

CHAPTER II

BISHOP DU BOURG AND THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

§ I. BISHOP DU BOURG

Louis William Valentine Du Bourg, second Bishop of Louisiana and the Floridas, was the human agent chiefly instrumental in starting the Jesuits of the Middle United States on their way¹ At his invitation the charter members of that group made their first settlement in the trans-Mississippi country, from his hands they received as a gift the land which made that settlement possible, through his agency they came into possession of the property on which they built the first of the colleges that were to rise under Jesuit auspices in various localities of the Middle West. By wise counsel and friendly encouragement, and, when his slender resources permitted it, by material assistance, he sought to tide the pioneer Jesuit colony over the period of distress that followed its entrance into Missouri in 1823. Nor did his interest in the missionary venture he had fathered come to an abrupt end when under the pressure of painful circumstances he withdrew in 1826 from his American field of labor and retired into France As Bishop of Montauban he sought with characteristic energy to enlist the aid of the court and ministry of Charles X in the work of the Society of Jesus in mid-America. In fine, he wrote from France to its superior in the United States that he would not consider the well-nigh fifteen years of his residence in the Mississippi Valley to have been ill-spent though he had nothing more to show for his labors in that part of the world than the successful issue of the Jesuit Mission of Missouri In 1827, only four years after the establishment of the mission, Bishop Du Bourg was being called its "founder" by the superior of the Jesuits in North America.²

¹ Bishop Du Bourg often made use in his correspondence of the style "Bishop of New Orleans" and is so designated at times in papal documents The diocese of Louisiana, to which Florida was annexed by papal brief, was erected in 1793 with Rt Rev Luis Peñalver y Cardenas as its first incumbent Rt Rev Francis Porro, appointed successor to Bishop Peñalver y Cardenas, died in Rome as Bishop-elect of Louisiana and the Floridas The diocese of New Orleans proper was erected only in 1826 conjointly with that of St Louis

² "*N'y eût il que cela de gagné, je ne croyais pas avoir mal employé les 15 années que j' ai passées dans ce pays-la*" Du Bourg à Van Quickenborne, Montau-

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Louis Valentine Du Bourg was a native of Santo Domingo in the West Indies, having been born at Cape St François in that island, February 14, 1766. At an early age he was sent to France to be educated. It was the last stage of the pre-revolutionary period and the social graces of the old régime, to which at a later date even confirmed radicals like Talleyrand were to look back wistfully, were still an actual educational influence. Upon Du Bourg the impress of his French training was sharp and lasting, showing itself in an ardent piety as also in a refinement and courtesy of manner and an easy, tactful address that distinguished him in after life. Having made his theological studies at the Seminary of St Sulpice in Paris and received holy orders, he was, though not as yet a member of their congregation, placed by the Sulpicians at the head of the new institution begun by them at Issy near Paris. He was discharging the duties of this honorable position when the storm of the Revolution broke over his head, scattering the inmates at Issy and sending him for shelter to his family at Bordeaux. Even here he was not safe from pursuit by the revolutionary officials, and so, taking counsel of prudence, he made his way out of France, going first to Spain, and afterwards to America, which he reached at Baltimore in December, 1794. Received here with open arms by Bishop Carroll, he found established in this American refuge his old friends, the Sulpicians, into whose ranks he was himself admitted the year after his arrival in Baltimore.³

ban, January 26, 1828 (A) "*Hujus missionis fundator*" Dzierozynski ad Fortis, May 10, 1827 (AA)

³R A Clarke, *Lives of the Deceased Bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States* (New York, 1872-1888), 1 205 *et seq*. The account in the text of Du Bourg's career previous to his consecration draws chiefly on this source, which is based on contemporary notices in the *Lyons Annales* and the *Catholic Almanac*. Cf also Shea, *Catholic Church in the United States* (Akron, O, 1892), 3 670, and Herbermann, *The Sulpicians in the United States*. An illuminating portrayal of Du Bourg, the man, drawn almost entirely from contemporary letters and documents, is available in a study by Charles L. Souvay, C M, "Around the St. Louis Cathedral with Bishop Du Bourg, 1818-1820," *Pastoral Blatt* (St. Louis), January, 1918, p 8 *et seq*, also, *The Western Watchman* (St. Louis), October, 1917. Other first-hand information regarding Du Bourg's American episcopate is contained in Souvay's article, "Rosati's Elevation to the Sec of St. Louis," *Catholic Historical Review* (Washington), 3 3, as also in notes supplied by the same scholar to the text of Du Bourg's letters in the *St. Louis Catholic Historical Review*, *passim*. Souvay's pen-picture of Bishop Du Bourg notes "the wonderful amiability which shines forth from those kindly eyes of his, his genial countenance, his cordial courtesy, the very tone of his voice, soft, yet manly, and that unfailing tact—the infallible birthmark of one to the manner born—which naturally prompts him to say to every one, always in a most simple, unaffected, gracious language, sometimes tinged with a shade of the purest Attic wit, just the thing which every one likes to hear. He has truly, as Father De Andreis says, the *donum sermonis*,

To the Abbé Du Bourg the education of youth was a field of labor particularly congenial and in cultivating it the first years of his residence in America were spent For nearly three years, 1796-1798, he was president of Georgetown College, having been assigned to this post through the influence of Bishop Carroll, who was impressed from the first with the brilliant attainments of the young ecclesiastic At Havana he attempted, in company with the Abbés Flaget and Babade, to found a Sulpician college The Spanish government looked with disfavor upon the project and he returned to Baltimore, there to open St. Mary's School, the nucleus of the later St. Mary's College The impression made by Du Bourg and his Sulpician associates on the best Catholic element of Cuba during their stay in that island now bore fruit So many sons of Cuban planters flocked to the Baltimore school that in 1803 the Spanish government, fearful of the democratic tendencies of an education received under American auspices, sent a government vessel to the United States with orders for all the Cuban school-boys to return to their own country The institution survived this mishap, flourished for a while, and then declined Du Bourg's plans outran his means and financial embarrassment followed

Educational projects did not by any means exhaust the energies of this enterprising clergyman He found time to engage in controversy, taking issue on one occasion with the Presbyterian Synod of Baltimore, which had attacked St. Mary's College and the faith it professed He took a lively interest in Bishop Carroll's project of a new cathedral, suggesting the choice of the present site and, when money was needed to purchase it, collecting ten thousand dollars in the course of a single week from the Catholic poor of Baltimore He organized societies of mutual aid and benevolence among the Catholic men of the city and was active in securing proper spiritual care for the Catholic colored population, his efforts in this direction having much to do with the origin of the Oblate Sisters of Providence

his French has, of course, the classic purity and sobriety of refined ecclesiastical French of the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and at the same time he has a most perfect command of English All, from Bishop Carroll—a good judge—down, have long held him as an accomplished orator When you look at his regular features, you notice at once in his complexion much of that indescribable something which the Italians call *morbidezza*—an untranslatable word, you realize that all that distinction, that perfect gentlemanliness, that attractiveness, that amiable self-control, natural as they are, are accompanied by a wonderfully keen sensitiveness, and no wonder, since the prelate is a native of San Domingo, he has inherited all the temperamental characteristics of the West Indies Creole He is naturally clever, as every well-born West Indies Creole is, and thanks to the thorough classical education which he owes to that prolific nursery of sterling clergymen—St. Sulpice, he is undoubtedly one of the most highly cultured men of America ”

No achievement of the Abbé Du Bourg during his residence in Baltimore is more deserving of record than the part he took in the foundation of Mother Seton's Sisters of Charity. He met Mrs. Seton for the first time at St. Peter's Church in New York, where she acquainted him with her plan of going with her children to Canada and there entering a sisterhood. Suggesting to her the practicability of her realizing the same plan in the United States, he invited Mrs. Seton to come to Baltimore, received her two sons into St. Mary's College and watched with paternal care over the little group that had gathered about her until in 1809 it was organized on his advice as a religious community. Du Bourg was appointed by Archbishop Carroll its ecclesiastical superior and when Emmittsburg was chosen for its permanent home he went there in person to select and purchase the property. "The Rev. M. Du Bourg," Mother Seton wrote from Emmittsburg in December, 1811, "has exerted himself continually for us and bestowed all he could personally give."⁴

Eighteen years of educational and ministerial activity in the city of Baltimore had passed away when the scene of Du Bourg's labors shifted to the Mississippi Valley. That part of our national domain was then taking its first steps towards the splendid material growth that was to mark its future. No event in American history, after the adoption of the Federal Constitution, has done more to direct and shape the destinies of the country than the act by which President Jefferson acquired from France the magnificent sweep of territory known as Louisiana. With the Louisiana Purchase was born the trans-Mississippi West, and for the philosophy of our national history, as a distinguished student of that history has pointed out, one must look to the influence which the West has had upon the development of the American state.⁵

The state of religion in the Louisiana Territory at the period of its acquisition by the United States in 1803 was distressing. The diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas had been erected in 1793 with Bishop Peñalver y Cardenas as its first incumbent. That prelate, disheartened by the ill-success of his ministry, withdrew in 1801 to Guatemala, to which diocese he had been transferred by the Holy See. During the period 1801-1806, two vicar-generals, Fathers Thomas Hasset and Patrick Walsh, were successively in authority at New Orleans. The diocese was subsequently placed under the jurisdiction of Bishop Carroll.

⁴ The most authentic account of Du Bourg's activities in connection with this institute of nuns is in Sister Mary Agnes McCann, *History of Mother Seton's Daughters, the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, Ohio* (3 vols., New York, 1915-1917).

⁵ Woodrow Wilson in *Mere Literature* (Boston, 1896), echoing probably F. J. Turner's classic hypothesis on the significance of the frontier.

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Father John B David, a Sulpician, and Father Charles Nerinckx were in turn nominated to the vacant see. Neither could be brought to accept the post, delicacy of conscience, it was reported, making them both shrink from the responsibility. Meantime the interests of religion in Louisiana became severely menaced by the prolonged vacancy in the episcopal see. In the crisis Carroll, now archbishop, turned to the Abbé Du Bourg. By virtue of Apostolic Letters he appointed him in 1812 administrator apostolic of the diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas. The brief for his appointment as bishop was not forwarded, as Pius VII, then a victim of persecution at the hands of Napoleon, had resolved to issue no more papers of the kind until he was free to take counsel with his cardinals. Du Bourg, in deference to the wishes of his venerable bishop, accepted the appointment and towards the end of 1812 arrived in New Orleans. "Religion was in a most deplorable condition," says a contemporary account, "but a few clergymen distributed over its vast territory, scarcely a church in which the faithful could assemble to hear the words of eternal life, no institution that offered an asylum to the innocent and penitent heart, no seminary of learning to dispense the blessings of classical and religious instruction, the child reared in ignorance and forgetfulness of duty, the adult debarred from a participation of the sacraments, all classes of society in a woful indifference upon the subject of their eternal welfare, such was the scene of desolation he [Du Bourg] was compelled to witness" ⁶

The opposition which the newly appointed administrator met with from recalcitrant priests and their abettors on his arrival at New Orleans made him slow at first to assert his position as head of the diocese. A circumstance that contributed not a little to commend his authority was the patriotic course he pursued on occasion of the battle of New Orleans. On December 18, 1814, he issued a pastoral enjoining public prayers in the churches of New Orleans and calling upon his flock to implore the protection of heaven, "while our brave armies, led by the hero of the Floridas, prepare to defend our altars and firesides against foreign invasion." After the battle a public service of thanksgiving was celebrated in the cathedral, the victorious General Jackson being met at the door by the administrator and welcomed in an eloquent address.

A residence of three years in New Orleans convinced Du Bourg that the priests, missionaries, and religious communities so sorely needed for the upbuilding of the diocese would have to be obtained from Europe. He therefore went abroad early in 1815. In Rome he laid the circumstances and needs of his diocese before the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius VII. Archbishop Carroll having requested Du Bourg's appoint-

⁶ *Catholic Almanac*, 1839.

ment to the vacant see of which he was already administrator, the Pope named him Bishop of Louisiana and the Floridas, an honor which the Sulpician accepted in a spirit of obedience. He received episcopal consecration in Rome on September 24, 1815. From that time until his departure for America Bishop Du Bourg was employed in the difficult task of procuring men and means for his destitute diocese. As a result of his efforts he enlisted a number of recruits, conspicuous among whom were a group of Lazarists or members of the Congregation of the Mission under the leadership of the saintly Father De Andreis, and five *religieuses* of the Society of the Sacred Heart with the Venerable Mother Philippine Duchesne at their head.

§ 2 APPEALS FOR MISSIONARIES

The story of Du Bourg's episcopate up to 1823 discloses repeated attempts on his part to secure the services of Jesuit cooperators. At least five such attempts, all, except the last, unsuccessful, are on record. As early as 1814, while apostolic administrator at New Orleans, he appealed for priests to Father Grassi, the superior of the Maryland Jesuits.⁷ In the following year, he was consecrated Bishop of Louisiana and the Floridas. Not a month had elapsed since his consecration when he procured from the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius VII, a brief, under date of October 16, 1815, commending his petition for missionaries to the General of the Jesuits, Father Thaddeus Brzozowski.⁸ Father Brzozowski, however, did not find it possible to comply with this joint petition of Pius VII and the Bishop of Louisiana, honorable as it was to the Society over which he presided. That body had been restored throughout the Christian world only the year before, its provinces were unsettled and undermanned, its General, refused permission by the Russian government to go to Rome and unable to dispose freely either of himself or of his subjects, could not from so remote a point as Polotsk in Russia administer properly the important spiritual interests entrusted to his hands. Father Brzozowski regretted, therefore, that he had only promises to make to the zealous prelate from America. Yet he did what he could. He issued instructions to Father Perelli, vicar for Italy, as also to Father Clorivière, provincial of France, to furnish Du Bourg with men if they had them to spare.⁹

⁷ Hughes, S. J., *History of the Society of Jesus in North America, Colonial and Federal*, Documents, 2: 1008.

