

Lasallian Studies

**11**

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF  
THE INSTITUTE OF THE BROTHERS OF  
THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

# **19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Century (1875 - 1928)**

**Br. Henri Bédel, FSC**

Generalate FSC  
ROME



LASALLIAN STUDIES

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(1875 - 1928)

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Generalate - Via Aurelia, 476  
00165 Rome

2008

*French Edition: November 2003*

*English Version: January 2008*

Supplemento al n. 1 del 2008 della **Rivista lasalliana**

Trimestrale di cultura e formazione pedagogica della Associazione Culturale Lasalliana

Direzione e redazione: 00165 Roma - Via Aurelia 476

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## REMARKS

The present volume (LS 11), 1875-1928, follows on from volumes published in 1994 (LS 5), 1651-1726, in 1997 (LS 6), 1726-1804 and in 2001 (LS 9), 1805-1875 in the *Lasallian Studies* series.

### In the text:

- The asterisk sign refers the reader to the glossary.
- The term “Brother” is used to refer to a member of the Congregation of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, unless otherwise indicated.
- The Christian name and surname of a Brother is given only the first time the Brother is mentioned.
- Names of towns in foreign countries are given in the language of the country except in the case of towns whose names are usually translated into foreign languages.
- Names of towns in France are normally accompanied by the name of the “departement” in which they are. A map giving names of departements can be found in LS 9, page 69.
- When only the author’s surname is given when a book is quoted or referred to, the title of the author’s work will already have been given earlier in the same text. More detailed information on the work can be found at the end of this volume.

## INTRODUCTION

### GENERAL HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The period of Institute history studied in this new volume covers the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Historians, however, consider that the separation of this period into two clearly distinct parts has less to do with the change of centuries than with the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. In our introduction to the general historical context of the Institute in this period, we shall therefore retain this latter division, even if, in the case of the Institute, the point of separation between the parts under consideration occurs in 1904.

#### Continuation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century

What characterised the 19<sup>th</sup> century from the political, economic, social and religious point of view in many parts of the world, continued to do so in the last quarter of the century and even somewhat longer. However, the developments that took place during this period led to changes in what had obtained for most of the preceding century.

#### – Political aspects

##### *Spread of liberal democracy*

Almost everywhere, in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, states adopted political systems based on national representation and the establishment of public rights. This is what can be called “liberal democracy”. Reality, however, did not always correspond to appearances.

In the Ottoman Empire, absolutism continued to hold sway. The establishment of a constitutional type of political system in 1878, and the “Young Turks” movement in 1908, led to a mere handful of reforms which did not last. In Russia, reforms regarding internal freedom introduced by Tsar Alexander II, and those which followed the 1905 Revolution, did little to diminish the autocracy of the Tsar. The German and the Austro-Hungarian Empires were of a “mixed” type, combining a solid tradition of monarchical absolutism and the development of a representative system. In the Mediterranean states of Spain and Italy, the adoption of a constitution and, in Italy, in 1912, of universal suffrage, was not enough to ensure the participation of the citizens in public life. In Latin America, independence had generally been established on the basis of liberal principles, and states had adopted, for the most part, constitutional political systems of a presiden-

tial type, but power remained in the hands of an aristocracy, which brought to power alternatively conservatives and liberals, often with the support of the army.

In industrialised countries, where economic and social development had encouraged the growth of a middle class, liberal democracy made progress. Great Britain, with its long-standing parliamentary system and its protection of civil rights, gradually extended voting rights to a greater number of people. When Belgium undertook a reform of its constitution in 1893, it established universal suffrage, but also instituted plural voting which enabled a single person, under certain conditions, to have two or three votes. In France, universal suffrage was established in 1848 and then abolished by Napoleon III to increase his personal power. Re-established subsequently, it made possible the rise and eventually the successful establishment of the Republic. The Republic, however, clashed with conservative forces, and a virulent conflict ensued. From the outset, the United States adopted a representative system and the defence of civil rights. The democratisation of institutions began initially in individual states and then spread to the Union as a whole.

### *The emergence of political socialism*

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, various socialist movements chose as their aim the establishment of a more just social order. Challenging the political powers of the moment, these movements supported first of all the workers' movement which fought for the improvement of the working and living conditions of the workers in the new-born industries. In the third quarter of the century, certain socialist movements formed political parties. In 1869, together with various workers' organisations, they formed a socialist International. One of these movements - that of Marxism - became more powerful than the others. It imposed its authority in the Second International, created in 1889. The various national parties which constituted it considered themselves "sections" of this body. With their aim of coming to power by means of elections and popular representation, these parties played an increasingly important part in the political life of the country in which they existed. With a view to obtaining the extension of political democracy and the establishment of social democracy, they supported the advocates of democracy in their fight against their opponents.

#### – The economic and social situation

##### *Economic aspects*

From the middle of the century onwards, several European countries had witnessed



great economic growth. From 1873, however, these same countries were in crisis because of agricultural and industrial over-production. The crisis was due in large measure to the competition of new countries which had recently achieved economic development in their turn. Among these were the United States, Japan and countries with populations of European origins. One result of the crisis was a return to protectionism \* by industrialised countries but not by Great Britain. Despite the crisis, the three key areas of the first industrial revolution - coal, steel and textiles - continued to play an important role. The links between science and technology became increasingly close, leading, in particular, to the development of a chemical industry. In addition, "successive inventions after 1880 in the application of electricity and the internal combustion engine heralded a new technological system which would reach its peak in the 20th century and would be called the second industrial revolution" (Milza and Bernstein, *Histoire du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 210).

The effect of this second industrial revolution on Great Britain was a mild recession. Germany, on the other hand, became the first industrial power in Europe, producing the goods typical of the first industrial revolution, as well as those that characterised the second. France benefited from the second, thanks to its hydraulic resources. But it was the United States which benefited most from this new phase of industrialisation. By the middle of the 1880s, its industry had achieved world supremacy. One factor which helped was the adoption of new methods of production - assembly-line manufacture, standardised production - which enabled American industry to produce at a lower price the goods it exported to the whole world. The second industrial revolution contributed also to a new phase of economic expansion which began in 1896 and which the First World War interrupted in 1914.

### *Social aspects*

During the period of crisis, the decrease in prices, in particular of food products, compensated at least in part for the inadequacy of wages. But this crisis worsened the situation of the workers; and the risk and consequences of the unemployment it produced made their situation deteriorate even further.

During this same period, the workers' movement made further headway. In Great Britain trade unions were recognised in 1875. In France, their formation was permitted by law in 1884. These legal measures made possible the growth of workers' unions, including those for agricultural workers. In France, a number of unions joined together in 1895 to form the C.G.T. (*Confédération Générale du Travail*). The trade union movement sought to improve the material conditions of the workers. Their demands were

centred “on the stability of work, the duration of work, hygienic and safety measures, the amount of remuneration” (R. Rémond, *Le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 128). These demands led to legislation advocated or supported in particular by socialist parties. At the same time, a number of measures sought to protect workers from social risks - insurance against accidents at work, against sickness. Germany took the lead under Bismark in the period 1880-1885 by organising an overall social security scheme. Great Britain followed suit between 1890 and 1910.

Economic recovery beginning in the final years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was such as to improve the situation of the workers. However, there were problems. From 1900, and particularly from 1905, social agitation gained ground. It resulted in the adoption of new measures regulating work or reinforcing social security. In France, for example, a law passed in 1906 made the weekly day of rest - as a rule Sunday - obligatory.

### - International rivalry

Rivalry among the major European countries had marked the 19<sup>th</sup> century from the beginning. In the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>, this rivalry became more intense owing in particular to the emergence of a new power, the German Empire, and resulting from nationalistic aspirations in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, or in the Balkans, which were progressively shuffling off the yoke of the Ottoman Empire.

European expansion across the world which increased during this same period was likewise a source of conflict. The combination of all these different causes of tension led to the First World War.

### *Confrontation of European Powers*

Germany which beat France in the 1870-71 war, but feared it would seek to avenge itself, tried to isolate it on a diplomatic level. In 1873, Chancellor Bismark concluded an agreement between the three Emperors of Germany, Austro-Hungary and Russia, and in 1879, a military alliance with Austro-Hungary. When Italy joined them in 1882, this became the Triple Alliance. When it was renewed in 1887, Bismark signed a secret treaty of “reassurance” with Russia, which was a promise of reciprocal neutrality in the case of war with other powers.

After Bismark left the political scene in 1890, Russia drew closer to France and a diplomatic agreement was signed in 1893. Great Britain which found itself isolated and

feared the development of the German navy, accepted France's offers of a *rapprochement*. In 1904, the "Entente cordiale" between France and Great Britain was signed. In 1907, these two countries and Russia constituted a bloc opposed to the Triple Alliance.

During this same period, among the problems facing the European powers there were those connected with the Balkan peninsula. Austria and Russia had conflicting interests as both tried to bring the Slav peoples of the region under their control. The first crisis occurred in 1876 when, following a revolt in Bosnia-Herzegovina against the Ottoman Empire, Serbia and Montenegro entered into war against Turkey. Following the defeat of the Serbs, Russia intervened, imposing the Treaty of San Stefano in 1878, which created a Greater Bulgaria. The other European powers imposed a revision of the treaty at a Congress in Berlin: Greater Bulgaria was reduced in size, the acquisition of territory by Serbia and Montenegro was limited, and Bosnia-Herzegovina was placed under the control of Austrian administrators.

In the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, crisis followed crisis in the Balkans. In 1911, Italy attacked the Ottoman Empire and took possession of Cyrenaic Libya. In North Africa and the Dodecanese Islands in South Turkey. In 1912, Bulgarians, Serbs and Greeks attacked Turkey, but in 1913, faced with the demands of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Romania, which joined them at this point, turned on their former ally. At the Peace of Bucharest (1913), Turkey relinquished most of the territory it controlled in Europe. It was in this part of Europe that a war broke out in 1914 which affected a great many countries in Europe and even the world over.

### *Conflict of interests in the conquest of the world*

Different European nations had already imposed their rule over certain peoples all over the world. This European expansion continued. It gave rise to a rivalry which was all the more bitter among these nations and others which harboured the same ambitions, as the still available regions became thinner on the ground. This was particularly true of Africa, which was shared out at a congress called in Berlin in 1885.

Apart from the former colonial powers of Portugal, Spain and the Netherlands, Great Britain above all and France also acquired various territories in Africa, Asia and Oceania. *Great Britain* continued to build up its empire in West, East and South Africa. *France*, after its defeat in 1870-71, found a form of compensation in the constitution of a colonial empire in West and Central Africa. When it tried to expand its territories to the East it was blocked by Great Britain, as in the case of Sudan (South of Egypt) in 1898. But

newly constituted States also had similar ambitions. *Italy* was interested in North Africa. In Tunisia, where its interests conflicted with those of France, it gave way. On the other hand, it obtained neighbouring Libya. In the "Horn of Africa", it established itself in Eritrea, but failed to do so in Abyssinia. *Germany*, under the Emperor Wilhelm II, had ambitions to set up for itself a colonial empire in West, East and South Africa, side by side with Great Britain. It tried to prevent France extending its influence to Morocco. For its part, *Belgium*, found itself in the Congo overseeing a vast territory bequeathed to it by its sovereign, Leopold II. At the same time, the *USA* ousted Spain from Cuba, and took from it the island of Puerto Rico and the Philippine archipelago, in the war of 1898.

Colonial rivalry interfered with problems arising from international relations in Europe. And so "the system of alliances existing in the 25 years preceding 1914 was largely inspired by concerns which were rooted and pursued overseas" (R. Rémond, *Le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 228).

## – Religious dimension

### *Impact of the political, social and international situation*

Regarding politics, it should be noted that in predominantly Catholic countries, the establishment of liberal democracy was often accompanied by hostility towards the Church. In France especially, the beginnings of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic ushered in extensive legislation intended to prevent the Church from continuing to exercise its influence in public institutions and, in particular, in the school. A particularly bitter period of conflict led to the prohibition of teaching by members of religious congregations, the suppression of these latter, and finally, the separation of the Church and State in 1905. Unified Italy pursued a policy all the more hostile to the Church because, in response to the State's confiscation of Rome and its region from the Pope in 1870, the latter forbade Catholics from participating in the political life of the country because of what was known as "*non expedit*". In October 1905, the *Congreso masonico panamericano* meeting in Buenos Aires called for the separation of the Church and State in all the countries of America, gratuitous and obligatory secular education, and the suppression of monastic orders and of all religious feasts.

The intransigent attitude of Pius IX had contributed to increase the hostility against the Church. Pope Leo XIII, who was elected in 1878, while remaining firm where principles were concerned, endeavoured to understand the times better and not remain simply on the defensive. And so, in two encyclicals, in 1885 and 1888, he recalled that the

Church was not bound to any form of political power. In the encyclical addressed to French Catholics in 1892, he invites them to accept the republican regime. In Italy, on the other hand, he maintains the *non expedit* of his predecessor.

In France, only some of the Catholics accepted the invitation of Pope Leo XIII, and it was not long before the conflict opposing the other Catholics to republican rule flared up. When, in 1905, the French government unilaterally denounced the Concordat of 1801 and decreed the Separation of the Church and State, Pope X, elected in 1903, adopted a very firm position which obtained some concessions from the French State. Later, when Marc Sagnier, one of the Catholics who had rallied to the cause of the Republic, started up the "Le Sillon" movement and created an excessively exclusive link between the democratic regime and Catholicism, he was condemned by Pius X in 1910.

The Catholic Church met no less hostility from the socialists who shared the anti-clericalism of many of the proponents of liberal democracy. The Marxists, in particular, who considered materialism an important tenet of their philosophy, took up position not only against the Church, but also against religious faith.

Even if all the Catholics were far from understanding the social problems of their times, it was nonetheless true that "Catholic socialists" tried to find solutions. They found support in Leo XIII who had followed the beginnings of social Catholicism in Germany, Switzerland and France. The Pope defined the social doctrine of the Church in the encyclical *Rerum novarum* of November 1891. This document made a great impact and opened the door to many practical initiatives: trade unions for workers, mutual benefit societies, cooperatives and social action schemes.

If religions, as such, should not have been involved in rivalry between States, they remained a factor all the same. At the 1903 conclave, the Emperor of Austria used his "exclusion" right to remove a potential candidate whom he considered insufficiently favourable to himself. After his election, Pius X suppressed this right which was still attributed to Catholic princes. During this period of intense nationalism, the members of various religions often espoused with great fervour the cause of their country. National rivalry affected in particular missionaries in far-off countries. The progress of evangelisation was not, in fact, unrelated to that of colonisation. Colonisers had no apostolic aims, especially when they fought against the Church in their own country, but they saw the missions as a means of extending their country's influence. As for the missionaries, it was difficult for them to remain completely aloof from this kind of concern, even if their motivation was quite different.

