

such courage and fortitude. At the sight of the Indian 1639. cabins, to which the nuns were conducted the day after their arrival, they were seized with new transports of joy. The poverty and untidiness prevailing in them all did not repel them ; and a sight so capable of chilling their zeal served only to give it new life. They evinced a great impatience to begin the exercise of their functions.¹

Madame de la Peltre, who had never desired to be rich, and who had so cheerfully become poor for Christ's sake, could not refrain from saying that she wished to have at her disposal enough to draw all the nations of Canada to a knowledge of the true God ; and she took a firm resolution, which she observed her whole life, to spare herself in nothing where the salvation of souls was to be effected. Her zeal led her even to till the soil with her own hands, to have wherewith to relieve the poor neophytes. In a few days she had stripped herself of all she had retained for her own use, so as to reduce herself to want of actual necessities, in order to clothe the children brought to her almost naked ; and her whole life, which was prolonged many years, was but a series of acts of the most heroic charity. They have forever endeared her memory to all New France, where the fruit of her good work is perpetuated, to the great advantage of all that colony.²

After the visits of which I have spoken, the nuns of the two institutes embraced each other affectionately, and then separated to enter their several cloisters, the Ursulines at Quebec,³ and the Hospital nuns at Sylleri,⁴ where

Courage of
Madame de
la Peltre.

¹ Relation de la Nouvelle France, 1639, p. 8 ; Juchereau, *Histoire de l'Hotel-Dieu*, p. 14 ; Charlevoix, *Vie de la Mère Marie de l'Incarnation*, p. 264.

² Relation de la Nouvelle France, 1672, pp. 57, 65 ; Creuxius, *Historia Canadensis*, pp. 255, 256.

³ This first convent was in the lower town, on the quay, a site now

occupied by a Mr. Blanchard : *Les Ursulines de Quebec*, i., p. 27.

⁴ Relation de la Nouvelle France, 1639, p. 8. They did not go to Sillery to reside. A house had been commenced at Quebec ; but finding it unsuitable, they occupied temporarily a new house, assigned to them by the governor (Juchereau, *Histoire de l'Hotel-Dieu*, pp. 15, 17).

First labors
of the nuns.