⁸ *Idem*, Doc., 2: 1010. Thaddeus Brzozowski, born in Ermeland, Königsberg, East Prussia, October 21, 1749, entered the Society of Jesus August 26, 1765, General of the Society from 1805 to his death in 1820, his administration witnessing the tragic episode of Napoleon's invasion of Russia.

⁹ *Idem*, Doc., 2: 1011.

It was, it would appear, Du Bourg's desire to see in Louisiana a Jesuit mission independent of that of Maryland. He alleged as the reason for such separation the great distance between Louisiana and Maryland, but the true reason, so Father Fidele de Grivel informed his General from Paris, was the fear entertained by the prelate that Father Grassi, superior of the Maryland Mission, might withdraw men for service in the eastern United States. Meeting the Bishop in Paris, de Grivel disabused him of some misconceptions he was under regarding the Society's methods of disposing of its members. "He is," de Grivel commented in a letter to the General, "a man of God and one can easily come to an understanding with him." The Bishop agreed to pay the travelling expenses from Bordeaux to Louisiana of such missionaries as the General might send him, but in his poverty he could not undertake to pay their expenses from Polotsk to Bordeaux, a matter of seventy-five ducats for each traveller.¹⁰

Not disheartened by the failure of his first application, Bishop Du Bourg wrote again to the Father General with a request that he issue orders to the Jesuit provincials of Italy, France and Belgium requiring men to be supplied.¹¹ Finally, on the eve of his departure from Bordeaux, he again addressed himself to the General, requesting leave to take with him to America Father Barat, for whom he had conceived a high regard. The latter, a brother of St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart, "yearns," in the Bishop's words, "for the foreign missions." Local superiors may protest, for this reason the Bishop has recourse to the General. "It is to obviate such difficulties that your holy Founder wished all things to be regulated by a single individual, who not being influenced by the particular interests of this or that locality may pronounce upon the vocations of his subjects in a manner more conformable to the general interests of the greater glory of God."¹² But Father Barat was not to accompany the Bishop of Louisiana. After two years of fruitless negotiations with the Society of Jesus, the enterprising prelate, with a party of twenty-eight recruits, embarked at Bordeaux for America, June 17, 1817, on the French frigate *Caravane*, which the generosity of Louis XVIII had placed at his service.¹³

¹⁰ *Idem*, Doc, 2 1011. Fidele de Grivel, born at Cour St Maurice in France, December 17, 1769, entered the Society of Jesus, August 16, 1803, master of novices at White Marsh in the thirties, died at Georgetown, District of Columbia, June 26, 1842.

¹¹ *Idem*, Doc, 2 1012.

¹² *Idem*, Doc, 2 1013. Louis Barat, born at Joigny, France, March 30, 1768, became a Jesuit August 20, 1814, died at Paris, June 21, 1845.

¹³ F. Holweck, *Kirchengeschichte von St. Louis*, p. 23. Bishop Du Bourg was the bearer of letters from the Jesuit Father General appointing Father Anthony

Bishop Du Bourg, returning now to America without the Jesuit missionaries he had so earnestly solicited, did not by any means relinquish the hope of some day seeing them settle in his diocese. About a year after he had taken up residence in St. Louis, which he temporarily made his headquarters in preference to New Orleans, he wrote to Father Anthony Kohlmann, superior of the Society of Jesus in Maryland, inviting him to open a house in the town of Franklin, Missouri, now known as Old Franklin, to distinguish it from the present town of the same name.¹⁴ It was situated in Howard County, on the left bank of the Missouri River, opposite the present site of Boonville. Laid out in 1816 on fifty acres of land donated for the purpose, with streets eighty-seven feet wide, it soon became the most considerable town in the state after St. Louis. The Missouri *Intelligencer*, appearing at Franklin, April 23, 1819, made claim to be the first newspaper, after the Missouri *Gazette* of St. Louis, published west of the Mississippi. The first steamboat to ascend the Missouri, the *Independence*, reached Franklin, the terminus of its historic trip, May 28, 1819, having been eight days out from St. Louis. But the glories of Franklin were short-lived. In 1826 the encroachments of the Missouri River caused the inhabitants to abandon the town, the buildings being moved bodily or else torn down for the sake of the materials. The site of the town was soon swept away entirely, the only part pertaining to it that now remains being the old graveyard, which lay beyond its limits.¹⁵

It was to this promising frontier settlement that Bishop Du Bourg was inviting the Jesuits of the Maryland Mission. But that mission of the Society was too slenderly manned to venture on a new establishment in the Far West and so the Bishop's invitation went unheeded. This outcome must have brought disappointment to Mother Duchesne in St. Charles, Missouri, whence she had written hoping "that at the town of Franklin, which was rapidly rising, the Society of Jesus would also found a college and by the gradual erection of small habitations extend their operations into distant localities where the word of God had not yet been preached."¹⁶

Kohlmann superior of the Maryland Mission "Sept 9, 1817 Rt Rev Mr Du Bourg came to the College having landed at Annapolis a few days ago, with about 31 eccl [esastics] 5 of whom are priests. He brought letters for Fr Kohlmann from Rev Fr General Sept 11, 1817. Father Kohlmann assembled all the religious in the refectory and read an extract of Fr General's letter appointing him Superior (i.e. of Ours)." Diary of Father John McElroy, S.J. (G)

¹⁴ Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 2 1013

¹⁵ Howard L. Conard, *Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri* (St. Louis, 1901), art "Franklin."

¹⁶ Baunard, *Life of Mother Duchesne*, tr. by Fullerton (Roehampton, England, 1879), p. 181

Two years after the project of a Jesuit establishment at Franklin was mooted the Bishop was still in search of Jesuit recruits. This time he addressed himself to Cardinal Fontana, Prefect of the Congregation of the Propaganda. He regretted his inability to provide for the conversion of the savage tribes which abounded in "the upper parts" of his diocese, and he asked his Eminence to use his influence to have the General of the order grant him Father Barat and other French fathers as well as some of the members recently expelled from Russia. Five or six fathers would be enough if only the Maryland Mission would reinforce the party with two or three more.

So far I have scarcely been able to turn my attention to the conversion of the savages, who are in great numbers in the upper part of my diocese. But even if I had been able to do so, there were no laborers. For some time past I have been thinking, for this paramount work of charity, of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus and have left no stone unturned in order to secure some of them. In this regard I was greatly aided by his Holiness [Pius VII], who went so far as to write to the Superior General with a view to indorse my wishes. But hitherto our efforts have proved unsuccessful. However, I understand that the Superiors of the Society are showing more willingness to undertake the work. I have accordingly recommended to Father Inglesi to make use of every resource his intelligence and zeal could prompt in order to bring the project to maturity. I likewise beg most earnestly of your Eminence to second his efforts. There is, in particular, one of the Fathers of the Society, Dr. Barat by name, now in the Little Seminary of Bordeaux, whom I know to be most anxious to come here, in piety, knowledge and zeal he is second to none. I most earnestly pray the Vicar-General to give him to me, and beseech to this end the aid of your Eminence's most powerful influence. With him some of the younger French Jesuits will be glad to come as also others of riper years, who came lately from Russia to France. Five, or six at most, would be sufficient, if to them were added two or three from Maryland—a thing most desirable on account of their knowledge of English, and also because, as these are well-off financially, they could supply the want of their brothers. With this help, the Gospel cannot fail to make headway among the numberless natives on both sides of the Mississippi and the Missouri. Your Eminence should make it his business to undertake so great a work. Let him buckle manfully to the task. If he do not, I am afraid the Protestant missionaries will wrest from us so desirable a palm of victory.¹⁷

In his answer to Bishop Du Bourg under date of June 2, 1821, Cardinal Fontana, after disposing of the question of a coadjutor for the Bishop of Louisiana, wrote apropos of the Indian missions

¹⁷ Du Bourg ad Fontana, New Orleans, February 24 (25th), 1821. *SLCHR*, 2: 136

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Meanwhile, what your Lordship has no less at heart than the Sacred Congregation, concerns the conversion of the savages, who are in great numbers throughout Upper Louisiana and may easily be brought from the darkness of error to the light of truth, provided there are laborers I indeed feel like yourself that no workers are better fitted for this task than the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, accordingly I will do my utmost to bring the Superior General to consent to your proposal, and not only permit Father de Barat, now residing at Bordeaux, to go over there with others who came recently from Russia, but also to see that two or three from Maryland be sent I shall without delay notify your Lordship of the result of this negotiation But you ought to mention and specify exactly the places to be assigned to the Mission of the Jesuit Fathers in order to preclude all misunderstandings and conflicts for the future ¹⁸

In fulfillment of the pledge it had given Bishop Du Bourg to do its utmost to secure him Jesuit missionaries, the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda, through its secretary, Msgr. Pedicini, addressed a note to Father Fortis, who had succeeded Father Brzozowski as General of the Society of Jesus

An answer is being returned to the prelate that the Sacred Congregation will lend all its services in obtaining from your Most Rev. Paternity the fulfillment of the desire expressed, and that, in the meantime, he himself should determine and circumscribe the limits of the mission to be placed entirely under the care of the Jesuit Fathers, so that no collision or disturbance arise subsequently In pursuance of the orders received from the Sacred Congregation, Pedicini, the Secretary, prays your Most Rev. Paternity, to take to heart a work so conducive to the glory of God and the salvation of souls, and to let the undersigned know what you will be able to resolve upon with regard to each of the points mentioned, so that he will be able to give the prelate a suitable reply ¹⁹

Father Fortis was not any better off in the matter of available subjects for the foreign missions than had been his predecessor, Father Brzozowski. He therefore signified regretfully to Msgr. Pedicini his inability to comply with Du Bourg's request His letter, briefly summarized, enters in detail into the difficulties of his position

The scarcity of priests who are fit for active work and have received the formation of the Order, since the reestablishment The engagements already made, binding the General in conscience and honor to complete the estab-

¹⁸ Fontana ad Du Bourg, Rome, June 2, 1821 *SLCHR*, 2 143

¹⁹ Pedicini ad Fortis, Rome, June 2, 1821 Hughes, *op cit*, Doc., 2 1014 Aloysius Fortis, born in Verona, Italy, February 26, 1748, entered the Society of Jesus October 12, 1762, General of the Society of Jesus, 1820-1829, died in Rome January 27, 1829

lishments founded by the Society in diverse states in Europe. The urgency of so many European princes, who demand the return of the Order or its extension into their own countries, with the additional consideration that these same princes have distinguished themselves as protectors and great benefactors of the Society. The state of France, where many Bishops have placed the Jesuits under signal obligations and have been so liberal in allowing members of their diocesan clergy to enter the Order, "in the hope that they should receive a return in kind," by seeing the same as Jesuits lending their help in the ministries proper to their new state. What would they think, if, after being so frequently put off, they now saw their most strenuous workmen, who are actually in their service, withdrawn and despatched to America? ²⁰

This unequivocal communication from the General of the Society to the Propaganda might seem to have quite cut off from Du Bourg all hope, at least for the moment, of securing Jesuit missionaries for his diocese. It was forwarded to that prelate by Cardinal Fontana with an accompanying note:

Your Lordship's proposal concerning the erection of a mission in your immense diocese for the evangelization of the savages, under the direction and in care of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, I did not fail to recommend warmly to the Superior General of the said Society. But from the answer returned by him, a copy of which I enclose herein, you may easily understand that, by reason of the scarcity of laborers, he is for the present unable to undertake this noble work. It accordingly devolves upon you to adopt other means to bring about the realization of your praiseworthy design, no work, indeed, is holier and more apostolic than that of turning barbarous nations, plunged in the darkness of error, to the light of truth and the path of eternal salvation. What I know of your solicitude and zeal assures me that you will not neglect these means. ²¹

§ 3 NEGOTIATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT

Towards the end of 1822 Bishop Du Bourg arrived in Washington to transact with the federal government some business matters relating to his diocese. ²² To a friend in Lyons, France, he wrote on January

²⁰ Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 2 1015

²¹ Fontana ad Du Bourg, Rome, June 23, 1821 *SLCHR*, 2 144

²² In his letter of March 29, 1823, to the Cardinal-Prefect of the Propaganda (*SLCHR*, 3 129), Du Bourg details the reasons that brought him to Washington. These fall under two heads, (1) the Ursuline property in New Orleans and (2) the Indian missions. With regard to the property, on which was built the venerable Ursuline convent in New Orleans, Bishop Du Bourg sought and obtained from the government a confirmation of the old French or Spanish title by which the nuns held it, besides inducing the government to relinquish a claim which it had preferred on some technicality to a third part of this same property. The Bishop's particular interest in the matter was due to the circumstance that the nuns having

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29, 1823, from that city apropos of the newly founded Association of the Propagation of the Faith