### *Within the Church*

As for the Catholic Church itself, Pope Leo XIII, who concerned himself with problems of an intellectual nature, encouraged the faithful to return to the philosophy and theology of St Thomas Aquinas. Up till then, the study of the Bible was the reserve especially of Protestants and agnostics. Leo XIII encouraged exegetical research in the Catholic Church, in particular, by setting up the Pontifical Biblical Commission.

Some who were drawn to this movement, however, pushed their critical study of the Bible, and the history of Christ and of the Church to extreme limits, and finished by undermining the foundations of belief. The danger of what was called "modernism" led Pope Pius X to condemn this line of thinking, especially in the encyclical *Pascendi* of 1907. At the same time, a trend called in Rome "americanism", was condemned by the Pope: bishops in the United States asked that more account be taken in the Church of the evolution of American society.

In another connection, Pius X gave life-giving pastoral guidelines, such as those concerned with the communion of children, frequent communion, and the restoration of Gregorian chant. This Pope was also keen on renewing the content, and raising the standard, of the training of priests. He had the laws and regulations in force in the Church brought together in a *Code of Canon Law*, which was promulgated in 1917 by Pope Benedict XV, elected in 1914 to succeed Pius X.

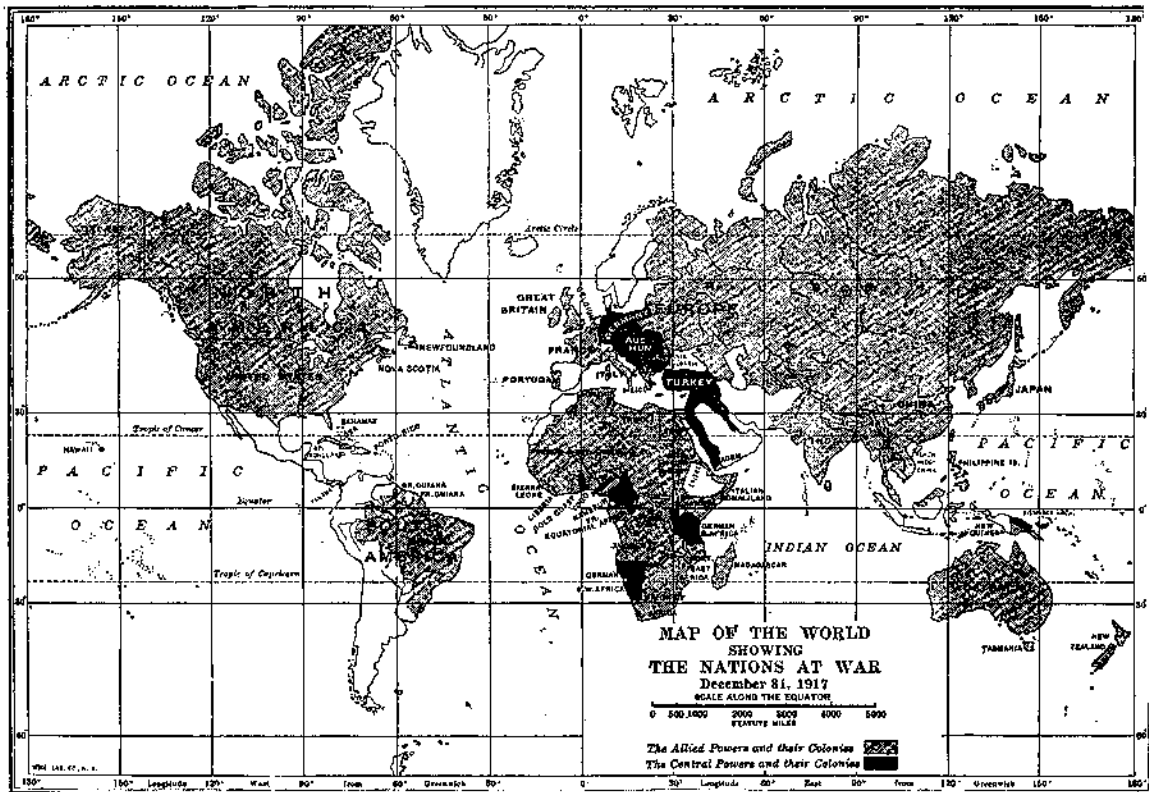
### **The First World War and the Post-War Period (1914 - 1928)**

If the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were a continuation of the 19<sup>th</sup>, the war which broke out in 1914 was a clear-cut dividing line. This war, in which the majority of European countries chose one or other of two opposing sides, took on also a worldwide dimension. The post-war peace treaties brought with them extensive territorial changes. The settlement of the conflict created or allowed the persistence of a certain number of problems.

#### **– The First World War (1914 - 1918)**

The conflict which broke out in 1914 had its immediate source in the Balkan crisis. Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian Empire was assassinated at Sarajevo in Bosnia Herzegovina on June 28<sup>th</sup> 1914. Austria laid the responsibility of this assassination on Serbia which supported Slav nationalism, and declared war on this country. However, the formation of opposing blocs based on international rivalry led Russia to

enter the war on the side of Serbia. And then, because of its alliance with Austria, Germany declared war on Russia, and then on France. When Belgium was invaded by Germany, Great Britain and its colonies joined the side of France and Russia. Other countries, depending on their affinities or interests also joined the conflict: the Ottoman Empire in 1914 and Bulgaria in 1915, on the side of the central Empires of Austria and Germany; Italy in 1915, Romania and Portugal in 1916, as well as other countries, joined the Allies. The same goes for the United States and various Latin American countries which joined the war in 1917. In total 35 countries were involved in the conflict.



World Map, with the countries at war, December 31, 1917.

■ Allied Powers and their Colonies

■ Central Powers and their Colonies

### *Characteristics of the war*

By comparison with previous wars, the one which started in 1914 was characterised by the size of the forces involved. Thus, in the course of the war, France mobilised 8 and a half million men, and Germany 14 million. Another characteristic was the mass of material means used to furnish the combatants with arms or provide for the needs of armies. Also, new weapons were used. The whole economy of the warring parties was geared to the war, and each of the belligerents tried to ruin that of its adversary: the Allies organised the blockade of the central Empires; Germany retaliated with submarine warfare.

The conflict was characterised also by its duration. In the West, following the invasion by the German troops of Belgium and a part of France in 1914, the front lines of the belligerents hardly altered their position over the course of several years. In the East, the Russian army suffered numerous losses and setbacks, but neither side won any decisive victories.

1917 marked a turning-point in the war. Both sides were weary from their efforts up to that point. This was the year when the Russian Revolution led to the separate peace of Brest Litovsk, which upset the balance of the forces at war to the advantage of the central Empires. In western countries, pacifist movements became active; in France, strikes paralysed the munition factories, and mutinies broke out in the army. Attempts to end the conflict by the new Emperor of Austria, Charles 1st, or by Pope Benedict XV, failed. Finally, the formation of governments resolved to bring the war to an end in Great Britain, Italy and France, and the entry of the United States into the war, restored hope of victory to the Allies.

In spring 1918, Germany tried to force the decision in their favour by a series of offensives in France. The general counter-offensive of the Allies in autumn 1918 led to the armistice of November 11<sup>th</sup>. The war had already ended on other secondary fronts.

### *Consequences of the war*

The forces of the central Empires and their allies had been conquered. As a result of the Peace Conference which opened in Paris in 1919, and of the treaties which followed, the map of Europe was greatly changed. While the German Empire lost territory only on the eastern side, mostly to the advantage of the new Poland, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was replaced by a series of new States created on the "principle of nationalities" (see LS 9, 5). The Ottoman Empire was dismembered. The Baltic States were reconstituted at the expense of Russia, and Germany lost all its colonies.



The victory of the countries where democracy was established encouraged the spread of this type of political regime. The new States created in the place of the Austro-Hungarian Empire or detached from Russia adopted the republican system. Universal suffrage was established in various countries, including Great Britain. The Society of Nations which was created to solve conflicts between countries “extends to international relations, the principles and practices which have gradually become generalised in States” (R. Rémond, *Le XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 36).

With the exception of the United States, the countries which fought the war were totally exhausted. A high number of relatively young men had been killed: for example, 1.4 million French, 1.7 Germans. Many others were wounded, mutilated or had become permanent invalids, in particular because of the use of mustard gas in the trench warfare. The areas where the conflict had taken place were devastated. Numerous countries were bankrupt: the countries which had incurred debts owed vast amounts of money especially to the United States; currencies based on the gold standard were replaced by considerably devalued paper money.

In total, the European countries which tore one another apart lost prestige in the eyes of the world, as well as the preponderance they had exercised in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### – The immediate post-war period (1919 - 1923)

The armistices of autumn 1918 and the peace-treaties signed in 1919-1920 did not solve all the problems resulting from the war or dating from the pre-war period. Some countries disputed their new frontiers. This was the case of certain States created in central or Eastern Europe. Turkey refused to ratify the treaty which dismembered it: Mustapha Kemal took power in the country and created a secular State. Poland fought a war against Russia which was in the throes of a civil war (1918-1920). Differences surfaced among the victorious powers. The American Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles signed by Germany and the Allies, and this led the United States to disassociate itself from settling problems in Europe. Italy did not think it had obtained what it expected by entering the war on the side of the Allies, The Treaty of Versailles condemned Germany to pay “reparations”: a disagreement arose between Great Britain which was prepared to postpone the payment, and France which, having suffered great damage, wanted to hasten it. When France decided to occupy the Ruhr in 1923 to put pressure on Germany, its action was condemned by Great Britain and the United States.

The period was marked by a wave of unrest. From 1919 - 1923, Great Britain was faced with an uprising in Ireland. The example of the Russian revolution which led to the establishment of the Bolshevik regime, encouraged similar movements in other countries. In Germany, the left minority of the Spartacists started up a revolutionary movement in Berlin, and then in Bavaria, at the beginning of 1919. In Hungary, a communist government was formed in the spring of 1919. In Italy, communists encouraged unrest of a revolutionary nature which culminated in 1920. The working class masses who had suffered most from the war, looked for an improvement in their situation. The economy, however, was slow to pick up in the countries which had been involved. Conflicts which opposed the working class masses and conservative governments led to strikes and outbreaks of violence. Even when power was in the hands of the socialists, as in Germany, governments used force to suppress revolutionary movements or social unrest. Things calmed down. The Soviet regime itself gave up trying to propagate its model by force, and signed treaties with neighbouring countries. From 1922, the leading powers recognised this regime.

The attraction which Russia had for socialist countries led to the creation of a third International in 1919 which was concurrent with the second one. In each country, the rivalry between the different trends caused a split between the social democrats and the communists. In France, at the Tours Congress, at the end of 1920, the majority of the socialist party decided to constitute a communist party. The split into rival trade unions mirroring these trends, was added to the split in the political parties.

### – The years of stabilisation (1923 - 1928)

Various problems were resolved. In 1923, a settlement put an end to the Irish uprising by recognising the independence of the Republic of Ireland. However, the north part (Ulster) remained attached to the British Crown. Also in 1923, a treaty was signed at Lausanne in Switzerland between Turkey and Greece, which put an end to the war which broke out in 1922 between the two countries, and which led to the eviction of the Greek populations living in Asia Minor.

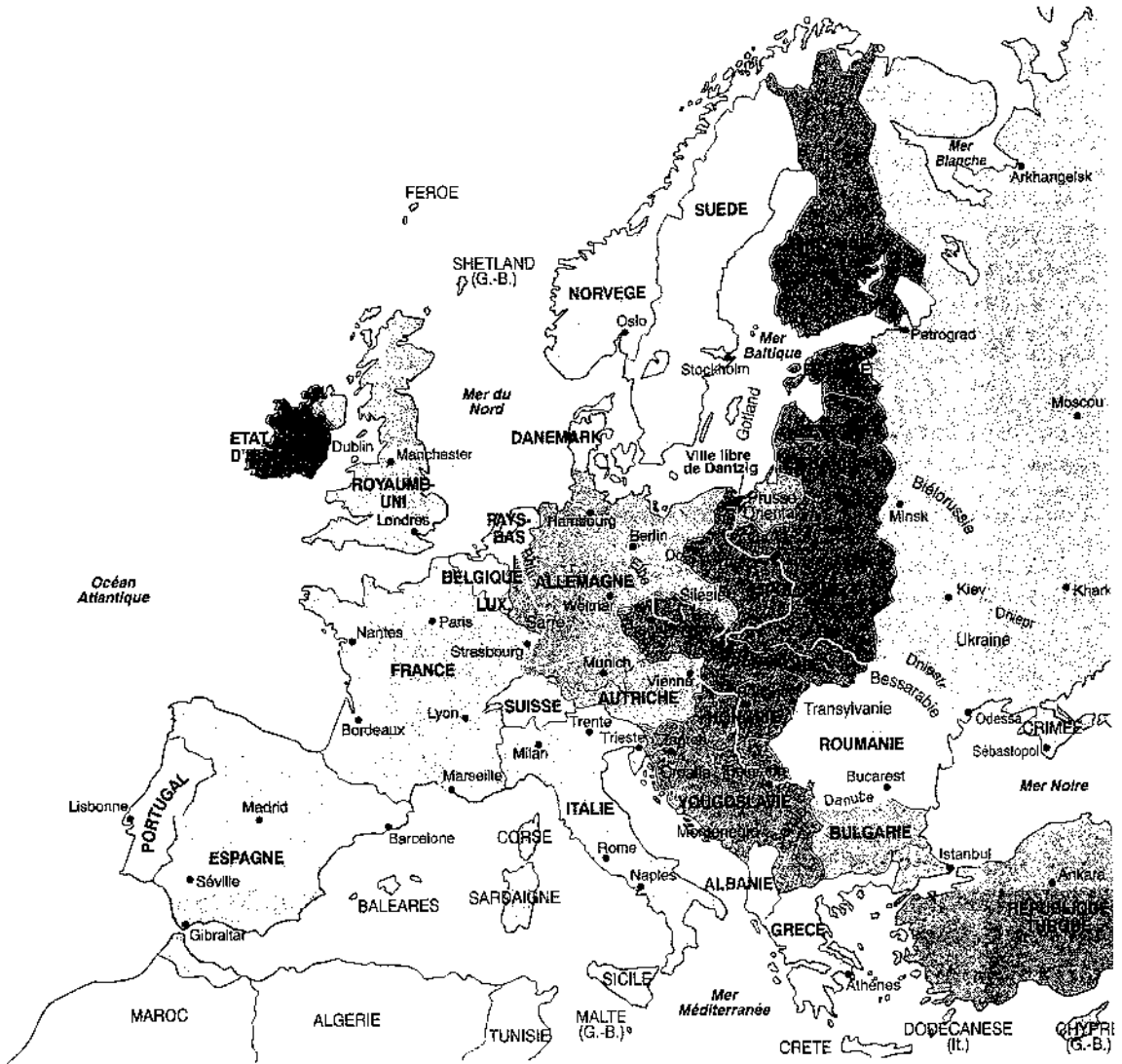
A new climate presided over international relations. France modified its position regarding the “reparations” due from Germany: it ended its occupation of the Ruhr. A pact signed at Locarno, Switzerland, in 1925, “marked the transition from a situation imposed by force to a constructive settlement. Up till then, Germany had suffered the consequences of its defeat: it had signed, under constraint and coercion, the Treaty of Versailles. In 1925, it was freely that it accepted its territorial dispositions” (R. Rémond,

*Le XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 61). It also joined the Society of Nations in 1926. This body arbitrated in a number of situations and put an end to conflicts. It was also the period when great international conferences tried to build relations between states on a peaceful basis.

