

# ANNALS OF IOWA.

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## RT. REV. MATHIAS LORAS, D. D., FIRST BISHOP OF DUBUQUE.

BY REV. B. C. LENEHAN.

A foreigner by birth and education, he had freely chosen America as his field of labor, and once in this field he harmonized himself with its conditions, and became a thorough American, a lover of American institutions, an exemplar of American citizenship.—*Most Rev. John Ireland, D. D., Archbishop of St. Paul.*

The following notice among the Miscellanies in a number of *The Dublin Review* for 1837, not long since caught my attention and kindled the memories of old times in Iowa. It is an extract from a letter of Bishop Simon Gabriel Brute of Vincennes, Indiana, to a friend in Europe:

I intended some time ago to send you an account of our progress in these parts: but I waited in the hope that Our Lord would be pleased still more to increase and continue the graces and fruits of our new mission. At my arrival in my diocese November 18, 1834, the total of clergy amounted to two priests; but the Almanack of this year will contain twenty-one and we have small parishes begun in every direction: small when we consider their number: but great when we look to their distance from each other, the manner in which they are scattered over tracts of country; any of them being equal to a French diocese, or two or three Italian ones. I have just finished a journey of between six and seven hundred miles on horseback, from Vincennes to Soutte Bend, near the frontiers of Michigan; thence to Fortwayne; thence to Logansport; and lastly to Terre Haute, to give Confirmation to the few who happened to be prepared to receive it. There were, however, about sixty of them communicants in their wood-built church, which is sixty feet in length and forty in breadth. In other places the number of persons to be confirmed was small. In one parish no more than seven were prepared. It is true, that, on account of the Council of Baltimore, and the time of my return being uncertain, timely notice could not be sent to those worthy ecclesiastics. The Council has

petitioned His Holiness to establish three new dioceses: Natchez, for the State of Mississippi; Nashville, for Tennessee; and Dubuque, for the country north of St. Louis. "*Ostium magnum apertum!*" "*Messis multa!*" (A great doorway is open! A mighty harvest!)

Consider that 666,495 emigrants have landed in the port of New York alone within the last six years. Alas! Alas! would that there had been priests in proportion. "*Rogate rogare Dominum messis.*" (Ask beseech the Lord of the harvest.) Advance and encourage, by every means in your power, the missions of the United States the most important of all. Now is the crisis after which they are to rise or fall. A second Europe is to be converted: a church to be planted *nunc vel nunquam* (now or never). I am summoned elsewhere. Pray for

SIMON BRUTE,

Bishop of Vincennes.

WASHINGTON, INDIANA, JULY 21, 1837.

This echo of the past announces the creation of the See of Dubuque. It calls up before the memory the figure of Mathias Loras, its first incumbent; a remarkable figure in the history of the Catholic Church of the United States; like Bishop Brute a son of France; like him a sufferer and an exile for his Faith; and again like him, a model missionary and pioneer bishop of a great diocese. What the Apostle of Indiana writes of his own extensive charge was eminently true of the new western bishopric. The want of clergy and the slenderness of means were more painfully apparent in the church of Iowa, and justified the two years of preparation for the work that seem, at first sight, like delay. Yet the establishment of the diocese was truly the opening of a mighty gateway, and of all the works of the Third Provincial Council, the most important in results. Bishop Rosati of St. Louis, commended to the Fathers of the Council Very Rev. Mathias Loras, Vicar General of the diocese of Mobile, Ala., as eminently qualified for the burdensome place, and he was named to the Holy See and appointed July 28, 1837. The official notice was sent to Baltimore in September, 1837, and he was consecrated in Mobile Cathedral by Bishop Portier, assisted by Bishop Blanc of New Orleans, and the clergy, December 10 of the same year. He was in his forty-fifth year; had been twenty years in the ministry, the last eight of which he had spent in the American Missions; was in vigorous health, an earnest preacher and overflowing with

zeal. The territory committed to him stretched away from the north line of Missouri to the British Possessions, and from the waters of the Mississippi to the Missouri river. It embraced also for the time the whole of the State of Wisconsin as it is now, and by courtesy, the northwestern portion of Illinois. It was as yet the territory of Wisconsin, out of which should come in 1838, the new territory, and in 1846, the new State of Iowa. The little town just opposite the boundary line of Illinois and Wisconsin, which is also the parallel  $43^{\circ} 30'$ , had been settled as early as 1788, as a mining camp, by the indomitable Frenchman, Julien Dubuque. From 1828 to 1833 an occasional priest, now from Detroit, now from Indiana, but most frequently from St. Louis, visited and exercised his sacred office amongst the scattered Catholic pioneers; but it was father Samuel Mazzuchelli, of the Order of St. Dominic, who by his apostolic zeal, his untiring labors, his self sacrifice and devotion to the missions of the northwest, from 1833, laid a solid foundation for the future diocese of Dubuque. Immediately after his consecration Bishop Loras set out for France to procure assistance for the conquest of his diocese, and spent many months in soliciting financial help and securing his much needed clergy. A Cardinal, whose death he deplores in one of his letters but whose name is not given, aided him very munificently, and devised all his episcopal vestments to the poorest Bishop in the church. Bishop Loras presented his claim which could not easily be contested and was accorded, so the tradition runs, the valuable and useful bequest. After a brief visit to the Holy Father, he was ready with his two priests Fr. Cretin and Fr. Pelamorgues, and his four subdeacons, Rev. Messrs. Ravoux, Petiot, Galtier and Causse, to turn his face again towards the west.

In Lyons, the city of his birth, where his family had been wrecked in the French Revolution, he must have been at once overwhelmed by recollection and animated anew by the glorious example, always before his mind, to devote himself without reserve to the work awaiting him beyond the sea. Born August 30, 1792, he was but a babe in his mother's



arms when the Reign of Terror culminated in the murder of Louis XVI. His father, John Mathias Loras, and his mother, Etienne Michelet, were well born and possessed of handsome properties and abundant means derived from inheritance or acquired by trade; for Lyons was the great emporium of the silk trade of Europe. Carlyle says that "she was the city of capitalists and aristocrats." They were, however, more remarkable for the simplicity and fervor of their lives; devoted to the practices of their religion and to works of charity among the poor. The young Mathias was the eleventh and youngest child of this truly Christian family, when it came to suffer the awful blow which has secured its glory.