I am writing today to the [members of the] Association of the Propagation of the Faith. Their plan is most excellent May they persevere and not permit themselves to become discouraged by difficulties! We have very great ones of another kind to surmount, but if the Association is constant and endeavors to help us by all the means that such a project faithfully followed may produce, I have no doubt of the most consoling success Abandoned to our own resources, however, we can advance but slowly, and then only provided the constant sight of the great needs which appeal to us clamorously from so many quarters may not end by crushing our courage I cannot tell you how much this project has already contributed to encourage mine I see in advance churches building, the ignorant instructed, the savages evangelized It is in part, the interests of the last which have called me to Washington The government has received my request graciously, but what it can do does not amount to much Never mind, it will help, at least The most difficult part as well as the most expensive in all great enterprises is the beginning, and when there is little or no money, it is enough to drive one mad²³

A letter of Du Bourg bearing the same date as the preceding one and addressed to the officials of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith dwells upon the aid which that body in the first year of its existence proposed to lend to the missions of Louisiana

The plan of your Association, Gentlemen, does credit to your judgement as well as to your piety Your organization, so well adapted to facilitate collections and insure unity in the whole business, and your intention to distribute funds between the missions of the East, Louisiana and Kentucky, all seems to me perfectly conceived I do not doubt that He who has inspired you with the courage to take up and the wisdom to conceive the plan, will give you also the perseverance to put it into execution There will be difficulties of detail, there will be, too, an elaborate correspondence to keep up, which might weary men less faithful, men whose intentions were less elevated, but the remembrance of all that Jesus Christ suffered for the redemption of your own souls, the happiness of working with him and his followers for the redemption of so many other souls which the want of pecuniary help would leave eternally condemned to the privation of this happiness, are motives that

acquired a new site for their convent had engaged to turn the old site over to him as soon as the new convent buildings should be ready for occupancy To secure a clear title to the old Ursuline property was accordingly a matter of moment to the Bishop

²³ Du Bourg à M ——— de Lyon, Washington, January 29, 1823, in *Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*, I (no 2) 60 Tr in *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society*, 14 145 Bishop Du Bourg had a share in the creation of the great Catholic international society for missionary support, the Association of the Propagation of the Faith

never lose force in hearts filled with Faith By giving a broad range to the object of your Association, you insure for it the support and interest of all who love God in France The imagination, as well as the heart, is fired with the idea of carrying the torch of religion to the most distant points of the two hemispheres Nothing could be more truly Catholic than this wise thought and what pious soul, even in the poorest classes, would not esteem it an honor and joy, to procure, at the price of sacrifices so light, the glory of taking part in such a great work ²⁴

In the negotiations with the government on which Bishop Du Bourg was presently to enter, John C. Calhoun, secretary of war under President Monroe, took a leading part. The management of Indian affairs belonged at this period to the Department of War, but in the following year, 1824, a separate Bureau of Indian Affairs, with Thomas Lorraine McKenney at its head as commissioner, was organized, the bureau being made an appanage of the Department of the Interior. From 1821 to 1824, Calhoun, as secretary of war, gave to the Indian affairs of government his personal attention, displaying in the conduct of this branch of his administrative duties a grasp of the Indian question worthy of one to whom the impartial verdict of history has accorded high rank among American statesmen.²⁵ That both President Monroe and Secretary Calhoun showed themselves sympathetic to the Bishop's plans was probably due to certain Catholic associations that had entered into their lives. Monroe had apparently made contacts with the Jesuits of Georgetown College Calhoun, during his residence on Georgetown Heights or perhaps even before that period, was brought into friendly personal relations with the same Jesuit group ²⁶ To one of their number, Father Levins, a mathematician of note, he offered a professorship at West Point He apparently was not without some knowledge and appreciation of the Jesuits as missionaries, for he advised Bishop Du Bourg to secure the services of some of their number for the missions

²⁴ Du Bourg à l'Association, etc, Washington, January 29, 1823 *Ann Prop*, p 13 (ed Louvain, 1825) Tr in *RACHS*, 14 146

²⁵ "Upon the whole he advocated a policy towards these wards of the nation which it would have been well for all parties concerned to adopt and pursue with undeviating honesty Even in our days his Indian reports might be profitably studied with regard as well to the cardinal mistakes committed in the Indian policy as to what ought to be done" Herman E Von Holst, *John C Calhoun* (American Statesmen Series), 1888, p 45

²⁶ "I have often heard old Jesuits say that Mr Calhoun, who lived in Georgetown at this period in an elegant mansion on the heights, often interchanged neighborly courtesies with them and seemed to take much pleasure in his visits to the college" J Fairfax McLaughlin, *College Days at Old Georgetown and other Papers* (Philadelphia, 1899), p 73 Calhoun was living on Georgetown Heights at least as early as the summer of 1823

which the prelate was now proposing to set up Negotiations with government on this head began in January or February, 1823 Having met Calhoun in person, Du Bourg was directed by him to draw up and submit a definite statement of his missionary plans and the extent of aid he would expect from government to enable him to carry them out The Bishop thereupon wrote to the secretary February 15, 1823

Encouraged by the friendly attention with which you have been pleased to honor my advances for the establishment of Catholic missions among the native Indians of Missouri, I gladly meet your kind invitation in submitting some considerations on that important subject, which, if approved, may serve as a basis for the concession to be made by government for the support of those missions

I should then, with due deference, think that for those distant missions at least, the work of civilization should commence with harmonizing them by the kind doctrine of Christianity, instilled into their minds not by the doubtful and tedious process of books, but by familiar conversation, striking representations and by the pious lives of their spiritual leaders Men, disenthralled from all family cares, abstracted from every earthly enjoyment, inured to fatigue and self-denial, living in the flesh as if strangers to all sensual inclination, are well calculated to strike the man of nature as a supernatural species of beings, entitled to his almost implicit belief Thus become masters of his understanding, their unremitting charity will easily subdue the ferocity of their hearts and by degrees assimilate their inclinations to those of their fellow-Christians

I would be for abandoning the whole management of that great work to the prudence of missionaries as the best judges of the means to be progressively employed to forward the great object of their own sacrifices Such at least was always the policy observed in Catholic Indian missions, the success of which in almost every instance answered and often surpassed every prudent expectation

Upon these principles I would be willing to send a few missionaries by way of trial at least among the Indians of Missouri should Government be disposed to encourage the undertaking The appropriation of monies for that object, being, I understand, very limited and in a great measure already disposed of, I feel extremely delicate in proffering any specific demand I would only beg leave to observe that hardly a less sum than 200 dollars would suffice to procure a missionary the indispensable necessities of life With this abridged view of the subject I beg you will have the goodness to inform me, Sir, whether and to what extent, Government would be willing to favor my scheme 1 What allowance it would grant to each missionary? 2 To how many that support might be extended? 3 In case establishments could be made, what help would be made towards them either in money or lands? (H)

This letter of Bishop Du Bourg's brought from Secretary Calhoun a reply, dated five days later, February 20

I have received your communication of the 15th instant and laid it before the President [Monroe], who has directed me to state to you in reply that the regulations established in relation to the civilization of the Indians have been relaxed with respect to the remote tribes, that is, those tribes occupying the country beyond the Osages and the line of our military posts, and that the Government will contribute \$200 annually towards the support of each missionary whom you may send out, not exceeding for the present, three, which will be paid quarter-yearly to your order, commencing from the time they shall actually set out in the prosecution of their duties, of which, and also of the names of the persons selected, you will be pleased to notify this Department. The Government will also contribute towards the expense of the buildings (of which an estimate must be submitted to this Department), which it may be necessary to erect for the accommodation of the Missionaries, in the proportion mentioned in the regulations, printed copies of which are enclosed.

An annual report, on the 1st day of October, communicating information of the points selected for the location of the missionaries respectively, the progress they have made and the prospects of success and also any information in relation to the character and condition of the Indians and the surrounding country which may be thought useful to be known to the Government, will be required, which will enable the Government to judge of the propriety of extending further encouragement to the undertaking . . .²⁷

Bishop Du Bourg's efforts to interest the federal authorities in his Indian missions had thus met with considerable success. He had been pledged an annual appropriation of two hundred dollars for each of the three missionaries whom he engaged to send among the Indians and had besides secured a promise of substantial aid towards the erection of buildings in which to house them. But he was not content to put up with his actual gain so long as there was a chance of making it still more substantial. He asked and obtained from Calhoun a pledge that the government allowance promised in favor of three missionaries be extended to four. From the Visitation Convent at Georgetown he wrote on March 10 to Calhoun

I left, thru mistake, in Baltimore, the message with which you lately favoured me in relation to the support granted, at my request, by Government to a few Catholic Missionaries for the Indian tribes of upper Missouri and Mississippi. In that message, you had confined encouragement to *Three*, but on a second verbal application from me, you were kind enough to promise to *alter* that word into *Four*. Now, Sir, I have to request of your kindness 1st. a written authorization to make that alteration myself, on my return to Baltimore—2nd—a letter for Genl Wm Clark of St Louis intimating to him the dispositions of Government respecting those four Missionaries,

²⁷ Calhoun to Du Bourg, Washington, February 20, 1823 (A)

and an invitation for him to assist in conveying them to their respective destinations

As I intend to leave this place on Thursday for Wheeling, via Baltimore, I take the liberty of soliciting an immediate answer, observing at the same time that in consequence of new arrangements, the departure of the Missionaries will be somewhat retarded in order to make the expedition more complete, and probably to afford a sufficient number for the three posts designated by you, viz Council Bluffs, River St Pierre, and Prairie Du Chien. When this latter circumstance is fully ascertained, I will have the honor of addressing you for an extension of patronage.²⁸

To this letter of Du Bourg's Calhoun replied on the following day granting the request made by the prelate and informing him that in compliance with his petition a letter had been forwarded to General William Clark, superintendent of Indian affairs in the West, directing him to furnish the missionaries with passports and otherwise befriend them in their missionary designs. "It is believed," says the secretary in his letter to Clark at St. Louis, "that the missionaries will, besides preparing the way for their ultimate civilization, be useful in preventing the commission of outrages and preserving peace with the tribes among which they may fix themselves."^{28a}

Thus far in the negotiations between the Bishop of Louisiana and the American secretary of state nothing had been said on either side in regard to an Indian school. The Bishop's plan, as presented to the government and indorsed by the latter with an accompanying pledge of financial support, did not go beyond the settling of a few missionaries among the Indian tribes of his diocese, it stipulated nothing whatever regarding the education of Indian boys and, in fact, made no mention of the topic at all. But between the dates March 10 and 17 circumstances arose which led to a radical change in the Bishop's program as he had previously laid it before the government. What these circumstances were, the Bishop details in a letter written from Georgetown to his brother Louis, a resident of Bordeaux in France.

I am still here, my dear brother, although I had proposed to leave before this. I have delayed, partly on account of bad roads, but more especially in order to see the end of a negotiation which I had begun with the government on the one hand and with the Jesuits on the other for the establishment of Indian missions on the Missouri and the Upper Mississippi.

Providence deigns to grant a success to this double negotiation far in excess of my hopes. The government bestows upon me two hundred dollars

²⁸ (H) Government posts were established at this time at Prairie du Chien, near the confluence of the Mississippi and Wisconsin Rivers, at the confluence of the Mississippi and the St. Peter's, and at Council Bluffs on the upper Missouri.

^{28a} Calhoun to Clark, March, 1823 (A)

a year for each missionary and that for four or five men, and it promises to increase the number gradually, which I am sure it will do.

For an enterprise such as this it was essential that I should have men especially called to this work, and I had almost renounced the hope of ever obtaining such when God, in His infinite goodness, brought about one of those situations of which He alone can foresee and direct the outcome. The Jesuits of whom I speak had an establishment of theirs in Maryland and finding themselves exceedingly embarrassed were on the point of disbanding their novitiate when I obtained this pecuniary encouragement from the government. They have seized this opportunity and have offered to transport the whole novitiate, master and novices, into Upper Louisiana and form there a preparatory school for Indian missionaries. If I had my choice, I could not have desired anything better. Seven young men, all Flemings, full of talent and of the spirit of Saint Francis Xavier, advanced in their studies, about twenty-two to twenty-seven years of age, with their two excellent masters and some brothers, this is what Providence at last grants to my prayers

* * * * *

As for the rest, you have my permission, in fact it will even give me great pleasure to have you communicate this news to any who can aid in such a great work, particularly the members of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith. They will see with gratification how God makes the establishment of their Association in France coincident with the one forming for the heathen in Louisiana, as though He would have them understand that He destines the former for the support of the latter. Now I shall tell you of my plan. Near the spot where the Missouri empties into the Mississippi, outside the village of Florissant, already so happy as to possess the principal institution of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, I have a very pretty productive farm, excellent soil, which if well cultivated, (which it is not at present), could easily provide sustenance for twenty persons at least, so far as the important question of sustenance is concerned. True, there is only a small house on the place, but in this country a big cabin of rough wood, such as will be suitable for the apostles of the savages, is quickly built. It is there that I will locate this novitiate, which will be for all time a seminary especially intended to form missionaries for the Indians and for the civilized and ever growing population of Missouri.

