁹ Verhaegen to Purcell, August 10, 1840. Archives of Mount St. Joseph-on-the-Ohio.

On my part, permit me to assure you, again and again, that you would meet with the most cordial cooperation I desire only the glory of God by the right education of youth, the confusion of heresy and the conversion of heretics and sinners I will love you and your faithful brethren, as I would my own soul—and I hope, though I am conscious that I am far, very far from possessing the wisdom or a title of the amiableness of the prelate by whom you are now cherished, that with me too, as long or as short as God prolongs my life, you shall be happy.

In addition to, or instead of the foregoing, just as you please, I would give you 500 acres of land in Brown County, forty miles from Cincinnati, with a first-rate McAdamized road, 22 miles of which are completed, passing by the door of the small brick College, already built thereon I should think a college in the country indispensable—or instead of this in Brown County, you can have sixteen hundred acres or 2000, as you prefer, in Gallia County, 12 miles from the Ohio river and 18 from Gallipolis, which property has been deeded to me for a college by a wealthy and enlightened Irish Catholic I have visited his residence lately He has 6000 acres in one body there All I would ask is the support of five or six seminarians annually, or in equivalent. But of this, no more now

Bishop Purcell concluded his letter with an urgent invitation to Father Verhaegen or a representative of his to visit Cincinnati and confer with him in person on the offer made. He would regard the arrival of the Jesuits in his episcopal city as “an infallible pledge of his own and his diocese’s acceptance with heaven.”²⁰

Father Verhaegen was prompt in bringing Bishop Purcell’s offer to the notice of his consultors. At a meeting of the board, August 31, it was unanimously agreed that the offer be accepted. Only on the question whether control of the Athenaeum should be assumed at once or be postponed to a later date was there a difference of opinion. Verhaegen and Smedts were for taking over the institution without delay, even though only a single father could be spared for the impending session. Elet and Van de Velde, on the other hand, were of the opinion that the opening of classes under Jesuit auspices should be delayed a year so as to afford time for communication with the Father General and through his intervention obtain some fathers from other Jesuit provinces either to man the Athenaeum or else be substituted at St. Louis University for such professors as should be transferred to Cin-

²⁰ Purcell to Verhaegen, August 17, 1840 (A) Bishop Purcell was anxious to have a Jesuit college as a defence against the virulent current anti-Catholic propaganda motivated by fear that Rome was trying to secure control of the Mississippi Valley Conspicuous as a mouthpiece of this propaganda was the Reverend Lyman Beecher, president of Lane Theological Seminary, at Cincinnati Cf Ray T Billington, “Anti-Catholic Propaganda and the Home Missionary Movement, 1800-1860,” in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 22 361-384 (1935)

cinnati. Verhaegen's view prevailed and it was resolved accordingly to conduct the Athenaeum as a college of the Society of Jesus during the approaching session 1840-1841. The choice of the superior and his consultants for rector of the college, which was to be named for St. Xavier, patron-saint of the Athenaeum, fell upon Father Elet, at the moment vice-rector of St. Louis University. The day following the discussion of Bishop Purcell's offer, Verhaegen, in company with Elet, left St. Louis for Cincinnati to confer with the Bishop on the terms of the transfer.

Though decision had thus been reached to extend the labors of the vice-province to the inviting field of Cincinnati, it was not done without misgivings on the part of most of Father Verhaegen's advisers, who had previously communicated their sentiments on the subject to the Father General. "Every now and then," wrote Elet, "there is talk of opening a new college in Cincinnati. They also speak of starting a residence in New Orleans. In both places a most extensive field lies open with promise of the most abundant fruit. But the workers are wanting and will continue to be wanting unless serious thought be given to a Seminary for Ours completely separated from the college of St. Louis."²¹ "I do not see," said Van de Velde, "how the college is to be begun. Certainly no one can be sent from the University. All who might be suited are quite necessary here. . . . So, unless your Paternity provides from other sources, it would be a risky thing to begin the college of Cincinnati. It is better that the thing be not done at all than that it be done badly and turn out badly."²² Within a few days of the dispatch of these letters Verhaegen with his advisers succeeded in solving as best they could the problem of a staff and nothing remained but to embark on the venture.

On September 6, 1840, formal announcement to the public of the transfer of the Athenaeum to the Society of Jesus was made by Bishop Purcell. A notice of the event appeared in the *Catholic Telegraph*, edited at this period by the Bishop's brother, Rev Edward Purcell.

Last Sunday, the Bishop had the pleasure of announcing to the Cathedral congregation, after the benediction at High Mass, that Very Rev Father Verhaegen, Provincial of the Society of Jesus in Missouri and Louisiana, and Vicar General of the diocese of St Louis, and Rev Father Elet, late President of the University of St Louis, had just arrived in the city, the announcement thrilled through the heart of many a parent, for this auspicious event had been long fervently prayed for and most anxiously expected. After Vespers, the Rev. Provincial addressed the congregation on the words of our Divine Savior which had been so powerful in the conversion of St Francis Xavier "What doth it avail a man to gain the whole world and lose

²¹ Elet ad Roothaan, August 25, 1840. (AA)

²² Van de Velde ad Roothaan, August 22, 1840. (AA).

his own soul" His development of the highly appropriate text was impressive and his remarks were listened to with deep interest by a large and much edified congregation

From this time, we trust in God, the Athenaeum will be worthy of its motto "Sacred to religion and to arts" The building is being fitted up, extensive improvements are going on in it and around it, and as soon as they are completed, the schools will commence on a scale not hitherto reached by the institution To the many inquiries of parents and guardians, we would say that the classes will be reorganized in the most efficient manner by the 1st of November A select number of boarders, about twenty-five or thirty, can be accommodated²³

The Athenaeum having thus been formally accepted by the Society of Jesus, Fathers Verhaegen and Elet returned to St. Louis, whence the former addressed a communication to Bishop Purcell

In a few days some of the members appointed to commence the glorious work will leave for the "Queen of the West"! The amiable and zealous Father Gleizal will be their leader What a motion there is at present in our Province! No wonder, to get competent men, shifting is unavoidable

Father Elet has already forwarded to you the *Prospectus* and today I comply with my promise by sending you a sample of the deed which prudence requires to be executed As I am not acquainted with the Statutes of Ohio, I do not know whether there may not be something illegal in the form I rely on you, right reverend Sir, for everything that will be required for the validity of the instrument²⁴

In a letter written shortly after his return to St. Louis, Verhaegen acquainted the Father General with the step he had taken

I visited the Right Reverend Bishop of Cincinnati, who received me and Father Elet, my companion, with every token of love and benevolence All arrangements regarding his college have been made He has ceded to the Society in perpetuity all the buildings, which were erected for a boarding school and diocesan seminary, and has given along with them a rather large and handsome church. The college will be opened at the beginning of November under the title of St Francis Xavier After hearing my consultors I appointed Father Elet vice-rector of the new institution Of course I will give him some companions—Fathers Pin and Gleizal and Messrs Van der Eycken and Duerinck and Brothers De Meyer, Schlienger and Dugan Since, however, there is not a sufficient number of professors, the Bishop will lend a hand by allowing certain of the seminarians to assist Ours in teaching as long as will be necessary.²⁵

²³ *Catholic Telegraph*, September 12, 1840

²⁴ Verhaegen to Purcell, September 19, 1840 Archives of Mount-St-Joseph-the-Ohio

²⁵ Verhaegen ad Roothaan, September 24, 1840 (AA)

The first contingent of Jesuits assigned to Cincinnati left St. Louis on September 30. It consisted of Father Gleizal, the scholastic, John Baptist Duerinck, and two coadjutor-brother novices from the novitiate, Sebastian Schlienger and John Dugan. They were followed on October 18 by Father Elet accompanied by the scholastic, Maurice Van den Eycken, and Brother Peter de Meyer. The seven Jesuits named together with Father Aloysius Pin, who arrived later, constituted the Jesuit community of St. Xavier College during the session 1840-1841.²⁶

It was not until the following June that Bishop Purcell, writing from Columbus, Ohio, expressed his thanks to Father Roothaan for having taken over the college, circumstances having prevented him from making earlier acknowledgment

I thank your Paternity most cordially for having remembered the word given to his servant in which you held out hope to him that the Fathers of the venerable Society over which you preside so worthily and successfully would take in hand as soon as possible the management of our college of Cincinnati. That this goodly pledge was redeemed several months ago is an occasion of joy shared with me not only by all the faithful of this city, but also by not a few non-Catholics, who realize that the sceptre of education of school-going youth can nowhere be entrusted to or held by more skillful hands, the experience of three centuries to witness

I would indeed have conveyed much more promptly to your Paternity my sentiments of gratitude for the transfer of ownership had the transfer been ratified by the Supreme Pontiff. (It had already been effected before a civil court on a presumption based on a permission previously granted when I was in Rome.) But now that I have lately received express authorization to this effect from the Most Reverend Archbishop Joseph Cadolini, the indefatigable Secretary of the Propaganda, I suffer no delay to intervene but pour out at once before your Paternity with all possible reverence the deepest sentiments of my heart

Your reverend and beloved son, Father Elet, will make known to you with what success God has blessed the beginnings made by him in favor of this city of Cincinnati, nor will he fail to bring to the notice of your Paternity what cooperators he stands in need of in order that in Mathematics and Physics as in the other sciences your college of St. Francis may not only equal but even surpass on the admission of everybody the alas! flourishing colleges conducted under the auspices of heretics

There is still great need of one or more Fathers who know German, as there are almost 20,000 Germans in the city of Cincinnati, of whom only a third belong to heretical sects, while all the others attend our churches with great edification. No one knows better than your Paternity that there are hardly any flourishing seminaries in Germany—as a consequence many

²⁶ *Diarium Universitatis S. Ludovici* (D).

have flocked from that country to these parts bringing with them the name but not the spirit of priests and have done irreparable harm to our religion I pray your Paternity for the love of God to make every effort within your power to remedy this evil situation

When I proposed to make a donation of the land and buildings to the Society, I thought I should not go beyond the bounds of moderation if I asked that five or six of the seminarians who were to teach at least three hours every day in the college be fed and clothed by your Fathers But after Very Reverend Father Verhaegen set before me that this could not be done and that the Society had never accepted the gift with a perpetual burden, I turned over the property to them without any burden whatsoever of this kind In return for this good faith of mine I certainly ask for nothing except that God be honored through our Lord Jesus Christ to the great gain of souls and particularly those of boys

May your Paternity excuse this letter which I indite in a hotel while on a diocesan visitation. I have no secretary and I merely put down with unlearned pen the thoughts which occur to me spontaneously, submitting them to your kindly eyes with the highest esteem of soul and the deepest affection of my heart.²⁷