The city of Lyons did not share in the frenzy of the Revolution exhibited in Paris, and when the King fell upon the scaffold January, 1793, her citizens appalled at the crime and foreseeing its consequences, resolved to make head against it. They were not all royalists; but there was a oneness of feeling against the crimes committed in the name of Liberty. A Committee of Public Safety was appointed of which Mons. Loras was chosen a member; the city was put in a state of defence; troops were mustered in, and put under the command of Gen. Precy; independence of the Directory declared, and the watch word given out "Resistance to Oppression; Free and Complete National Representation." Dubois-Crance and Couthon, the commissioners of the National Convention, issued proclamations declaring the citizens outlawed; putting their magistrates under accusation, confiscating private property and suspending payments of public and private debts due the inhabitants while Gen. Kellerman advanced against them with 20,000 men. "It is no longer the delegates of the people of Lyons who write you," they wrote to Dubois-Crance, "it is the entire people. Shut up within these walls are forty thousand men sworn to defend till death the rights of men, the liberty, the property and the safety of the citizens." The order for the bombardment was given. Death reigned on every side. Carlyle says: "Late one night in autumn what sudden red sun-blaze is this that is risen over Lyons City, with a noise to deafen the world?"

It is the powder tower of Lyons—nay, the Arsenal, with four powder towers, which has caught fire, in the bombardment, and sprung into the air carrying one hundred and seventeen houses after it, with a light one fancies, as of the noonday sun; with a roar, second only to the last trumpet. Worse things are still in store; famine is in Lyons, with ruin and fire. Desperate the sallies of the besieged. Brave Precy, their commander, doing what is in man, desperate but ineffectual. Provisions cut off; nothing entering our city but shot and shell. The famishing women and children are sent forth. Deaf Dubois sends them back; rains in more fire and madness. Our redoubts of cotton bags are taken and retaken—Precy under his fleur-de-lis, is valiant as despair. What will become of Lyons? It is a siege of seventy days. The National Convention decreed the abolition of the very name of Lyons. You shall call it Ville Affranchie and on its ruins shall be raised a column—and these words shall tell the story—Lyons made war against Liberty—Lyons is no more.” The horrors that followed the fall of the city were begun by the fantastic tyrannies of Couthon who, carried about on the shoulders of his ruffians struck with a little silver hammer upon the doors of the stately homes and public buildings, thus devoting them to destruction.

Mons. Loras was arrested, confined in the Exchange, until he had turned over the public properties in his hands, and then lodged in the common prison. Four weeks after his arrest he was condemned and led to execution. In a relation, addressed to Archbishop Ireland by one of the kinsmen of Bishop Loras, the writer says: “There is an ancient custom according to which the condemned are allowed to make a request that is always granted: one asks for wine, another for tobacco; some demand brandy; some one thing; others another, according to their feelings in this supreme moment. When this permission was given Mons. Loras, he said: ‘Let Mons. le Cure of my parish of St. Paul at once be called hither.’ When this was done Mons. Loras addressed him aloud, and in the presence of the assembly, with the firm dignity of the early Christians: ‘Mons. le Cure, I know that

as you adhere to the wretched men who are devastating France, you are outside the Catholic Apostolic and Roman church in whose embrace I have lived and wish to die; but I also know that in our last moments, any priest, schismatic, or even apostate, may legally and authoritatively administer the sacrament of Penance. I therefore ask you to hear my Confession.' Stepping aside, he made his Confession, surrounded by the guards, as coolly as if in the regular tribunal. When he had finished, he once more addressed the Cure, saying: 'Kindly excuse me sir, for having spoken to you so plainly, in a public place. God knows that I did not intend



JOHN MATHIAS LORAS,  
Father of the Bishop.

to give you any pain; but only to save the people the scandal I might have caused them if, without this explanation, I availed myself of your services. I am ready.'” The procession moved towards the scaffold, the Cure now busying himself to prepare the victims for death, of whom there were eight in number; and Mons. Loras after hearing the death blow of each of his companions, submitted himself to the executioner and his head was severed from his body. The remains of the victims were hurried to the cemetery of St. Pierre hard by; for no one ventured to claim his dead. A



few days after, two brothers of Mons. Loras met a like fate, for the same cause, and two sisters of Madame Loras were likewise brought to the scaffold, which was now permanently set up in Lyons. In the course of the year, sixteen persons of the same family lost their lives rather than abandon their principles of faith and social order. *Guardiateurs* was the name given the companion-spies assigned by the Revolutionary Government to those accused before their tribunal. It was their duty to hear, see, and learn everything regarding their victims whose fate and whose family hung on their testimony and whose property fell largely into their hands.

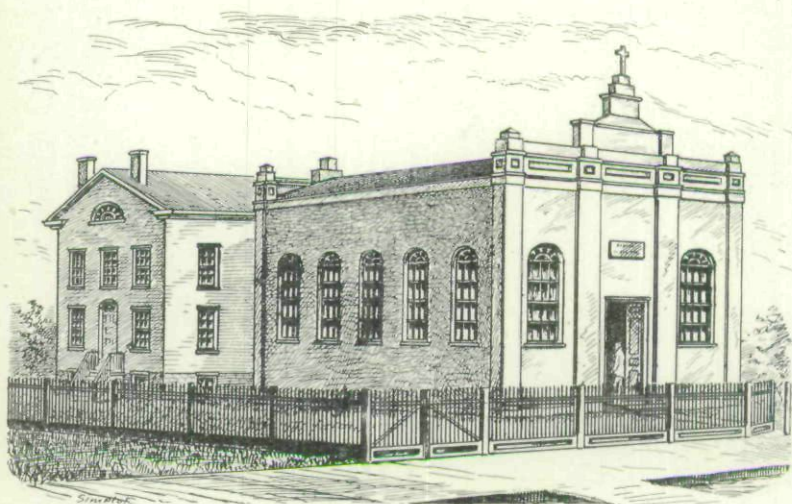
The *guardiateur* stationed with Mons. Loras did his office well. It was impossible to conceal even the smallest thing from his vigilance and cupidity. As soon as Mons. Loras had ceased to live, his property, real and personal, was sold at a maximum—such was the expression used to disguise outrage—and the Widow Loras found herself, in the midst of such awful surroundings, helpless, with her eleven children, without resources and in a most delicate state of health. We may well suppose that her most earnest desire was to find for her little flock safety in seclusion.