As soon as the actual subjects are ready, we will commence the mission in good earnest. In the meantime, I propose to receive in the seminary a half dozen Indian children from the different tribes in order to familiarize my young missionaries with their habits and language and to prepare the Indians to serve as guides, interpreters and aids to the missionaries when they are sent to the scattered tribes. It seems to me that with the Divine assistance this plan, which presents itself so naturally, may in time develop. The first thing we have to do is to pray to God, the second to petition His servants on earth, not forgetting, however, those who are in heaven. I foresee still many difficulties, for we must build, we must buy provisions for the first

year, the farm not being under sufficient cultivation, we must buy clothes, etc etc., but we will raise our eyes to Him who has but to open His hand in order to shower blessings upon His creatures, and I know that when our brothers and sisters in France hear of our undertaking and our needs they will come to our aid

I wrote some time ago to the Association of the Propagation of the Faith through its secretary at Lyons I did not then expect this Indian Mission to take form so soon I prudently wished to have funds before seeking men, but behold! the men arrive before the funds, because God has His own way of arranging matters which often upset the plans of our poor little human prudence May His holy will be done Moreover, my young missionaries are not the men to recoil before difficulties I asked the master of novices the other day how they would travel, as I had no money to give them "Oh!" said he, "I have no uneasiness, we will walk and we will beg" ²⁹

On the same day that Bishop Du Bourg penned the foregoing letter to his brother in Bordeaux he wrote to Secretary Calhoun informing him of the change in his plans occasioned by the offer he had just received from the Maryland Jesuits

The liberal encouragement which the Government has, at my request, consented to extend to Catholic Missions among the remote Indian tribes on the Missouri and Upper Mississippi, having induced me to bestow on that important subject all the attention to which it is entitled, I have the honor to submit to your consideration a plan of operation which the most serious reflections have presented to me as best calculated to insure permanency to that establishment and to enlarge its sphere of usefulness

The basis of that plan would be the formation (on an eligible spot near the confluence of those two large streams) of a *Seminary* or nursery of Missionaries, in which young Candidates for that holy function would be trained in all its duties, whilst it would also afford a suitable retreat for such as, through old age, infirmity or any other lawful cause, would be compelled to withdraw from that arduous ministry—The chief studies pursued in that Seminary would be the manners of the Indians, the idioms of the principal Nations and the arts best adapted to the great purpose of civilization—And, in order to facilitate the attainment of some of these objects, I would at once try to collect in that Institution some Indian youths of the most important tribes, whose habitual converse with the Tyros of the Mission, would be mutually of the greatest advantage for the promotion of the ultimate object in contemplation—The result of that kind of Noviciate would be a noble emulation among the Missionaries, uniformity of system, a constant succession of able and regularly trained Instructors, and a gradual expansion of their sphere of activity.

I am willing to give for that establishment a fine and well-stocked farm

²⁹ Du Bourg à son frère, March 17, 1823 (*Ann Prop*, 1 (no 5) 37 *et seq* Tr in *RACHS*, 14 149

BISHOP DU BOURG AND THE SOCIETY OF JESUS 53

in the rich valley of Florissant about one mile from the river Missouri and fifteen from St. Louis.

Seven young clergymen, from twenty-two to twenty-seven years of age, of solid parts and an excellent Classical education are nearly ready to set off at the first signal under the guidance of two Superiors and professors and with an escort of a few faithful mechanics and husbandmen to commence that foundation I calculate at about two years the time necessary to consolidate it and to fit out most of those highly promising candidates for the duties of the missions, after which they will be anxious to be sent in different directions according to the views and under the auspices of Government whilst they will be replaced in the Seminary by others destined to continue the noble enterprise

So forcibly am I struck with the happy consequences likely to result from the extension of that same project that I hesitate not to believe that Government viewing it in the same light with myself will be disposed to offer me towards its completion that generous aid without which I would not be warranted to undertake it . . .

It has already condescended to allow \$800 per annum for four missionaries. But it was on the supposition that they would be immediately sent to the Missouri and in the proposed plan the opening of the missions would take place but two years after the opening of the Seminary. Yet though not actually employed among the tribes, the missionaries, whilst yet in their novitiate, would not be the less profitably engaged in the cause, since besides having a number of young Indians to feed, to educate and maintain, they would be laying the foundation for far more extended usefulness for the future. . . .

The true object of this memoir is to demand that the allowance granted by government, to be increased, if possible, to \$1000 per annum (on account of the great additional expenses incident on the present scheme) should be paid from the first outset, on my pledging myself as I solemnly do, that, at latest, in two years from the commencement, I will send out five or six missionaries and successively as many more as Government may then be disposed to encourage.

For the attainment of the object of collecting some Indian boys in the Seminary, it would be of great service, Sir, that you should please to invite Gen'l Clark and Col. O'Fallon to lend me their assistance³⁰

³⁰ Du Bourg to Calhoun, Washington, March 17, 1823 (H). There are indications that this letter, as also the one of Du Bourg's to Calhoun February 15, 1823, were drawn up by Father Benedict Fenwick. General William Clark, associated with Meriwether Lewis in the famous Lewis and Clark expedition to the Columbia River, 1803, was appointed by President Monroe in 1822 western superintendent of Indian affairs with headquarters in St. Louis, an office he discharged with great credit until his death in 1838. Familiarly known to the Indians as Red Head, on account of the color of his long hair, he gained a remarkable ascendancy over the native tribes of the West, his dealings with whom were characterized by prudence, humanity and justice. It was owing to his long continued control of Indian affairs at St. Louis that this city became the recognized clearing-

54 THE JESUITS OF THE MIDDLE UNITED STATES

Calhoun's reply to the foregoing communication from Du Bourg is dated four days later, March 21

I have received your letter of the 17th instant and submitted it to the President for his consideration and direction, who has instructed me to inform you, in reply, that believing the establishment of a school on the principles which you have suggested, is much better calculated to effect your benevolent design of extending the benefits of civilization to the remote tribes, and with it the just influence of the government, than the plan you formerly proposed for the same object, he is willing to encourage it as far as he can with propriety, and will allow you at the former rate of \$800 per annum to be paid quarter yearly towards the support of the contemplated establishment. No advance, however, can be made consistently with the regulations, until the establishment has actually commenced its operations, with a suitable number of Indian youths, of which fact and the number of pupils the certificate of General Clark will be the proper evidence

A copy of this letter will be sent to General Clark with instructions to give proper orders to such of the Indian agents under his charge as you may think necessary, to facilitate the collection of the Indian youths to be educated, and to afford every aid in his power to promote the success of the establishment ³¹

President Monroe had thus accepted Bishop Du Bourg's project of an Indian school as a substitute for the former project of sending out missionaries at once among the remote tribes, at least there appears to have been no intention on the part of the government to subsidize both ventures, the Indian school and the dispatch of missionaries, by separate appropriations. The terms of the President's offer, however,

house for all federal transactions with the Indians of the West and Southwest. Though not a Catholic, he had three of his children baptized by Bishop Flaget on the occasion of the latter's visit to St. Louis in 1814. "Governor Clark [at this time Governor of Missouri Territory], the former associate of Lewis in the discovery of the Columbia river, paid him every possible attention. He invited the Bishop to his house and prevailed on him to baptize three of his children as well as an orphan girl residing in his family. The Bishop stood God-father and Mrs. Hunt God-mother of the children." Spalding, *Sketches of the Life, Times and Character of the Rt. Rev. Benedict Joseph Flaget, First Bishop of Louisville* (Louisville, 1852), p. 135. General Clark's son, Julius, was a student with the Jesuits in Florissant and later in St. Louis, where he was baptized by one of their number.

Benjamin O'Fallon (1793-1842), brother of John O'Fallon, St. Louis philanthropist, served many years as Indian agent on the Missouri River under his uncle, General William Clark, the latter's sister Frances having married Dr. James O'Fallon, father of Benjamin and John. Father John O'Fallon, Pope of the Society of Jesus, for many years head-master of the Jesuit house at the University of Oxford known as Pope's Hall, was a grandson of John O'Fallon and a great-grand-nephew of General Clark.

³¹ Calhoun to Du Bourg, Washington, March 21, 1822 [1823] (A). This letter is dated 1822, obviously a mistake for 1823.

The Hon W. Calhoun
Secretary of State for
the War Department.

Monastery of the Visitation
at Georgetown March 10th 1826

Sir

I left, thro' mistake, in Baltimore, the message with which you
kately favoured me relative to the support granted at my request, by
Government to a few Catholic Missionaries for the Indian tribes of
upper Missouri and Mississippi - In that message, you had expressed
encouragement to three. but on a second verbal application from me
you were kind enough to promise to alter that word into "four"
Now, Sir, I have to request of your kindness a written authorisation
to make that alteration myself, on my return to Baltimore -
I enclose a letter for Genl Wm. Clark of St Louis, intimating to him
the disposition of Government respecting these four Missionaries,
and an invitation for him to assist in conveying them to their
respective destinations.

As I intend leaving this place on Thursday for Wheeling, via
Baltimore, I take the liberty of soliciting an immediate
answer, observing at the same time that in consequence of
new arrangements, the departure of the Missionaries will be
somewhat retarded, in order to make the expedition more
complete, and probably to afford a sufficient number for
the three posts designated by you, viz Council Bluffs, River
St Pierre and Prairie du Chien. When this latter circum-
stance is fully ascertained, I will have the honor of advising
you for an extension of patronage.

With great respect
I remain

Hon Sir, your most hum servt
+ G. Wm. DuBourg - Bishop
of N Orleans

Department of War,
21 March, 1822.

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 17th instant and submitted it to the President for his consideration and direction, who has instructed me to inform you, in reply, that believing the establishment of a school on the principles which you have suggested, so much better calculated to effect your benevolent design of extending the benefits of civilization to the remote tribes, and with it the just influence of the government, than the plan you formerly proposed for the same object, he is willing to encourage it as far as he can with propriety, and will allow you at the former rate of \$800 per annum, to be paid quarterly, towards the support of the contemplated establishment. No advance, however, can be made consistently with the regulations, until the establishment has actually commenced its operations, with a suitable number of Indian youth, of which fact, and the number of pupils, the certificate of General Clark will be the proper evidence.

A copy of this letter will be sent to General Clark with instructions to give proper orders to such of the Indian agents under his charge as you may think necessary to facilitate the collection of the Indian youth to be educated, and to afford every aid in his power to promote the success of the establishment.

I have the honor to be,
Your most Obedt Servt

Wm. Calhoun

L. M. Du Bourg
Bishop of New Orleans

J. C. Calhoun

Last page of a letter of Secretary of War Calhoun to Bishop Du Bourg, March 21, 1822 (1823) Files of the Indian Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, D C

did not completely satisfy the energetic prelate, who was determined to secure every possible advantage for the enterprise on which he had set his heart. To Calhoun's letter of March 21 announcing the President's willingness to grant an annual appropriation of eight hundred dollars for the projected Indian school, Du Bourg replied on the same day, asking that the allowance of eight hundred dollars run from the actual setting out of the missionaries though it was not to be paid until the seminary should be in operation. "I suppose," writes the Bishop, "it is your understanding, for the establishment being considered by Government in the same light with all others, it should be assimilated to them in this respect—and in fact great expenses are necessary to prepare for the accommodation of the missionaries and of the Indian boys for which we ask nothing of Government. Then, until these can be collected, the missionaries must be supported and it is impossible to know how many months it may take to effect that purpose." ³²

No answer from Calhoun to this final petition of Bishop Du Bourg seems to be extant, at all events subsequent developments indicate that it was not acquiesced in by the government.

§ 4. NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE MARYLAND JESUITS

Bishop Du Bourg's plan of Indian missionary enterprise in his diocese had thus been presented to the federal authorities in Washington and had been approved by them and even subsidized. We have now to retrace our steps for a space and learn what passed between the prelate and the Society of Jesus in Maryland in connection with the aforesaid plan. It was at the very crisis in the affairs of the White Marsh novitiate told above that Du Bourg came before the Maryland Jesuits with his petition for missionaries to labor in the West.³³ At this juncture, however, the dissolution of the novitiate had already been determined upon by the Jesuit authorities. It was not the Bishop's appearance upon the scene that led to this drastic measure, his contribution to the development of events was to consist rather in saving the entire personnel of the novitiate to the Society of Jesus by providing it with a new home in another section of the United States.