²⁷ Purcell ad Roothaan, June 16, 1841 (AA) A letter of subsequent date, September 2, 1841, also in Latin, was addressed by Bishop Purcell to Father Roothaan (AA) "Taking advantage of the occasion offered by [the visit of] your beloved son, Reverend Father Van de Velde, I thank your Reverence from the bottom of my heart as I have previously done through our very dear alumnus, James F Wood of the College of the Propaganda, for having been mindful of his promise to come to the aid of his servant or rather of the holy religion of the Son of God [by sending] the Fathers of the dear Society of Jesus, over which he presides with so much praise and merit

By leave of our most Blessed Father, Gregory XVI [March 10, 1839] I have given them in legal form and in perpetuity land, houses and church, all with a view to promote those holy designs to which they give themselves up with the greatest devotedness [ms ?] everywhere on earth

May your Reverence deign to be not unmindful of our needs, for the enemies of the Holy Name of Jesus Christ are making every effort to endow schools and colleges in which *per fas et nefas* to bring the Catholic cause to ruin. But with God, the most Blessed Mary and the dear Society straining every effort in opposition, nothing whatever will they be able to effect Your Reverence's most obedient servant and friend in the Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, J B Purcell, Bishop of Cincinnati "

The warranty deed of transfer, dated March 31, 1841, conveyed for a consideration of one dollar the Sycamore Street property, one hundred and ninety-three feet in frontage, to John A Elet, Peter J Verhaegen and James Van de Velde, "to have and to hold to the said Elet, Verhaegen and Van de Velde, the survivors forever—in trust to set apart a portion for a church or a chapel for the permanent accommodation of the Society of the Roman Catholic Church in said city—the residue thereof to appropriate for the permanent support and promotion of education on the premises, in default thereof, to the use of the said J. B. Purcell "

St Xavier College Archives

M D G P B R 114

Columbus Ohio 16^a Junii 1841

Admodum Reverendo Patri

Gratias atque pietate iocundo Paternitati Suae eo quod meminerit
suam vobis tam diu in quo vobis operi ad ista patet commendare
civitate cum tanta cum dignitate & utilitate praesens regimine colle-
gii nostri circumstantiis presentibus suscepturus. Hoc tam insignem
promissum tum iam a pluribus mensibus adimpletum esse. Me
cum Congregant omnes vobis nostrae fideles, nunc & Catholici non
dum qui prohi videntur Scepterum Educationis studiorum, immen-
ditate nunquam presentibus Munkis committi vel tenere, tale tamen
operumta Saeculorum!

Multa quidem Cetera gratia animi mei de vobis, ut per erit
Paternitati Suae epistolam de translatione Domini, jam cum
Civile Tribunali contracta, cum presumptura in aucta, cum
Romae fuerit, concipere, licentia, a Missione Prae Sphae in lae
pupet cum vero huiusmodi Requisitionem formaliter expressam
super ab Illmo Revmo Archiepiscopo Jo: Ludovico Probst Fr
Secretario indeposito acciperem, nulla in superposita mora,
quod in casu meo aliter in praesentibus Paternitati Suae
omni quo prope reverentia stando

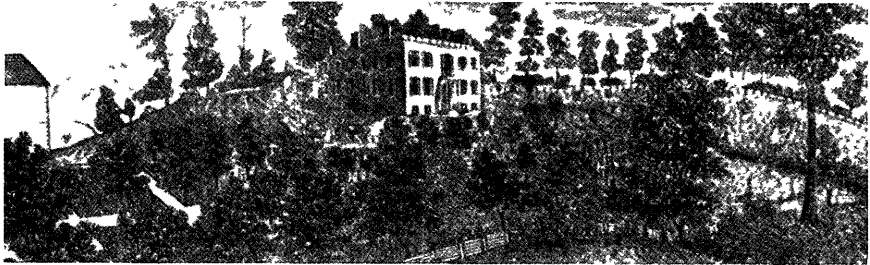
Reverendissimo dilectissimo filio tuo, Patri Electo, Libere notis facit quod
cum de vobis ~~scriptis~~ ^{hinc} huiusmodi circumstantiis in vobis gratiam
exceptis amaret Deus - nec Paternitatem Suae latere
permittit quibus adhuc indiget compensationibus ut in Mathese
& Physica, sicut et in Ceteris, sicut, alios Collegios sub hanc
tunc auspiciis legendi florentibus, nostrum St. Fran-
cisci Collegium non solum occupare sed et aucta
nemine Contradicta, valeat

Vide autem adhuc nequam sunt illi, vel plures
Patres, qui linguam Germanicam Collocant; sunt cum
fere 20,000 Germanorum in urbe Circumata quorum
nomina tanta pars haereticorum Patris inscribitur, ceteri vero
sunt ecclesiae, Notum Magna omni adificatione regnant
aut minus melius Paternitati Suae Sive potest. Amen

First page of Latin letter by Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati, June 16, 1841, thank-
ing Father Roothaan for taking over the Athenaeum (St. Xavier College) General
Archives of the Society of Jesus, Rome



St Xavier College, Cincinnati, in the forties. Left to right St Xavier Church, episcopal seminary, college. From St Xavier College catalogue



Purcell Mansion St Xavier College Preparatory School. From St Xavier College catalogue

The taking over of Purcell's college by Jesuits from St. Louis came as a surprise to their brethren of the Mission of Kentucky. Father William Stack Murphy, superior of the mission, hastened to convey the news to his provincial, Father Guidée of Paris. The Kentucky Jesuits were at the moment about to open a school in Louisville.

"A centrally located town of 30,000 inhabitants and one always crowded with strangers, a great river which carries 300 steamboats, the assured cooperation of the principal citizens, the largest possible field thrown open to the ministry of the Society, and many other considerations seem to impose on us the obligation of doing everything we can on behalf of this establishment [Louisville]. But now of a sudden and without our being given the least intimation of it, we learn from the papers that our Fathers of Missouri have just accepted in Cincinnati (called the Queen City) . . . the bishop's college, which we refused because we had in view the one in Louisville. This college is going to open November 1 next. Cincinnati being only twelve hours from Louisville, a trip one can make at any moment thanks to 300 steamboats, would our two establishments be perhaps too close together?" Moreover, adds Murphy, the route from Kentucky to Canada, where the General wished the French Jesuits to make a start, would be intercepted, as it would be necessary to pass through Cincinnati. Writing to Father Roothaan some three weeks later Murphy suggests to him the same difficulty, but he ends on a generous note "Our Missouri Fathers are opening a college in Cincinnati, November 1 . . . we fear it may hurt Louisville much and St. Mary's not a little. . . . Nevertheless, *soror nostra es, crescas.*"²⁸

To Father Guidée, who had conceived a program of northward expansion for his little Kentucky mission, the presence of the Missourians in Cincinnati meant a summary frustration of his plans. "Yes, Reverend Father," he represented to the General, November 10, 1840, "we believe with you that the work begun in Kentucky by the Province of France should extend afar and spread its blessings to the neighboring states. We further believe that we are called to march in the footprints of our Fathers for the spread of the light of the Gospel among the Indian tribes who people North America and that the moment is not so far off when we can begin to realize so fair a destiny. The country we live in is immense and offers a field spacious enough to satisfy the devouring zeal of several Provinces of the Society of Jesus. Providence, it seems, has so far made a sort of natural division of the country between the three Provinces which have workers engaged here. The western states, it appears to me, have devolved upon the Belgian Fathers.

²⁸ Murphy à Roothaan, September 22, 1840 (AA)

The East belongs to the American Jesuits and the central portion of the country to those of France. They are far away enough from one another not to cause each other mutual harm and can extend and spread out without confusion.”²⁹ A more specific formulation of Guidée’s scheme of territorial division was presented to the General by another French Jesuit “Let Missouri be given all the country beyond the Mississippi (Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Arkansas, Missouri), together with the whole Indian territory on the far side of the Rocky Mountains . . . and let us be given Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, the lakes, which brings us up to Canada with a way opened to the Indian missions.” At a time when territorial lines were not sharply drawn between the various Jesuit groups at work in the United States, the aspirations of Father Guidée and his associates for a field of expansion from Kentucky north to Canada were legitimate enough. But in view of the *fait accompli* of the occupation of Cincinnati by the Jesuits of Missouri with the sanction of the Father General himself and even at his express desire, the program of their French confrères became impracticable, a situation which they themselves were prompt to recognize.

§ 3. ST. XAVIER COLLEGE, 1840-1848

In accordance with the announcement made to the public St. Xavier College was opened November 3, 1840. By the middle of December there were in attendance seventy-six students, of whom twenty-six were studying Latin. The first occasion to be celebrated with éclat was St. Francis Xavier’s day, December 3, the patronal feast of the institution. Early Mass with Holy Communion was followed by a solemn high Mass at nine o’clock, at which the faculty and Catholic students assisted. Immediately after the Mass all assembled in the study-hall where an address was delivered by one of the lay professors, William X. Gilmartin. Washington’s Birthday, 1841, was observed by the students, in the language of a newspaper report, “with appropriate honors. Several of the most distinguished of the alumni for religious and moral worth and literary attainments were invited by the patriotic President to a *utile dulce* dinner, between which and the dessert, Mr. Gilmartin delivered an eloquent eulogy on the ‘Father of his Country.’ The birthday flowers were arranged with a master-hand.”³⁰

²⁹ Guidée à Roothaan, November 10, 1840 (AA).

³⁰ *Catholic Telegraph*, December 12, 1840, February 27, 1841. A prospectus of the college, apparently the one forwarded by Father Elet from St. Louis, appeared in the *Telegraph*, September 26, 1841. It was subsequently embodied in the college catalogue “St. Xavier’s College Hitherto known as the Athenaeum,

An effort was made during the first session to attract day-scholars to the college, especially by the introduction of a mercantile or commercial course. A notice was inserted by Father Elet in the *Telegraph*: "At the solicitation of many parents and citizens the St. Xavier College has agreed to enlarge the Day School attached to the institution. By this arrangement the College will afford to the youth of the city an excellent opportunity for acquiring a business education. The classes are so 'conducted that the scholars may follow either the regular or the Mercantile Department, or both, or apply to such branches as parents or guardians may think proper to select. . . . Day scholars in the Mercantile Department will be charged \$6.00 per quarter, and no entrance fee will be required.'" ⁸¹ In February, 1841, a night-school was advertised in the local press. "At the request of some young gentlemen, who are desirous to learn the German Language, and who have expressed their wish to attend at night, after the hours of business, a Sycamore Street, Cincinnati This Literary Establishment will be opened on the first Monday of November, 1840, under the direction of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, and the patronage of the Rt Rev Dr. Purcell, Bishop of Cincinnati" "On entering, each boarder must be provided with a uniform to be worn upon public occasions. It consists of a blue or black frock coat, with pantaloons of the same cloth for winter and white pantaloons for summer. Parents who live at a distance are requested to appoint an agent in Cincinnati and New Orleans, who must be answerable for the payment of all expenses, and to whom the pupil may be directed on leaving the Institution. Mr P Huchet Kernion, No 95 Conde Street, New Orleans, will act as regular Agent of the Xavier College for Louisiana, Mississippi, Mexico, Cuba, etc, will receive the payments and send such youths as may be recommended to his care by the parents or guardians. All letters written by the parents or others, to the students, or to the President or Agents of the Institution, must be directed free of postage, or they shall be liable to remain at the post office."