Little is known of the earlier days of the future Bishop. A private tutor had been maintained by the father of this excellent family for his children, and, we are told by Henri Monnin that John Baptist Vianney, the celebrated Cure of Ars, had dwelt in his youth beneath their roof in that capacity, and shared the family life of this admirable household. Young Mathias from his earliest years was distinguished for the disposition which, as virtues, marked the lives of his parents: simplicity, generous and faithful devotion. In an abandoned Carthusian monastery a little society of priests conducted a school which, like that of Thackeray—the Charter House, took its name from the old foundation—Le Chartreaux. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1817 at Lyons, and became Superior of the Seminary at L'Argentiere. He allied himself afterwards, to the band of missionary priests with whom he had studied and who were giving missions throughout the diocese of Lyons. He was engaged

in this work when he met the Rt. Rev. Michael Portier, D. D., Bishop of Mobile, Ala., who had just come from the United States to secure priests and means to perfect the organization of his young diocese. The descriptions, given by the Bishop, of that distant country, and his accounts of the great need of religious instruction and service among the people, awakened his zeal and determined him to offer himself for that attractive field.

To leave his home and aged mother was perhaps a sacrifice he had never contemplated before: but she was an adept in the school of sorrow and suffering and freely yielded him to his vocation. A medallion in the possession of Sister Mary Agatha, B. V. M., of Dubuque, given her by the Bishop himself not long before his death, will illustrate the character of that admirable woman and how she expressed her resignation to what she believed to be the will of God. In an ebony plaque, three inches square, a circular opening is countersunk to receive a little painting, in water colors, of the Sacred Heart, around which is wreathed a divided spray, the longer branch of which terminates in a little flower, a forget-me-not; the shorter one, extending up the other side, displaying clusters of leaves and terminating in a single leaf. Around the margin has been very delicately printed in these words: "Dans ce Divin Coeur, O mon fils! pensez a moi, c'est la que tu me trouveras toujours." At the foot of the picture, likewise printed with a pen, are the words: "Ve Loras a son fils le missionnaire," and below that, "8bre, 1829." ("In this Divine Heart, O my son, remember me. It is there you will always find me. The Widow Loras to her son the missionary. October, 1829.") She loved the title of widow as that which the Revolution had fastened in hatred and contempt upon her queen, the unfortunate Marie Antoinette—the Widow Capet. From the open wound of the Sacred Heart are distilling minute drops of blood, and we may well believe the tale that they were painted in the crimson of her own veins, as we realize by careful scrutiny, that the background of this picture has been woven of the silvered chestnut hair itself of this holy mother.





THE FIRST CATHOLIC CHURCH IN DUBUQUE.

It was designed and the work superintended by the Rev. Father Samuel Mazzuchelli.  
The corner stone was laid in August, 1835. It became St. Raphael's  
Cathedral in 1837, and was torn down in 1859.

From that year of 1829 he had labored for eight years in the state of Alabama, teaching successfully in Spring Hill College of which he was the founder, and for two years the president; a useful and vigorous institution which still flourishes; busily employed, at other times, in giving missions to the scattered congregations of the State, and as Vicar General, sharing with his Bishop the burden of the care and rule of the diocese.

Now, in October, 1828, himself a Bishop, with the benediction of the Supreme Pontiff, he is ready to enter, with his fervent associates, the extensive and undeveloped territory that forms his charge. Arriving at New York, he proceeded at once to Baltimore, where he left one priest and the four subdeacons at the Seminary, to learn English. With his remaining companion, Fr. Cretin, afterwards Bishop of St. Paul, making his way over the mountains, and down the Ohio river, he found further progress stayed at St. Louis. They occupied themselves giving missions in that neighborhood until the approach of spring, when Fr. Pelamorgues, who had come on from Baltimore rejoined them.

Fr. Mazzuchelli, who had been caring for the diocese as Vicar General, since the consecration of the Bishop, unable any longer to repress his ardor, hurried down the river to meet him and escort him to Dubuque, where they arrived shortly after Easter, 1839. In all the diocese there was the little chapel of St. Thomas at Potosi, Wis.; the chapel of St. James, Lee county, Iowa; the combination school, church and dwelling, of St. Anthony, at Davenport; the church of St. Michael at Galena, Ill., and the church of St. Raphael at Dubuque, which was to be the cathedral—all of them the missionary creations of the unwearying Fr. Mazzuchelli. The cathedral was in Romanesque style, designed by the missionary himself, built of rubble stone work rough cast, but with hammered stone water table and pilasters, seventy-eight by forty feet, with an apsis for the altar; and a gallery round about the entire length of the audience room. A crypt, beneath the sanctuary, intended for a chapel, was used as the home of the missionary. With the means obtained from the

Association this church was freed from debt, some adjoining property purchased, and the Episcopal house erected during the summer, at right angles with and close behind the cathedral, with which it was connected by a covered bridge. This building, at present the school of the Holy Ghost Sisterhood, is of brick, two stories with basement and garret and was at once Episcopal residence and seminary.