The internal situation of countries improved also. Germany, which had suffered from staggering inflation in 1923, was saved from a putsch led by Adolph Hitler. New currency restored stability to the country. By 1925, the Weimar Republic was functioning normally. France suffered from great ministerial instability and a financial crisis from 1924 to 1926. Confidence was restored with the advent of a government of National Unity which, in particular, fixed the new value of the franc. In Great Britain, the establishment of universal suffrage and the rise of the Labour party had upset the traditional alternation between parties. The coming to power of the Labour party in 1924 was followed by a period of unrest which stopped with the return of the Conservatives. The Soviet Union rebuilt its economy thanks to a new policy (the N.E.P.).

In countries such as France, Great Britain and Germany, as well as in the states created after the war, democracy functioned satisfactorily. Even in Italy where parliamentary democracy had been swept away by the Fascists with the coming to power of Benito Mussolini in 1922, the regime settled down. The United States, which by their "isolationism" had escaped the backwash, as the case may be, of defeat or victory, enjoyed a period of increasing prosperity where the principles of the most absolute liberalism held sway. And yet, the country began denying entry to immigrants.

As far as Europe was concerned, it appeared to have overcome its problems and regained its prestige in the world. These appearances were deceptive, however: the victory of Communism in Russia and of Fascism in Italy, and the progress of the Nazi movement in Germany posed an ever-growing threat to peace. And in 1928, the world was on the eve of a crisis that would deeply affect it everywhere.



### Europe in 1923 in the aftermath of the Great War

Cf. CHALIAND Gérard y RAGEAU Jean-Pierre, *Atlas du millénaire, la mort des empires 1900-2015*, Paris, Hachette-Littératures, 1998, p. 119.

## SOURCES AND REFERENCE WORKS

As far as sources are concerned, we need to establish a few distinctions regarding some key-dates, and between information regarding the centre of the Institute, France or other countries. Regarding the reference works, we have to distinguish between what concerns the history of the Institute properly so called, and what is connected with this history.

### Sources

The overall approach adopted in the preceding volume remains valid for the present one: there is therefore no need to explain it. On the other hand, the events which occurred in the years studied here call for the comments that follow.

#### – Centre of the Institute

Even if the suppression of the Institute in 1904 concerned only France, the rupture that this constituted has left traces in the documents of the Institute. On the one hand, before this event, a considerable part of the Institute archives had been destroyed as a precautionary measure. Then, when the Mother House was transferred to Belgium, it became possible to re-establish the archives, and even to reconstitute in part the material that had disappeared. This, however, could not compensate for the losses incurred. On the other hand, it appears that, even if the documents were all collected together again, far from the prying eyes of the French public authorities, the event of major importance, the so-called “secularisation”, was kept secret at least until the First World War.

#### – France

French Districts had never previously suffered such destruction as occurred in 1904. However, as the Districts were not modified after this date, the Brother Visitors and their services were transferred to the houses for elderly and sick Brothers that had not been closed, and the District archives were transferred with them. But, as they were liable to be inspected by the public authorities, there could be no mention in them of “secularised” Brothers. In the same way, the *historiques* could not mention houses run by the latter. The 1914-1918 War changed the situation of the Brothers, and mention of them can be found in the archives and in the *historiques* which had been completed for the years following 1904.

Individual houses do not seem to have set about destroying documents before 1904. Archives kept in houses which the Brothers had to leave after July 1904 were pooled at District level. The same procedure had to be followed for houses maintained by “secularised” Brothers. It was inevitable that some material would be lost. As far as the *historiques* were concerned, orders were given to send them all to the Mother House. Later, as in the case of Districts, following the changes that took place because of the war, “secularised” Brothers were once again able to communicate in writing with their Superiors, and could bring their *historiques* up to date and continue writing them.

### – Other countries

For other countries where the Brothers were already present, 1904 did not have the same importance as it had for France, and for this reason, did not mark a point of rupture regarding archival material between pre-1904 and the following period. On the other hand, in a certain number of cases, it was the First World War which had repercussions regarding the conservation of archival material in Districts or houses. Even if actual destruction of material does not seem to have occurred, some may have been lost. Archives and *historiques* also may have recorded changes that occurred. It was possible for countries where the Institute was started during the same period to have experienced similar situations. This was true, for example, in the case of Mexico in 1914.

Research into the three areas of investigation indicated above was done mostly in the Generalate archives. In the case of the French Districts, this research was complemented by the consultation of the archives now centralised in Lyons (which will be referred to as FA). For the other countries, a questionnaire was sent to the Districts concerned. Brothers from all over the world were good enough to answer this questionnaire, and some sent complementary documents. We are most grateful to them, as are those who kindly accepted to revise the text concerning their country. On the other hand, it will be clear from what is said about some other countries that some questionnaires were not answered.

Regarding individual houses, research was carried out in a restricted way. The reason for this is that to do otherwise was impossible given the nature of the present work. Nor was it necessary, since our intention was not to write the history of our establishments. It was difficult to find information in the archives or *historiques* about the daily life of the Brothers. To deal with this aspect, it would have been necessary to be able to work on already completed monographs on Brothers or communities.

## Reference works

As for the preceding volume, we wish to indicate here the main works we used to complete the information we gathered directly or through the intermediary of various correspondents. We shall continue to make a distinction between works concerning the history of the Institute properly so called and those connected with this history. A number of remarks regarding the period need to be made.

### – Works concerning Institute history

Regarding the overall history of the Institute, it should be noted that for the period 1875 - 1904 we have at our disposal several volumes of the *Histoire Générale de l'Institut des Frères des Écoles chrétiennes* by Georges Rigault. The 7<sup>th</sup> volume concerning France appeared in 1949, the 8<sup>th</sup>, published in 1951, speaks of the Institute in Europe and in the missions; the 9<sup>th</sup>, completed in 1953, treats of the *L'Expansion lasallienne en Amérique*. On the other hand, for the rest of the period, the author has left us only a study entitled *Le Temps de la "sécularisation" 1904 - 1914*, which appeared in 1991, and which forms, with various additions, the first three volumes of the Lasallian Studies series.

Similarly, in the case of the works written by W.J. Battersby (Br Clair Stanislas) which appeared under the title *The History of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, only a part of the volume devoted to the years 1850 - 1900 concerns the period under consideration. On the other hand, for the countries apart from France, we have for the whole period Br Alban's book entitled *Histoire de l'Institut des Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes - Expansion HORS de France*, which appeared in 1970.

The history of the Institute in various countries has been treated in a number of works published more or less recently. For the countries where the Institute was already present in 1875, we can mention works by:

- Félix HUTIN (Br Macédon): *L'Institut des Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes en Belgique*. Volume III, however, does not go further than 1879.
- Nive VOISINE: *Les Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes au Canada*, vol.I (1837-1880) and vol. II (1880-1946).
- Bro. Angelus-Gabriel: *The Christian Brothers in the United States* (1848-1948).
- W.J. BATTERSBY: *The Brothers in the United States, vol. I (1900-1925) and II (1925-1950)*.

- Francis BROWN: *La Salle Brothers - Malaysia and Singapore* (1852-1952).
- W.J. BATTERSBY: *De La Salle Brothers in Great Britain* (1855-1955).
- Eduardo MUÑOZ BORRERO: *El Instituto de 'La Salle' en el Ecuador* (1863-1998).

For the countries where the Institute was established between 1875 and 1928, we have works by:

- Br. Saturnino GALLEGO *Sembraron con amor* (1878-1978), an important work on the Institute in Spain.
- Br. Eugenio Leon BARRYE and Br. Bernardo MONTES *Los Hermanos de La Salle en Colombia* (1890-1950).
- Br. Honorio BELZA *La Salle en el Istmo Centroamericano*.
- Peter DONOVAN *For Youth and the Poor*, on the Brothers in Australia (1906-2000).
- Ivo Carlos COMPAGNONI *Historia dos Irmaos lasallistas do Brasil*.
- Br. Luis BEJARANO CHAVEZ *La Salle en el Peru 75 anos* (1922-1997).
- Br. Saturnino GALLEGO *La Salle en Bolivia. Bodas de Diamante* (1919-1994).

All these works give a more accurate assessment of the history of the Institute in these different countries. In other countries, such as Mexico, similar work has been undertaken or, while no such exhaustive studies exist, there is enough material to make possible a first attempt at a history.

There are also works on specific points, some of which have been published in Institute series such as Lasallian Studies. For example, I.S. vol.4 is a work by Br Pedro Gil, *Tres siglos de identidad lasaliana*, published in 1994, and vol. 7, a work by Br Bruno Alpage, *El instituto al servicio educativo de los pobres*, published in 2000 (both these volumes have been translated into French and English in the L.S. series). Other works, on the other hand, such as Br Rodolfo Meoli's *La prima scuola lasalliana a Roma*, deal with individual houses. There are also articles published by Lasallian Studies or other Institute publications such as the *Bulletin of the Christian Schools*, *La Rivista Lasalliana*, *Lasalliana*. University theses also deal with a variety of aspects of Institute history.

### – Works connected with Institute history

Regarding the overall context of Institute history in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, either to its end or extended to 1914, the works included in the bibliography of the preceding volume are included in that of this volume. Others dealing more specifically with the last part of the century have been added. This is obviously the case also for works dealing with the



beginnings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and more particularly, with the First World War and its consequences.

The same is true of whatever concerns the more particular context of Church history or the history of education. The bibliography includes, therefore, works already mentioned in the preceding volume. New works have been added, especially those concerning the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as those of A. LANFREY *Les Catholiques français et l'École (1902-1914)*, and of G. LAPERRIERE. *Les Congrégations. De la France au Québec (1880-1914)*, which are particularly enlightening for whatever concerns teaching religious congregations in the years indicated.

J.M.J.  
1905.

Paris, October 15<sup>th</sup>

78, Rue de Sèvres - Paris.

My Dear Brother Visitor,

In the present circumstances, it is important to gather together all the historical documents relative to our communities in France. Consequently, when you come to Lembecq on Thursday November 23<sup>rd</sup>, would you please bring the following:

- I. - All the historiques of the houses of your District;
- II. - The historique of this same District;
- III. - Old documents which are of some interest for our Institute history: plans or drawings of the houses occupied by our Brothers, either before 1792, or at the restoration of our Institute, after 1802; old correspondence; local history books or brochures on education, which mention our former communities, our Brothers who were dispersed during the Revolution, their return, etc.
- IV. - More recent documents, manuscript or printed, which you think might have some historical value. In this category are included official documents, copies of documents filed in municipal or departmental archives, etc.



## A. Change (1875 - 1904)

By comparison with the period following the restoration of the Institute which was characterised by a certain homogeneity, the 30 years preceding 1904 were a time of change for the Institute.

This essentially has to do with the situation of the Institute in France. Here, the republican regime had been provisionally established in 1871, but from 1876, it had begun to take root more permanently. The new institutions and the politicians elected by universal suffrage gained increasingly widespread support. With this to rely on, those in power could carry out their programme.

Part of this programme consisted in secularising (laicising) society and public institutions. The aim was to separate whatever concerned the administration of public affairs from religion by relegating the latter to the private domain. The first stage of the programme, the 1880s, consisted in the secularisation of public institutions, in particular, of schools. The second stage included the very first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. During this latter period, the more radical Republicans concentrated on removing from the Church any influence it had in society, their aim being to separate the Church and State by denouncing the Concordat which had regulated relations between the two powers since 1901. As one of the means of reducing the Church's influence was thought to be the destruction of the power of religious congregations, the government set about attacking them between 1901 and 1904. The separation of the Church and State followed in 1905.

Although Catholics were still in a majority in the country, they could not prevent this move to secularise. Most, in fact, looked to the re-establishment of one of the preceding regimes (monarchy or empire) as a means of nullifying the consequences of the policy pursued by the ruling regime. But they did not constitute a sufficiently powerful political force to bring this about. As Catholics as a whole continued to refuse to accept the society resulting from the Revolution and, at the same time, showed little sympathy for the new aspirations of their contemporaries, their attitude fuelled the hostility of their adversaries for the Church. When, during a lull in hostilities, Pope Leo XIII invited French Catholics to accept the republican regime, few listened to his plea; and when hostilities not only resumed but increased in intensity during what was known as the "Dreyfus affair", the ruling regime was spurred on to complete what it had set out to do.

The secularisation programme implemented by the Republicans affected especially schools. Schools in general, and primary schools in particular, were considered by them - and not only by them - to be particularly important, because they were seen to be a means of forming the minds of children and, therefore, of future citizens. During the first phase of "laicisation", the ruling regime set about extending the schooling of children by making primary education obligatory and, therefore, gratuitous and secular. Their aim was achieved by a series of laws passed between 1881 and 1886. During the second phase, the legislation directed against religious congregations, not only led to their legal suppression, but excluded from any type of education religious committed to it by vow, the reason given being that their lifestyle made them unsuited to teach young people.

Of the teaching congregations, that of the Brothers of the Christian Schools was the largest, and it bore the brunt of the hostilities. When the programme of public authority schools was laicised in 1882, some Brothers remained in a number of these schools, leading prayers and teaching catechism outside school hours. This became impossible after a law was passed secularising school staffs. In the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, although officially recognised, the Institute was affected in its turn by legislative measures which forbade members of religious congregations to teach in France, even in private schools.