The matriculation-fee for boarders and half-boarders was ten dollars, for day-scholars or externs, five dollars. The rate for boarders, including tuition and subsistence, was one hundred and thirty dollars. With washing and mending (if done at the institution), physicians' fees and stationery, the rate amounted to one hundred and fifty-five dollars. Half-boarders, who breakfasted and dined at the college, were charged a hundred dollars per annum. They reported at the college at 6 A M and remained until 7 30 P M. Tuition for day-scholars was forty dollars per annum for classical students and twenty-four for students in the mercantile course. The day-scholars "were not only permitted but required, as far as practicable," to attend the morning and evening studies at the College. As morning studies began about 6 o'clock, the proviso as to practicability was apparently a needed one. While the rate for boarders was notably low according to present-day standards, it did not include items which in the boarding-school of today are covered by the general charge, e g, bedding, towels, napkins, knives, forks, spoons and tumblers. Students who remained at the college during the summer vacation, which ran a month and a half, were charged twenty dollars for the extension of board and lodging.

⁸¹ *Catholic Telegraph*, December 26, 1840.

German Class, and also a Book-Keeping Class, will be opened at the St. Xavier College, on the 1st of March next, and will be taught every evening towards candlelight. A late hour has been chosen in order to afford both to the students and to persons engaged during the day in mercantile pursuits an opportunity for frequenting these classes."³²

With the session 1841-1842 began the Philopedian Society, the oldest of the student organizations of St. Xavier's. Its object was to improve the senior students in public speaking and debate, an object it still cherishes today after the lapse of ninety-five years. The addresses delivered before it by its own members or invited guests were sometimes elaborate in character. An address by P. McGroarty on "The Influence of the Church on Society," delivered at the Washington Birthday celebration of the society, February 22, 1847, ran through three consecutive issues of the *Catholic Telegraph*. In the session 1842-1843 were organized the Philhermenian or Junior Literary Society and the Euterpean Society. There was never any lack of student organizations at St. Xavier's. In later years, besides those of the Philopedian, Euterpean and Philhermenian, occur the formidable names of the Cosmopean, Himiroletic and Phileoglossian societies³³

As is traditional in all Jesuit colleges, a students' sodality of the Blessed Virgin was established. In response to a petition addressed to the Queen of France, consort of Louis Philippe, for the purpose of obtaining from her well-known liberality some ornament for the sodalists' chapel, a choice painting of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary from the king's private gallery reached the president of the college, Father Elet, in March, 1847. The canvas, nine by four feet, contained twenty-four figures and at the bottom of the richly gilt frame were inscribed the words "*Donné par le Roi en 1846.*" In gratitude for this splendid gift the sodalists, on May 1, 1847, received holy communion at the hands of their director, Father Elet, for the spiritual and temporal welfare of their royal benefactors.³⁴

A large proportion of the boarders at St. Xavier's were recruited from the southern states. In the last year but one of the boarding-department, 1852-1853, seventy-seven boarders were registered, of whom thirty-two were from the South or from Latin-American countries. Most of the southern students were French-speaking Creoles. The prefect of studies' diary for October 15, 1850, contains the item

³² *Idem*, February 27, 1841

³³ Catalogues of St. Xavier College, 1844—

³⁴ *Catholic Telegraph*, May 6, 1847. Certain paintings in the Bardstown (Ky.) cathedral were also gifts from Louis Philippe. Cf. W. D. Pike, "A Review of 'The Curious Legend of Louis Philippe in Kentucky,'" *Illinois Catholic Historical Review*, 8: 195 et seq.

"Today F. [Father] Rector directed something to be done to restrain the Creoles from speaking French and appointed Father Wippen to establish some rule for it" More liberty in this regard appears to have been allowed the students in the first years of the college. Said the prospectus of 1840 "The English will be the ordinary language of communication in all the classes, the French excepted, but the students may speak French or English indiscriminately during the hours of recreation." In the forties, before the Irish and German immigration had set in on a large scale, the racial complexion of the student-body was distinctly Anglo-American. In the session 1841-1842 the register showed only about ten per cent of German names, in the session 1861-1862 the percentage had risen to approximately fifty-five.

A large enrollment of non-Catholic boarders had been traditional in the days of the Athenaeum and this tradition persisted under the Jesuit régime. Elet in April, 1844, reckoned the proportion of non-Catholic boarders at one-half. "If we admitted only Catholic boarders, religious instruction and exercises of piety would suffer less embarrassment." But there was compensation in the way of conversions. "The Protestant children cannot resist the influence of good example and during the last thirteen months eleven of them have been converted." The figures for some years are recorded. Accessions of non-Catholic students to the Church numbered four in 1844, thirteen in 1845, eight in 1846. The day-scholars appear to have been at all times largely, and in some years even entirely Catholic. In 1856 the hundred or so day-students registered were all, with a single exception, Catholic.

St. Xavier College had but shortly started out on its career under Jesuit management when Father Verhaegen arrived in Cincinnati to make his first official visitation of the institution. His appearance so soon after the transfer of the college was occasioned by the circumstance that Bishop Purcell wished to insist on the Jesuits pledging themselves to the support of five seminarians *in perpetuum* as a condition for his executing the deed of transfer. This condition, however, the Bishop waived on representations made by Verhaegen, as he made mention in his above-cited letter to Father Roothaan Both the prelate and the vice-provincial then conferred with a lawyer, who was instructed to draw up a deed of transfer, the Bishop engaging himself to meet the wishes of the Jesuits on every point In his letter reporting the affair to Father Roothaan, Verhaegen said

The Bishop will begin this year to build his new cathedral church, on the completion of which all the buildings together with his present church will be left to our use He is exceedingly anxious to commit his seminary to our care. He would pay an annual sum for the support of the seminarians

and since the buildings are large enough both for the scholasticate of the Vice-Province and the diocesan seminary, may your Paternity deign to let me know whether he approves of placing our scholasticate there as soon as it can be done and of admitting the seminarians to the classes of theology ³⁵

At the time the Athenaeum was conveyed to the Society of Jesus the diocesan seminary of St. Francis Xavier still occupied the building between the Athenaeum and the cathedral on Sycamore Street. It was apparently Purcell's expectation at this period that the seminary would remain in this location, for, as has been seen, he offered to Verhaegen the services of his seminarians as teachers in the college. But within a year or two of the transfer of the college, the seminary was removed to the Bishop's farm in Brown County, Ohio, where it was presided over by Rev. Joseph J. O'Mealy. In 1842 the direction of it was confided to the Lazarist fathers, who remained in charge until 1845 when it was again removed to its original location on Sycamore Street in Cincinnati. In compliance with Bishop Purcell's offer, the services of his seminarians, first of two and later of four or five, were utilized to fill out the rather meagre teaching-staff of St. Xavier College. The *Catholic Almanac* for the years 1843, 1844, 1845, states that besides the twelve seminarians in Brown County, "there are four or five Seminarians who teach in St. Xavier College under the direction of the Rev. Father De Theux of the Society of Jesus." In August, 1845, Purcell petitioned that a Jesuit father be named superior of his seminary. Van de Velde with his advisers were of the opinion that such appointment should not be made without the express permission of the Father General, but they agreed that Father Leonard Nota, who had assisted in the direction of the novices at Florissant, should teach theology to Bishop Purcell's seminarians and in general direct them in their studies. Father De Theux having been transferred to St. Charles, Missouri, in August, 1845, his place in Cincinnati was taken by Father Nota. In October the Bishop again returned to the question of a superior for his seminary and requested that Nota be named to the office. Van de Velde and his advisers demurred, but, finally, in March, 1846, yielded to the Bishop's repeated requests ³⁶ For the three years 1846, 1847, 1848, the *Catholic Almanac* carried this notice "The Diocesan Seminary is under the charge of the Reverend Leonard Nota, S.J., who also teaches theology. The Seminarians, ten in number, study in the scholasticate attached to the St. Xavier College, Cincinnati." In 1848 the

³⁵ Verhaegen ad Roothaan, March 14, 1841 (AA)

³⁶ *Liber Consultationum*, March 2, 1843 (A) According to this source the scholastics Florentine Boudreaux and Dennis Kenny were to be sent to Cincinnati to take the place of the seminarians. Cf. also Lamotte, *op. cit.*, p. 289

seminary was again in the hands of the diocesan clergy, the seminarians residing and studying in the Bishop's new house on Eighth Street "until the new Seminary on a hill overlooking the city" should be completed³⁷

Father Elet, St Xavier's first Jesuit rector, held office until his departure in the autumn of 1847 to represent the vice-province of Missouri in a congregation of procurators at Rome. He had been elected to this charge, with Father De Smet as substitute, at a quasi-provincial congregation held in St. Louis on August 3, 1847. On the day following the congregation there was held a provincial consultation in which Father John Blox, a Belgian, was named vice-rector of St Xavier College to replace Elet during his absence from the country. Father Dennis Kenny was to succeed Blox in the pastorate of St Xavier Church, Cincinnati, a post the latter had filled since coming to the West in 1845 from his province of Maryland. These appointments were rescinded in another consultation held on August 5, Father Carrell being displaced from the rectorship of St Louis University and Blox substituted in his place as vice-rector. Father Druyts was assigned the vice-rectorship of St Xavier's, Cincinnati, and Carrell the pastorate of the Jesuit church in the same city. Even this series of changes was not the one eventually carried out, as Bishop Purcell appears to have declared his displeasure at the proposed removal of Blox from Cincinnati. Accordingly, Van de Velde, the vice-provincial, decided in a consultation held on August 19 to instruct Blox to return from St Louis, whither it seems he had actually gone in answer to a previous summons, to Cincinnati and there assume the duties of vice-rector of the college. Druyts was at the same time installed vice-rector of St Louis University.

Two occurrences of note marked Father Blox's short tenure of office in Cincinnati, the opening of a preparatory school for the college, and the establishment of the so-called "free schools" of St Xavier's parish.