The ordinary missionary labors of the prelate were extremely severe, such as he describes in the work of one Sunday; celebrating the early mass, singing the high mass, and preaching the sermon; immediately after dinner hurrying over the river, running thick with ice, to Galena, Illinois, seventeen miles distant, by wagon, to preach and give benediction in the evening. He continued to sing the high mass occasionally, on account of the fewness of his priests, well up to his old age; sick calls he was equally ready to attend, and his labors, in the years of the cholera visitation were very devoted and exemplary. The first Christmas, that of 1839, he spent in Galena, as he writes, "a town of six thousand inhabitants, one-third of whom are Catholics, hearing confession all day, on the eve of the festival, and celebrating the midnight mass for a large congregation." His Indian charges called out all his zeal. He had met at St. Louis Fr. Petit, the last of the Jesuit Fathers to live among the Pottawattamies at Council Bluffs, who had come home to die among his brethren of the Society, and over whose mortal remains it was the Bishop's mournful privilege to read the burial service.

He endeavored to provide for his "poor savages" by personal visitation to the Chippewas and to the Sioux on the upper waters of the Mississippi, and to the Menominees at Green Bay; and he assigned the care of these different tribes to his Vicar General Fr. Cretin, to Fr. Galtier, of Prairie du Chien, and to Fr. Ravoux who used to make the long journey to the Sioux on the Missouri, and to the troops at old Fort Pierre, for years after.

In a letter to his sister in 1839, he describes a visit made during that summer to St. Peter's, Minnesota, at the conflu-



ence of the river of that name with the Mississippi, now Ft. Snelling, where there was a fort with a garrison of one hundred and fifty men. The Catholics of the post and the village were nearly two hundred in number, and he was busy during his stay, administering the sacraments of which they had been so long in want. He details the circumstances of his visits to the Indians who showed him much deference. In a letter of the same year, to the Association at Lyons, he gives an account of a bloody struggle between the Sioux and the Chippewas which he had witnessed, but carefully refrained from mentioning in his letter to his sister. He was about to establish a mission in a village of the Sioux, six miles from St. Peter's, when war broke out between them and the Chippewas.

They were ancient enemies, and their chiefs were invited by the agents of the government to make a treaty of peace. A general assembly was therefore convoked, near the court of the house, in which Mr. Scott had afforded me and Rev. Mr. Pelamorgues the most generous hospitality. It was a sight entirely new to us, to see two hundred of those half-naked savages armed with bows, axes, lances and muskets, seated together and looking fiercely at each other. A Sioux orator rises up; at first he speaks in a low tone, then becomes gradually more animated and gesticulates with violence; at the end of each sentence he is applauded violently by the Sioux. Mr. Scott, interpreter for the government, repeats the speech to the Chippewas who, in their turn, pronounce a harangue not less energetic. The calumet of peace is then handed around. It is a pipe about five feet long in which is smoked a mixture of tobacco and the bark of the willow tree. I had it in my mouth for an instant, for it is considered an act of great impoliteness to refuse it, when offered, either in private or in public. When this ceremony was over the chiefs separated, having, as they supposed, entered into a lasting peace. With a view of cementing it still more strongly, the warriors were convoked on the following day, in a large plain, to run foot races. In the first race the Sioux were victorious; in the second the Chippewas; but though, on the third trial, the runners of each side came in together, the Chippewas, either by fraud or by violence, got possession of the prize and both sides separated breathing vengeance against each other. On the following day, July 2, the Chippewas, returning to their forests, met a Sioux hunting with his son. They killed him, took off his scalp and continued their journey, delighted at this opportunity of gratifying their revenge. The son escaped by concealing himself in the grass of those immense meadows which border the great Falls of St. Anthony. The body of the murdered Sioux was enveloped in leaves and suspended from the branches of a tree, where, according to custom,

it will remain until the bones are dried, when they will be religiously collected, by the members of the family of the deceased, and transported by the tribe to the new region where they are about to settle. As soon as the Sioux were informed of this horrible murder they assembled their warriors to punish the treacherous violators of peace so lately and so solemnly ratified. In the space of a few hours an army was assembled and marched without delay, in pursuit of the enemy; for these people are always armed, and never bring provisions with them in their campaigns. The wife of the murdered Sioux accompanied the warriors that her presence might stimulate their revenge, while her young daughter was received into the house of our excellent host Mr. Scott. All that were capable of bearing arms set out for the war; the women, children and old men remained at home awaiting the result of the contest. The women manifested their grief by making deep incisions on their arms and limbs. As for me, having offered up my prayers to Heaven for peace, I begged the commander of the fort to interfere in this unfortunate affair; but he told me he could not; however, he despatched a company of soldiers for the protection of the village. Such was the state of things on Tuesday, the second of July.

On Thursday, July 4, the sixty-third anniversary of the Independence of the United States, I was at the altar offering my prayers to Heaven in favor of my adopted country, when a confused noise burst upon my ears. A moment later I perceived, through the windows, a band of savages, all covered with blood, executing a barbarous dance and singing one of their death songs. At the top of long poles they brandished fifty bloody scalps to which a part of the skulls were still attached—the horrible trophies of the hard fight of the preceding days. You may well imagine what an impression such a sight made upon my mind. I finished the holy sacrifice as well as I could and recommended to the prayers of the audience those unfortunate beings.

It is impossible to convey an adequate idea of the fury with which the Sioux were animated; they pursued the Chippewas along the western bank of the great river to a distance of sixty miles, and killed a hundred of them; of this number twenty-two only were warriors, the others were women and children. All the scalps, taken by the Sioux from their vanquished enemies, are to be carried in triumph through the neighboring villages, for the space of three months, as a proof of the vengeance they have wreaked upon their foes. Another band of Sioux pursued a body of Chippewas along the eastern bank, killed twenty-four of them, and wounded a great many others. Those who escaped from the massacre have taken refuge on an island from which they dare not stir. This evening, at my request and that of other Frenchmen, the commander of the fort is to send some troops to facilitate their escape. . . . May the sentiments of hatred which this frightful war has awakened present no insurmountable obstacle to the progress of our missionaries amongst these poor people. Instead of discouraging me these events have only inflamed my desire to labor in the civilization of these unfortunate beings; by imparting to them the blessing of the Christian Faith. We baptize a great

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number of children and find the women favorably disposed towards religion. I have many of them at present under instruction who are married to Canadians and Irishmen, and am preparing them to receive, on Sunday next, the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Confirmation.