The situation of the Institute in France had repercussions on the Institute as a whole. This was due to the fact that French Brothers were easily in the majority in the Institute, and Superior Generals were always French. The result was that whatever happened in France affected the whole Institute. And so, following the enactment of the first measures secularising education, a General Chapter was held to decide what attitude to adopt in the circumstances. The Superiors were particularly busy when the laws to exclude religious congregations were being prepared. At the same time, guidelines given by the Institute were often inspired by the situation in France. For example, the invitation to renew one's fidelity to religious obligations as a means of coping better with the situation, which was addressed to the French Brothers, was sent also to the Institute as a whole.

The Institute as a whole felt also some of the negative consequences of the measures affecting the Brothers in France. At the beginning of the 1880s, there was a drop in recruitment. It picked up again for a while, but then gradually decreased up to the end of this period. During this same period, an internal dispute called into question

the current way of governing the Institute, and the political tendency which predominated in it. On the other hand, the Brothers on the whole benefited from certain measures taken in the Institute because of the circumstances. The obligation now imposed on all teachers in France to have the necessary qualification led to an improvement in formation. In concrete terms, it resulted in particular in the creation and proliferation of scholasticates. At the same time, the efforts being made to promote a deeper understanding of the spiritual life among the Brothers, contributed to a higher rate of perseverance.

In certain countries, Brothers encountered problems similar to those experienced in France. In Italy, where they had already been excluded from teaching in public authority schools, they suffered also the consequences of the official suppression of religious congregations, and of an anticlerical policy pursued by the leaders of the country. In Germany, they were affected in their turn in 1879, by exclusion measures directed against religious. In Latin America, they were allowed or forbidden to teach in public authority schools, depending on which political faction was in power at the time.

After a noticeable recession around 1882, the Institute began a period of development, more or less all over the world, which was more rapid than it had been in France in the period leading up to 1902. This development took place especially in Belgium, Canada and the United States. New countries received Brothers. In Europe, this was true of Spain and Ireland; and in Latin America, of Chile, Argentina and Colombia. Diversification in the nationality of the Brothers, resulting from the spread of the Institute to other parts of the world, led, here and there, to a desire for less uniformity in the Institute and greater attention to local conditions. This was the case particularly in the United States.

Of the educational establishments, it was mainly primary schools that were affected by change, and it was primarily these that the Brothers ran throughout the world. The exclusion of the Brothers from public authority education in France meant that now the Brothers ran mainly "free" or "private" schools. Outside France, the predominance of free over public authority schools was not so clear, because some countries allowed Brothers to teach in public authority schools, or schools were funded by the civic authorities. The fact that the majority of Brothers now taught in private schools threw a different light on the question of gratuity: recourse to charging fees often proved to be necessary, and this brought with it the risk of changing the type of clientele admitted.

While there was a tendency for establishments providing post-primary education to increase in number in the Institute, primary schools were still in the majority. On the other hand, proportionally speaking, boarding schools had more Brothers. Brothers continued to work in orphanages, in particular in Austria; or in rehabilitation centres, as in the United States. In some countries, evening classes for adults were still provided, but they gradually decreased in number as education spread. To the teacher training colleges already run by the Brothers in Belgium, were added others in Austria, Chile and Colombia.

In the 1870s, there was an increase in France of "perseverance" groups. This increase was not affected by the effects of the policies pursued in the country. Measures were taken to ensure their continued existence on the spiritual, apostolic and social level. In other countries, the Brothers continued to run or create similar groups, but the Institute hesitated to extend them when their organisation had to be added to the existing work and obligations of the Brothers, in particular, in the primary schools.

The various aspects mentioned in this introduction will be developed in 5 chapters and in the supplements which complement them.

Chap. 1: The French context and its repercussions on the Institute

Chap. 2: The Institute at its centre

Chap. 3: The Institute in various European countries

Chap. 4: The Institute on the American continent

Chap. 5: The pursuit of missionary expansion in the Institute.

While the date chosen to mark the beginning of this period coincides with the election of a new superior general in the Institute, it is connected more loosely with the context of Institute history. On the other hand, the date chosen to mark the end of the period is dictated by what it represents for the Institute.

## Chap. 1 - THE FRENCH CONTEXT AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS ON THE INSTITUTE

### Introduction

During the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup>, the French context was so important for the Institute that we have to treat this subject first before considering the other aspects of the period we are studying (1875 - 1904).

In France, during this period, the Brothers were affected by educational legislation which excluded them first from public authority schools, and then forbade them to teach in the country. Other teaching congregations were similarly affected. The Institute suffered also from the effects of the hostility of public authorities towards religious congregations, which led, for the second time, to its official suppression in France.

This chapter will examine this situation. It is followed by a **supplement** which will deal with other aspects of the life of the Institute in France during this same period.

### Laicisation of public education (1878 - 1898)

Towards the end of the Second Empire, the establishment of gratuitous, secular and obligatory primary education was included in the republican programme (see LS 9, 209-210). From 1876, and above all from 1879 when the Republicans had a majority in the two legislative assemblies, and the President was a Republican also, the Republicans could start implementing their educational programme. There followed a series of laws which had repercussions on the Brothers, above all, because they secularised completely public authority education.

The term "laicisation" denotes the measures taken in France by the republican regime in the 1880s to remove from public institutions any religious reference. The measures did not affect only schools: "Crucifixes and religious emblems were removed from hospitals and law courts... Military chaplains were suppressed, hospital chaplains lost their pay..." (Cholvy and Hilaire, *Histoire religieuse de la France* 3, 58).

Hard to translate into other languages, it can be replaced by "secularisation", so long as the meaning it has in French of being voluntarist is not lost from view.

For derivatives "lay", "lay state", see LS 9 *Glossary*, 247.

### – Laws concerning public education

The tendency to remove teaching congregations from the public authority schools entrusted to them and to replace them by “lay” teachers had already constituted a form of laicisation of education. With the accession to power of the Republicans, this tendency could only grow stronger. And so, a circular from the Ministry of Public Instruction dated December 1878 encouraged prefects to look favourably upon requests from municipalities wishing to exclude religious congregations from their schools. The Superior of the Institute, Brother Irlide, in a booklet dated December 1878 entitled *Un simple exposé de la situation légale des instituteurs publics*, protested in vain against the interpretation of the 1850 law adopted by the minister. The City of Paris, for example, removed Brothers from its schools in 1879. In the period from 1879 to 1881, exclusion of members of religious congregations from public authority schools became increasingly widespread in France and Algeria.

However, it was with the Minister of Public Instruction Jules Ferry, that the educational programme of the Third Republic began in 1880 by the enactment of a few preliminary laws. The law of February 27<sup>th</sup> removed civic and religious leaders from the Superior Council for Public Instruction (cf. Rigault 7, 204). In the years that followed, a whole series of basic laws were passed.

#### Basic laws

**1881:** the law of June 16<sup>th</sup> generalises the gratuity of education in public authority schools; another law on the same date makes it obligatory for all primary school teachers to have a “certificate of competence”.

**1882:** the law of March 29<sup>th</sup> makes education compulsory for all children between the ages of 7 and 13. The same law decrees the laicisation of public authority education, declaring it neutral regarding all religions. As a consequence, ministers of religion cannot use school premises.

**1886:** the law of October 30<sup>th</sup> establishes that “in public authority schools teaching is entrusted exclusively to lay staff” (quoted in Rigault 7, 212).

A few other laws completed the series:

– In 1884, a municipal law ordered the removal of all religious emblems from public authority schools.

– The military law of 1889 put an end to the exemption of teachers and seminarians from military service.



## – Consequences for the Brothers

The law of 1881 regarding the certificate of competence ended the acceptance of equivalent qualifications some Brothers had, and those without this certificate, the majority, had to obtain it within 3 years. The law of 1882 which laicised the curriculum posed a serious problem for Brothers still teaching in public authority schools: to what extent could they continue teaching in these schools? A practical solution was adopted. The Brothers took the pupils out of class to make them say prayers and to teach them catechism.

The law of 1886 which decreed the laicisation of school staffs had other effects too. It raised the question in particular of how to re-employ the Brothers still teaching in public authority schools. A period of 5 years had been given to apply the law, and this made the gradual transfer of Brothers to private schools easier. This was convenient for the State also, as it did not have enough teachers to replace the members of religious congregations still employed in public authority schools.

The military law of 1889 imposed on young Brothers the obligation of doing military service, but whereas teachers in public authority schools had only a year to do, the Brothers were obliged to do the 3 years imposed by the law. The Institute took measures to cope with the situation created by this law.

On the national level, the years which immediately followed 1890 were relatively calm, thanks in particular to the presence of more moderate Republicans in the government, and the efforts of Pope Leo XIII to induce French Catholics to accept more fully the regime in power. But this period of calm did not last.

## Exclusion from teaching and suppression of religious congregations (1898 - 1904)

During this second phase, it was the hostility of the regime towards the Church that inspired new legislative measures intended specifically to exclude members of religious congregations from teaching, and to suppress their congregations.

## – A new political trend

The relative calm we mentioned earlier came to an end in 1898, with the occurrence of certain political scandals, the most notorious of which was the “Dreyfus Affair”. This scandal caused a violent confrontation between Catholics and their adversaries, the Republicans, whom they were already little disposed to accept despite the Pope’s urging to do so.

### The Dreyfus Affair

Alfred Dreyfus, a captain in the French Army, who had been posted to headquarters in 1892, was accused of spying. He was condemned to be deported to Guyana in 1894. Suspicion then having fallen on another officer, a campaign was immediately launched in 1898 by the writer Emile Zola in particular, to have the trial reviewed. Dreyfus was a Jew, and as antisemitism was rife in Catholic circles, the majority of the Catholic clergy and lay people, belonging to the "antidreyfusards" opposed the review virulently. Dreyfus was supported by the Republicans and anticlericals, called the "dreyfusards", who confronted their adversaries with equal violence.

The Dreyfus Affair, like other threats to the regime, had the effect of rallying more extreme members to the republican ranks. In 1899, a ministry formed by Waldeck-Rousseau was a victory for the "dreyfusards". In 1902, with Prime Minister Combes, "radical" Republicans supported by the Socialists took over the direction of public affairs. For the "radicals" it was not enough that the lay nature of the State had been established: the State now had to ensure that Christianity withered away, and propagate an ideology inspired by the rationalism implied by the term "lay". They believed also that the State should pass laws which would limit the influence of the Church, which was considered to be a threat to the principles and values of modern society. Their ultimate aim was the denunciation of the Concordat, and the separation of Church and State. Hence, the policy they pursued was directed especially against religious congregations and, in particular, teaching congregations. The role of some of these congregations during the "Dreyfus affair" gave credence to the myth of a plot hatched by "the Congregation", as if the congregations as a whole constituted some occult power.

#### – Legislation regarding non-authorized congregations

In 1901, in his desire to control religious congregations, Waldeck-Rousseau, prime min-



"I think he's ready for the barracks" – Caricature by Jossot for the *Assiette au Beurre*, January 2<sup>nd</sup> 1904. Source: Mona OZOUR, *L'École, l'Église et la République, 1871-1914*, p. 195.

ister since 1899, made first use of a text concerning freedom of association. While this text was very liberal regarding associations properly so called, it was particularly rigorous in articles dealing solely with congregations. Article 13 stipulates:

“No religious congregation can be formed without authorisation given by a law which determines the conditions under which it functions”.

“It cannot found any new establishment without a decree from the Council of State” \* (quoted in Rigault 7, 494).

Congregations had three months to conform to the requirements of this law. Some refused to take any steps to do so. Others, especially teaching congregations conformed.

In 1902, the new Prime Minister Combes, a declared enemy of the Church, used the law of 1901 to attack congregations considered “non-authorised”. His first step, in 1902; on the basis of a stipulation in the law of 1901 that, in order to open a school, a congregation had to be authorised to do so by a government decree, was to order the closure of 135 establishments opened after the law was passed; and then some 2,500 others whose opening pre-dated the law (cf. André Lanfrey, *Les Catholiques français et l'École 1902-1914*, 45). In 1903, a law put an end to requests for authorisation by saying that none would be granted. Given this, members of teaching congregations could no longer teach in that capacity, not even in private schools.

Among these congregations were those who had received an “ordinance of authorisation” (see LS 9, p. 86). Authorised as associations of “public utility” dedicated to teaching, rather than as religious congregations, they had to conform to the requirements of the 1901 law concerning non-authorised congregations (cf. GA, NC 269-1/2).

What could the men and women religious affected by these measures do? As exile for so many people could not be envisaged, there remained the option of “secularisation”, that is, to abandon all external signs of religious life in order to continue to run educational establishments as “private” teachers. For this reason, the clergy and the Catholics supporting Christian schools were in favour of this solution. In 1902, a number of Brothers and Sisters expelled from closed schools had already chosen this option: a much greater number followed suit in 1903.

In most cases, it was not real secularisation, because those who chose it remained faithful to their religious commitments. But they ran the risk of legal proceedings if, despite their secular dress, they gave the impression they had not changed their lifestyle. Initially, the criteria applied by those who had to judge such cases were particularly strict, and so

leading this sort of life was not without its risks, including that of becoming completely secularised after a certain time and abandoning religious life. In the case of the Marist Brothers, at the end of 1903, those leaving in this way plus those who left when the congregation was suppressed, represented 20% of the total membership (cf. A. Lanfrey, *Les Catholiques et l'école, 1902-1914*, 62).

### – Attitude of the Institute during these same years

During the “Dreyfus affair”, the Brothers, unlike members of other congregations such as the Assumptionists, do not seem to have been actively involved in the confrontation between the two sides in the dispute. To say with any kind of authority what the position of the Brothers was during this affair would call for an investigation impossible here; but one could quite easily suppose what it was by examining how they felt during the period under consideration here.

On the other hand, when the conflict between the opposing sides became more intense from 1898 onwards, the Brothers were rapidly caught up in the storm. On February 5<sup>th</sup> 1899, a boy disappeared from a parish club run by the Brothers in Lille. The following Wednesday, the body of the boy was found in the school parlour. The magistrate in charge of the enquiry was convinced that the murderer was a member of the Brothers' community. When the Brothers were interrogated each in turn, one of them, Brother Flamidien (Isaie Hamez), appeared ill at ease. He was immediately considered guilty of the crime. What became known as “the Flamidien affair” unleashed violent feelings among the enemies of religion. However, after 5 months of detention on suspicion, the Brother was released, preliminary investigation having proved him innocent. But, as the investigation had been conducted illegally, it was ruled null and void. The new investigation resulted in a judgment dated July 10<sup>th</sup> stating “there was no reason to pursue the matter”. “The Flamidien affair shows how far anti-clerical fury could go”, concludes G. Rigault in his account (vol.7, 491). Despite the outcome, this affair inevitably harmed the Institute. We see Brother Gabriel following developments closely in his correspondence with Brother Assistant Louis de Poissy who was in Rome at the time (cf. GA EE 281/16).