From the first days of his arrival in the East towards the end of 1822 Du Bourg had been in close touch with the Jesuits of Georgetown College. A spiritual retreat of eight days closing on Christmas Day, which he made at the college, gave edification to the faculty of the institution.³⁴ One of its professors, James Oliver Van de Velde, then

³² Du Bourg to Calhoun, Washington, March 21, 1823 (H)

³³ Cf. *supra*, Chap. I, § 6

³⁴ Hughes, *op. cit.*, Doc. 2, 910

a young scholastic and subsequently second Bishop of Chicago, claimed in later years the distinction of having been the first to suggest to Bishop Du Bourg the plan of recruiting the White Marsh novices for service in his diocese. Doubtless the prelate took up with the Jesuits the question of missionary recruits at an early stage of his visit in the East, moreover, it appears likely that he did not approach the government on the subject of subsidies until he had received from Father Charles Neale, superior of the Maryland Mission, at least a provisional pledge of a few men to enable him to carry out his program. The results of his negotiations under this head up to February 27, 1823, were embodied by him in a letter of that date addressed to the Lazarist, Father Philip Borgna, an assistant-priest at the cathedral in New Orleans, who was about to visit Rome and whom the Bishop commissioned to be his confidential agent with the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda.³⁵ After deploring the imprudence of which he had been guilty in allowing himself to be duped by a clergyman who was afterwards discovered to be an adventurer and imposter, the Bishop wrote to Father Borgna

In the midst of these great occasions of affliction, God has kept in store for me extraordinary consolations. *The first* is the success of the application I made to the American Government for the establishment of an Indian Mission at Council Bluff[s], where there is a military post made up mostly of Catholics.³⁶ The Government grants \$800 yearly for four mis-

³⁵ Du Bourg à Borgna, C M, Washington, February 27, 1823. Tr. in *SLCHR*, 3: 123. The letter refers in these terms to Father Angelo Inglesi, whom Du Bourg ordained in St. Louis. "Make known to the Cardinal Prefect by what artifices the notorious Inglesi magnetized me and Father De Andreis and all, both priests and lay-people, who knew him here. Say that I acknowledge my mistake and deplore it, and that such is the confusion and the sorrow into which this sad disclosure has plunged me that I have been several times tempted to beseech his Holiness for permission to retire, in order that I may bewail this fault, that the sole fear of seeing my Diocese lost by that request prevented me, but that if his Eminence deem it fit to relieve me of a place of which I made myself unworthy by such a great imprudence, I am ready to resign and will be most thankful to him." A sketch by Msgr. F. Holweck in the *Pastoral Blatt* (St. Louis), February, 1918, "Fin dunkles blatt aus Du Bourg's Episcopat," gives the facts of Inglesi's career.

³⁶ The present town of Council Bluffs on the western boundary of Iowa, directly opposite Omaha, Neb., takes its name from an older place on the Nebraska side of the river about sixteen miles in a straight line above Omaha. It is the older place to which Bishop Du Bourg refers. The name originated with Lewis and Clark, the two explorers having on their way up the Missouri in 1804 met at this spot a group of Oto and Missouri Indians, with whom they held a council. Elliott Coues (ed.), *Journal of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (New York, 1893), 1: 66. A government post known as Fort Atkinson (or Fort Calhoun) was established here about 1819 and later, under Col. Leavenworth, the commandant, moved to a site lower down the Missouri, where it took the name of Fort Leavenworth. That most of the soldiers garrisoned at Fort Atkinson at this period (1823) were Catholics,

sionaries, and it will defray two-thirds of the outlay for the establishment and for the education of the young Indians³⁷ It has been my intention to give this mission to your congregation, but it is and shall be yet for a long time too poor in subjects to be able to take it The Jesuits are going to take it, they are giving me for this purpose two excellent priests and two lay-brothers to teach catechism Council Bluffs is situated at about a thousand miles [!] from the mouth of the Missouri river The missionaries will start in two or three weeks . . .

Divine Providence brought me here to discover a veritable mine In order that these words may not be a puzzle to you and your Superiors, here is in plain and clear language what I mean The Jesuits, being overburdened by an enormous debt which obliges them to stop every expenditure, have determined to dissolve their Novitiate, which is made up of seven Flemish subjects, some of whom are quite remarkable, and they have proposed to me to take over those, who, unable to join their Society, would be willing to enter your own They offer to pay transportation expenses I am going tomorrow, or the day after, to visit the Novitiate and pick out three or four of the best.

In this communication from Bishop Du Bourg to Father Borgna two important points of agreement in the negotiations between the Bishop and the Jesuits of Maryland, as they had developed at this stage, are disclosed First, the Bishop had secured for his projected Indian mission at Council Bluffs the services of two priests and two coadjutor-brothers of the Society of Jesus, these being Fathers Van Quickenborne and Timmermans and Brothers De Meyer and Reiselman³⁸ Secondly, the Flemish novices at White Marsh, who were to be dismissed in view of the impending dissolution of the novitiate, were to be given an opportunity of laboring in Du Bourg's diocese by becoming Lazarists or members of the Congregation of the Mission established in Missouri since 1817. That this last proposal was actually laid before the novices by their superiors, there is nothing in the pertinent documentary sources to indicate. In any case Du Bourg, if he did make the contemplated visit to White Marsh, did not broach the subject

as Bishop Du Bourg declares, is probably an exaggeration The actual distance of old Council Bluffs up the Missouri from its mouth at the Mississippi is six hundred and ninety miles, the direct distance between the two points being about four hundred

³⁷ It was only on March 11 that Calhoun raised the number of missionaries to be subsidized from three to four There is nothing in the Du Bourg-Calhoun correspondence to indicate that the government had engaged to defray two-thirds of the expense of setting up the mission and educating the Indian boys, in addition to an annual federal appropriation of \$800 for the support of the missionaries It is likely that the Bishop misconceived the terms of the government offer.

³⁸ Cf. *infra*, § 5.

to the novices. Before leaving Baltimore, whither he had gone to lay before Archbishop Maréchal the arrangements he was making with the Jesuits, he wrote to that prelate on March 6, 1823

I am returning to Washington and before leaving deem it proper to enter into a brief explanation

I have had the honor to inform you that I am not acquainted with any of the young men of White Marsh, and am absolutely unaware of the arrangements they have made. They were unaware themselves at the time of my parting of the arrangements made by the Superiors in their regard. This has prevented me from speaking either to you or to them of the affair which was proposed to me, but probably all is known to them by today and they must have made their decision. Perhaps all, perhaps only a part of them will decide to follow their vocation to the religious state. Perhaps also they will prefer to enter the ranks of the secular clergy. In the last supposition, I declare to you that I want none of them, but in the other supposition, I do not believe that you have the right to oppose their leaving. These young men are foreigners, they have cost the diocese as such nothing at all. They came to America to be religious, they have persevered sixteen months in their determination. I do not see on what ground you have the right to claim them. Nevertheless, I do not attach as much importance to the acquisition of a few subjects as to the preservation of charity and, consequently, I stand only for what can be done without detriment to the union which ought to exist between us. Be so kind then, as to let me know frankly whether you insist that I have nothing at all to do with any of these young men or whether you see your way to a certain number of them, say three or four, accompanying me.

As to the priests already employed in your diocese, I have already had the honor to signify to you that I am disposed [ms²] to refuse their services³⁹

It would appear that Archbishop Maréchal made known to Bishop Du Bourg that not even a partial recruiting of the White Marsh novices for service in the West would meet with his approval. At any rate, Du Bourg on returning from Baltimore to Washington had his mind made up to break off further negotiations with the Jesuits. But during the interval March 10-13 the situation unexpectedly shifted. As the Bishop of New Orleans later explained to Archbishop Maréchal, the Jesuits, using towards him "a sort of violence" (the expression is Du Bourg's), prevailed upon him to agree to the transfer of the entire personnel of the novitiate, novices and novice-masters, to Missouri. Here they were to set up a new mission of the Society of Jesus, which was to devote itself to the conversion of the Indians of the West,

³⁹ Du Bourg à Maréchal, Baltimore, March 6, 1823. Baltimore Archdiocesan Archives

though other apostolic activities were not to be excluded from its range of work. To those most intimately concerned in the project, Father Van Quickenborne, the master of novices, Father Timmermans, his assistant, and the Belgian novices, the news of the proposed transfer of the novitiate to Missouri came as a surprise, though not an unwelcome one, as they now saw the way open before them to a realization of the hopes which before everything else had brought them to America.

Father Charles Neale, superior of the Maryland Jesuits, was at this juncture at Portobacco, St. Marys County, Maryland, where he was filling the post of chaplain to a community of Carmelite nuns whom he had been instrumental in bringing over from Belgium. Unable on account of the mortal illness which prostrated him to conduct with Bishop Du Bourg the negotiations for the transfer of the novitiate, he commissioned Father Benedict Fenwick of Georgetown College, the future Bishop of Boston, to discharge this task in his name. Taking advantage of their canonical privilege as a body of religious men exempt from episcopal jurisdiction to dispose of their men without consultation with the diocesan authorities, the Jesuits had not advised Archbishop Maréchal of the arrangements they were to make with Bishop Du Bourg. To a letter of inquiry from the Archbishop regarding the nature of these arrangements, Father Fenwick wrote to his Grace from Georgetown College on March 13, 1823.

Just returned from Mount Carmel where I have been on a short visit to F[r]. Charles, who has been and who still continues very ill. I hasten to reply to your Grace's communication which reached here in my absence and to afford every information in my power which it calls for.

The following are facts which your Grace may rely on. At the last meeting of the Board of Trustees held at Mount Carmel in consequence of the indisposition of the Superior, the whole state of our affairs was taken into consideration. It was found that the former Superior [Kohlmann] had received into the Society more members than it could consistently support, and in consequence of this, a very considerable debt had been contracted, and that this debt could not be liquidated without suspending for the present the novitiate. Accordingly I was directed by the Superior to write to some of the Rt. Revd. Prelates of these States to know whether any, and if so, how many of the young men, now in their noviceship at the Marsh, they would be disposed to receive into their Seminaries for the benefit of their respective Dioceses. As soon as I had determined to execute the wish of the Superior in this particular, the Rt. Rev. Bp. of New Orleans arrived here. I commenced with him and addressed him a letter on the subject. I was led to this, principally in consequence of his being on the spot, and could explain to him, *inva voce*, the motives of the application and the urgent necessity that compelled it. About this time Mr. Secretary Calhoun had expressed his

desire to the Bp to have some Jesuit Missionaries stationed at Council Bluffs. It immediately struck him that this mission, the expenses of which the United States would defray, might afford an opening to the Society, and answer the double purpose of diminishing our number here and consequently our expenses, and still of retaining the novices in the Society. After various plans, some of which have been partially adopted and partially rejected, the following has been finally settled and has received the sanction of the Superior Rev F F [Fathers] Vanquickenborne and Timmermans, the first being Master of Novices and the second his Socius, have received orders to start as soon as possible with all the novices, seven in number, and repair to St. Louis and afterwards to *Council Bluffs*. The young men are to be considered as novices of the Society and are to continue their noviceship under the direction of the above-named Fathers, at the same time that they prepare themselves for their future mission by studying the language, manners and customs of the country. The Superiors have been led to accept of this new mission, in addition to the reasons presented by our present difficulties, by the earnest desire of both the Holy Father, the present Pope, and the Rev Father General who sent Revd Mr Vanquickenborne to this country expressly for the Indian Missions. It would seem indeed that D[ivine] Providence has a hand in this business, for it was as unexpected to us as it has been promptly acted upon. It is somewhat singular that the Secretary of War should make the demand of missionaries, just at the time when we could best spare them and offer a support for the same precisely when every other means has failed us. Whatever the case may be, I can assure your Grace that there is nothing *clandestine* in the affair—that if the transaction wore at any time the appearance of mystery, it proceeded from our unwillingness to let the world know our impoverished state and our embarrassments, the public acknowledgment of which might seriously have affected our credit. But it was far, very far from our mind to wish to conceal anything from your Grace. The candour with which this letter was written will be sufficient evidence of the fact. I do not think, either, that even the shadow of blame can attach to the Bp of New Orleans in consequence of any part he has taken in the promotion of this scheme. It originated entirely with us—it was a measure of our own—it was prepared by us and only accepted by him. Had he not accepted, the only consequence (as I now know, but of which I was ignorant then) would have been that these young men disappointed in their expectation of joining the Society in this country, would have returned to their own and sought to be admitted elsewhere. So great is their desire of becoming Jesuits, that they would never have consented to remain here as secular priests ⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Benedict Fenwick to Maréchal, March 13, 1823. Baltimore Archdiocesan Archives. The reasons for the transfer of the novitiate are indicated in a letter of Benedict Fenwick to the General, Mount Carmel (Portobacco), May 6, 1823. These reasons are summarized in Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 2 1025. "Four reasons for the transference of the novitiate, etc 1. Reasons from the side of Mr Calhoun, Secretary of War, who would otherwise have engaged Protestant missionaries, 2. The insistence of Mgr Du Bourg who feared that his successor in the See might

Having made these explanations to the Archbishop of Baltimore, Father Fenwick busied himself with the drafting of an elaborate and carefully worded Concordat defining the respective rights and obligations of the Jesuits and of the prelate who was to receive them into his diocese. There were precedents in the history of the Maryland Jesuits that made the framing of a written agreement an obvious step to take. Father Grassi, superior of the Maryland Mission, and Archbishop Neale had been parties to a concordat, while Bishop Conwell of Philadelphia had at one time proposed that the activities of the Jesuits established in his diocese be regulated by written agreement.⁴¹ Moreover, Msgr. Pedicini, secretary of the Propaganda, on endorsing Du Bourg's petition for Jesuit missionaries in 1821, had directed the prelate "to define and circumscribe the limits of the mission to be placed entirely under the care of the Jesuit Fathers so that no collision or disturbance arise subsequently."⁴² The signing on March 19, 1823, of the agreement between Bishop Du Bourg and Father Charles Neale may be taken to mark the birth of the Missouri Mission.⁴³ The text of the document, which is necessary for an understanding of subsequent events, is here reproduced

1823, March 19

A Concordat or Agreement

entered into by the Rt. Rev. Louis Wm. DuBourg, Bishop of New Orleans, on the one part, with the Rev. Father Charles Neale, Superior of the Society of Jesus in the United States of America, on the other part, respecting the Missions about to be undertaken by the said Society in the Diocese of the said prelate.