July, 1839.

MATHIAS,

Bishop of Dubuque.

The return from St. Peter's was made by canoe to Prairie du Chien. The Bishop, Fr. Pelamorgues, and a young half-breed Sioux, embarked with their provisions, blankets, requisites for the Holy Sacrifice, and baggage, in a canoe, hollowed out of a large tree, and paddled their way down the majestic river a distance of three hundred miles. On the way they stopped at a camp of Sioux Indians where they were warmly welcomed and hospitably entertained. It was dangerous traveling at night as they might easily be mistaken for the hated Chippewas. The day after their arrival at Prairie du Chien the corner stone was laid of the spacious church of St. Gabriel which is still the largest religious edifice in the city. Fr. Pelamorgues was left here as pastor to continue the work and minister to the people of Western Wisconsin, while the Bishop and his half-breed protege resumed their journey to Dubuque. Mr. Benedict Manahan, of Prairie du Chien, who had come out from New York some years before, to assist in the construction of Fort Crawford, and who is yet living at Los Angeles, Cal., contracted to build two little churches for Iowa. They were framed at the mills of Chippewa Falls and floated down the river on a raft; one of them erected at Bellevue, in honor of St. Andrew, the other under the invocation of St. Mathias at Muscatine. It would be difficult to name the most laborious among the many journeys made by the Bishop in the discharge of his pastoral and apostolic labors. An old settler, Miles Sweeney, tells of a trip he made with the Bishop in a lumber wagon from Holy Cross to Fort Atkinson where a considerable body of Indians were to be evangelized. Sheets were tacked up about the altar, over it, behind it, and on the sides, to insure cleanliness. With the greatest composure the Bishop celebrated the Holy Mass while the Indians, one after another, in all their paint and feathers, thrust their heads through the



openings here, there and everywhere, unexpectedly, and the server of the Mass found his heart often in his throat for anxiety if not for fear.

In 1840, as we learn from the letter written by him from Milwaukee, in July of that year, he visited the Menominee Indians who, to the number of four or five hundred, lived at Coquelin, on the Fox river, and who were in the first fervor of their conversion. Fr. Van Den Broeck, a Dutch priest, had devoted his whole time and means for three or four years to their service.

I was setting out from Green Bay for Milwaukee, when I received a deputation, sent by the Menominees, begging me to pay them a visit. I readily yielded to the pious wish of these savages and, on the appointed day, six of them arrived at Green Bay in a canoe. Their first visit was to the church; the first favor they asked was my blessing. Conducted to the canoe, I discovered floating over my head a large standard on which was worked a cross, encircled with stars; and the colors of the United States. With a favorable wind and expert rowers our course was rapid, and we soon arrived at the village where the greatest honors which had yet been paid to my episcopal character, awaited me. The entire tribe followed in procession; the priest, surrounded by his Indian Levites; the Canticles, sung by the savages on our way to the church, all combined to give this a pious and solemn air and to inspire the most consoling hopes for the future success of the mission. . . . The entire of the last day was spent in religious exercises. In the evening thirty warriors came in the name of the tribe to thank me for a visit which had been to them the source of so many graces. "The little children, even," said one of the chiefs, "have rejoiced and never will forget it." "But," replied I, "to be truly Christian your fervor must be lasting." "So it will," answered one of them, "when you return among the Menominees you will find us such as we are." "Yes, yes," added all with a loud energetic voice. In leaving those excellent savages I was not only consoled at what I had witnessed; but was also convinced that it would be easy to effect much good amongst the other tribes.

The work among the scattered settlements was undertaken with great vigor. The organization of congregations was the delight of the experienced missionary, Fr. Mazzuchelli. In Burlington, the little church he erected was used for the sessions of the territorial legislature and from the Speaker's desk on Sundays, he addressed his congregation. In his *Memorie Istoriche* he boasts of the beautiful site he had acquired in the new capital, Iowa City, and speaks of the

hopeful future of the church the foundation of which he speedily laid. His engineering skill was employed in the platting of the city and the designing of the State buildings. Garryowen and Holy Cross, both settlements of Irish people, Keokuk, Fort Madison, Council Bluffs, Muscatine, Bellevue, Des Moines, Fort Dodge, Monona, New Wexford, and the Buffalo Settlement, were added to the list of charges of the Bishop and of his benefactions.

Of his own pastoral work the Bishop writes :

Twenty-four miles north of my residence there is a small establishment of eight or ten Irish families. . . . Here an old man was suffering from sickness, but too exhausted to come to Dubuque to seek the aid of my ministry, yet desiring to receive the last sacraments before his end, which he believed fast approaching. To call a priest was for his children a sacred duty; they fulfilled it with zeal, and the next day I passed the twenty-four miles that separated me from the poor dying man. He said: "Father, like my ancestors in Ireland, I should like to repose in holy ground under the shadow of the cross. The sanctified earth would be no longer to me a strange land and I should less regret the tombs of my country."

On a subsequent visit he found the old man almost entirely restored to health in the midst of his happy family, and writes: "This time my visit was marked by still more abundant consolation. A rustic altar had been erected and I celebrated there the Holy Mysteries . . . . Around this Crib of Bethlehem I also found, in my worthy Irish, the adoring Shepherds, and I had the happiness of giving Communion to all who were of an age to receive." They had prepared a great oak cross, twelve feet long, which the Bishop blessed, and it was erected "in its majestic simplicity at the crossing of the two principal ways of the desert upon an eminence whence it may be descried at a distance of several miles; it appears to protect the land cultivated by our Christians and to stretch forth its arms to the savages who inhabit the neighboring forests. Beneath it, according to the desire of those Irish, the old man and his children will be laid in that sleep which shall be broken by the trumpet of the resurrection; there will be assembled . . . other Catholic families cast by adventure into those vast solitudes; the hos-



tile tribes will perhaps one day, lay down their blood-stained weapons at the feet of the God of peace."

