

1915

My dear Mothers:

This a "behind the scenes" letter just for the Councillors. We went to see the Southern University as soon as we had recd. Holy Communion and breakfasted as described by M. Mercedes. One electric car brought us just in front of the building and property. Of course, it took 20 minutes to get there. I am sending you an old picture of the property. Does it not look something like what you expected? Rather better looking than I expected. The member of the board who was in an office to the right, to our inquiry as to whether we could look around, said, "Yes" in an indifferent kind of way, and he let us go around by ourselves and apparently forgot all about us. Every door was open and so bent on knowing all, we took our time going through. Here is a sketch of 1st Floor.

SKETCH

I left no room to show the grounds on each side of the classrooms and also the long wooden building, 2 story high, which is a separate building in which there was the Mechanical Department, shown in picture and the Chemical laboratory on 2nd story.

As to the 2nd floor of Main building, it is as follows: When you get up the stairs you are at the door of the auditorium which is over the hall and 6 classrooms of 1st floor, thus:

SKETCH

To make a long story short, the building seemed sound, no cracks over windows denoting insecure foundations, so we concluded to go to Father Le Bear and ask him to investigate price on Sat. morning - (that was the next morning) also to ask whether he thought it would make a parish church, and whether the Colored would go to school there. He said he was sure if turned into a Colored Church, 400 would attend regularly, and as to school if Academics and 7 and 8th grades only were taught, he thought the children would attend. It was not till Sunday 10 A.M. that we succeeded in seeing the Archbishop. He was in favor of the parish and school and a foundation of our Sisters - he seemed very anxious for all. He called a meeting of his Vicar and Rev. Le Bear and the pastor of St. Francis de Sales (a parish teeming with Colored) to meet at 2 P.M. Sunday, and we were to be present. The result of the consultation was that the Mayor and a politician were to be reached on Monday early to try to wire work for the sale and try to purchase it for us at private sale at \$18,000 which the Board had fixed at the lowest figure - it was to be called off if it were less than \$18,000. The Archbishop was seeing politicians and the Real Estate man, and architect to examine the solidity of building, etc. all Monday morning - we were here praying before the B. Sacrament

Lebear

1915

Exposed until 2 P.M. when the Archbishop called us by phone to come to him.

Tuesday, 3 P.M.

We have been praying and praying before the B.S. Exposed on His Throne as we seldom prayed before. The Archbishop had arranged when we saw him yesterday for Mr. Tessier, agent, to buy property at private sale and if that did not succeed, a Mr. Macinery would buy it in at public auction. We were to learn at 9 A.M. today about the sale - but did not until about 10 minutes ago. It was bought by Mr. Macinery at public sale @ \$18,000 - so now we have it. I have sent for Rev. Le Beau and I think we shall send a night letter to Rev. McCarthy and ask him to send the priest he is going to send in charge. I thought to have things go on amicably this might be necessary and especially I want the Josephite to clinch the Colored Parish and a priest for them in charge.

Le Beau

Now, dear Mothers, there will be a need of about \$3,000 alterations, viz: for the church and a house for the priest - we are thinking of the Mechanical building and arranging it for the priest, Josephite. There is plastering needed, and painting and glazing (much of this). I now beg you allow us \$3 or even \$4 thousand dollars to arrange for the above and blackboards, and arrange all needed for the Sisters' quarters. I am going to get estimates, and as the weather is cooler now than in the summer, plus the carfare which would cost \$100 to return, I think we should arrange to have everything in readiness for the Srs. who come here in Sept. This will keep us at least till 20th April here. I am relying on your allowing us the 3 to 4 thousand, as we decided we would go as far as \$30,000 to purchase property I thought we are pretty sure to have your vote for 3 to 4 thousand as \$18 plus \$4 equals \$22. I think this would include the furniture and if it does not may I ask \$1 more - \$23 in all. If on the receipt of this you Councillors are opposed to the expenditure in whole or in part, kindly at once send a telegram. If on the other hand, you approve of all write; but feel perfectly free in your vote for the appropriation.

The only thing I am scared about is that the University will have to be for 7 and 8 grades and 2 Academics, or all Academics. We are going to visit the Baptist and Strait Institute and Public schools to see what we must compete with. It is necessary to offset the protestant schools to have higher education. I forgot to mention that we want to turn the auditorium into the Parish Church.

Affectionately your

Mother in the B.S.