When threats to “non-authorised” congregations had become clearly defined from 1901 onwards, one might have thought that these congregations found support from the Institute, which was not targeted. This does not seem to have been the case. In 1894, when the Pope invited the superiors of congregations to meet, a first attempt failed because Brother Joseph, superior general of the Institute, refused. In a meeting organised

in 1898, the Brothers of the Christian Schools and two other congregations were not represented. The Institute did not attend the 1901 meeting either, when the draft law on associations was given to the superiors present. In this instance, Brother Gabriel Marie understandably thought that the Institute was not concerned. In fact, a communication from the Council of State dated January 16<sup>th</sup> 1901 had re-affirmed “that the associations of St Lazarus, the Foreign Missions, the Priests of St Sulpice and the Brothers of the Christian Schools, could be considered as being legally authorised religious congregations” (GA NC 269-2/2).

And yet, in 1902, the superior of the Institute, Brother Gabriel Marie, sent a petition to the Sovereign Pontiff, giving his reason for doing so “the events which seem to be about to happen in France, which could, possibly very shortly, bring about for the second time the dissolution and dispersal of the said Institute”. He asked the Pope to grant him:

“1° The faculty to use the endowments given to Institute establishments to provide for the needs of the Brothers that it will be possible to keep [...].

2° The faculty to grant secularisation to Brothers who wished to keep their vows interiorly, on condition they returned to the Institute once calm was restored.

3° The faculty to dispense Brothers from their temporary or perpetual vows”. (Copy in GA EE 281-1/9).

The response given on October 7<sup>th</sup> 1902 granted the first two “faculties”, but imposed certain conditions. Regarding the third request, the Superior General was asked to have recourse to the Holy See in each specific case.

### – Impact of threats directly affecting the Institute

When, in 1903, Combes used the part of the law concerning congregations to suppress those which were not authorised, there were some in the Institute who still deluded themselves that they would not suffer a similar fate. And so, Brother Assistant Exupérien “put his trust in high ranking persons who showered him with marks of esteem” (Rigault 7, p. 497). The Superior General did not share his optimism, as we read in his “*Notice biographique*” (p. 101). There was cause for worry, in fact, as Combes made no attempt to hide his intention of suppressing the congregations as a whole. In the course of the same year, the Brother Visitors were called to the Mother House or to Athis. On December 5<sup>th</sup>, the threat was sufficiently clear for the Regime Council to think it necessary to destroy the personal files of the Brothers, and on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the same

month, to decide to purchase a property at Lembecq lez Hal, in Belgium (cf. *Registre des Délibérations du Régime C*, 470-471).

Meanwhile, on December 18<sup>th</sup>, Combes tabled his draft bill concerning authorised congregations. On January 3<sup>rd</sup> 1904, the Brother Visitors were called to a meeting scheduled at the Mother House for February 8<sup>th</sup>. From now on, the Brothers were sure that the Institute was going to be suppressed once again. The measures to be taken in this eventuality had to be considered. In a copy of the deposition made by Brother Almer Bernard, the secretary of Brother Exupérien, at a preliminary hearing in view of the beatification of the latter, we read that, at the beginning of January 1904, the Superior General spoke to the Brother Directors of the houses in Paris in terms that greatly exaggerated the danger: in his opinion, the destruction of the Institute was imminent, and the Brothers who were not of an age to be admitted to retirement homes should look for places to go to “it did not matter where”. According to the author of the deposition, the Superior General, alluding to a recent shipwreck, is supposed to have added: “when a big ship sinks, it’s each man for himself”. It is also said in the same document that the Superior General had the documents in Brother Exupérien’s office destroyed while the latter was in the Mother House infirmary (cf. GA EE 281-1/9). The effect of the declaration we have based ourselves on here is very much minimised by Brother Alban in his *Histoire de l’Institut des Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes - Expansion HORS de France*, 291 ff.

### – Legislation affecting the Institute

The measures adopted regarding non-authorised congregations did not affect the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, which was one of the 5 male congregations recognised by Napoleon 1<sup>st</sup>. However, the terms of the 1901 law stating that the opening of new establishments entrusted to religious congregations had to be authorised, applied to the Institute as well: a number of schools opened after the law came into force had to be closed for lack of the required authorisation.

At the beginning of 1904, the Council of State stated that the “offence of reconstituting a congregation” had to be based on proofs and not only on appearances, and this made the situation of those fictitiously secularised more bearable. But for Combes, all members of religious congregations, even from those that were recognised, should be barred from teaching. In December 1903, he presented a draft bill in the Chamber of Deputies directed specifically against the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

The chairman of the committee appointed to study the draft bill was Ferdinand

Buisson, a university professor, a rationalist and an expert in pedagogy. His report to the Chamber of Deputies aimed to show that the fact of being a religious was incompatible with being a teacher, or more precisely, with forming young persons; as the vows pronounced by the religious made him lose all his personality. Given this, he could not be entrusted with educating children or young people. The State, by officially recognising certain religious institutes, had played a part in maintaining men or women in this position. It was a situation that had to be ended (cf. GA NC 269-1/5).

Even in this succinct form, it is necessary to be aware of this line of reasoning in order to understand the “zeal” shown by those who shared these views to bring about the exclusion of members of religious congregations from all educational establishments, and the dissolution of these congregations in their present form.

The same Ferdinand Buisson, in the *Dictionnaire de la Pédagogie*, whose publication he had overseen from 1878 to 1887, had actually defended the Brothers of the Christian Schools who were directly targeted by the law he presented in 1904! In the same way, when the law was discussed, it was agreed that some novitiates would be maintained “to train staff for French schools abroad, in the colonies and protectorates” (art. 2 of the law, GA NC 269-1/2). Despite such contradictions, the law was voted through, and promulgated by the President of the Republic on July 7<sup>th</sup> 1904.

As a result of this law, the Brothers had to withdraw from all their educational establishments within 10 years at the most. The first decrees of closure were published on July 9<sup>th</sup>. Between then and July 15<sup>th</sup>, 801 Brothers’ establishments were affected, that is, about three-fifths of the total number of these establishments (cf. Rigault 7, 514).

In Brother Gabriel Marie’s “*Notice biographique*”, we read that when the 1904 law began to be applied, the Superior suffered a great deal as a result, and the perplexity of the Brother Assistants “made him hesitate initially regarding decisions that had to be made. The first impression, then, was one of hesitation and despondency” (p. 103). It seems, in fact, that from the moment the threat took concrete form, the Brother Superior and his entourage had difficulty in facing up to the situation. In any case, if we are to judge by the *Registre des Délibérations du Régime*, no overall plan seems to have been drawn up by the superiors and, what is certain, they failed to be unanimous regarding future conduct. This is confirmed by what Brother Assistant Louis de Poissy wrote later in a document addressed to Brother Imier de Jésus who was Superior General then:

“In 1904, it seems that necessary measures were not taken regarding the vows, secularised Brothers, subjects in formation, etc. Perhaps better instructions would have been given, if previously these questions had been discussed by the Council” (GA EG 151-1).

This was particularly well illustrated by the solutions advocated by the various Brother Assistants responsible for the Brothers in the French Districts. Most of the members of the Regime were in favour of sending to other countries Brothers who had been asked to do so and had accepted. And so, in the first few months of 1904, the first departures of young Brothers in formation took place. Brother Exupérien, on the other hand, caused a certain amount of astonishment by advocating the “fictitious” secularisation of Brothers in order to save the schools, especially in Paris. Brother Almer Bernard added in his deposition that, when Brother Assistant returned to the administration of his Districts after his illness, “he had only one thought in his head: to save the schools at all costs, and not abandon the children brought up by us to godless schools.”

## Conclusion

What we have considered in this chapter clearly raises some questions. Thus, when we see the succession of events leading once again to the dissolution of the Institute in France, it is difficult not to wonder why, in a country with a vast majority of Catholics, such a thing was possible. We can see these events as the culmination of the conflict which, throughout the century, had mobilised anticlerical liberals and republicans against Catholics, of whom the majority supported the monarchy, were in favour of “order”, and had little sympathy for the way society was changing. And the conflict was won by the liberals and republicans. It was also the culmination of the process leading to the secularisation of public offices and social institutions. We need to bear in mind also, the inability of Catholics to form a political force capable of finding sufficient support in the country to overthrow their adversaries. To that we have to add the lack of cohesion even within the Church; between, for example, the secular clergy and religious congregations, and among the different congregations themselves.

As far as the Institute is concerned, we are justified in questioning the attitude of those who directed it at a time when threats to religious congregations began to be more clearly defined, and when they became explicit. On the one hand, they hung on to the certainty that the Institute would not be harmed, and they dissociated themselves from other congregations. On the other, they seemed to resign themselves to the worst and to be disorientated by the prospect. The fact remains that, while, so many years later, we find their attitude surprising, it is still difficult to explain it, unless, perhaps, as we said before, by the inability of the Superiors to adopt a common position.

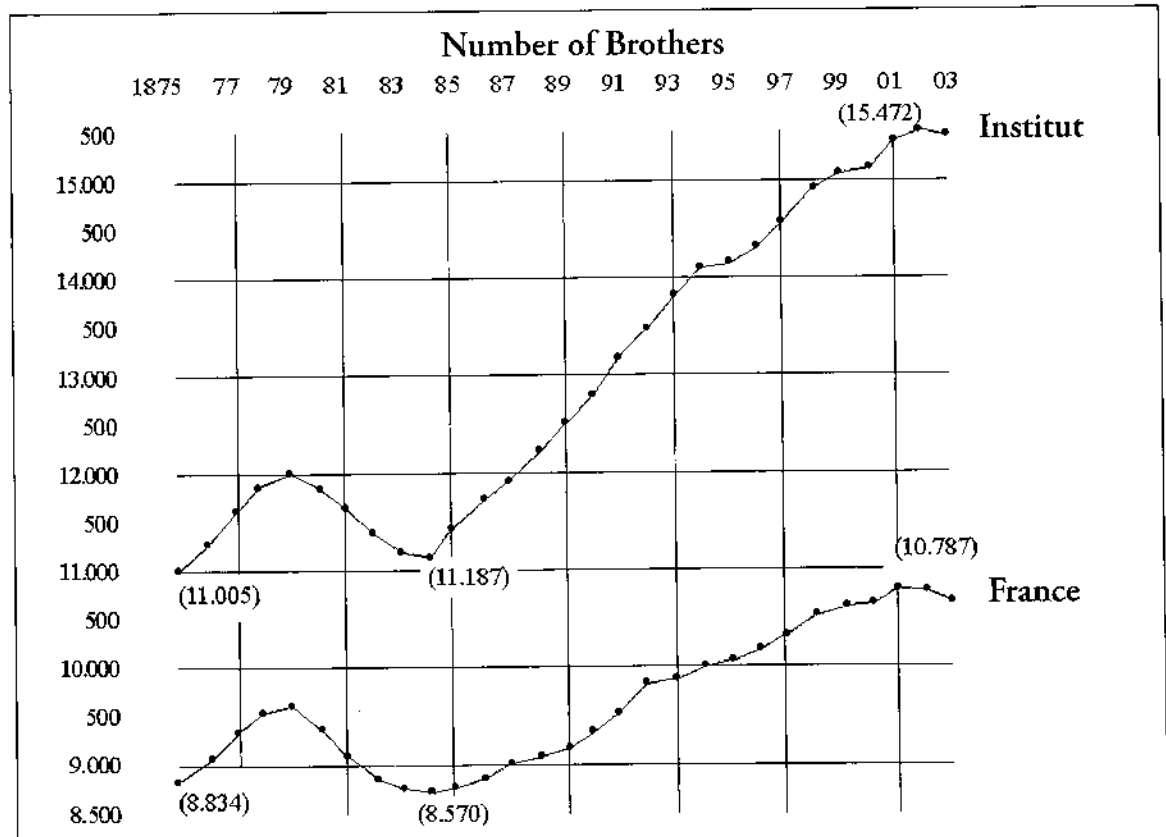


## 1. THE INSTITUTE IN FRANCE

The threats which hung over the Brothers, and the measures which affected them, in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup>, inevitably had an impact on them. They had an impact on numbers, on their state of mind, and even on their apostolic enthusiasm. What actually happened? This is what we shall examine here.

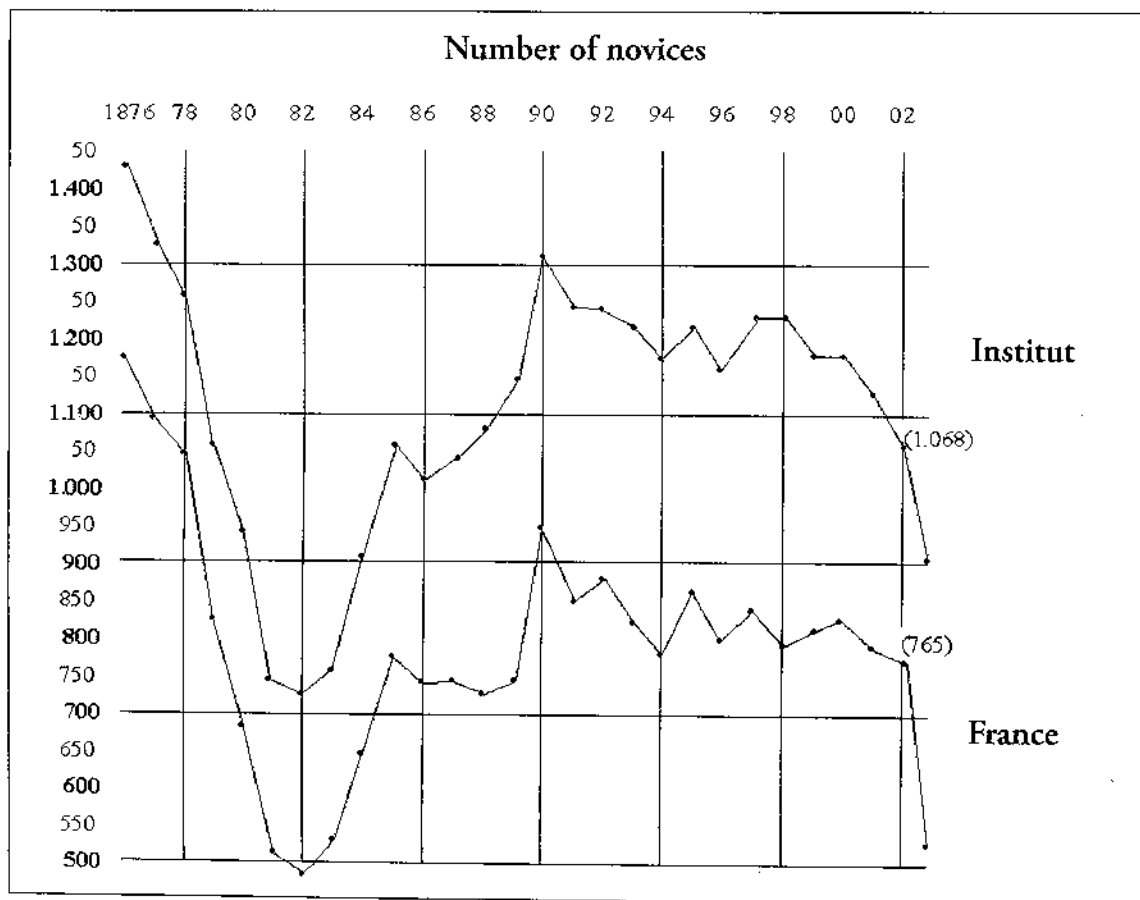
### The impact on numbers

The situation in which the Brothers found themselves in France was enough to make those thinking of entering the Institute hesitate. We can use two graphs to show what actually happened. The first highlights the changes in the number of Brothers in France compared with those in the Institute as a whole. The second does the same regarding the number of novices. As there will not be any other opportunity to return to these figures for the Institute as a whole, we give them now.



