

## PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

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For many years, during his long and successful episcopate, the thought uppermost in the mind of the Rt. Rev. Matthew Harkins, D. D., Bishop of Providence, has been to found an institution of higher education for the Catholic youth of the diocese and of the State of Rhode Island. Being fully occupied heretofore with the furtherance of other affairs of the diocese, he did not deem it advisable to undertake this important project until he considered the time most opportune. At length, in the fall of 1916, when all the various diocesan institutions had attained proper development and efficiency and had been set upon a financial basis satisfactory to the Bishop, a formal invitation was extended to the Dominican Fathers of Saint Joseph's Province to establish a college, organize courses of study and designate the teaching faculty. This the Very Rev. Raymond Meagher, O. P., S. T. Lr., Provincial of the Order, accepted. And after a consultation with Bishop Harkins, who had weighed carefully every feature of the proposition, plans were formulated for the present and future buildings of Providence College.

The founder, with keen foresight, had already acquired title to a piece of land, seventeen acres in extent, situated at the junction of River Avenue and Eaton Street in the city of Providence, as a suitable site for the college. Apart from the offer of this ground, the first financial assistance was his generous, personal offering. Later, at the annual Diocesan Conference, the Bishop requested his priests earnestly to exhort their parishioners to a whole-hearted cooperation with him in this important enterprise. The people, imbued with the spirit of their chief pastor, generously responded and in many instances oversubscribed their original quotas, with the result that over \$200,000 was realized. The name of every parish, and practically of every parishioner, was inscribed on the roll of benefactors. This large sum, together with the offering of the Bishop and the substantial gifts of prominent laymen, not only establishes an unusual record of a college beginning its work free from debt, but also permits of a reserve principal towards the foundation of an endowment fund, as intended by the founder, for the future extension and needs of the institution. This wonderful cooperation and happy union of the diocesan authorities and the Dominican Order, the former supplying an "Endowment of Money" and the latter an "Endow-

ment of Men" with a common end in view, that of providing for the spiritual and intellectual needs of the Catholic youth of the diocese, goes far toward the solution of the problem of Catholic education in America.

The present college building, Harkins Hall, a beautiful Gothic structure, named in honor of its founder, Bishop Harkins, stands as an enduring monument to this distinguished prelate whose episcopate has now entered upon its fourth decade. Built of tapestry brick and Indiana limestone, five stories in height, it makes a very imposing structure. This building, in addition to its class rooms and lecture halls, accommodating six hundred students, comprises distinct laboratories and lecture rooms for chemistry, physics and biology, an art studio, astronomical observatory, assembly hall, library, gymnasium and a chapel. As a whole, it has been pronounced one of the finest edifices for scholastic purposes within the confines of the United States.

Although Providence College is at present represented by a single spacious building, ultimately it is designed for a large boarding college. Harkins Hall will be the dominant unit of the proposed group of buildings—at least ten in number—the erection of which primarily depends upon the bounty of the parishioners of the diocese. Providence College will eventually take on the character of a university, for which development the plan of its buildings and the scope of its courses are intended.

At present no provision has been made for students' living quarters in Harkins Hall. The college will begin as a day school, so that students living in Providence and its vicinity will board with parents, relatives or friends. For the students coming from remote parts of the diocese, or those desiring to come from other parts of the country, the practice of selecting their own boarding places will obtain until such time as means are found for building dormitories.

On May 25th, 1919, the new building was blessed by Bishop Harkins, and the dedicatory address was delivered by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Shahan, D. D., rector of the Catholic University, Washington, D. C. Among the other speakers of the day were Bishop Hickey, coadjutor of Providence, and the Very Rev. Raymond Meagher, O. P., S. T. Lr., Provincial of St. Joseph's Province. The date for the formal opening of the college has been set for the early part of next September.

—Bro. Hyacinth Sullivan, O. P.