³⁷ A claim having been made that St Xavier College was under obligation to board a certain number of seminarians gratis, Father Elet wrote to Bishop Purcell (c. 1847) "The supposed obligation of boarding gratis a certain number of seminarians, Fr Verhaegen proved to yr Lordship, from your own letter [August 17, 1840, *supra*] containing the conditions to be fulfilled on the part of the Society on accepting this college and church, never to have been imposed yet it has been complied with from the 2nd year and more so at present than ever Probo

3 students whose board and tuition are gratis	\$450 00
2 (Noguez and Brownson) at half price	150 00
6 day-scholars, tuition gratis	184 00

Add to this the low terms on which I admitted the seminarians, \$80 for a whole year's board, \$20 for light, fuel, room, washing, mending, and yr Lordship must be convinced that we do contribute our mite towards the support of your diocese." Archives of Mt St Joseph-on-the-Ohio

In 1845 Bishop Purcell conveyed to St Xavier College for nine thousand dollars a tract of land, seven and a quarter acres in extent, which Bishop Fenwick had acquired years before as a site for his seminary. It was located a few miles east of the college in the district then and since known as Walnut Hills. The *Annual Letters* grow eloquent in describing the natural beauties of the property as it rose two hundred feet above the waters of the Ohio, affording an entrancing panoramic view of the surrounding country. The place had been utilized for a period of years for farm purposes only when it was determined to make it the home of the preparatory department of the college, as the need of separating the smaller boys from the older ones had long been felt. An announcement to this effect appeared in the *Telegraph* for September 2, 1847. "The College Country Seat, Purcell Mansion, situated on Walnut Hills, has been fitted up for a Boys' Boarding School, in which youths from 8 to 13 years of age will be admitted. The buildings are large and commodious and the riverside of the premises commands the finest scene in the vicinity of Cincinnati. Parents desirous to send their sons to this preparatory school should make early application, as the number will be limited, it will be conducted by three gentlemen of the faculty." Another notice was carried in the *Catholic Almanac* for 1849. "St Xavier Preparatory School, Purcell Mansion, Walnut Hills, two and a half miles from Cincinnati, Ohio. This institution, intended solely for small boys, is situated on one of the most elevated heights, in the vicinity of the city, commanding, from its grounds, a panoramic view of the Ohio River, Fulton, Newport and Covington, with other beautiful portions of Kentucky and Ohio. The mansion itself is a spacious and handsome building, in the midst of a fine tract of land, well laid out and divided into garden, vineyard, pasture, grove and most ample play grounds for the exercise and amusement of the children. The diet is good, wholesome and abundant, calculated to promote health, which is an object of constant solicitude. The classes and hours of study are so arranged as to afford the pupils more time for healthful exercise than can be allowed in colleges. The Matron, who has charge of the wardrobe and laundry establishment, attends, in a particular manner, to the neatness and cleanliness of the children." The charge for board and lodging, apart from extras, was one hundred and thirty dollars a year. Pupils who spent their vacation at the Mansion paid an additional charge of twenty dollars. This fitting school for St Xavier College was maintained for only two years. Father Herman Aelen was president the first session, 1847-1848, and Father George Carrell, the second and last session, 1848-1849.³⁸

³⁸ The so-called mansion, erected shortly before the Jesuits acquired the property, was appraised at about four thousand dollars. The mansion property, about

The boys' division of St Xavier's parish school was opened in 1848. In July, 1847, a lot sixty by one hundred feet in depth on the west side of Sycamore just north of Seventh Street, was purchased by the college authorities at a cost of a hundred dollars a foot. On July 25, pursuant to notice, a meeting of the St Xavier congregation was held in the college hall to deliberate on ways and means to promote "the establishment of a Free School in the eastern part of the city for the education of the Catholic youth to be under the direction and control of the pastors and gentlemen connected with the church and college of St Xavier"³⁹ Though the attendance was small, the sum of six hundred dollars was subscribed towards discharging the debt incurred by the purchase of the school-lot. The meeting organized itself into The Catholic Free School Society, the conditions for membership being a small initiation fee and a monthly contribution. Father Blox, rector of the college, was elected president, Father Duerinck, treasurer, and James M. Moreland, secretary. The efforts of the congregation to gather funds for the new school house met with success. A substantial building was begun and finished in time for occupancy at the beginning of the session 1848-1849. Father Angelo Maesseele was the first director of the free school, assisted by Mr. Francis Van Agtmael, a Jesuit scholastic, and four tutors. A contemporary advertisement notes "St Xavier School. The boys' school-house is crowded with pupils!"⁴⁰ According to the *Annual Letters* the school opened with an attendance of four hundred, "no slight attendance," the chronicler observes, "for even the most populous cities of Europe, much more so for this wilderness."⁴¹

The girls' section of the parish school, conducted by the Sisters of Notre Dame of Namur, had been started as early as 1846. A sort of Sunday school was held in the sisters' chapel on Sundays from 2 to 4 P. M., at which as many as four or five hundred girls were present. Many of the more mature of these were taught to read and write.⁴²

The opening of St Xavier's parochial school was another step forward in the progress of Catholic education in Cincinnati. Since the day, sixteen years before, on which Bishop Fenwick took up his residence in Cincinnati where there was neither Catholic church nor school,

seven and a quarter acres, was sold April 30, 1873, for \$89,229.03, or nearly thirteen thousand dollars an acre.

³⁹ *Catholic Telegraph*, July 29, 1849.

⁴⁰ *Catholic Almanac*, 1849, p. 153.

⁴¹ The school-house had a frontage of fifty feet on Sycamore Street, was sixty feet in depth and fifty feet high. The top-floor served as chapel for the children. *Litterae Annuae*, 1842-1849 (A).

⁴² *Catholic Almanac*, 1849, p. 141.

Catholicism had advanced in the city by leaps and bounds. In 1822 the Catholics were only about fifty, in 1848 they numbered thirty-five thousand. Their churches were eleven in number, their parochial schools nine, with an attendance of 2,607 children. The Catholic school-children of Cincinnati are pictured pleasantly in a contemporary account of the St. Aloysius Day (June 21) celebration of 1847. Father John McElroy, a Jesuit of the Maryland province, just then a transient in the city on his return from Mexico where he had served as chaplain in the American army during the Mexican war, is the missionary referred to in the account.

Feast of St. Aloysius—This delightful feast was celebrated by our Catholic youth with unusual solemnity. In the morning the Bishop sang High Mass, in the St. Xavier Church, attended by Rev. Father McElroy as assistant Priest, and Rev. Messrs. Allen, S. J., and P. C. Delacroix as Deacon and Subdeacon. The congregation consisted almost exclusively of the youths of the various Catholic congregations. They were addressed by the zealous missionary in his peculiarly impressive and efficient manner. After the High Mass, between sixty and seventy were confirmed, several of whom were converts, two whereof had been baptized the same morning by the Bishop. The College Choir, aided by several professional amateurs—a rich, effective orchestra—added much to the solemnity.

At 4 P. M. the pupils of the Catholic Schools, the girls alone extending nearly the entire way, walked in procession two by two, from the St. Xavier Church to the Cathedral, which was filled in every available space, pews, aisles, nooks, corners, window seats, altar steps, by the children alone, with only a few exceptions of persons of mature years who would, in spite of anything, feast their eyes on the most beautiful sight that was ever seen in Cincinnati.

The College and Cathedral choir united to sing Vespers. One of the Jesuit scholastics delivered the panegyric of the Saint. The discourse had all the characteristics of the composition of fervid, pious youth.

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given by Rev. Father Elet—after which the German schools sang with exceeding sweetness and harmony the “Grosser Got[t]!” and the Bishop closed the interesting ceremony by a few words and his blessing. Then the thousands of young guests—the boys with a cheer—attacked the cakes and lemonade in the basement and on the green-sward around the Cathedral. We cannot begin to describe the happy scene. It should have been witnessed. We are sure it will not be forgotten—and would only say to the few, dear, modest, retiring children who were crowded out, that we shall have more experience, and hope to keep better order the next time. Three thousand happy children are not easily controlled even if one thought it worth while, on such a holiday, to try to control them.⁴³

⁴³ *Catholic Telegraph*, June 24, 1847.

The *Annual Letters* for 1848 record a lack of vigilance in the admission of students with the result that while the registration ran high, scholarship and discipline lagged behind. In July of that year the question of superseding Father Blox in the rectorship having come before Father Elet and his consultors, a resolution was taken to arrange for the return of Blox to his own province of Maryland and to promote the scholastic, John De Blicck, to the priesthood in the impending vacations, with a view to appointing him rector of the college. De Blicck, a young Belgian of twenty-seven, was at the moment rounding out the second year of his theological studies in St. Louis University. Raised to the priesthood, he became rector of St. Xavier College on February 17, 1849. In the interim Father Blox, who had gone East on some matter of business, was notified by the vice-provincial of De Blicck's appointment and did not return to Cincinnati.⁴⁴

The temperance crusade preached by Father Matthew was at its height in the early forties. Good results in ample measure followed in its wake, but the position taken by some of the crusaders appears to have been extreme and out of line with the traditional Catholic viewpoint. Father Murphy wrote from St. Mary's College, Kentucky, in 1843 that Catholics were beginning to contend that the wine used by our Lord at the Last Supper was of the unfermented kind and that as a consequence grape-juice should be substituted for alcoholic wine in the celebration of Mass. A lecture delivered in Cincinnati in 1841 by the Kentucky Jesuit, Father John Larkin, met with the disapproval of Bishop Purcell, himself an enthusiastic advocate of total abstinence. Larkin's stand, however, was the one taken subsequently by the bishops of the country in the pastoral issued by them after the Sixth Provincial Council of Baltimore. It was declared therein that the temperance pledge then being widely taken throughout the country was to be re-

⁴⁴John Blox was born in Belgium January (June?) 17, 1810, became a Jesuit at White Marsh, Md., November 5, 1832, and died in Philadelphia, November 27, 1860.