The fairly similar curve of both graphs highlights the continuing influence exercised by the number of Brothers in France on that of the Brothers in the Institute as a whole. This influence is particularly felt in the period 1879 to 1884, when the decrease in numbers caused in France by the uncertainty resulting from the education laws of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic had repercussions on the Institute as a whole. It is noticeable also how the constant growth in the number of Brothers in the Institute from 1885 to 1902 was mirrored by a similar growth in France; and the subsequent decrease was linked with the heavy threats hanging over religious congregations from which the Institute was not shielded.

Also, the curves of the two graphs tend to separate gradually. This indicates that, even if the number of Brothers in France remained very high (we should bear in mind that the graph begins only at 9,000), this number gradually decreases, relatively speaking, by comparison with that of the Brothers in the Institute as a whole.



This graph also, which begins with 1876 (the figure for 1875 was exceptional), highlights the influence of the number of novices in France on the overall number of novices in the Institute.

In particular, one can see very clearly the effects of the decrease following the education laws of the 1880s. On the other hand, changes in the number of novices seem quite different from those in the number of Brothers. By comparison with the constant growth in the number of Brothers between 1885 and 1902, the number of novices fluctuates and tends to decrease from 1891 onwards. As in the preceding graph, we note the increasing gap between the number of novices in France and that of the novices in the Institute as a whole.

### The impact on the state of mind of the Brothers

The context in which the Brothers in France found themselves could not fail to have repercussions on their state of mind. This is manifested in their overall attitude, but also takes the form of contestation towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>.

#### – Overall attitude of the Brothers

Given the fact that this period saw the enactment of so many education laws which affected the Brothers, one may well wonder how the Brothers felt about these measures. As far as individuals are concerned, it is difficult to know. Their correspondence would have no doubt given some indication, but we have little trace of it. On the other hand, it is possible to ascertain in the *Historiques* of Districts and houses, what the dominant state of mind was of the Brothers as a group.

And so, it appears that the Brothers saw in what was happening to them a deliberate attempt to dechristianise France. This is confirmed, for example, by the *Historique* of the District of Béziers, in a passage which speaks of the various stages of this process:

“Everyone knows that in 1882 a most painful break occurred between religion and school, the legislator excluding henceforward teaching religious from public authority schools and with them the Christian teaching they gave children in them. This was the prelude to the ultimate aim of the anti-clerical educational policy pursued by anti-Christian sects... They will never succeed in dechristianising France until they have first replaced Christian by neutral schools.” (GA NC 284/1.2).

This is also what we read in the *Historique* of the small community of Conliège, Jura, about the Brothers expelled in 1904:

“...such fine examples of dedication could not find favour with sectarianism, as impious as it was

insane, whose avowed aim was the (so-called legal) establishment in France of full-scale atheism. Sects begin by attacking children; the priesthood, its hierarchy, its altars will follow later.” (ADF 71-20).

If the implementation of this plan was the doing of the Republican Party, the writers of the *historiques* had no doubt that this party was inspired by occult forces. A passage referring to the boarding school at Dijon gives an evocative description of them:

“The suppression of education by religious congregations in France is the triumph of Satan through freemasonry, the Jews and their followers. Aim achieved: the work of free-thinkers, opportunists, radicals, socialists, communists, all acting always for Jewry and Freemasonry.” (ADF 71-26).

Other less virulent texts also did not hesitate to denounce these occult forces of which the Brothers considered themselves victims. And they were not alone in doing so. For example, in a study entitled *L'attitude des Congrégations religieuses en Haute Garonne face aux lois de 1901 et 1904*, we read that these laws “remain in the memory of congregations as a terrible period of upheavals and persecutions. The “laws” are referred to several times by religious who speak of impious laws.” (p. 98) In the Institute, equivalent expressions such as “wicked laws” or “liberticide laws”, used and transmitted throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, indicated quite eloquently that Brothers shared the impression that they had been persecuted. We should not then be surprised by the hostility they have kept for a political regime which forced them either to go into exile, or to put themselves “outside the law”, by adopting a fictitious secularisation.

## Internal contestation

While the overall attitude of the Brothers was as we have attempted to describe, it was not, however, absolutely unanimous. In fact, towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a dispute broke out in the Institute as in other teaching congregations. It took various forms.

– In 1894, a work appeared with the title *Un pensionnat des frères sous la III<sup>e</sup> République*, signed by Firmin Counort, (formerly Br Algis of the Institute of the Christian Schools). This work questioned the representativeness of the members of the Chapter held that same year. He believed that the Chapter had a great number of reforms to make. Discontent was almost universal, defections were numerous, boarding schools needed to be improved, the power of Visitors needed to be diminished; the Brothers needed better spiritual and professional training (cf. A. Lanfrey, 24).

– In 1895, the Le Franc de Tavières Committee was formed. In particular, it published a book entitled *Frère Malapion*, which denounced the shortcomings of teaching congregations and advocated their radical reform.

– In that same year, a review entitled *Gerson* was published, and in the period up to March 1896, 7 issues appeared. Setting out to be “an organ for the reform of the constituent elements of private

education" (A. Lanfrey, 32), the review took on, from its 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> issues onwards, a clearly political tone, adopting as its slogan "For God and the Republic".

– In 1898, there appeared another book by F. Counort, entitled *À travers les pensionnats des Frères des Écoles chrétiennes*. In the preface, the author gave an overall picture of the difficulties encountered by the Brothers (A. Lanfrey, 25). He withdrew the book from circulation as soon as it came out, not wishing to take advantage of the Flamidien affair.

While contestation was not restricted solely to the Brothers of the Christian Schools, most of it, in fact, came from them. What we find basically in published texts is that criticism is centred on such points as the government of institutes considered insufficiently democratic, and the poor quality of recruitment and formation, which resulted in the imposition of the obligations of religious life, especially that of celibacy, on persons who could not respect them. As for advocating solutions, the authors ended up, in practice, by abolishing the constituent elements of religious life.

From this criticism, we gain an insight into a number of facts we examined earlier (see LS 9, 148-149). But given the tone used, it is difficult to see how much credence should be given to these texts. As for determining the group of people this contestation was intended for, it is impossible. It seems, however, that only a small number of Brothers was involved. This was true also of other congregations.

#### External contestation

At the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was the work of the teaching congregations that was questioned in the criticism directed at private education. Thus, in 1904, there appeared a work by an author using the pseudonym Milès, entitled *Banqueroute des maitres chrétiens, ses causes, ses remèdes*. In short, the author says that the Church had not taken the advantage one might have expected, of the freedom which it had had for 50 years to open teaching establishments. In particular, the inadequacy of the religious formation given in Catholic boarding schools or colleges had facilitated, instead of preventing, the promotion of the policy of laicisation pursued for a quarter of a century. It followed also that the Christian formation given in school was inadequate to ensure the perseverance of school-leavers, if this formation was not continued in so-called after-school activities. This contestation reflected the criticism of certain members of the clergy who tended to prefer parish clubs and similar organisations to Christian schools. What credence can we give to this criticism? The present text will furnish some answers to this question.

### The dynamism of the Brothers' schools

Despite the vicissitudes of their situation and their repercussions on them during the

years under consideration here, the Brothers not only did not diminish their efforts, but they manifested on the contrary real dynamism in their various fields of action.

### – Primary education

Gradually, the Brothers had to abandon the public authority schools. First of all, this was because of the acceleration of their replacement by lay teachers from 1879 onwards: the *historiques* of many houses date from this year or from the years that immediately followed the withdrawal of the Brothers from the school or schools they had run up till then. This withdrawal speeded up when the law of 1882 was passed, although Brothers continued to run “laicised” schools. The law of 1886 fixed a five-year limit for the continued existence of such situations, but in some schools, the Brothers remained till after 1891. The dismissal of the Brothers at times met with resistance: at Concarneau, Finistère, for example, in 1883, women held a meeting to protest against the mayor’s decision (cf. Rigault 7, 244). In some cases, the process was carried out in an atmosphere of real hatred, as at Isle-sur-le-Doubs where “the Brother Director and one of his Brothers were falsely accused, imprisoned and taken to the prison of Baume, before the charge was dismissed and they were freed” (FA archives Besançon deposit 71-37).

Quite often, when the Brothers had to leave a public authority school, they were given a private school to run in the same town. If the overall number of schools run by the Brothers diminished initially, it subsequently began to grow again until 1900, as can be seen from the table below:

Years	1875	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900	1903
Number of public authority schools	1.016	540	347	174	–	–	6
Number of private schools	360	684	828	1.046	1.307	1.374	1.354
N.B. In this table, the number of private schools includes also establishments which are not schools.							

### – Boarding schools

The laicisation measures did not concern boarding schools. By comparison with the previous period, their number increased especially because of the creation of small boarding schools, or of “cameristats” for weekly boarders. The aim was to admit as many pupils as possible, and to complement the resources of houses running a primary school, many of which had added classes providing post-primary tuition. Apart from the boarding school at Rouen founded in 1874 and expanded on a new site; and the creation of

others at Besançon (1886) and Amiens (1889), few large boarding schools were added to the existing ones. The relative increase in this type of establishment can be judged from the number of pupils designated as “boarders” in the annual statistical returns:

- in 1880: 10,049 boarders (4.25% of total pupils in schools).
- in 1903: 15,186 boarders (7.8% of total pupils in schools).

The novelty of these large establishments, which as a rule, had opted for “special education”, lay in the introduction of a new type of secondary education called “modern”, which was created by a law in 1891, in which the teaching of modern languages replaced that of ancient languages. The same kind of education could be given in fee-paying weekly boarding schools and day schools.

#### - Vocational and technical education

In the small boarding schools and in a certain number of other schools, when post-primary courses were given in a class, these were often complemented by commercial, agricultural or even industrial vocational courses, according to local needs. It would be difficult to list all these courses because of their variety. In Lille, a St Luke school was opened in 1878, which ran evening classes offering the same courses as taught in the Belgian St Luke schools. Larger boarding schools often added technical training to courses in theory, in their vocational formation programmes properly so called. Other types of establishments were created for the same purpose.

Boarding schools such as those in Passy and Marseille, for example, ran **commercial courses**. In Paris there existed 4 so-called “advanced” commercial schools whose intake was provided by primary schools. The advanced commercial school opened in Lille in 1880, ran a three-year course leading to an exam which was the equivalent of the special secondary education certificate, tailored to commercial and industrial needs. In 1900, we read that “Brothers run commercial courses in 82 schools or special classes” (A. Prévot, *L'enseignement technique chez les Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes au XVIII<sup>e</sup> et au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles*, 136).

**Industrial training** is to be found more particularly in the Lyons area. In Lyons, the École de La Salle was opened in 1880 to provide technical training accompanied by solid instruction in the faith. In St Étienne, pupils following a primary school education programme, received at the same time practical training in industrial and craft skills, in factories and workshops. In the same town, a course devised by Brother Rodolfo (Jean

Achille Sogno) prepared for the entrance exam to the *École des Mines*. In other more or less large industrial centres, schools offered industrial courses on various levels: in Douai, the vocational school founded in 1875, had as its aim to train "good Christian workers"; in Rheims, workshops were opened in 1880, offering training for various trades, and in 1894, an advanced industrial section was opened. Different establishments prepared students for entry into the Arts & Crafts Schools, intended for the training of shop-foremen or under-managers of industrial enterprises. At Lille, a scheme was devised to open a Catholic school of this type and to entrust it to the Brothers of the Christian Schools, but the Brothers gave up the idea in 1892. Finally, an identical scheme was successfully implemented in 1900 in Rheims, and an Arts & Crafts School of this kind was opened.

In Brittany, the Brothers wanted to help pupils who wished to join the navy. In Lorient, they ran the port apprentice school from 1873 to 1880. In other establishments opened subsequently, Paimpol (1892), St Malo (1893), Brest (1896), the Brothers trained sailors. They did similar work in Dunkirk, (North).

In **agricultural training**, the "Le Likès" boarding school in Quimper was a pioneer.

Other boarding schools also ran courses in agriculture: at La Roche sur Yon, Vendée; in Béziers where viticulture was taught; in the boarding school at Longuyon, Meurthe et Moselle, which took over from the school at Beauregard, near Thionville, closed in 1874. Establishments specialising in this teaching were opened at Limonest, near Lyons and at Limoux, Aude. One of the Directors of the establishment at Laurac, Ardèche, a certain Brother Serdieu, became interested in the rearing of silk worms, and re-started the cultivation of the vine after the phylloxera crisis. The Agricultural Institute created at Beauvais in 1854 to train heads of large agricultural enterprises continued to extend its activities.

In 1900, there were 12 schools specialising in agriculture. To these should be added numerous agricultural courses run by other establishments (cf. A. Prévot, 138).

The St Nicholas Schools entrusted to the Brothers also provided vocational formation: industrial at Vaugirard, and horticultural at Issy, Igny. This same service was provided by a number of **orphanages** run by the Brothers, such as those at St André, near Clermont, or at Les Choisinets, Lozère, which gave agricultural training. Thanks to a donation, the Brothers built an establishment at Fleury Meudon, near Paris, which was able to give a scholastic and vocational formation to some 300 boys. The premises were officially opened on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1888. In 1891, the Brothers returned to Levier, Doubs, and took over an orphanage/boarding school.