The Rt. Rev. Bishop of New Orleans, animated by the desire of propagating and extending the Gospel through his extensive diocese, and anxious to promote, as much as possible, the temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of the numerous savage tribes inhabiting the shores of the Missouri and its

not favour the Society, 3 The debts of Maryland, which rendered the Novitiate a burden on the eastern mission, 4 The unfitness of foreigners for Maryland and their fitness for Missouri." A fifth reason "which might also have contributed something to influence Father Neale's determination," is added by Father Fenwick, viz. a desire to procure an asylum for the Society in the West, in case the disagreement with the Archbishop of Baltimore over the White Marsh affair should reach an acute stage

⁴¹ Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 1 301, 2 927

⁴² *Idem*, Doc, 2 1014

⁴³ The original of the Concordat (in Father Benedict Fenwick's hand and with authentic signatures) is in the archives of the Md-N Y Province, S.J. In the same archives is also the original draft, likewise in Fenwick's hand, with corrections and erasures, and inscribed "a true copy." A copy in Du Bourg's hand, signed by himself and Charles Neale, is in the St. Louis Archdiocesan Archives. Benedict Fenwick was evidently the author of the Concordat.

tributary streams, by conferring on them the benefits and comforts of civilization and at the same time instructing them in the ways of God and opening their eyes to the truths of His holy Religion, as taught by Jesus Christ His divine Son and proposed by the Church, seizes with joy a proposal made to him by the Superior of the Society in the United States, to co-operate with him and to carry into effect so laudable a design, by furnishing him with a number of able and zealous missionaries, who shall immediately proceed to the work And, in order that a fair understanding may always hereafter subsist between the Bishop of New Orleans and his successors in the See and the Superior of the Society of Jesus and his successors, the following concordat or agreement is entered into, and has been signed by each of the parties, and when approved and ratified by his Holiness as well as by the General of the Society in Rome, the same shall be perpetually binding on them and their successors

1. The Bishop of New Orleans cedes and surrenders to the Society of Jesus for ever, as soon and in proportion as its increase of members enables it to undertake the same, the absolute and exclusive care of all the missions already established and which shall be hereafter established on the Missouri River and its tributary streams, comprising within the above grant and cession the spiritual direction, agreeably to their holy institute, as well of all the white population as of the various Indian tribes inhabiting the above mentioned district of country, together with all the churches, chapels, colleges and seminaries of learning already erected and which shall hereafter be erected, in full conviction of the blessed advantages his diocese will derive from the piety, the learning and the zeal of the members of the said religious Society—Reserving, however, at all times to himself and his successors the right of visiting in charity said portions of his diocese, agreeably to the canons of the Church in such cases made and provided, also of requiring the removal of any member or members of the Society from any post or station in the ministry, when such removal for impropriety of conduct is deemed by him necessary, and also of requiring upon all occasions, when a Superior shall desire to withdraw a member or members from any post of the mission, the name of the individual or individuals he appoints to succeed him or them, in order that he (the Bishop) may judge of his or their qualifications, etc., and empower him or them to exercise jurisdiction accordingly ⁴⁴

2 The Bishop, to enable the Superior and the Society to enter immediately upon the work so laudably undertaken by them, engages to cede and transfer to said Society all right and title to a tract of valuable land at Florissant, of which he is now legal proprietor, consisting of three hundred and fifty acres or thereabouts, with all its buildings and improvements, and to make over the same immediately in such way and to such person or persons, in trust for the Society, as the Superior shall think fit ⁴⁵

⁴⁴ "And also requiring, etc" Father Fortis suggested a modification of this item Cf *infra*, Chap IV, § 7

⁴⁵ The signing of the Concordat was followed by a bond of conveyance dated March 25, 1823, by which Du Bourg engaged to deliver over the farm of Floris-

3 The Bishop furthermore pledges and hereby binds himself and his successors to support, encourage and promote to the best of his ability, and with such pecuniary aid, collections and donations, as his circumstances and means will allow, the missions herein ceded to the Society and their respective establishments, colleges, seminaries, churches, etc., which are and which shall be hereafter made and erected,—and especially the seminary immediately to be commenced on the above mentioned tract of land at Florissant

4. The Superior of the Society on the other hand engages himself to send immediately to Florissant, in the State of Missouri, two Priests of the Society of Jesus, with seven young men, candidates for the same, for the purpose of forming an establishment there, which shall serve for the present as a seminary of preparation for the objects above specified—He promises moreover to send, with the above, two or three lay-brothers of the same Society, with at least four or five negroes to be employed in preparing and providing the additional buildings that may be found necessary, and in cultivating the land of the above mentioned farm

5 The Superior also engages that, at the expiration of two years, counting from the time of their arrival, four or five, at least, missionaries duly qualified shall proceed to the remote missions, (i.e.) to the Indian settlements in the vicinity of Council Bluffs, and shall there labour towards the attainment of the great object specified above for the greater honor and glory of God

6 The Superior pledges himself to foster and promote, as much as he is able, the above mentioned missions with their several departments, and, until it shall be deemed necessary for the greater good of the mission to fix upon some other site for the principal residence of the Society engaged in this mission, to retain at the establishment at Florissant at least two capable Fathers, whose chief care it shall be to superintend and to direct the same, in qualifying the youth who shall offer themselves, and who shall have been

sant to Francis Neale, “as the assign of said Charles Neale,” “as soon as it shall have been duly notified to me that his Holiness the Pope has ratified the Concordat entered upon between me, etc.” A statement from the Bishop, of the same date as the bond of conveyance, explains that the money consideration of four thousand dollars specified in the said bond is merely nominal, “the true consideration,” to cite Hughes’s paraphrase, “being the articles of the aforesaid Concordat, which, if executed here by Neale and approved by Rome must be considered full equivalent for the farm” Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 2 1024 In the deed of transfer of the Florissant property executed in favor of Father Van Quickenborne under date of May 25, 1825, the consideration is specified as five thousand dollars, also a mere paper figure

Article 2 of the Concordat overstates the size of the Florissant farm The deed of transfer of May 25, 1825, describes it as “being four arpens wide and about sixty in length containing two hundred and fifty arpens or thereabouts,” approximately two hundred and twelve acres The Bishop acquired the tract in two sections, purchasing one section from Joseph James (1818) and the other from Father Joseph Marie Dunand, the Trappist pastor of Florissant (1819) (A) Father Van Quickenborne estimated “its highest value, abstraction being made of our improvements” at two thousand dollars

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received there with the approbation of the Superior, for the purpose of the mission

7 The Bishop of New Orleans in his desire of promoting the establishment about to be commenced at Florissant, and to benefit the mission at large, obligates himself and his successors to pay into the hands of the chief of the mission whatever sum or sums of money the United States Government shall think fit to advance, and to apply towards this object, and to transmit to the same whatever sum or sums it shall hereafter appropriate, and as long as it shall continue to appropriate it or them, towards the furtherance of the work of God in this section

In confirmation of this mutual agreement this instrument is signed by both parties

George Town, Dist of Cl^a, March 19, A D, 1823

✕ L Wm DuBourg, B^p of N Orleans

Charles Neale, Superior of the Mission of the Society of Jesus in the United States of America ⁴⁶

The signing of the Concordat had now committed both the Society of Jesus and Bishop Du Bourg to the establishment of a new Jesuit mission west of the Mississippi. Two days after the event Du Bourg wrote from the "Monastery of the Visitation," Georgetown, to his Grace of Baltimore

After the painful explanations which passed between us at Baltimore, where, despite the testimony of my conscience, I did not have the happiness of being able to convince you of my innocence in the affair of the Jesuits, I came here firmly [resolved?] to accept none of their propositions. I so declared myself on my arrival to F[ather] Ben[edict] F[enwick], who left immediately to carry my decision to his Superior. Two days later I saw Father Van Quickenborne arrive at my lodging. He was on his way back from Port Tobacco and informed me to my inexpressible surprise that he had orders from his Superior to start with his Socus and all his novices. At first I could make out nothing of what he said, from my previous knowledge that the plan of the Superiors was to break up the Novitiate. He explained matters to me by saying that on the news of this plan reaching White Marsh the novices had declared that they would die rather than quit the Society and that in consequence the Superior had decided to keep them together and have them set out with their Master to go to open an establishment on the Missouri for the Indian Missions. In vain did I speak against

⁴⁶ In Du Bourg's bond of conveyance of the Florissant farm dated March 25, 1823, it is stated that the Concordat was "entered upon" March 19, 1823, at Mt Carmel (Portobacco), Md, where Father Charles Neale usually resided, the place deriving its name from the convent of Carmelite nuns whose spiritual direction he took into his hands

the project Mr Van Q[uickenborne] answered me that he recognized only the voice of the Superior, to whom he had vowed obedience, that he would leave, and once arrived at his destination would abandon himself to Providence for what was to follow. Soon after F[ather] Ben[edict] F[enwick] arrived and confirmed the news of these arrangements.

All this, Monseigneur, led me to reflect that since Providence seemed to be at work in this affair in order to procure for a horde of heathen nations scattered throughout my diocese the boon of Faith which I had no hope of procuring for them otherwise, I had no right to set myself in opposition, that I had done nothing to obtain this assistance, unless it was to pray God to send me assistance, of whatever sort it might be. I thought I saw in this disposition of affairs the realization of the words addressed to me by the Pope, when I had the happiness of seeing him for the first time and of laying before him the state of my Mission, "You have need of Jesuits." Then too, by a singular coincidence these words were repeated to me here by the Secretary of War, when he dealt with me in the matter of the Indian missions.

On the other hand, it seems to me that the Jesuits have the right to dispose of their subjects in favor of a field of work for which they are particularly destined. And F[ather] Ben[edict] Fenwick assures me that the local Superior does nothing else in this affair but obey the orders of his General, who in several letters has expressed his surprise that a beginning has not yet been made of these missions. You are not unaware, Monseigneur, that it is the Society which laid the first foundations of the faith in the Illinois country, the tradition of their labors is still preserved there among the native tribes. How, then, could I resist the pressing offers which were made to me, or rather the sort of violence which the Jesuits are using today to force me to accept what I have always desired with the greatest eagerness but which out of delicacy and regard for you I had decided to refuse.

I know, moreover, that they are so firmly resolved on this course that any opposition of mine would be useless and that they would go and offer their services for the Indians of the Mississippi country who are dependent on the see of Cincinnati rather than let slip the opportunity to devote themselves to this noble work, and so I should lose them for my diocese, while you would gain nothing for your own.

Lastly, the Jesuits are already so numerous in young subjects, having 30 scholastics, besides 25 or 30 priests and novices, that I do not know how they can employ them all, unless by scattering them. They allege that they cannot meet the expenses involved in the support of so many persons, a reason which certainly admits of no reply, for it is quite clear that they ought to know their own affairs. Your diocese will never be able to employ even those who will be left to you. Accordingly, I cannot see in this affair any prejudice to its interests. Finally, all these young men are entire foreigners, and have come to America only in the hope of being assigned to the Indian missions.

In view of all these considerations, Monseigneur, I have acquiesced in the wishes of the Society. I confess to you that in doing so I have felt keenly the pain of finding myself in opposition to your views. But persuaded on

the one hand that in this affair I was not infringing on any of your rights and on the other that a calm and considerate examination of all the circumstances would in the end convince you of the rectitude of my conduct, I surrender myself in all this to Divine Providence, beseeching it, as we are both looking to its greater glory, never to permit the bond of fraternal charity to loosen between us, a bond which ought especially to unite Pastors employed in different places in the same undertaking

The letter, extracts of which were read to me by Mr de Cl——, has reassured me in my fears on this score I see in it with infinite consolation a charitable feeling such as I have always been led to expect in a heart as virtuous as your own, and it inspires me with confidence that the new arrangements which I have just communicated to you will not deprive of your friendship a brother who values it most highly ⁴⁷

Evidence of the satisfaction which Bishop Du Bourg now felt over the happy termination of the negotiations extending over many years which he had carried on with the Society of Jesus with a view to procuring its services for his diocese comes to the surface in two letters which he penned at Baltimore on Easter Sunday, March 29, 1823, one addressed to the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda and the other to the Father General of the Jesuits These letters throw so intimate a light on the sentiments of the zealous prelate at this juncture of affairs that they are here reproduced though both rehearse events with which we have already become familiar.