"This is Thursday morning, all our boys have gone to the hills to play ball, the yard is as quiet as the garden of a Capucin convent and I have a few moments to spare which I intend to spend in scribbling to you a few of my incoherent thoughts. We here proceed, in accordance with the holy admonition of St. Ignatius, in 'holy simplicity.' Isn't that a good manner too? The number of our students remains pretty much in statu quo neither increasing or diminishing to any considerable extent. When one leaves another one generally takes his place and vice versa. Our Sodality is doing very well, its members are all exemplary in their application and behavior, and I am happy to be able to state that in general our students are not backward in the preparation of their religious duties, there was only one real struggle and it required only one admonition from me to make him comply with the rule of monthly confession." De Blicck to Druyts, November 16, 1848 (A)

garded as a pious resolution rather than as a promise binding under sin and that "the moderate use of wine or of any other liquor is of itself lawful" ⁴⁵ "The Temperance Societies are considerably on the decline," Father Murphy noted in 1843 "As to Catholics, the declaration of the Bishops assembled in synod in May has formally corrected and enlightened the enthusiasts. It expresses the sentiments already known of the Bishops of St. Louis and Kentucky. I presume Bishop Purcell will no longer blame Father Larkin for having preached two years ago at Cincinnati the doctrine which he has just sanctioned himself at Baltimore" ⁴⁶

Though Bishop Purcell and the Jesuits of Cincinnati had not seen eye to eye on the methods to be employed in furthering the cause of temperance, however much this was an object of deep solicitude to both, relations between them continued to be friendly. Subsequently, however, according to a letter addressed to the Bishop by Father Elet about 1845, the prelate for reasons that are nowhere disclosed appears to have undergone a temporary estrangement from the Society ⁴⁷ The estrangement, however, was not of long duration. Within two years or so of the date of Elet's letter, the same father was writing to the General "Right Reverend Bishop Purcell shows himself every day

⁴⁵ *National Pastorals of the Catholic Hierarchy*, p. 156

⁴⁶ Murphy to Roothaan, July 10, 1843 (AA)

⁴⁷ "Last vacations were spent by Ours at the mansion exclusively for wint of means, and our living is such as becomes poor religious, wine at present but twice a week about the end of dinner. Yr Lordship has given us the use of a house etc but on the condition of working in it for the good of your flock from morning early until late at night, and I ask confidently did we not comply with it? We thank yr Lordship for having opened a field to us, and we ask but one more favour, to be permitted to work it in peace. I am grieved beyond expression at the unfortunate change that has taken place in yr Lordship's mind with regard to us, but then we are no better than our forefathers. It is indeed not so much the thing in itself in the present case as the person that causes me pain. God is my witness that during the 5 years that I have spent in your diocese, I have studied to please yr Lordship, not *from political views*, but from a thorough devotedness to yr person and a desire of promoting the M[ajor] D[e]i] G[loria]" Elet to Purcell, c. 1845. Archives of Mt. St. Joseph-on-the-Ohio.

At the commencement exercises of July 11, 1844, St. Xavier College conferred the degree of master of arts on a member of its staff, the layman John B. Stallo, professor of the German language and literature. This gave umbrage to Bishop Purcell as Stallo had some time previously rashly intimated in a public print that the prelate had diverted to the building of his cathedral money sent from Europe for the German parishes. In November, 1848, when Archbishop Purcell brought suit in a civil court to recover church property unlawfully retained by the pastor of Holy Trinity Church, Cincinnati, Stallo appeared as counsel for the defendant. He later achieved some distinction as a writer on scientific subjects, but appears to have severed his connection with the Church.

more and more benevolent in our regard I wonder why after his splendid gift to us of this college and the church annexed to it he has not been enrolled among [our] prominent benefactors by a diploma of affiliation " 48 This matter Elet appears to have taken up in person with Roothaan on his visit to Rome in 1847 A document signed by the latter March 16, 1848, declared Bishop Purcell founder of St Xavier College, Cincinnati, and as such entitled to the Masses and other spiritual suffrages guaranteed by the Jesuit Constitutions to distinguished benefactors of the Society "By this document," wrote Van de Velde, the vice-provincial, in transmitting it to Bishop Purcell, "your [Lordship] becomes a participant in all the prayers, good works and merits of all the members of our Society—in *perpetuum*, during life and after death " 49 At a much later period the impression seemed to prevail that Bishop Purcell was again out of sympathy with the Jesuits, but this impression, so thought Father Coosemans, the saintly first provincial of Missouri, was without foundation In a visit paid by Coosemans to Purcell in 1863 the latter assured the provincial of his good will towards the Society "He answered with great kindness that he was very well satisfied with all our Fathers, that he thanked the Lord for the zeal that animates them and the good they do in his diocese " 50

§ 4 PAROCHIAL MINISTRY

In Cincinnati as elsewhere the work of the Society of Jesus was not restricted to the education of youth Both in their own parish of St Francis Xavier and in other parishes of the city and its vicinity the fathers found in the exercise of the sacred ministry ample opportunities for advancing the Catholic life of the community What they had accomplished in their own quarter of the city within six years of their arrival was made a matter of editorial comment in the local Catholic paper

It is extremely gratifying to witness the great increase of piety in that quarter of the city where the church of St Francis Xavier is situated Two years ago there was only a small chapel in that part of town, and now the spacious accommodations of the Church of the Jesuit Fathers are scarce sufficient for the numerous congregation that attends it The rapid increase of this congregation is a subject of frequent remark by our people, and its character is no less gratifying than its numbers The instructions given at this church on Sundays at Vespers attract a great many Protestants, who

⁴⁸ Elet à Roothaan, February 28, 1847 (AA)

⁴⁹ Van de Velde to Purcell, June 2, 1848 Archives of Mt St Joseph-on-the-Ohio McCann, *Archbishop Purcell and the Archdiocese of Cincinnati* (Washington), 53

⁵⁰ Coosemans à Beckx, November 13, 1863 (AA).

listen with marked attention to the familiar, yet impressive exposition of the Catholic faith and morals which is usually delivered by the President of the University. The good done is witnessed, not only in the number of conversions that have taken and are taking place in our city, but also in the great improvement in the general tone of piety, in the striking reformation that has occurred in many families and individuals, and especially in the edifying behavior of the male portion of the congregation.⁵¹

In September, 1845, Bishop Purcell ceased to reside at the seminary building on Sycamore Street as the new episcopal residence adjoining St. Peter's Cathedral on Plum Street was ready for occupancy. The following year the old cathedral, now St. Xavier's Church, was lengthened out forty feet to meet the needs of the growing congregation. In 1848, the rector of St. Xavier's, Father Elet, on returning from Rome, brought with him a number of fine paintings together with candelabra, chandeliers and altar furniture for the embellishment of the church. These were in part purchased and in part bestowed as gifts by the Father General. Conspicuous among the treasures was the body of St. Adeodatus, a martyr of the early church, which Elet had procured from the catacombs with the permission of the Roman authorities.

St. Xavier's parish consisted largely of Irish immigrant families, poor in material things however rich they were in the inheritance of the Faith. Father Carrell had but a brief experience with his parishioners as head pastor of St. Xavier's when he wrote, October 4, 1847, to Father Druyts, rector of St. Louis University: "If you stand in need of exercise, you can petition to be one of the pastors of St. Xavier's, Cincinnati, at the end of your presidential career. You will not have reason to complain of a sedentary life. There is no end to our parish—it embraces the length and breadth and depth and height of the city. I am sure I have been to its double extent and I have been, too, I think, in the deepest cellars as well as the highest attics. I am sure Father Damen has not seen poorer or more wretched abodes—poverty and intemperance prevail here to a frightful extent."

The meagre supply of diocesan priests at his disposal led Bishop Purcell to ask the Jesuits to take in charge some of the parishes in Cincinnati and its vicinity. In February, 1841, at the joint request of Bishops Purcell and Flaget they agreed to serve St. Mary's Church, Covington, Ky. Mass was to be said there at least on the last Sunday of every month and catechism classes were to be held on all Sundays throughout the year.⁵² On June 15, 1845, Father Elet dedicated to divine service the new church of Corpus Christi in Newport, Ky. An

⁵¹ *Catholic Telegraph* (c. 1846)

⁵² *Idem*, February, 1841

English sermon was preached by him on the occasion and a German one by Father A. Tusch of St. Mary's Church, Cincinnati. The church, not altogether finished at this time, was of brick and measured fifty-five feet in length, thirty-three in width, and twenty-four from floor to ceiling. The lot on which the church stood was a gift from two Protestant gentlemen, Messrs. Goodman and Gould. The congregation numbered about two hundred souls and was steadily increasing. A number of stations were attached to the mission.⁵³ From 1848 to 1851 Father Joseph Patschowski, S. J., was resident pastor of Corpus Christi Church, while Brother William Barrett and later Brother Michael Schmidt taught in the parish school. A novena in honor of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, held in this church during the cholera epidemic of 1849, had as its happy sequel that the entire parish, one member excepted, escaped infection.⁵⁴

Eight miles from Cincinnati, in Green Township, was located the Church of St. James. The locality, then known as Browns Grove, has since taken the name of White Oak. The congregation, which was German, had for resident pastor from 1848 to 1851, Father Joseph Weber, S. J., who was aided in the domestic concerns of the residence by Brother Bartholomew Plank.⁵⁵

In the summer of 1847 the pastors of St. Mary's Church, Cincinnati, Fathers Ferneding and Hammer, petitioned the Jesuits to take in hand the direction of their parish school. Father Patschowski of St. Joseph's Church, St. Louis, was assigned by his superior to this duty. St. Mary's school numbered at this time five hundred and eighty children. The boys were taught by three lay teachers under Patschowski's direction, the girls by the Sisters of Notre Dame.⁵⁶ The father's brief connection with St. Mary's contributed in no small measure to the making of the parish. His duties evidently involved more than the direction of the parochial school. He infused new life into the Altar Society, organized a choir which soon became known as the best trained in Cincinnati, and established a sodality of the Blessed Virgin, which counted a surprisingly large number of members on its rolls. But his health broke under the strain of his zealous labors and for a while no hope was entertained of his recovery. A novena in honor of Blessed Peter Claver conducted at the college in his behalf and the fervent

⁵³ *Idem*, June 26, 1845. According to the *Catholic Almanac*, 1849, the towns of Newport and Covington in Kentucky directly across the Ohio River from Cincinnati, together with the adjacent territory to a distance of three miles, were attached to the diocese of Cincinnati.

⁵⁴ *Litterae Annuae*, 1842-1849 (A).

⁵⁵ *Catholic Almanac*, 1851.

⁵⁶ *Libel Consultationum*, August 4, 1847 (A). *Catholic Almanac*, 1848.

prayers of the parishioners of St. Mary's were answered by his restoration to health.⁵⁷

Father Patschowski remained but a year at St. Mary's, being succeeded in 1848 by Father F. X. Wippern, S. J., who, however, appears not to have directed the school, but to have been employed in ministerial duties only as assistant to Father Ferneding, the pastor.