In addition to the schools for the **deaf and dumb** which they ran at St Étienne and Besançon, the Brothers were asked by the bishop of Belley in 1889 to take over a similar establishment at Bourg, Ain. They opened one in St Étienne in 1900. At Besançon, Brother Riquier (Charles François André), was one of the pioneers of the “oral articulation” method, of which Brother Pierre Célestin (Pierre Fumet), who worked in this kind of establishment, was one of the propagators.

From 1855 onwards, the Brothers worked with the Jesuits in the “Mission St Joseph”, teaching French to the children of workers from Germany or Austria. After the 1870-1871 War, they did the same for those from Alsace and Lorraine, who had left their province after their annexation by the Germans. Brother Alpert (Chrétien Motsch), who began his teaching career there, became its Director in 1879, and up to 1895 worked with great zeal, even as he gradually became paralysed.

The Brothers continued to run evening classes for apprentices or adults in a certain number of schools. Proportionally speaking, the number of students attending them tended to diminish. From 15,556 in 1880, the number of adults had decreased by 1903 to 1,763. In the same period, the number of apprentices shrank from 2,108 to 711. Work with soldiers continued in various places, in particular, at Nantes, where Brother Camille de Jésus continued his apostolate till 1899. The centre for the “*Instruction et la persévérance des Petits ramoneurs et des ouvriers des rues de Paris*” already mentioned (see LS 9, 235) risked closure in 1870 because of the exclusion of the Brothers from the school on which it had been centred since 1860. However, it survived temporarily.

#### – “Perseverance” groups

Thanks to the impetus given especially by Brother Joseph who had become Superior General, perseverance groups run by the Brothers entered a period of great expansion in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Through them, the Brothers responded also to the wish expressed by Pope Leo XIII that they should increase the number of schools having a **youth club**, in order to ensure the Christian perseverance of their pupils after they left school. After their revival from 1873 onwards, the number of these youth clubs continued to increase in the years that followed. In Paris, after the laws laicising education were passed, the creation of private schools enabled the Brothers to run parish youth clubs. In 1882, of the 76 private schools run by the Brothers, 31 of them opened their doors every Sunday to some 2,800 young commercial or industrial workers. In 1893, the number of schools had risen to 44. In the same year, in the rest of France, there were

some 200 youth clubs run by the Brothers, catering to about 25,000 young people (cf. GA KD 862-2/3: *Rapport Noces d'Or des Œuvres de jeunesse*, p. 62-63).

But the Brothers did not wish these youth clubs to be solely perseverance groups: they wanted to be able to provide a real Christian education in them. Brother Assistant Exupérien especially, wanted to form a special group, whose members, by reason of a more solid formation, would become the apostles of their companions. On June 13<sup>th</sup> 1882, he brought together 9 young men, who decided to set up a society with St Benedict Joseph Labre as its patron, whose members would commit themselves to live an intense Christian life, and dedicate themselves entirely to the work of the youth clubs. In 1897, the **Society of Saint Labre**, which had a group in each of the principal schools run by the Brothers in Paris, had 900 members, that is, 1 out of 6 of all pupils were members of one of the 60 youth clubs run by the Brothers in the Paris area (*Pédagogies chrétiennes, pédagogues chrétiens*, 424).

Former students' associations also, whose number had greatly increased, made it their task to ensure the religious perseverance of their members by taking as their objective the defence of Christian, and in particular, of Brothers' schools.

#### – Involvement in social aid

Sharing the concern of certain Catholics such as Albert de Mun or René de la Tour du Pin, who sought "to bring the working class back to their faith and to reconcile it with the ruling classes" (Rigault, 7, 412), some Brothers extended the scope of their existing youth clubs by giving them a social dimension.

Already, in some of the youth clubs the "Junior conferences of St Vincent de Paul" had been formed. They were called "junior" because they were intended for young people, as opposed to the "senior" conferences composed mainly of adults. In 1890, in Paris only, there were about 20 of them (GA KD 862-3/4).

These youth clubs expanded also in a different way. Among the Brothers running perseverance groups, there was some who wished to add a social dimension to their work. And so, in 1883, Brother Hiéron (Jean Giraudias) in charge of the Notre Dame de la Bonne Nouvelle youth club in Paris, set up an employment agency to help young people belonging to his club to find a job. This initiative was followed by an even more important one. A law passed in 1884 allowed the formation of trade unions in France, and so in 1887, thanks to the efforts of Brother Hiéron, the Commercial and Industrial Employees' Trade Union was founded. Its main characteristics were as follows:

- to be a resolutely Christian trade union;
- not to be a “mixed” union, that is, to be for employees only, as opposed to those which included the bosses;
- to provide various services: an employment agency, a mutual aid fund, vocational and social formation (cf. GA KD 862-2/5).

This union was composed almost exclusively of members of the youth clubs. It was run by persons belonging also to the St Labre Society.

The social concern of the Brothers was shown also, for example, by the creation of a “St Nicholas family house” for young workers coming to Paris: as well as by the setting up of socially orientated study groups as in Rheims, Lyon, St Étienne, Bordeaux, Roubaix (cf. GA NC 269-2/1, p. 23).

Who benefited from all these undertakings which were not included in school programmes properly so called? “In France, in 1900, there were 350 youth clubs and other youth schemes run by the Brothers, catering for some 35,572 boys. These were mostly to be found in the North and in Paris” (AVANZINI Guy, *Dictionnaire historique de l'éducation chrétienne d'expression française*, 503). According to Rigault, the Brothers were in contact with 50,000 young people and adults in their extra-curricular activities.

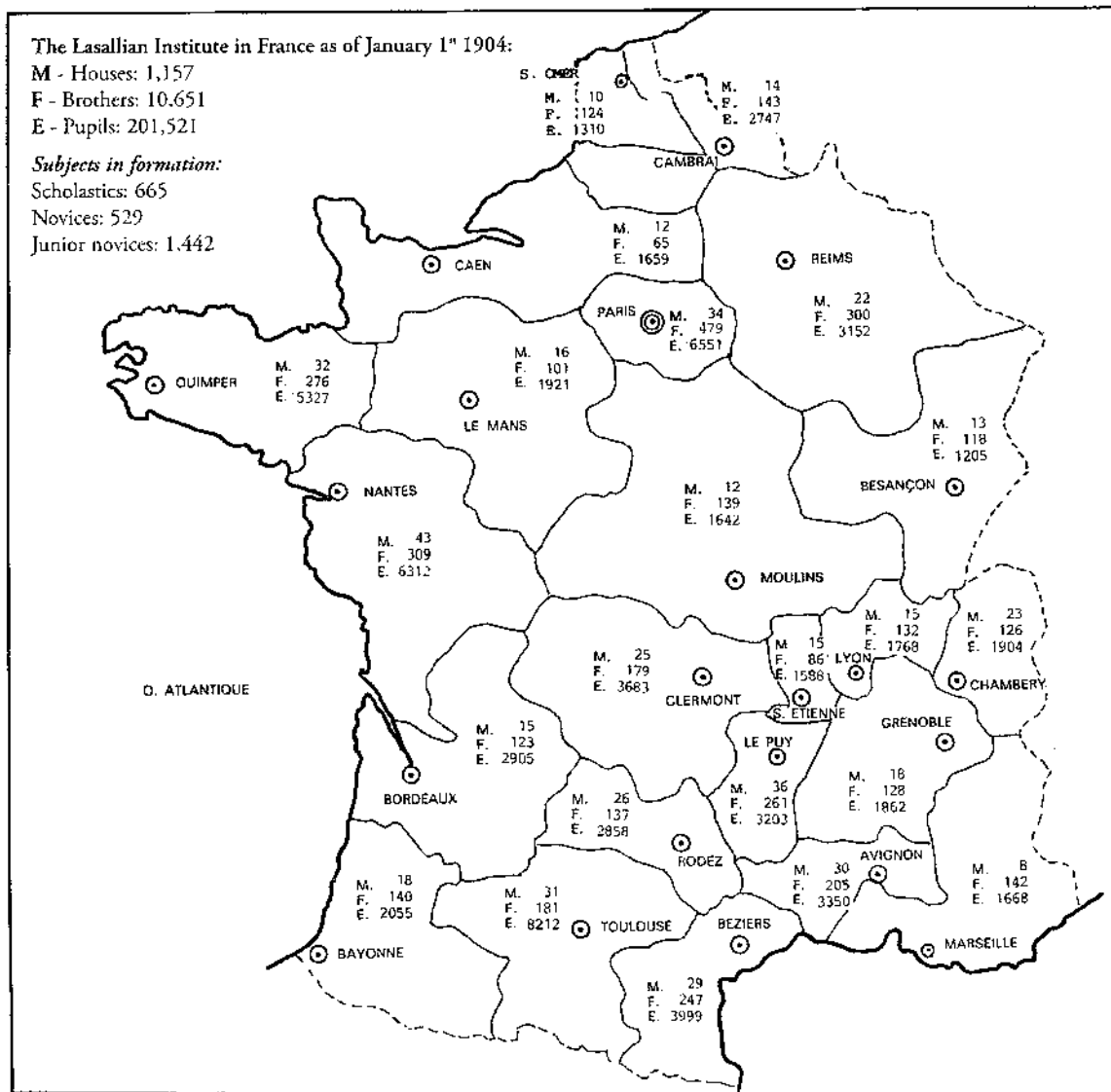
## Conclusion

As far as the Institute in France is concerned in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, its outstanding characteristic is no doubt the fact that, after a decrease in numbers in the 1880s, it then took on new life, despite the obstacles it encountered and the threats hanging over it. On the other hand, these obstacles and threats did not affect the apostolic dynamism of the Brothers.

Regarding the traditional work of the Brothers, despite their exclusion from public authority schools, the number of schools they ran did not diminish noticeably. In fact, circumstances favoured an increase in the number of boarding schools, without this causing a lack of balance in the overall number of schools.

As for the other kinds of work undertaken, should they have been developed further to complement the work done in the schools, so as not to deserve the criticism levelled at them by Milès? Perhaps, but to make a judgment, one would have to assess the results already achieved in these other kinds of work the Brothers had undertaken. In the absence of such an assessment, we can highlight the profound effects and influence of, for example, the St Labre Society (the fostering of priestly and religious vocations); or

the effects of the creation of a trade union from which originated one of the groups of affiliated trade unions, the Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens (cf. Michel Launay, *La CFTC*, p. 100).



It will be noted that the District of St Omer does not figure on this map, and that the southern boundary of that of St Étienne lies under this word.

## Chap. 2 - THE CENTRE OF THE INSTITUTE

### Introduction

During the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup>, three Superior Generals succeeded one another at the head of the Institute. This meant the convocation of three General Chapters; a fourth was called at the end of a 10-year period; and others met for various reasons. The work of the Chapters and that of the Superiors constitute only one aspect of the history of the Institute during this period. However, they provide us with a framework to which we can attach other aspects of this same period. Each of the three parts of the chapter will be attached to one of the Superior Generals.

Since what happened to the Institute in France during this period had repercussions on the Institute as a whole, the present chapter had to be relegated to second place. As it will be complemented by the supplement which follows it, many points have not been brought up here, or have only been mentioned in passing.

Historical landmarks	
1875	General Chapter: election of <b>Br. Irlide</b> Brothers arrive in Hong Kong
1877	Brothers arrive in Chile
1878	Brothers arrive in Spain and Holy Land
1879	Brothers expelled from Germany
1880	Brothers arrive in Ireland
1882	General Chapter
1884	General Chapter: election of <b>Br. Joseph</b>
1887	Creation of Second Novitiate
1888	Beatification of the Venerable De La Salle
1889	Brothers arrive in Argentina
1890	Definitive arrival of Brothers in Colombia
1894	General Chapter
1897	General Chapter: election of <b>Br. Gabriel Marie</b>
1900	Canonisation of Blessed De La Salle
1903	Brothers arrive in Nicaragua
1904	Institute suppressed again in France

### Brother Irlide (1875 - 1884)

#### Chapter of 1875

Following the death of Brother Jean Olympe, the Brother Assistants sent out a letter on May 3<sup>d</sup> 1875 convoking a Chapter for June 29<sup>th</sup>. In the statistics for France, 1,278

“Professed school Brothers” were listed as being “senior”, and 273 as being Directors of the principal houses. To the Provinces with the right to appoint one or several delegates were added those of New Mexico and California.

When the vote was taken on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, a large majority of the 74 voters chose Brother Irlide as the new Superior General. The election of 3 Assistants was postponed to another day. This election took place on July 8<sup>th</sup> and brought the number of Assistants up to 12 with the addition of Brothers Phileter (Augustin Deygas) born in 1822, Junien (Pierre Saurel) born in 1822, and Aimarus ((Jules Goussuin) born in 1830, and the continuation of those already in office.

**Jean-Pierre CASANEUVE** was born on March 24<sup>th</sup> 1814 at Guchen (Hautes Pyrénées). At the age of 17, he turned to teaching and obtained his certificate of competence in 1833. For the first two years he did not teach because of ill health. In 1835, he obtained a job. He had not yet decided to join the Brothers. He entered the novitiate in Toulouse during the holidays of 1837. After his novitiate, he was sent to teach in the gratuitous schools of this town. In 1839, following a retreat presided over by Br Philippe, he made his first vows.

The following year he was one of the Brothers who opened the boarding school in Toulouse. On September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1842, he made his perpetual vows. In 1845, he was appointed Director of the boarding school. In 1850, he accompanied Brother Leufroy, sent as “apostolic visitor” to the Papal States (see LS 9, p. 127), where he remained some time. On his return to France, he was sent to start up the new District of Bayonne, detached from that of Bordeaux, with the title of Visitor and Director of the house in this town. In 1856, he opened a boarding school there. He was elected a delegate to the Chapter of 1856 and to those that followed, and was appointed Assistant in 1873.



In the course of the Chapter, in addition to questions regarding the formation and the religious or apostolic life of the Brothers, the following topics were raised:

- the suggestion was made “that the Institute create a third order”, but it was thought that the idea had not matured enough;
- there was a discussion about “the Brothers who remain in the Institute without asking to make vows”.

But, above all, the Chapter made some important decisions concerning the representation of the Brothers at this kind of assembly. It was decided that, for France, in each of the Districts one or two delegates would be elected, depending on the number of the Brothers in the District. Among ex-officio delegates were included “Provincial Visitors”, this new function having been created at the request of the Superior General, who had proposed that certain Brother Visitors, too old to administer their District, could, instead, be asked to fulfil ad hoc missions. According to the report on the deliberations, these Provincial Visitors would have primarily the task of visiting novitiates and the houses of residence of Visitor Directors in charge of Districts (Register C, 72).