In a letter to Propaganda which accompanied the two copies of the Concordat forwarded to Rome the Bishop said

To develop Catholic Missions among the many Indian tribes which roam far and wide along the banks of the Missouri river, I have likewise obtained from the Government an annual subsidy of eight hundred dollars, with promise of an increase in proportion to the development of the work, and a hint was given me that the Government would be pleased to see the Fathers of the Society of Jesus take up these missions, for everybody knows what success in the past rewarded their labors for the civilization of the savage in the various parts of the world, and a tender remembrance of them has survived among the Missouri nations It appeared to me quite a remarkable coincidence that the opinion of our Protestant government men echoes so well that of his Holiness, for, when I was in Rome and described to him the condition of my diocese, he at once, as moved by the spirit of prophecy, added "Secure the help of the Fathers of the Society, you will find their services most useful in those Missions"

Now, by a stroke of Divine Providence, it happened that just at that time the Superior of the Society of Jesus in Maryland, overburdened by the number of his men and by debts, was thinking seriously of lightening by any means the burden of that Province No sooner had he heard of

⁴⁷ Du Bourg à Maréchal, Georgetown, March 21, 1823 Baltimore Archdiocesan Archives

these far away Missions, and of the wishes of the Government, than he offered me two of his Fathers, with seven young men and a few lay Brothers, to start on the banks of the Missouri, a Seminary, that would take charge of these Missions Your Eminence is well aware of the efforts which I had made for seven years, in order to bring over the Society of Jesus, as I was all along firmly convinced that this was for me the only means that could enable me to help not only the infidel Savages, but also the numerous bands of farmers who are unceasingly moving to the banks of the Missouri from various parts of the United States Your Eminence may then easily realize how pleasant to my ears was this proposal However, to consolidate this foundation, and forestall all evils which might arise later on from various misunderstandings I have deemed it necessary to make a contract with the Society, herewith are two copies of this contract, submitted to the judgment of the S[acred] Congregation and of the Father General⁴⁸

Bishop Du Bourg's letter to the Jesuit Father General, Aloysius Fortis, which accompanied a Latin translation of the Concordat, details the circumstances that gave occasion to that notable document

Very Reverend Father

Although the answer of your Paternity to the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda concerning the request I made for some subjects of your company for the missions of my diocese seemed calculated to extinguish any hope I may have had of obtaining them, there ever remained deep down in my heart enough of hope to encourage me to continue my supplications, *at least before God*. I thought I heard in this connection the voice of J[esus] C[hrist] repeating to me "*et si perseveraveris pulsans propter improbitatem autem dabunt*"⁴⁹

Not in vain, so it seems to me, has God inspired me from my infancy with an affection for your Society which age has only deepened and which has kept alive in me, despite so many difficulties and obstacles, the most ardent desire of seeing it established in the diocese committed to my unworthy hands. I was confirmed in these reflections by the recollection of the words addressed to me by his Holiness the first time I had the honor of prostrating myself at his feet, words which I have always looked upon as prophetic, as they expressed the very idea I was cherishing in the depths of my heart, but had as yet no time to disclose to him⁵⁰

Following up this intelligence, which I welcomed with the greatest eagerness, his Holiness deigned to give me a letter signed with his own hand for your predecessor of venerable memory, Reverend Father Thad-

⁴⁸ Du Bourg ad Em Card Praef Sac Congr de Propaganda Fide, Baltimore, March 29, 1823 Tr in *SLCHR*, 3 131

⁴⁹ "And if you persist in knocking, they will hear your prayer on account of your importunity" A paraphrase of Luke, XI, 8

⁵⁰ *Supra*, Du Bourg à Maréchal, March 21, 1823 Baltimore Archdiocesan Archives.

deus Brzozowski, earnestly recommending to him my mission I have several letters from the latter in which he promised to send me some subjects as soon as political conditions should allow of it Death, which took him off from your Society, put an obstacle in the way of his good designs, but did not dissipate my hopes In fine, Reverend Father, the divine goodness which avails itself of every means to arrive at its merciful ends, has, just at the moment I was least expecting it, realized all my wishes in this regard

Affairs of great importance for my diocese having made it necessary for me to come and pass the winter at the seat of Government, I thought it my duty to profit by the favorable dispositions which the leading officials showed in my regard to try to obtain some pecuniary assistance for the establishment of missions among the heathen Indians, who are numerous in the upper reaches of my immense diocese My petition having been graciously received, nothing remained for me to do but to procure some very devoted missionaries to undertake so difficult a task I spoke a word on the subject to some of your Fathers of Maryland, who assured me that circumstances favored my speaking about it to the Superior and that they had no doubt I should obtain my request and in a greater measure even than I could reasonably ask As a matter of fact, your Society in Maryland finding itself involved in debts as a consequence of having received too many subjects which it was obliged to support, the Superior and his council were at the time busily engaged over the design they had formed to dissolve the novitiate, which consisted of seven Flemish subjects of great piety, most of them highly talented and advanced in their theological studies The opening up of the Indian Mission altered this plan of dissolution The Superior judged with reason that of all the subjects of the Society in this country, few combined in a higher degree than these young men the qualifications necessary to succeed in such an enterprise He accordingly made up his mind to offer them to me, as a step that would harmonize the interests of all concerned But as they cannot be sent immediately on the mission, since they have still six or seven months of novitiate and at least two years of theology to fill out, the conclusion was reached to send them under the conduct of their master of novices, Father Van Quickenborne and of his socius, Father Timmermans, to establish in the neighborhood of the Mission a seminary of probation and preparation for the missions

To co-operate with the designs of the Superior I assumed the obligation of giving to the Society for the establishment thereon of the seminary, a beautiful farm, which, properly cultivated, can suffice for the support of a sufficiently large number of persons The government adds thereto 800 Roman crowns [eight hundred dollars] a year Providence will supply the rest And as I have grounds for hoping that the establishment will go on increasing, it was proposed, with a view to avoid disagreeable friction in the future, to draw up a concordat between the Superior and myself, which, on being confirmed by the Holy See and your Paternity, may regulate forever the respective rights of the Bishop and of the Society. The

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Father Superior is to transmit to you an authentic copy of it written in English I have the honor of sending you the Latin and a copy of the same addressed by me to the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda I dare hope from the spirit which inspires you, my Reverend Father, that you will kindly give your sanction to this establishment, consider it as a house of the Society and extend over it, especially during its infancy, your vigilant protection Your Paternity will be kept informed as to its beginnings and progress so that you may be able to judge of the measures it will be proper to take in order to consolidate and maintain it in the true spirit of St Ignatius and Saints Xavier and Regis. What gives me most confidence is that the whole pious colony share the same ideas, being composed of subjects of the same nation, who are filled, all of them, with the desire of consecrating themselves under obedience to the most trying labors

A year from now it may perhaps be necessary to send from Europe a professed father of the final vows, of talent joined with experience, to take in hand the direction of the establishment, Messrs Van Quickenborne and Timmermans having as yet taken only their first vows I should be delighted were your choice to fall on Father Barat, at present master of novices in your Paris house, who has always manifested the liveliest desire to come and die in this Mission ⁵¹

For the rest, I submit the articles of our Concordat with entire confidence to the wisdom of the Sacred Congregation, to the authority of the Holy See and to the enlightened judgment of your Paternity

I beg you to recommend me as also my flock to the Holy Sacrifices offered in your Society and to the fervent prayers of the house of San Andrea ⁵²

I am with deep veneration and sincere devotion,

Very Rev. Father,

Your very humble and obedient servant,

Baltimore,
Easter Day, 1823

L. William Du Bourg,
Bishop of New Orleans ⁵³

Preparations were at once made to set the western expedition on foot Though Bishop Du Bourg had engaged to furnish the Jesuit party with a home when they should have reached their destination, he had not engaged to defray the expenses of the thousand miles of travelling that lay before them On the other hand, the Maryland Mission was unable to contribute adequate funds for the purpose Two hundred dollars was all it could spare from its almost depleted treasury Hence, nothing remained for Father Van Quickenborne, who was named superior of the party, but to beg the money which was available in no other way. But if the Bishop of Louisiana was not in a position to furnish

⁵¹ *Supra*, note 12

⁵² San Andrea, the Jesuit novitiate in Rome

⁵³ Du Bourg à Fortis, Baltimore, jour de Pâques (March 29), 1823 (C)

means for the journey to the West, he did his best to enable the Jesuit superior to secure them readily from others. On Easter Sunday, 1823, he penned a number of letters of introduction with which Father Van Quickenborne was to make the rounds of the principal cities of the East. These letters, descending as they do to numerous particulars, are characteristic of the energetic prelate, who was never more in his element than when arranging on paper the details of some cherished plan. They were addressed among others to Bishop Conwell of Philadelphia, Bishop Du Bois of New York, and Father Roloff, pastor of the German congregation of Trinity Church, Philadelphia. In New York, Mr. Bernard Eyquem, whom Du Bourg commends as one of the most zealous laymen of the city, was requested by the prelate to accompany Van Quickenborne on his rounds. In Philadelphia Father Roloff was asked to render a similar service. "I must claim of your charity," the Bishop wrote to him, "to accompany and introduce him [Van Quickenborne] to all houses (either Catholic or Protestant) of your city, where you may expect to get a mite. I am sensible that it is an unpleasant task, but I know your devotedness to the cause of religion, and that the dread of some rebuffs will not curb your zeal for its promotion." ⁵⁴ As to Baltimore, the Bishop wrote to Van Quickenborne

Do not fail on your return from Philadelphia, to offer your respects to the Archbishop, ask him humbly not to take it amiss that you continue your begging in Baltimore. Visit also the gentlemen of the Seminary. I have spoken to Messrs. Robert and John Oliver, who have promised to aid you. Mr. Caton will be able to give a list of the principal Protestant houses which it would be well to visit, perhaps he may have the kindness to introduce you at these places himself. ⁵⁵ I will ask it of him, do you make a similar request. As soon as you have collected \$700 or \$800, it will be proper, I think, to forward the same to Father Benedict Fenwick, so that he may dispatch your confrères at once. But for yourself, keep on begging as long as anything comes of it. You will have great need of money in the beginning. ⁵⁶

The way thus prepared for him by Du Bourg, Van Quickenborne visited the principal cities of the East, collecting in a short time between nine hundred and a thousand dollars. ⁵⁷ Means for the journey were

⁵⁴ Du Bourg to Roloff, Baltimore, Easter Sunday, 1823 (A)

⁵⁵ The Mr. Caton of the text was Richard Caton, an Englishman, son-in-law of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, last survivor of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

⁵⁶ Du Bourg à Van Quickenborne, Baltimore, St. jour de Pâques (March 29), 1823 (A)

⁵⁷ Van Quickenborne had \$963 with him when he left the East for Missouri. He had, besides, promissory notes to his credit to the aggregate amount of \$432.50 which were to be paid to a Mr. Charles Hill and forwarded by him to Florissant.

thus at hand and there was nothing to delay its inception. Accordingly, on the morning of April 11, 1823, Van Quickenborne and his party left White Marsh behind them and took the road to Baltimore on their way to Missouri.⁵⁸ The superior carried with him a set of instructions drawn up by Benedict Fenwick in the name of Father Charles Neale

1—Rev Mr Van Quickenborne is desired by the Superior to take charge of the Mission entrusted by the Bishop of New Orleans, agreeably to the Concordat lately signed by them mutually, to the Society on the Missouri.

2—To set off with Rev Mr Timmermans, his Assistant, the seven novices at the Marsh, three brothers, viz Brs Strahan, Henry [Reiselman] and De Meyer, with six negroes from the Marsh plantation, as soon as he possibly can for Florissant

3—To write to him when arrived at Wheeling, also at St Louis and also at Florissant

4—To show on all occasions the utmost deference and respect to the opinions of the Bishop of New Orleans into whose diocese he is about to enter, in all matters where the interests of the Mission are concerned and where the interests of the Institute are not infringed upon His knowledge of the country, his talents, his piety and zeal will be a sure and safe guide, when doubts, difficulties and uncertainties arise

5—To execute the Concordat, as far as it belongs to the Society

6—To direct those entrusted to his care especially who are of the Society with prudence, charity, wisdom and discretion⁵⁹

It was inevitable that such a startling development in the affairs of the Maryland Mission as this western adventure should soon meet with comment in Jesuit domestic correspondence of the period. Something of a mystery to those who heard of it from afar with no adequate knowledge of the circumstances that had prompted it, it was seen in most quarters in the light of a providential turn, from which much good was to issue in the future "I congratulate them," wrote Father Kohlmann, the former superior of the Maryland Mission, "I am sorry for us, but may God's will be done, Who knows how to turn all things into good."⁶⁰ From Italy, Father Grassi, another one-time superior of the Maryland Mission, expressed to Kohlmann his wonder at the perplexing news "Good God! what news have I heard from a late letter of F[ather] Dzierozynski and Father Sacchi about the pitiful state of our affairs in America The novices gone to the State of Mississippi [*sic*] at Council Bluffs!¹¹ it is an enigma for me as well as many

⁵⁸ *Hist Miss Missourianae* (Ms) (A)

⁵⁹ (A).

⁶⁰ Kohlmann ad Fortis, Washington, May 1, 1823 (AA)

other things.”⁶¹ To Father Peter Kenney, recent Visitor of the Jesuits in America and now residing in Dublin, the measure seemed inopportune and a wrong stroke of policy on the part of the Maryland superiors “But,” he reflected, “I have strong hopes that God will do much with the little band gone to Florissant”⁶² On the other hand, Father Rantzau, writing to the General from Maryland, was filled with apprehension over the future lot of the emigrants “They could not live at White Marsh on three thousand acres. How can they live there on three hundred? They trust in Providence. But the ordinary means of Providence, men and money, are lacking there, since the region is but thinly populated”⁶³ The trust in Providence that upheld the participants in the adventure was amply justified by the event.