The German parish of St. Philomena, lying to the southeast of St. Xavier's was served for a while by the Jesuit, Father Francis Xavier Weninger. From 1848, in which year St. Philomena's Church was finished, up to 1852, Father Weninger, when not employed in giving missions, regularly assisted the pastor, the Rev. B. Hengehold, in preaching and hearing confessions. Though he ordinarily lodged at St. Xavier College, during the cholera epidemic of 1849 he took up his residence at St. Philomena's to assist the pastor in sick calls. While thus engaged he had the unpleasant experience of being attacked on one occasion by an anti-Catholic mob, who, recognizing him for a Catholic priest, pursued him with cries of "down with the priest" and forced him to take shelter in a "coffee-house" on Broadway.⁵⁸

§ 4 ST. XAVIER COLLEGE, 1849-1867

Each summer of Father De Bleeck's administration was marked by a recurrence of the Asiatic cholera and at each recurrence a Jesuit was one of the victims claimed by the dread disease. Father Angelo Maesseele, a Belgian, had filled various posts in the college, among them, those of minister, procurator, professor of physics, mathematics and rhetoric. While he was prefect of the church in his last year of life, his zeal for souls found an additional outlet in attendance on the patients in the city-hospital and the pest-house, in which latter place he contracted a serious contagious disease. He had not quite recovered from its effects when the cholera, then spreading its ravages over the country, reached

⁵⁷ *Litterae Annuae*, 1842-1849 (A)

⁵⁸ Weninger, *Erinnerungen*, p. 49. The register of the Missouri vice-province for 1850 lists Father F. X. Wippern as pastor of St. Philomena's. In October, 1845, Bishop Purcell asked the vice-provincial to allow Fathers Emig and Verheyden to take charge of a German church recently built in Cincinnati. The fathers sometimes made extended trips outside of Cincinnati. Thus Emig at Purcell's request made visits in 1844 to Dayton, Hamilton and Sandusky City. Elct to Purcell, July 8, 1844. Archives of Mt. St. Joseph-on-the-Ohio.

Two churches were subsequently bought by the Jesuits. St. Thomas's, on the west side of Sycamore Street between Fifth and Sixth, in 1860, and St. Anne's on New Street in 1873. The latter church was used by the Catholic Negroes of the city. St. Thomas's was built in 1832 for the Campbellites and was the scene of a notable discussion between Alexander Campbell, founder of the sect, and Bishop Purcell.

Cincinnati In his weakened condition he began to bring the aids of the ministry to the plague-stricken, only to succumb himself to the disease, July 11, 1849 He was in his thirty-eighth year To a coadjutor-brother who asked him in his last moments whether he needed anything, he repeated the words of St Paul, "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ" Bishop Purcell preached the panegyric of the dead priest, to whom he did not hesitate to apply the glorious title of a martyr of charity ⁵⁹

While the cholera was epidemic in the city, every effort was made to preserve the student-body from infection The students, on their part, did not overlook the supreme preservative of prayer They bound themselves by vow to adorn the statue of Our Lady and the Holy Child with two golden crowns, if every one of their number should be left unharmed by the plague A single student, after returning to his home, was stricken and died Though it was felt that in view of the circumstances the vow had lost its binding force, gratitude for the signal protection vouchsafed the college led to its fulfillment and crowns were placed on the figures of Our Lady and the Child A further incident connected with the cholera of 1849 was the sudden cure of a dying child in the parish by the application of St Ignatius water

Father Christopher Genelli, of the province of Austria, had come to America with Father Weninger in 1848 He spent two years in the West, being stationed at St Joseph's residence in St Louis where he employed his leisure moments in writing a scholarly life of St Ignatius Loyola, which remains to this day one of the standard biographies of the founder of the Jesuits During his stay in St Louis his health was poor and this circumstance induced his Austrian superior to recall him to Europe He had arrived at Cincinnati on his journey home, when he fell ill with what seemed to be only a passing ailment, but the sickness quickly aggravated and, developing into cholera, terminated in death August 12, 1850, only two days after his arrival in Cincinnati ⁶⁰

⁵⁹ *Historia Domus* (Cincinnati), 1849 (A) The city hospital has been served by the Jesuits for ninety years and more Father Coosemans informed the General (September 20, 1862) that Father Levisse's activity in this particular ministry was "almost incredible" He was doing more than his predecessor, Father Roelof, recently deceased, who "was a holy man and certainly did not spare himself" "Father Maessele told me last night that he had witnessed at the hospital during the course of that day, two cases of cholera, both of which proved fatal Both patients were brought in Protestants and died Catholics, they were not inhabitants of Cincinnati All our people are well and hearty with the exception of Mr Johnston, whose breast is ever very delicate" De Bleeck to Druvts, December 27, 1848 (A)

⁶⁰ *Idem*, 1850

A year later died Julius Johnston, a scholastic of unusual promise, whose unexpected death in the prime of life spread gloom throughout the vice-province At St Xavier College, where his services seemed to be indispensable, it was felt to be nothing short of a calamity He was a Virginian by birth and a Protestant before his reception into the Church in St Louis, where he married and took up the practice of law. His wife having died, he resolved to enter the priesthood and to this end, after making provision for the maintenance and education of his two daughters, Virginia and Martha, became a Jesuit novice at Florissant, August 14, 1846 Noviceship still unfinished, he took up the duties of instructor at St Louis University, which position he filled for a year He was then assigned to St Xavier College, Cincinnati, where he was professor of philosophy and rhetoric, at the same time getting up privately the divinity studies preparatory to ordination In his last year at St Xavier's he discharged the duties of prefect of studies, an unusual appointment for a Jesuit not in priestly orders and one which did not pass without a qualified protest from the General, Father Roothaan Yet that Mr Johnston filled the post with efficiency there is a great deal in the records of the day to indicate A diary which he kept while prefect of studies is a revealing document with its occasional lapses from the record of routine business into the personal and intimate Pensive reflections on the glories of the autumn scenery on which he feasted his eyes one day at the Purcell Mansion in Walnut Hills fill out a passage in the diary

October 7, 1850 Commenced today keeping the boys in studies for penance and at 11 o'clock went out with them to the Mansion Observed that the prefects were not vigilant enough there Dined and returned at 2 P M Took notice of the great beauty of the woods and their various coloured hues, reminding me of the mountains of Virginia and stirring my soul with great recollections What a subject for poetry! What thoughts! What feelings! What a union of the Beautiful and the Sublime Beauty in the gorgeous dyes that cover the trees, sublimity in the deep suggestions of the Future and the Infinite Who has ever analyzed the effect of the autumn scenery? Many breasts have caught the feeling, but where is the pen that has expressed it? ⁶¹

On June 8, 1851, Mr Johnston made his final entry in the diary "Preached in the church in the evening in place of Father Rector, who was sick Began a novena in honor of St F[rancis] Regis to obtain the true spirit of the Society, profound humility and religious vocation for my daughters, Virginia and Martha" On the following day he went out somewhat unwell to the Mansion with the boarders, returned at

⁶¹ *Diary of the Prefect of Studies*, St Xavier College Archives

six in the evening and was at once taken down with cholera. He immediately asked for the last sacraments, which were administered to him by Father Wippert. His deep spirituality came fully to the surface in the face of death. Before taking medicine he crossed himself devoutly, made a public confession of his sins, and calling the rector, Father De Blicke, begged pardon for his faults, at the same time commending to him his daughters in St. Louis. As the end came near he kissed his crucifix repeatedly. Death came at half-past ten o'clock on the morning of June 10 and the funeral services took place at four in the afternoon of the same day, after which the remains were immediately brought to the villa for interment. Julius Johnston had lived to his forty-first year.⁶²

The pain which the news of this sudden taking-off was to bring to the vice-province is reflected in the words of Father Gleizal, who was making a visitation of the houses east of the Mississippi as deputy for the vice-provincial, Father Elet, then in a dying condition at Florissant. Gleizal had already arrived at St. Joseph College, Bardstown, and was about to begin the visitation of that house when he received a telegram entreating him to come immediately to Cincinnati. From Louisville on his way to Cincinnati he wrote to St. Louis: "It is now after midnight, on my way to Cincinnati where I am called by the following despatch by telegraph, 'Julius Johnston is expiring, come immediately, you are absolutely wanted. F. De Blicke.' This despatch received at 3½ o'clock P.M. and at 4¼ I was off from St. Joseph's for Louisville in a private conveyance. This morning I hope to leave this place and reach Cincinnati tomorrow. This unforeseen call from Father De Blicke upsets all my arrangements. . . Now I go to bed but harassed by the thought that poor Johnston will be no more when I reach Cincinnati. If he be gone, what a loss! but I tremble lest this stroke be only the *initium dolorum*. The cross is on our shoulders—we must bear it. Happy if we knew how to carry it." It does not appear that Father Gleizal reached Cincinnati before the scholastic's death.⁶³

All the virtues which the Society of Jesus would see in its scholastic members were found in Julius Johnston, in particular, a love of prayer and self-denial. Not content with the period of time allotted by the rule to meditation on divine things, he often spent hours at night in this holy practice. So earnest a cultivation of the virtues of the interior life could not fail to be reflected in his outward manner, which endeared him to the student-body he was called upon to direct, one of the reasons left on record as accounting for the diminished registration

⁶² *Idem*

⁶³ Gleizal to Druyts, June 10, 1851 (A)

with which the college opened in the session following his death is the circumstance that his winning personality with its power to impress the students was no longer on the scene. One particular title to grateful remembrance of Mr. Johnston must be noted. He prepared an English translation or paraphrase, neatly worded, of the Little Office of Our Lady, the same version which generations of Jesuit students have piously recited at their sodality meetings down to our own day.

One other death from cholera among the Jesuits of Cincinnati is recorded. Brother William Hayes contracted the disease July 14, 1852, and passed away the following day.

In the month following the death of Julius Johnston Father De Blicke was relieved of his duties as rector. In philosophy, which he taught to the scholastics in Cincinnati in the leisure moments they could spare from their duties as instructors, he showed himself a keen and independent thinker, carrying indeed his aggressive handling of philosophical problems to a limit that became the occasion of anxiety to the officials of the vice-province. In March, 1851, Father Elet discussed with his consultors the action to be taken in view of complaints that De Blicke, in the lectures delivered by him to the scholastics, was holding to certain propositions which seemed to savor of the system known as ontologism and which had been put forward some time previously by Father Martin of Louvain. It was felt by the consultors, one excepted, that no step beyond a prudent admonition to Father De Blicke to be more cautious in the future was necessary under the circumstances, but Gleizal was of the opinion that De Blicke should be required to discontinue his teaching of philosophy owing to the danger of perversion in their philosophical training to which the scholastics might be exposed on his account. It does not appear, however, that De Blicke's removal from the office of rector was motivated by his tendency to unconventional doctrines in philosophy. As a matter of fact, he had never completed the customary theological studies of the Society and, on ceasing to be rector of St. Xavier College, became a student of theology at Georgetown College. That he had not lost the confidence of his superiors as a professor of philosophy is borne out by the fact that he was in later years steadily employed in that capacity in Bardstown College and other institutions of the vice-province. At the same time it is evident on his own admission that certain views in philosophy held by him at one time were not in keeping with the system subsequently authorized by the Father General of the Society, as De Blicke's correspondence with Dr. Orestes Brownson clearly indicates.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ "In Father De Blicke he [Brownson] found almost for the first time a professor of philosophy who saw clearly that for the last two centuries no philoso-

On June 29, 1851, Father De Blieck was succeeded as rector of St. Xavier College by Father George Carrell. From the rectorship of St. Louis University, which he held during four years, Carrell had been called in 1847 to the pastorate of St. Xavier's Church, Cincinnati. He was subsequently in charge for a year of the preparatory school at Purcell Mansion, passing thence to Chillicothe, Ohio, to become pastor of a parish in that town temporarily administered by the vice-province. During Carrell's incumbency as rector two additional dormitories for the students were erected and a new museum and chemical laboratory installed. The college, together with a diminishing registration owing in measure, so the *Annual Letters* declare, to the loss of Julius Johnston, had also to bear with certain manifestations of ill-will on the part of anti-Catholic elements of the city. The Know-Nothing movement was in full swing and in December, 1853, shortly after Father Carrell's resignation from the rectorship to receive episcopal consecration as first Bishop of Covington, Cincinnati witnessed a disgraceful attack by an infuriated anti-Catholic mob on the Pope's official envoy to the United States.