In every town-site property was secured, largely by donation, "as it was easy to see that the building of a church could not fail to attract new inhabitants to the rising city . . . and I think that their generosity has been well timed . . . for the sales have been much more advantageous than they expected. . ." Thus he writes to the Association at Lyons.

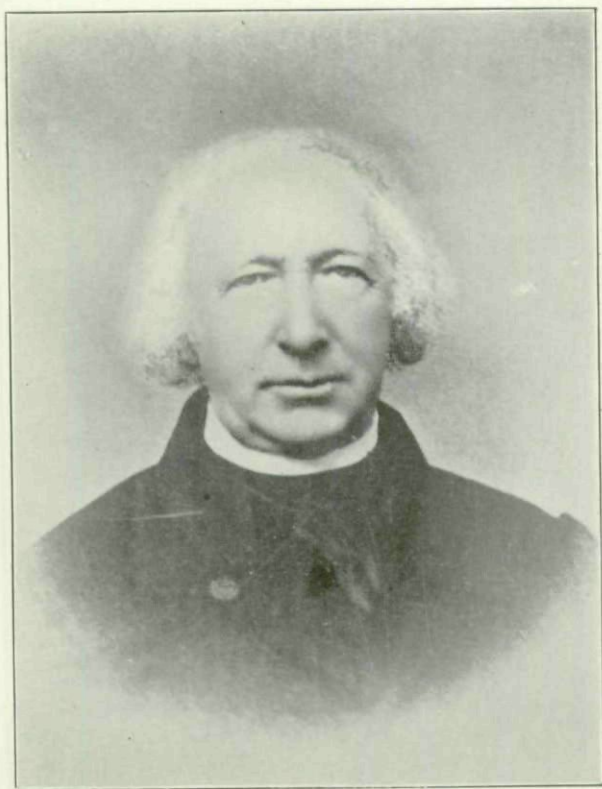
With the increasing needs of the diocese came frequent accessions to the clergy qualified to serve the different nationalities represented throughout the State, and into each one of his new Levites he infused his own spirit and interest for the temporal and spiritual well-being of his people, of whose wants he frequently informed himself by personal visitation.

He sat in the Fourth Council of Baltimore in 1840; in the Fifth in 1843; whither he was accompanied by Fr. Muz-zuchelli, who was on his way to his native city Milan, after an absence of many years; in the Sixth Council of 1846; and again in 1849; though he was then a suffragan of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, and was only passing through the city on his journey to Rome to pay his canonical visit to the Holy Father.

After many ineffectual efforts he succeeded in 1843 in obtaining a religious community for the girls' schools of his diocese. The five charter members of the Sisters of Charity, B. V. M., Mother Mary Frances Clarke, Sister Mary Margaret Mann, Sister Mary Catherine Byrne, Sister Mary Rose O'Toole, and Sister Mary Eliza Kelly, who had established their institute in Philadelphia, left that city under his guidance, on June 5, and reached Dubuque June 23, Feast of the Sacred Heart, of that year.

Father Donoughue, their chaplain and associate founder, brought the other members of the community to Dubuque in the following October. He was not successful, at first, in obtaining permission to leave his own diocese, and after seeing them comfortably settled in Iowa, was obliged to return





*T. J. Donaghoe*  
V.G.

VERY REV. TERENCE J. DONAGHOE.  
Chaplain and Associate Founder of the Sisters B. V. M.,  
and Vicar General of the Diocese of Dubuque.

to his duty in Philadelphia. His church of St. Michael, his pastoral residence, and the convent which had been the mansion of General Cadwallader, were destroyed by fire in the Know-Nothing riots of the following year; but the city was obliged to compensate him for the loss sustained, and he was soon enabled to rejoin the community in the west, where he was made welcome by the bishop whose cares he shared as vicar-general during the life of the prelate.

Schools were opened, immediately after the arrival of the sisters, at Dubuque, at the Mother House, St. Joseph's Prairie, Garryowen, Potosi, Wisconsin, and in due course at Davenport, Muscatine, Burlington, Iowa City, Fort Dodge, and Des Moines, and an academy opened at Keokuk by the Visitandines and later on, by the same community, at Ottumwa. Late in 1850 the Brothers of Christian Instruction, from Puy, France, arrived and began work in a two-room school-house, and in a room of the basement of the Episcopal house, directly under the bishop's study; so he had nestled about, though at different times, his seminarians in the garret, his clergy on the first and second floors; while his kitchen, pantry, dining-room, and the noisiest boys of the congregation were in the basement of the Episcopal palace. He kept his students and ecclesiastics about him until the fall of 1850, when he opened the seminary at Mt. St. Bernard, four miles from the city, where many hardships were to be endured and privations to be suffered by the aspirants to the ministry and none the less by their professors.

For a long time the Sisters of Charity, at their Mother House, six miles further west on the prairie, used to bake bread for them and send it in barrels to the keen-toothed young seminarists. A good stone building was erected in a couple of years and every effort was made to insure the establishment of a grand seminary; but the Bishop admits that "while it is unquestionably the most important work of the diocese it is beset with the greatest difficulties. Should I be enabled to carry it out prosperously I shall be able to say with the venerable Simeon, *Nunc dimittis*. (Now Thou dost dismiss, O Lord, Thy servant in peace)." In 1855 the

enterprise was for the time abandoned, and the students distributed among the various preparatory and theological institutions of the east and south. In 1849 he welcomed heartily a colony of Cistercian Monks, from the Abbey of Mt. Melleray, Ireland, among whom was Fr. Clement Smyth, afterwards his own assistant bishop and successor, and Fr. James M. O'Gorman, afterwards the first Vicar Apostolic of Nebraska.