§ 5 THE TRANSFER OF THE NOVITIATE

The incidents involved in the transfer of the novitiate need to be told with further detail if the episode is to be seen in its proper light. As to the part taken in it by Father Van Quickenborne, this is indicated

⁶¹ Grassi to Kohlmann, Turin, February 27, 1824 (B)

⁶² Kenney to McElroy, Dublin, September 4, 1823 (B)

⁶³ Rantzau ad Fortis, May 2, 1823 (AA) The strained relations existing at this period between Archbishop Maréchal of Baltimore and the Maryland Jesuits as a result of the controversy over the White Marsh property are reflected in the view the prelate took of the withdrawal from his diocese of the Jesuit contingent secured by Du Bourg for Missouri. On March 15, only a few days after the transfer of the noviceship to the West had been agreed upon, he wrote to Father Anthony Kohlmann, at that time superior of the Jesuit theological seminary in Washington “I am more intimately convinced than ever that the good of religion in general and of my diocese and above all the interests of the Society demand that the projected emigration from Maryland be carried out in successive detachments without noise or parade. This method of procedure will be just as efficacious and advantageous for Msgr. Du Bourg and the Society as the plan suddenly concocted in secret between the prelate and [Rev.] Mr. Ben[edict] Fenwick.” Later, in April, Archbishop Maréchal requested Father Kohlmann to use his influence to prevent Van Quickenborne and the rest of his party from going to Missouri, “at least some of them that it might not be said that the noviceship was transferred there for,” he said, “the people will think that I am the cause of the Jesuits leaving the diocese.” Moreover, to Father Robert Gradwell, rector of the English College in Rome, he wrote to express his disapproval of Du Bourg’s action in the Missouri affair “Msgr. Du Bourg’s project is regarded here by persons of experience as chimerical. They think, and not without reason, that the real purpose of the prelate is to make a little display in the newspapers of Europe and under pretext of the conversion of the Indians to make collections in Europe and elsewhere.” Hughes, *op. cit.*, Doc., Part II. There seems to be no reason to question Du Bourg’s sincerity in his plans for the conversion of the Indians, though the undertaking, while not chimerical, was certainly beset with more difficulties than the sanguine prelate reckoned with.

in a previously cited letter of Bishop Du Bourg's and is still further elucidated in a brief statement of the affair which Van Quickenborne penned for the Father General. According to this statement the closing of the novitiate had been urged upon Father Neale by Fathers Benedict Fenwick and Adam Marshall, by whose advice he was, so Van Quickenborne alleges, principally guided in the whole transaction. The superior had previously directed the novices to write to their families in Belgium for financial help. They had done so but without result, and Father Neale thereupon issued an order, which was communicated to Van Quickenborne, for the closing of the novitiate and the dismissal of the novices. But no sooner was the order issued than the superior regretted his action and immediately dispatched a second letter revoking the instructions contained in the first, only a few days having intervened between the two communications. The instructions first issued were to the effect that Fathers Van Quickenborne and Timmermans were to proceed to Council Bluffs on the Missouri River and there open an Indian mission, the novices being at the same time sent away. Van Quickenborne kept all this a profound secret from the young men, intending to visit the superior at Portobacco within a few days and there prevail upon him, if possible, to retain the novices at White Marsh.

Meanwhile, later designs were formed involving not the absolute suppression of the noviceship, but its transfer to another part of the United States. But Van Quickenborne hoped to suspend the execution of even this alternative plan and to maintain the noviceship at White Marsh. He had it in mind to represent to the superior that while circumstances had made it necessary for the novitiate community "to live very poorly for a while," sufficient income had been received during the past half year from the pew-rents of the White Marsh church and from offerings of the laity to enable the community "to live as others, to wit, well provided with all things (*de omnibus jam bene provisum*)."⁶⁴ Moreover, there was every prospect that with funds promised by certain friends the present number of novices could be brought through their studies without expense to the Society.⁶⁴

It is not unlikely that here was only another instance of Father Van Quickenborne's characteristic optimism in financial matters, an optimism that did not always commend itself to his associates. His management of the White Marsh farm had been accounted, rightly or wrongly, one of the chief causes of the heavy load of debt that precipitated the present crisis. It was, therefore, scarcely probable that any sanguine view of his as to the practicability of continuing the novitiate

⁶⁴ Van Quickenborne ad Fortis, April, 1823 (AA)

would induce Father Neale to reverse the decision he had already taken. As a matter of fact, when Van Quickenborne presented himself before the superior at Portobacco, Father Benedict Fenwick being present at the interview, he was not allowed to make any representations at all, but was told peremptorily that the decision for the transfer of the novitiate was final and that he and the novices must prepare to emigrate. It is obvious, then, from Van Quickenborne's own account that his departure from Maryland was involuntary, but in the sense only that it ran counter to his own views as to what was the proper solution of the difficulties in which White Marsh was then involved. Acquiescing though he did in the mandate of his superior, he would nevertheless have preferably continued the struggle to maintain the noviceship where it was until the young men should have completed their studies and so qualified themselves for immediate service in the Indian mission field, the desire of which had never lapsed either in the master of novices or in the novices themselves.

Regarding the rôle played by the Belgian youths in a development which concerned them more intimately than anybody else, it would appear that they, too, had merely to acquiesce in a *fait accompli*. The transfer of the novitiate had been determined upon independently of them and without their knowledge or consent, the superior having evidently judged that nothing in the circumstances required their previous agreement to the measure taken. One of their number, recording these events in later years, spoke of the outburst of approval with which they greeted the news, which apparently broke upon them suddenly, of the impending removal of the novitiate. "We left home and country for the Indians," they exclaimed. "The Indians are in the West. To the West let us go."⁶⁵ Moreover, to borrow Father Van Quickenborne's expression, the Belgian candidates had been "disposed of" by the arrangement made between the Bishop and the superior, and he later alleged this as a reason why special consideration should be shown to the group by admitting them to the Jesuit vows after the customary two years of probation had run its course.⁶⁶ On the other hand, an apparently different version of the novices' relation to the affair is furnished by Father Van Quickenborne himself in the above cited report transmitted by him to the Father General. This report is to the effect that the migration of the novices turned on a spontaneous offer on their part to follow Bishop Du Bourg to the West. "But the novices, unaware of the measure under consideration and knowing that Bishop Du Bourg was asking for some of Ours for the Indian Mission, pleaded with Reverend Father Superior to be sent to the Indians at Council

⁶⁵ De Smet, *History of the Missouri Mission* (Ms) (A)

⁶⁶ Van Quickenborne to Dzierzozynski, July 25, 1823 (B)

Bluffs To this he very readily consented, but he forbade them to take their vows without the permission of your Very Reverend Pateinnty." ⁶⁷ This, it would seem, is the only bit of contemporary testimony to support the explanation that the removal to the West was not so much imposed on the novices as permitted to them at their own request. Other statements of Van Quickenborne explain the affair in a different sense. In any case it is to be noted that the young men were to leave their White Marsh home with no sense of having been driven from its shelter but rather in a mood which Van Quickenborne described as one of "exultation," so fascinating was the prospect of missionary enterprise in the distant West that now opened up before them.

As to the transfer of the novitiate and the negotiations with Bishop Du Bourg, it is evident that Father Neale acted without the explicit approval of the Father General. The proposal to close the novitiate as the only avenue of escape from impending financial ruin came originally, it would seem, from Father Adam Marshall, procurator of the Maryland Mission ⁶⁸ As already stated, Father Dzierzynski, on making the visitation of White Marsh in 1822, came to hear of the proposed measure, but declared that it might not be carried out without formal permission from the Father General ⁶⁹ This permission Father Neale appears to have solicited, but without receiving a response. Successive letters of the Maryland superior to Rome had miscarried and for a year or two preceding the spring of 1823 he had been left without any word whatever from general headquarters. At this juncture the project of the new mission in the West suddenly loomed up and action upon it could scarcely be deferred. The opportunity of relieving the financial distress of the Maryland Mission which now presented itself could not reasonably be allowed to slip by. Moreover, the plan contemplated not the absolute closing of the noviceship, but its transfer to another part of the country. Impossible, then, as he found it was to act in the affair concurrently with the General, Father Neale was led to negotiate with Bishop De Bourg on his own responsibility, hoping to obtain from Rome a subsequent ratification of the arrangement made by him. He proceeded, therefore, with the reasonably presumed permission of the Father General, a lawful mode of procedure when communication is no longer possible between subject and superior. The ratification of his act came promptly, being communicated by Father Fortis to Bishop Du Bourg in a letter of date as early as July 25, 1823. For some reason or other a similar communication was not conveyed to the Maryland superior himself, at least no evidence of such is to be

⁶⁷ Van Quickenborne ad Fortis, April, 1823 (AA)

⁶⁸ *Supra*, Chap V, § 5

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*

met with in the General's letter-books. Father Fortis said in his letter to the Bishop of Louisiana

The approbation of the Sacred Congregation does not appear to me to be doubtful, but as affairs of this sort are always long drawn out, I do not wish to delay any longer, Monseigneur, in assuring you that for my part I enter most readily into your Lordship's views and accept with eagerness the project which you have conceived, a project the carrying out of which will result, I hope, in great gain to our holy religion. The articles drawn up by your Lordship are all of them replete with wisdom and calculated to prevent misunderstanding, always a source of unpleasantness. I subscribe to the articles without the least difficulty and confine myself to the request that a clause be added, etc. It only remains for me, Monseigneur, to witness to your Lordship my deep gratitude for the singular token of esteem and confidence which you have shown towards our Society in this mission. It is through your enterprising zeal that the door to new conquests for the Church of Jesus Christ is again to be thrown open to us and that we are to march in the footprints of our Fathers who have watered these lands with their sweat. To announce the Gospel to the heathen is the proper work of our Institute, the work which our holy founder had most at heart. What, then, must not be our indebtedness to your Lordship for furnishing us the means of taking up this work again? I regard it as an admirable disposition of Divine Providence that the state of our affairs in Maryland has facilitated the execution of a project which was always an object of my desire, but in the way of which I saw a number of difficulties. Believe me, Monseigneur, that this precious establishment which is going to take shape in Louisiana under your auspices will be the object of all my solicitude and I shall neglect nothing to make it prosper. I do not know whether Father Barat, who has not himself taken his vows, can be sent within a year to take charge of this establishment, but I shall see to it that his departure be not put off too long or in case of unforeseen difficulty that some one else of equal usefulness be sent. I need not recommend this infant foundation to your Lordship. I have learned that all the individuals who are to make up its personnel started out courageously on that long and painful journey and at this moment have probably reached their destination rich in good will but in great want of other things. But your Lordship will have a care of his work and bring it to perfection, thereby acquiring fresh titles to our gratitude and to the prayers which we daily address to heaven for our benefactors.⁷⁰

It was suggested at the time in quarters not reputed friendly to the Jesuits that the decisive reason behind the dispatch of the novices to the West was not financial distress but friction between the two groups, American and European, that made up the personnel of the Maryland Mission. Nothing in the pertinent documentary sources bears out this

⁷⁰ Fortis ad Du Bourg, July 25, 1823 (AA). See *infra*, Chap. IV, § 7, for further citations from this letter.

interpretation of what occurred. The General, Father Fortis, in a casual reference to the incident, alleged economic distress as the obvious and self-sufficient reason for the closing of White Marsh.⁷¹ There is also the testimony of Father Kohlmann, himself a European of Alsatian birth

To the fact that the novitiate was suppressed on account of lack of means I am an eye-witness, besides, that the suppression was not due to domestic dissensions between the American and foreign Jesuits, is clear from the fact that the prejudices shown by the American Jesuits extended for more than twenty years back and still, during all that time, new foreign novices continued to be admitted, nor did Msgr Du Bourg take a hand in the affair before it had been decreed absolutely to dissolve the novitiate.⁷²

It is true that a lack of sympathy was long shown by the native American Jesuits towards the recruits who came at intervals from continental Europe to reenforce their meagre numbers. This attitude had its origin, it may be conjectured, partly in a narrow nationalism, which in the wake of the War of Independence was widespread in the one-time English colonies, but it seems to have been also due to an impression, supposedly borne out by experience, that Jesuits from Continental Europe, in view of their antecedents, imperfect knowledge of English and presumed lack of appreciation of American life and character, were seriously incapacitated for working to good purpose among a people that was still overwhelmingly of Anglo-American stock. Time was to demonstrate the unsoundness of this view, as the various immigrant groups underwent a process of gradual Americanization, casting off racial idiosyncrasies and fusing together to a remarkable degree in the unity of a more or less common social type. But a hundred years ago the process of the melting-pot was still very much an untried experiment and one might not easily foresee the ultimate success in which it was to issue. It is therefore not altogether surprising to learn that the American members of the Maryland Mission failed to see in the Belgian novices at White Marsh future efficient workers in a population such as was then to be found in the eastern United States. This, in fine, was a reason alleged among others by Father Benedict Fenwick for sending the Belgians to the West, where both among Indians and whites they could put their knowledge of French to good account and not be too seriously handicapped by their presumed unacquaintance with American

⁷¹ Fortis ad Dzierozynski, January 23, 1827 (B)

⁷² Hughes, *op cit*, Doc, 1 549. The Visitor, Father Kenney, also assigned the White Marsh debts as the reason for closing the novitiate. "It had already [i.e. when Du Bourg arrived] been decreed to dismiss the novices, because White Marsh was encumbered at the time with debt and could not support them." Kenney ad Roothaan, February 22, 1832 (AA)

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ways.⁷³ But this failure of the native Jesuit group in Maryland to appreciate the possibilities of rapid Americanization that were latent in the members coming to them from overseas was short-lived. Within ten years of the setting up of the Missouri Mission, Benedict Fenwick, having become Bishop of Boston, was eagerly soliciting the services of priests of European birth for his diocese. Moreover, within the same period, the Maryland Jesuits were eager to enlist for their own mission a number of Belgian novices at White Marsh, whose original intention it was to affiliate with Missouri, but whose prospective valuable services their brethren of Maryland were reluctant to lose.

⁷³ Benedict Fenwick to Fortis, May 6, 1823 (AA)