Under Father Carrell St. Xavier College met with financial difficulties which he was not prepared to cope with. Already, in April, 1853, when there were intimations of his impending appointment to an episcopal see, the vice-provincial, Father Murphy, and his consultors were of the opinion that, whether he were made bishop or not, he should be given a successor as rector in Cincinnati. On leaving the ranks of the Society of Jesus for a place in the hierarchy, though he still retained, it would appear, his membership in the Society, Father Carrell was assigned a successor in Cincinnati in the person of Father Isidore Boudreaux, who assumed his new duties in December, 1853, being at the time only in his thirty-sixth year. He was a man of known fidelity

phy properly so-called had been taught in colleges or universities and both agreed that this failure was due to lack of free, independent thinkers" Henry F. Brownson, *Orestes A. Brownson's Latter Life From 1856 to 1876* (Detroit, 1900), p. 139. De Blieck at Brownson's request began to compile a text-book of philosophy but gave over the attempt when he found himself at variance in certain matters with the system prescribed by the Father General for Jesuit schools. "Cheered on by your words of encouragement, I had well-nigh finished my plan, which I flattered myself would have met with your approbation, when I received a letter from headquarters proscribing so many propositions to which I firmly cling that I had to give up all idea of the kind. Bowing, with implicit obedience to my superiors, as a religious, I cannot but think as a man that Italians, at least some of them, are far behind in true philosophy." De Blieck to Brownson, Bardstown, April 11, 1859, in H. F. Brownson, *op. cit.*, p. 141. In Father De Blieck's time the neo-scholastic movement in philosophy, to which the Jesuits are sincerely committed, had not reached its later development and departures from sound philosophical teaching were found on occasion in Catholic academic circles.

in the observance of the Jesuit rule and an adept in the art of engaging the sympathies and winning the confidence of others. On the other hand fears had been entertained as to his capacity for affairs and the numerous administrative details that fall to the lot of a college president. It was not without some reluctance that Father Murphy's advisers were brought to indorse Boudreaux's nomination for the post, which the vice-provincial on his part strongly recommended. One of the advisers, when the appointment was first proposed, declined to sanction it, while Fathers De Smet and O'Loughlin did so with the reservation that some strong-handed associate be supplied to Father Boudreaux to insure to his administration the needed measure of vigor and efficiency.

Father Boudreaux's term of office was marked by the high-water mark of the wave of religious bigotry which swept over the country in the early fifties. An election for mayor held in Cincinnati in 1854 precipitated a crisis which did not pass without sacrifice of human lives. The Irish and German Catholic immigrants were marked out as special objects of persecution on the part of the bigots. Attempts were made to prevent the Irish from voting, and, on the other hand, the cry was raised that in the German quarters of the city native-born Americans were being forcibly kept from the polls. In one instance fighting between German residents and the followers of the so-called American party ensued and the ballot-box with its contents was burned. The mob, on drawing off from the scene, passed along Sycamore Street in front of St. Xavier's where no manifestation of violence was made except the hurling of a two-pound stone through the window of the rector's apartment. Happily, that official happened to be absent from the city at the time and the incident passed off without physical harm to anybody. The German Turners, who in the preceding year had been a party, so it was alleged, to the disturbances fomented against Archbishop Bedini, joined hands in this election with the Catholics, the result being that the Know-Nothing candidate for mayor was defeated.⁶⁵

By the end of the first decade of Jesuit control the financial condition of the college, never really prosperous, was such as to cause alarm. In 1848 boys under thirteen were not registered at the city institution but only at the Mansion, an arrangement that gave rise to complaint as some of the younger students found themselves thus separated from their older brothers. But the separation of junior and senior students, impracticable on Sycamore Street owing to the cramped quarters, was always deemed advisable by the college authorities. Further, the separation of boarders and day-scholars was also urged in the interests of

⁶⁵ *Historia Domus* (House History, St. Xavier College), 1854 St. Xavier College Archives

discipline and morals among the boarders, who, so it was said, were in a way affected adversely by association with the allegedly more wayward city students. Bishop Purcell himself urged a separate building for the boarders and even offered property for the purpose, which, however, was not accepted as being too remotely situated from the city. With the closing in the summer of 1849 of Purcell Mansion, the younger students returned to St. Xavier's. Father Murphy, making the visitation of the college in 1852, found the outlook for it far from promising. The faculty, its younger members especially, were discouraged.

The day-college and the boarding-school are going down right before one's eyes. This institution has never been flourishing in the true sense of the word. During its first years it enjoyed a factitious prosperity produced by means that were artificial, and, so to speak, blustering. This could not last. To begin with, a boarding-school is entirely out of place there, the premises anything but suitable, sombre-looking dormitories under the roof, poorly lighted and sunken class-rooms. Our poor scholastics find themselves imprisoned as it were with some sixty pupils.

The rector at this juncture, Father George Carrell, was not a man to cope with the difficult situation. Father Murphy noted his embarrassment and depression. "He is not of that class of people who like Father Larkin know how to put a good face on bad fortune. . . . He has more or less a resigned air and makes no effort to fortify and encourage his community. For the rest he is exact, regular, restrained, well-thought of by everybody, paternal towards those under him, but full of firmness." ⁶⁶

The question whether or not to continue the boarding-school now became acute. Father Roothaan gave permission to close it but directed that the step be not taken unless with the approval of the Bishop. As a matter of fact the latter himself desired that the thing be done. Accordingly, in October, 1853, Father Murphy with the concurrence of his consultors decided to close the boarding-school and conduct in its place a day-college only or, as an alternative step, to abandon college and church altogether and withdraw from the city. Finally, in January, 1854, the determination was taken to suppress the boarding-school with the close of the current session in August, "the church and day-school to be continued as before." In the last year of the boarding-school the boarders numbered fifty-seven, and the day-scholars seventy. How small was the income from student-money is indicated by the figures for the same year, the amount being \$13,593 from the boarders and \$1,584 from the day-scholars.

⁶⁶ Murphy à Roothaan, February 15, 1852 (AA)

The entire situation at St Xavier's as it appeared to him in January, 1854, was set forth by Father Joseph Keller in a detailed communication to the General urging the immediate suppression not only of the boarding-school but of the entire institution. This young priest, who was later to render distinguished service to the Society of Jesus both in the United States and Europe, was now discharging the duties of prefect of studies in Cincinnati. The main reason which he urged in favor of discontinuing the college was that such a step would relieve the strain on the personnel of the vice-province and allow a number of the faculty members of St Xavier's to proceed in due course with their studies in divinity. "I reproach no one, I blame no one, for it is evident that practically all are working to their full capacity. But I regret keenly that things in our vice-province have come to such a pass that the name Jesuit in this part of the country has become little more than a name. Certainly the situation should be otherwise and could be if our men were not tied down by so many occupations" Father Keller then enumerated the objections that might be raised to the continuance of the boarding-school. A faculty of fourteen teachers were engaged with only fifty-four boarders and seventy day-scholars. The buildings were inadequate, the class-rooms, in particular, being too small, almost subterranean in position and ill-lighted, especially in winter, as the procurator was without means to purchase lamps. The income from the students scarcely sufficed to keep the buildings in repair and in general meet the running expenses of the institution. With the college closed, certain of the professors could begin or finish their studies and thus render themselves more efficient later on. Moreover, additions could be made to the teaching-staff of the two other colleges of the vice-province, which would thereby gain in prestige.⁶⁷

The boarders' department of St Xavier College was discontinued in 1854. "We have dissolved the boarding-school here," De Smet informed a correspondent July 25, 1854, "in order to spare men and money." Many of the students no longer able to register at Cincinnati, were received in the Jesuit boarding-schools at St Louis and Bardstown. But in these schools the color-line was strictly drawn with the result that some of the erstwhile Cincinnati boarders who showed a slight strain of Negro blood were unable to gain entrance into them. "Cincinnati," so Murphy explained to the General, "being in a State where slavery does not exist and where the blacks are better received, a number of Louisianians sent thither their children of mixed blood. Bardstown and St. Louis could not receive them without offense. More-

⁶⁷ Keller ad Beckx, January, 1854 (AA)

over, all the white pupils would leave at once. Black or mixed blood does not find liberty and equality except in Canada and Spanish America.”

The suspension of the boarding-school did not by any means relieve the financial situation at St. Xavier's. It still continued to be a source of serious concern to superiors, so much so that the view began to be taken that the day-college also should be suspended. One voice was steadily raised all these years against the abandonment by the Jesuits of their Cincinnati field of labor and that was the voice of Father De Smet. In his letters to the Father General he expressed himself repeatedly and with unmistakable earnestness against giving up this field. Thus in a letter written at what seemed a critical moment in the history of the college

The financial state of the college [St. Xavier's] gives us a great deal of concern. The debt amounts to 25,068 dollars. This money was raised chiefly from petty depositors or creditors, most of them workmen who can come any day to call for their deposits. Should any rumors of a disquieting nature be started against us, say, of an attack on the college by the anti-Catholic party or something similar, a great many of these petty creditors would come and call for their deposits and the Procurator would find himself unable to meet the calls. As a consequence, a great clamor would be raised at once against the Society. The debt was contracted (1) in order to enlarge the church, \$8000, approximately, (2) to buy a site etc. on which to build a free school, \$13,000, approximately, (3) to buy another piece of property and build an addition to the college, \$6000, (4) to buy a villa, \$9000. The real-estate would suffice to cover the debt in full. To put an end to all disquiet we ought to take a loan on the real-estate and place ourselves under shelter of one or two good Catholic creditors.

It is obvious that the Society does an immense amount of good in this great town. The Catholics, in general, have the greatest respect for our Fathers, still they hold us just a little in check, a check, however, which often proves a salutary one, as it makes for prudence combined with zeal—after all, our enemies will pass away. It would be a veritable calamity, to my mind, were we to abandon this place which our Fathers have bedewed with their sweat for many years and with good result. About 600 children are receiving their Christian education. The parish of St. Francis Xavier counts a great many souls and is distinguished among the other parishes of the city for its piety and frequent reception of the sacraments. I enter into all these details, my very Reverend Father, because I sometimes hear the desire expressed that this entire establishment be suppressed. This would be a great misfortune and I respectfully witness to your Paternity my sentiments concerning it.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ De Smet à Roothaan, January, 1855 (A).