As soon as their monastery was completed, a little church was erected on their lands for the use of the few Catholic families in the neighborhood; and for all these years these good religious have provided for the spiritual needs of the congregation, now numbering many families and possessing a handsome church edifice. One of their first works was to establish a school for the children of the neighborhood, in which one of our most distinguished American scholars, Dr. Washington Matthews, late of the United States army, received his earliest teachings. The new Abbey of Our Lady of La Trappe is a fine specimen of Gothic architecture and the abbey grounds are the most beautiful in the west.

In the Sunday-schools the good Bishop frequently visited the children, and one of his pleasures was to urge the memorizing of the gospel of the Sunday and to hear its recital by the older children. At Vespers he was in his glory, and often called upon the congregation to join in the singing: "Sing—sing, my friends, to sing is to pray." Though not a good singer himself, he was possessed of a very "energetic" voice, and was a fervent sharer of the chant; and with his altar boys, and old Brother David, unseen behind the altar, but whose voice was like a fog-horn, alternated with the choir, in the organ gallery, to his own great delight and the edification of the people. The word edify—edify the people—was always on his lips; and the splendid vestments, the exact and imposing ceremonies which distinguished the observance of the great festivals, particularly the solemn procession of Corpus Christi, the midnight mass of Christmas, the devotions of Holy Week, and of the different seasons of the year, in which he took the prominent part, all



served with him—to teach, to move, to reclaim, to make strong in the Faith; in a word—his word—to edify the people.

His altar boys, who wore the splendid damask soutanes of scarlet and the beautiful lace surplices in the solemn functions of the cathedral, were to the Good Shepherd of Dubuque the future students of his seminary and with that *campagnie d'elite*, the joy of his heart.

Bishop Loras was a man of middle height, about five feet eight inches, strongly and squarely built; his arms were long, his hands large and strong, but shapely; his carriage, originally erect, was, when our portrait was taken, slightly stooping, his walk rapid and his steps short; his complexion was fair, and his hair a light brown; but, with advancing age, his skin had grown sallow and nearly colorless; his soft, fair hair became thin and gray; his eyes, one of which was slightly defective, were small and blue in color, but were shaded by the old-fashioned spectacles, the frame of which, for each lens, was an oblong square flattened at the corners; his face was peculiar—bearing a resemblance to that of the Indian, a large, strong face, rather high and pointed forehead, broad and high cheek-bones, wide mouth filled with beautifully white teeth; thin, firm lips, that wore a kindly expression, and beneath them a broad, flat chin. The constant wearing of the spectacles gave him the appearance of looking up and beyond the person before him. In the first months of 1850 when we arrived in Dubuque, after a long journey by wagon from Chicago, the most consoling and encouraging words were spoken by him to our mother, who, young and unused to hardships and more than a thousand miles away from her own kin, called to pay her respects to our spiritual father shortly after his return from Rome, a visit which was punctiliously returned; and I recall as of yesterday how in my best jacket and frill I clung to her hand along the sandy streets to the Bishop's house, and how, in response to my mother's rap with the old brass knocker that hung from the jaws of a brazen lion's head, the door was opened by the courtly prelate himself, and we were bowed

by him into his own little study first door to the left. Lumps of loaf sugar were always at hand for the little folks, and particularly for his acolytes, and bestowed with the commendation, "French snow, my child." These are little things, indeed, but they evince the deep kindness of the saintly man and his pervading zeal for souls.

In the early days it was customary to have a French sermon at vespers, and later on between vespers and benediction he used to read for the congregation a chapter of Reeve's Bible History with a running fire of comment. If any one subject of the whole line of Christian duty could be the hobby of such a broad mind and warm heart it was that of shunning scandal. His fear lest the little ones should be scandalized by the bad example of their elders, their teachers, their parents, or their associates, was an abiding fear, and his voice was ever raised in warning.

He was a man of courage, of singular fore-sight, and keenly alive to the advantages of his day. The early settlers had long been without the ministrations of religion and many of them without much instruction in the teachings of their Faith, while nearly all had grown used to the wild ways and intemperate habits of the frontier. It was necessary to condemn vice and irregularities, and to suggest and advise means of holy living that were not popular or acceptable to some, and he feared to do neither. He had to face down and conquer a spirit of insubordination in some of his people which was carried into the church itself and would have made a weaker man hesitate; but his firmness and fearlessness won the day and the example was fruitful of good ever after. His freedom from personal fear was equal to his moral courage and it is of memory that when the old Cathedral gave signs of weakness and was thought to be falling down, the congregation fled in wild disorder, and even the priest at the altar lost his self-control and sought safety with his chalice in flight, the brave old prelate stood calmly at his throne unmoved by the alarm. He had faced danger among the savages of these wilds. He had put his trust in God. It was in his blood to have no fear of men.

It need not be said that he was a man who squared his life by the counsels of the Gospel. He was unsparing of himself; he expected much from his clergy and he allowed them very little; ten dollars a month being the ordinary salary permitted to the hard-worked missionary for clothes, books and other necessaries. For the luxuries that are almost the necessities of our day he had no tolerance. Good example was of more value than good ability or even good work.

He visited Europe in 1849 for the purpose of increasing his body of clergy. On account of the troubles in Italy he did not go to Rome but spent his time in Ireland and France, where he secured efficient and enthusiastic recruits for his missions and ecclesiastical goods for the use of his diocese. It will be pardonable to mention here a little instance of his lofty self-denial which is told by one of his clerics who came down from Einsiedeln in Switzerland to meet him at Troyes, the capital of the County of Champagne. The hospitable Bishop Coeur of that city gave a dinner on the occasion in honor of the widely known pioneer of the New World, and the rarest vintages of that famous County were displayed upon the board, but the honest old prelate from the valley of the Mississippi asked to be excused from partaking of the seductive beverage, giving as a reason that for the sake of his people in the West he had taken the pledge of total abstinence, and he wished to be able to say to them on his return that the social customs of his own country even had not been able to make him forget the sorrows of his poor people or to modify the resolution he had taken for their good example.

In a letter addressed to the Association of the Faith at Lyons in 1854 he summarizes the results of his work:

During the last four years the northern portion of the immense State of Iowa has been detached from it and forms with the territory of Minnesota, the diocese of St. Paul. Probably ere long the western region will in its turn undergo a like severance. . . . On my arrival here I found only a single priest. . . . At the present time, after two voyages to Europe, and multiplied efforts, my clergy amount to twenty-four diocesan priests and six religious of the Order Clairvaux. . . . With the aid of the grace of God, and the liberal allowances of the Association, thirty-one temples have been raised to the glory of the Most High, exclusive of eight-



een stations where the Holy Sacrifice is occasionally offered. . . . In May, 1836, there were only a few of the faithful in Iowa; their number at present exceeds fifteen thousand, and the majority of emigrants flocking here from Ireland, Germany, and other countries of Europe, are Catholics. During the former period the religious communities were known only by name. The church of Iowa is delighted to see in her bosom six of these holy assemblies laboring by day and night for the extension of Faith and charity in this new diocese.

Three years after this letter was written to Lyons he could number forty-eight priests, sixty churches, forty missions, nine religious communities with academies and schools, a little band of American students, and fifty-four thousand of a Catholic population.

The corner-stone of a noble cathedral was laid by him in 1849 on Main and Eighth streets, Dubuque, but he found it impossible to continue the work. The little steam missionary, Fr. Mazzuchelli, of Galena, offered to complete the building and give him the keys of it free from debt, but the difficulties seemed too many and too great and it lay untouched for ten years, when the foundation was taken out in the administration of his successor, and business houses erected on the property. The present cathedral was begun and enclosed in 1857, hard by the site of the old church, the cradle of the diocese; and the last public service of the pioneer Bishop was the first Holy Mass within its walls on the Christmas Day of the twentieth year of his episcopate.

There were hard times from the morning of his coming until the evening of his death, particularly when the wild excitement of the boom in real estate on the approach of railway improvement carried the town into an atmosphere that was dangerous to its well being. Often during those days of hardship and disappointment he threatened to carry his burden of benefaction to our sister city Davenport, and several long absences in that sober and more conservative neighborhood gave fear that he would act as he had menaced; but the thought no doubt that Dubuque was his city, his seat, his betrothed, brought him back and kept him in life and death. In 1855 his increasing infirmities made the choice of a co-adjutor advisable, and the Prior of Our Lady of La

Trappe at New Melleray, whose noble figure and austere life had fixed the attention of the Province, was appointed and in obedience to a command from Rome was consecrated in 1857 at St. Louis.

His death came suddenly February 19, 1858, though his health and faculties had been for some time past considerably impaired. This sad event so worthy of notice and so significant to a large number of the citizens of Iowa, members of the church of which he was the chief, and to all his fellow citizens, should have received some attention from the press of that day and called forth some account of his labors. We may gather how little known was journalistic enterprise at that time when we learn that little more than a death notice appeared in the papers of the city. The affectionate grief of the older people filched little locks of hair from the venerable head or clipped bits of the purple cassock in which the remains were robed as they lay in state in the old cathedral. The funeral took place on Sunday, February 21, in the presence of four thousand people. The Solemn Requiem was sung at 10:30 by the Rt. Rev. Clement Smyth, assisted by a large number of the diocesan clergy.

He was buried in the sand of the basement directly under the altar of the new cathedral in which, though far from finished, he had celebrated the first Mass the preceding Christmas; and a circle like a circus ring was made round about his grave to warn the thoughtless feet of youth straying through those precincts that the place was holy. Nearly eight years after his death, in September, 1865, the remains were lifted out of their bed of sand to give the workmen room to build a vault for their reception and for the body of his successor, Rt. Rev. Clement Smyth, which was awaiting burial. When the glass of the casket was exposed the venerable and benign countenance was seen quite unchanged, and though there had been no embalming process before his burial his features were uninjured by decay.

Fr. DeCailly, his nephew, has just prepared for the press a life of his saintly uncle who opened wide the door of the great northwest and served so many years as its watchman.

The Archbishop of St. Paul, who looks with filial reverence upon the memory of Bishop Loras, the guide and the associate of his own great predecessor, Bishop Cretin of St. Paul, has promised to write a preface for it.

The History of the Church in Iowa, by Rev. Fr. Kemper, which, with his good will, has been used so freely here, and the letters of Bishop Loras, will afford many delightful bits of interest and edification from those early days. These simple lines, at the suggestion of a valued friend, have been written merely to embalm in the pages of the ANNALS OF IOWA, which he opens for this work of love, some recollections of a good priest, a prudent and tender bishop, a high-minded American citizen, and a courtly Christian gentleman.

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RAILROADS IN IOWA.—The Railroads in the State of Iowa, with the number of miles completed, are as follows:

	Miles
Keokuk & Fort Des Moines - - - - -	40
Keokuk & Mount Pleasant - - - - -	30
Burlington & Missouri - - - - -	75
Muscatine & Oskaloosa - - - - -	40
Muscatine & Tipton - - - - -	13
Mississippi & Missouri - - - - -	56
Chicago, Iowa & Nebraska - - - - -	86
Dubuque & Pacific - - - - -	42
Dubuque Western - - - - -	35
Total - - - - -	417

—*State Journal, Des Moines, Sept. 15, 1859.*

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THE DESMOINES is navigable for a considerable portion of the year, and is susceptible, with the greatest facility and slightest expenditure, of being made so for many hundred miles at all seasons of the year, when not obstructed by ice. The country through which it runs is one of unsurpassed fertility, and is now being densely inhabited. From the central position of this river, and its other advantages, *there are a very large portion of the people of Iowa who believe, and desire, their ultimate seat of Government should be upon it.*

—Speech of A. C. Dodge in Congress (H. R.), June 8, 1846.



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