At about the same time that De Smet was thus protesting to the General against the proposed cessation of Jesuit activities in the metropolis of Ohio, he was advising the rector of St. Xavier's, Father Isidore Boudreaux, that, if no other course were open to him, he might mortgage the college property and the Purcell Mansion.⁶⁹ In October, 1855, he noted in writing to Father Duerinck of St. Mary's Potawatomi Mission, a one-time professor at St. Xavier's and still deeply interested in the affairs of the institution, that "since the bank failures in Cincinnati and the breaking-up of the boarding-college, St. Xavier's, instead of assisting or contributing towards the support of the Novitiate etc., has largely drawn on us to help it out of its difficulties. Much good is done in Cincinnati and the day college promises very fair—the number of students is increasing fast. You will also hear with pleasure that the Archbishop and even his Very Rd. Brother are at present very favorably disposed towards us."⁷⁰

On September 12, 1856, Father Maurice Oakley (Van den Eycken) became rector of St. Xavier College in succession to Father Boudreaux, who was appointed master of novices, an office he was to hold with distinction for a quarter of a century. Oakley began his administration with a determined effort to improve the financial status of the college and secure it a more favorable position in public regard. Having made some much needed repairs in the college buildings, he set himself to the task of erecting a new church. The wrecking in 1858 of the old edifice, which dated from Bishop Fenwick's time, was marked by disaster. As a wall was being undermined previous to dismantling, the great mass suddenly collapsed, burying thirteen of the workmen beneath the runs. News of the tragedy soon spread through the city and presently a crowd of ten thousand, in no friendly mood and disposed to blame the authorities of the college for the catastrophe, gathered on the scene. City officials took the situation promptly in hand. A cordon of police was thrown around the college buildings, while an officer of the law relieved the brother-porter at the college-door to forestall any attempt that might be made by malevolent individuals to force an entrance into the building. The measures thus taken to protect the college, all of them under the personal supervision of the mayor himself, proved effective and the occasion went by without untoward incident.⁷¹

Whatever hopes Father Oakley may have entertained at his entrance into office of bettering the prospects of St. Xavier, it needed only a few months' experience to make him anything but sanguine over the

⁶⁹ De Smet à I. Boudreaux, January 11, 1855 (A)

⁷⁰ De Smet to Duerinck, October, 1855 (A)

⁷¹ *Historia Domus* (Cincinnati)

outlook for the institution De Smet, always very much of an optimist, wrote to him

In your previous letter to me you appeared somewhat in the blues with regard to the situation of St Xavier College St Xavier's will and must flourish, and must and shall continue in spite of the petty little obstacles and prejudices raised by prejudiced minds to hinder its progress, and who would be glad should the Society have the weakness to give it up—they are mightily mistaken in this last idea What you should do is this—the more zealously and courageously we should show them the contrary and redouble our courage and attention to further the progress of the students—parents and guardians of children will assuredly appreciate our endeavors and send us their children in spite of all opposition St Xavier's church meanwhile stands upright and the fruits of religion pouring out of it are immense Before you were in St Xavier's doubts were frequently raised among Ours in the college as to the probable closing of the schools. I do not know for certain whether the thought was ever seriously entertained by Superiors at that time. Certain it is that the uncertain state of things then prejudiced the college very much and should now be avoided and put down⁷²

A year later than the date of the foregoing letter Father Oakley was still persisting in his unhopeful view of the situation in Cincinnati as De Smet informed the General.

A great deal of good continues to be done there [in Cincinnati] especially in the church, which is well attended, and in the free school, which contains a large number of scholars The college has only 90 pupils This number is small for a big city According to what is said the Rector allows himself to be too easily discouraged and sometimes manifests a desire that this house be given up This would be a great misfortune for the city and a very sad occurrence for the Society Rev Father Provincial refuses to listen to any such proposals⁷³

All this time the suspension of the college continued to find advocates here and there, among them, Father Isidore Boudreaux, who in 1859 was advising that the measure be taken but on condition that the church and parish schools be retained. Father Beckx himself, moreover, had come around to virtually the same solution of the problem. The

⁷² De Smet to Oakley, January 14, 1857 (A)

⁷³ De Smet à Beckx, June 1, 1858 (A) "I also am of the opinion that the city of Cincinnati is of the number of those which offer a greater and more fertile field for our ministry, on which account we ought not easily to relinquish it If I wrote about closing the College, I wrote merely that a suggestion had come to me from the Vice-Province that in view of the very great lack of personnel the day-school be temporarily suppressed, the residence and parish free school being kept up; but I gave no orders that this be done." Beckx ad Oakley, December 3, 1859. (AA).

final word was to be spoken by the Visitor, Father Sopranis, who was shortly expected in the country. Meantime the vice-provincial, Father Druyts, was of the opinion that the college could not be suppressed without the approval of Archbishop Purcell. "Once the new church is built, there is no city in the Vice-Province where our Fathers will accomplish more good."⁷⁴ Sopranis's opinion, based on a careful study of the problem, was given unreservedly in favor of continuing the college. No thought of suppressing it could be entertained under the circumstances, both because of the new church then in process of erection, and "because the college *in se* has good prospects before it."⁷⁵ Moreover, the students, while not numerous, were being commended highly for "their talent, diligence and piety." Finally, work in the ministry was extensive and productive of much good. The spiritual harvest gathered in through the medium of the church was indeed always emphasized by Jesuit observers in commenting on the situation in Cincinnati. This feature it was which more than anything else prevailed upon the superiors to retain possession of the Cincinnati field. Even Father Keller, who urged the immediate closing of the college, was loud in his praises of the spiritual results achieved through the agency of the church. The confessors were not numerous enough to dispose of the long queues of penitents, many of whom had to be sent away unheard.⁷⁶

On July 16, 1861, Father Oakley was succeeded in the rectorship of St. Xavier's by the Alsatian, Father John Schultz, who had previously been guiding the destinies, as superior, of the Potawatomi Mission of St. Mary's in Kansas. "Very seldom has it befallen any of Ours who has spent ten years among the rude, uncivilized Indians," he observed to the General, "to be called thence suddenly and set over a college in a very populous city. But how precious a thing is the virtue of obedience, I realized on this occasion." What Schultz hinted at is disclosed by Father Coosemans, who observed in a letter to the General that the new rector of St. Xavier made a great sacrifice in accepting the post, for his whole heart was in the ministry. Conditions in church and college were gratifying as portrayed by Schultz in his first report to Beckx. There were five fathers regularly engaged in parish duties. The eight confessors in attendance on Saturdays and Sundays scarcely sufficed for the throng of penitents, many of them from distant localities, who flocked to the church. In the colleges studies had been reorganized and with good effect. Of the one hundred and seven students registered nearly all were studying Latin and Greek. Finally, the Archbishop,

⁷⁴ Druyts à Beckx, October 24, 1859 (AA)

⁷⁵ Sopranis ad Beckx, December 8, 1860 (AA)

⁷⁶ Keller ad Beckx, January 19, 1854. (AA).

who, it was reported, had not favored the Society some years previously, now showed the Jesuits the utmost kindness. The first Mass in the new church was said by his Grace, with many of the diocesan clergy assisting.⁷⁷

Father Schultz's incumbency as rector lasted through the Civil War period, which the college survived with no serious check on its fortunes. But the one-time Potawatomi missionary was apparently not quite at home in a college president's chair, though there was no shirking of his difficult duties. "Father Rector," reported Coosemans, the provincial, after a visitation of St. Xavier's in September, 1866, "continues to discharge the duties of his office with care, courage, perseverance and satisfaction, but it is evident that the charge weighs on him heavily despite the favorable circumstances which surround him. He has been ill several times during the year."⁷⁸ Father Schultz found a successor before the end of 1866 in Father Walter Hill, a native Kentuckian, then in his forty-fifth year. The pressing need of St. Xavier's at the moment was for more adequate quarters for faculty and students and this need Father Hill set himself to relieve, the structure which he succeeded in putting up becoming known as the Hill building. Property was acquired in 1863 at the southwest corner of Sycamore and Seventh and a massive four-story edifice of brick was erected thereon in 1867. Heavy and richly carved doors and mouldings of oak, more precious today than in a period when such elaborate woodwork was a matter of course in substantial buildings, featured the interior. Official correspondence between Jesuit superiors and the Father General is customarily carried on in Latin though up to the seventies of the past century the middlewestern Jesuits often employed French for the purpose. Father Hill, an excellent philosopher as his text-books indicate, but not an adept either in Latin or French, chose to use the vernacular when he applied to the Father General for permission to erect the building, which was his outstanding contribution to the development of St. Xavier's.

Our college has never been very successful, our buildings, class-rooms and yard are very poor, the house standing just in the northern shadow of the church, rendering gas-light necessary in the rooms for most of the day. We own two hundred feet square north of the church, one half of which is rented out. Debt about \$40,000, all of it in deposits, for most of which

⁷⁷ Schultz ad Beckx, c. 1861 (AA). Father Weninger had lent substantial aid towards financing the college. "Nor was it less gratifying to me to learn from your Reverence what considerable subsidies in money you have been able to collect for the college of Cincinnati. I thank you for this and other services for the good of the Province." Beckx ad Weninger, September 6, 1862 (AA).

⁷⁸ Coosemans à Beckx, September 22, 1866 (AA).

we pay no interest. Our possessions in and out of the city, which we own in fee-simple, valued at \$80,000 to \$100,000 Two hundred students, but no room for more Our Fathers who have lived in this house have long seen that no extensive good can be done here unless we provide a more spacious and commodious building Propose to erect new building on property farthest from church and remove present building, using site as part of yard or court. Confidently believe we can borrow most of money from people here interest free Provincial also of opinion (on last visit) that we should now endeavor to provide a building that would be more extensive and more inviting to the people than the present rude one Cost \$75 or 100,000 May I ask [you], my dear Father, to make one *Memento* at the Holy Sacrifice for my soul? I do this because I am in great need of it May our Lord grant your Reverence peace in your days and happiness in death ⁷⁹

With the turn of the sixties St. Xavier's College entered on a period more prosperous than it had ever known before. During the three decades that had passed with the institution in Jesuit hands a measure at least of solid educational results had been achieved on behalf of the youth of Cincinnati and its vicinity, not to speak of more distant localities. Alumni of the college were to be found in the professions and in the mercantile pursuits as also in the ranks of the clergy, diocesan as well as regular.

⁷⁹ Hill to Beckx, undated, c 1867. (AA)