### – The achievements of the Superior General

In his *Notice biographique*, it is said of Brother Irlide that “if he kept something of the limpidity of the streams of his enchanting valley, he was never able to free himself entirely of the impetuosity of the torrents which rushed into it (p. 6). He had, in fact, a strong character, and there was something imperious about the way he did things. His nine years at the head of the Institute left their mark on it.

Among the things Brother Irlide did was to try to ensure that the past history of the Institute was not forgotten:

- in 1881, he instructed the Brothers to consult local archives in order to write an *historique* of their house.
- he encouraged Brother Lucard to write his *Annales de l'Institut*;
- he had the Bull of Approbation reprinted after checking the text;
- he had a facsimile made of the 1717 Rule, and published the *Coutumier de Saint Yon*;
- thanks to him, documents were discovered in the departmental archives at Lyons, relating to the re-establishment of the Institute in Lyons in Year XII (1803) (see LS 6, 263).

Brother Irlide also had to face up to the consequences of the French government's education policy for the Institute. To counter various measures, he undertook studies worthy of a jurist. In 1878, in his *Simple Exposition de la situation légale des Instituteurs*

*publics*, he showed that certain motives put forward for replacing the Brothers by lay teachers were contrary to the law. As the right of the Institute to enjoy a legal status was being contested, Brother Irlide undertook a thorough study of the question (see GA DD 359/2) and in 1881 he published *Note sur l'existence légale et la personnalité civile des Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes*. And in the conflict between the Institute and the Paris Town Hall regarding the Mother House, he published in the same year a memoir defending the right of the Institute to use the building in rue Oudinot (*Notice biographique*, 127), and he published a second one the following year. However, as a result of this conflict, the house at Athis Mons was acquired, not far from the capital.

Brother Irlide had a sense of the universality of the Institute. As we said earlier, he had stayed in Italy. When he was Visitor Director at Bayonne, he admitted boarders from Spain, paving the way for the establishment of the Institute in that country. A request made during the time of Brother Philippe to send Brothers to Madrid had come to nothing. Negotiations were resumed in 1876 and, as Brother Irlide favoured the idea, they were rapidly completed. At the 1882 Chapter, the American Brothers invited him to visit them since, as they said, he had already visited Italy, Spain, England, Ireland, Belgium and Germany, but, even if he wished to, he was never able to make the journey.

### – The 1882 Chapter

In a circular dated June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1882, Brother Irlide convened a General Chapter for October 21<sup>st</sup>. He explained that among his reasons for calling this Chapter, the principal one was the policy “being pursued in almost all the countries of Europe and even elsewhere”, whose aim was, under cover of “popularising education ... to combat religion, by making its study almost impossible for children”, because it was excluded from primary school teaching programmes. Election of delegates took place according to the norms adopted in 1875 and endorsed by the Holy See on November 12<sup>th</sup> of the same year. Sixty-five delegates were to be elected by Districts or Provinces, and 20 were *ex officio* members.

The capitulants decided that from then onwards two kinds of Registers would be kept: one would continue to contain the decisions of the Chapter; and the other would contain a summary of deliberations. For reference, the first would continue to be indicated by a letter; the second would be classified by a Register running number.

At the beginning of the Chapter, the Superior outlined the situation of the Institute in France resulting from recent education laws, and from the contestation of the rights



of the Institute recognised up till then. In another session, Brother Irlide summarised in seven points the reasons why the Institute had not left the public authority schools in France when the “neutrality” of these schools regarding religion had been established. He stated that “the French episcopacy had declared that schools must not be abandoned, because such an abandonment would be equivalent to indirect cooperation with the law”; and that “When neutrality had been adopted in Italy, Pius IX had ordered the Superior of the Pious Schools not to abandon the schools”; and that Leo XIII had used similar language in the rescript dated August 9<sup>th</sup> 1881 which he had sent to the Superior General of the Institute (cf. Register C, 123 f). At the end of this session, the Superior gave his reasons for wishing to resign, but his resignation was not accepted.

After devoting several sessions to discussing the question of the presence of Brothers in “neutral schools”, the Chapter renewed the mandate of the existing Assistants for a further 10 years and elected 3 new ones: Brothers Gabriel Marie (future Superior), born in 1834, Raphaelis (Pierre Michallat) born in 1830, and Louis de Poissy (Albert Bruny) born in 1835. Discussion then turned to the reports of the commissions set up to study the notes sent to the Chapter by the Brothers. One long report in particular deserves attention: it is that of the 33<sup>rd</sup> session, where the duties of the different sorts of Brother Visitors are defined (Register C, 152). It was the first time a General Chapter expressed its opinion about the role of a person who was an important link in the running of the Institute. After 37 sessions, the Chapter ended on May 11<sup>th</sup>: it had been the longest since the beginning of the century.

A circular dated January 3<sup>rd</sup> 1883 turned its attention to the 1882 Chapter. During the summer holidays of that same year, Brother Irlide undertook a visit of retreat centres, but he fell ill at Nantes on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Even if he had some moments of respite from his illness and was able to fulfil his functions, the health of the Superior deteriorated. On July 16<sup>th</sup> 1884, he began to draw up a letter announcing to the Institute the convocation of a General Chapter for October 15<sup>th</sup>. He was able to complete the letter on the 20<sup>th</sup>, but on July 26<sup>th</sup> 1884 he died in his 71<sup>st</sup> year.

Despite its relatively short duration, the generalate of Brother Irlide was important because he was able to face up to the threats to the Institute posed by the education policy pursued in France and in other countries; and because his time in office marked a change in various areas by comparison with previous periods. It seems, however, that some of his collaborators in the Regime reproached him with having introduced changes that were thought dangerous for the Institute.

## Generalate of Brother Joseph (1884 - 1879)

### – The 1884 Chapter

On July 26<sup>th</sup> 1884, the Brother Assistants announced the death of Brother Irlide and confirmed October 15<sup>th</sup> as the date for the holding of the Chapter to elect a new Superior General. For this Chapter, there would be 23 ex officio members, and Districts (Provinces are no longer mentioned) were to elect 68 delegates from among the Visitors, the Directors of the principal houses and the senior Brothers.

When the Chapter met, three delegates were missing. During the election session on October 18<sup>th</sup>, Brother Assistant Joseph was declared to be elected even before all the voting slips of the first ballot had been counted. During the 13<sup>th</sup> session, two new Assistants were elected: Brothers Cyrus (Pierre Lesage) born in 1829, and Apronien Marie (Auguste Peritnicolas), born in 1833. Subsequently, the Superior proposed that the Assistants in office since 1882 should have their mandates extended to 1894.

**Joseph Marie JOSSERAND** was born at St Étienne, Loire, on March 30<sup>th</sup> 1823. The only schools he attended were those of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. In May 1836, he joined the junior novitiate which had been opened the previous year at the Mother House. On March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1838, he entered the novitiate. When he left it he was barely 16 years old. Brother Philippe sent him to the important house of St Nicholas des Champs in Paris. In 1845, he was sent to teach in the half-board school of the Franc Bourgeois which had just opened. From the outset, he had a remarkable impact on his pupils. In 1852, he received an obedience to be the Director of the house. He established a youth club there, opened another one for former pupils, and founded a "Family House" to lodge pupils with no relatives in Paris. In 1867, he was appointed Visitor of the District of Paris *extra muros* which included three departments. In 1873, he was a delegate to the General Chapter. He was already thought to be a future Assistant, but it was only in 1874 that he was given this responsibility.



At the Chapter, one suggestion received among others was "to organise societies for Catholic teachers which would be attached to the Institute". Most of the topics discussed had already been raised before in similar assemblies. In addition, the Chapter was marked by the visit of the Papal Nuncio and of the Coadjutor of the Archbishop of Paris, and by a pilgrimage to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at Montmartre. It ended on October 30<sup>th</sup>, after 21 sessions.

### – Inter-capitular period

The new Superior was very different from his predecessor, as is clearly shown by a passage in his *Notice biographique*: "After the conclusion of the General Chapter which had elected him, Brother Joseph immediately set about continuing and completing what his predecessor had done for the general good of the Congregation, without losing any of his habitual kindness, easy accessibility, distinction and punctuality" (p. 119). As will be seen, he did in fact continue to pursue certain aspects of Brother Irlide's work, but he nevertheless left his personal mark on whatever he did. This was particularly true with regard to the apostolate: the experience he had acquired at Francis Bourgeois in Paris coloured his particular approach to perseverance groups.

Other aspects of Brother Joseph's work deserve a mention too. For example, the role played by the house at Athis Mons (near Paris) in the organisation of retreats for Brothers, but also for young people, explains the interest shown by Brother Joseph in this house. He had the coffins of his three predecessors brought there on December 13<sup>th</sup> 1884. On April 29<sup>th</sup> 1886, the Bishop of Versailles came to bless the newly built chapel. At the end of 1893, building work began on a new building intended to house the next General Chapter.

We can mention also the interest shown by Brother Joseph in Brother soldiers. As a result of a military law passed in 1889, young Brothers in France had to do military service which was now obligatory. In a circular dated January 20<sup>th</sup> 1890, Brother Joseph spoke to these young Brothers expressing his pain at seeing them undergo this trial and encouraging them. On November 1st of that same year, he sent a letter to each of these Brother soldiers. In October 1891, he sent various recommendations to Brother Visitors regarding them. In September 1892, the question of having a retreat for them was raised; and in February 1893, a plan was drawn up to establish regular contact with them, which took the form of a monthly letter. It was thanks in particular to these measures that the risks inherent in this separation from the Institute for three years proved smaller than might have been feared.

## – The 1894 Chapter

With the 10 year period between Chapters drawing to a close, Brother Joseph convened a Chapter for October 11<sup>th</sup> in a circular dated June 24<sup>th</sup> 1894. The Chapter was to be held at Athis Mons. Eighty-one Brothers had to be elected to represent Districts, and there were 20 ex officio members. In practice, however, the total number of delegates was 97, as two District representatives and 2 ex officio members could not attend. In the second session, the Superior presented his report on the Institute. He spoke of the problems resulting from the laws passed in France, and the difficulty of “recruiting good novices”, but he said also that “education laws, far from hurting us, have been useful to us. There had been a decrease in the number of Brothers leaving, and there had been an increase in the number of Brothers with certificates of competence” (Register C, 270). He highlighted the fruits of the “wise measures” adopted in the houses of formation, of the increase in the number of 20-day and 30-day retreats, and of the “beatification of our Founder”. After indicating the “consoling results” obtained by Districts “outside France”, with the exception of India, he presented a “very interesting monograph on the Christian works promoted by the apostolic zeal of the Brothers”.

The presentation of reports by the various commissions entrusted with the examination of notes sent in by Brothers was interrupted by the designation of 12 Assistants. Among the 10 who were retained in office, 2 had been chosen by the election commission which met in 1891: these were Brothers Clementian (Peter Muth), born in 1840 in Germany, who had emigrated to the USA, and Réticius (Louis Gonet), born in 1837. Two new Assistants were elected: Brothers Narcellien (Antoine Gardet), born in 1834, and Madir Joseph (Charles Dekoster), born in 1837 in Belgium. We can mention here a note which “reported serious difficulties regarding Brothers who had been admitted several times to renovation of vows”. The Superior asked “Brother Visitors to be vigilant regarding this matter to ensure that subjects unsuitable for the Institute were not kept”.

The Chapter ended on October 28<sup>th</sup> 1894, and Brother Joseph communicated its results to the Institute in a circular dated November 21<sup>st</sup>. In the years that followed, Brother Joseph had to face a number of trials. Health problems were already reducing his capacity for work, and he had already considered offering his resignation to the Chapter, but his certainty that it would be refused, made him abandon this idea. His state of health had not prevented him from presiding the Chapter with “a liveliness and competence noted by everyone” (*Notice biographique*, 182). But his health did not improve with time. In another connection, a so-called “*subscription*” tax law, passed in August 1895, affected the Institute. In agreement with the Superiors of the four other

male congregations “recognised” by the State, Brother Joseph decided to conform to the law, but protesting at the same time against the exceptional treatment meted out by this law and by a previous one passed in 1884. In certain Catholic circles, Brother Joseph was criticised for having come to terms to some extent with a government that was hostile to religion, and he was much affected by this reproach. On the other hand, the lawsuit brought to court by the City of Paris to deprive the Brothers of the use of the Mother House resulted in a decision in the Brothers’ favour on January 2<sup>nd</sup> 1896.

In October of the same year, Brother Joseph’s state of health deteriorated. In November, he went to Arcachon, Gironde, in the hope that it might improve, but he died on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1897, in his 74<sup>th</sup> year. The Brother Assistants informed the Institute of the death of the Most Honourable Brother Superior and convened a Chapter for March 16<sup>th</sup>.

### The first years of the generalate of Brother Gabriel Marie (1897 - 1904)

#### – The Chapter of 1897

At the opening session of the Chapter, 83 of the 99 members were elected. On March 19<sup>th</sup>, the capitulants elected a new Superior General, **Brother Gabriel Marie**.

The Chapter was due to elect two new Assistants. When the Superior announced that this election would be held on March 25<sup>th</sup>, he drew the attention of the capitulants to its importance, and expressed the hope that their choice would fall on Brothers “endowed with sufficient vigour, with real strength to resist fatigue, and who were relatively young” (Register C, 351). On the appointed day, Brothers Viventien Aimé (Claude François Aymonier-Davat), born in 1851, and Périat Etienne (Paul Bargel), born in 1845, were elected.

Among the matters treated, we can mention the recommendation made by the formation commission to give preference to “direct recruitment of pupils from schools or large boarding schools where high quality studies were pursued” (Register C, 360). Another question that was raised was gratuity. The Superior spoke at quite great length on this matter, and the assembly accepted the propositions of the Schools commission:

1° The Institute will try to refuse any responsibility for ordinary schools, totally or partially supported by school fees of any kind whatsoever.

2° When it is question of closing a school, preference should be given to closing a paying school.

3° As far as circumstances permit, the use of school fees should be ended with prudence and wisdom in places where it has been tolerated, in order to return to a situation where strict gratuity obtains” (Register C, 369).

During the inter-capitular period which followed the election of Brother Gabriel Marie, we can mention the election as Assistant of Brother Dosithée Marie (Léon Le Touze), born in 1837, by the election commission when it met in October 1879. But the outstanding event was no doubt the canonisation of St John Baptist de La Salle, to which we shall return later.



**Edmond Brunhes** was born at Aurillac, Cantal, on November 16<sup>th</sup> 1834. Receiving his primary education in a public authority school, he moved to a school run by the Brothers in the same town for his secondary schooling. In September 1850, he entered the novitiate at Clermont Ferrand and, having completed his formation, remained there for a year as a substitute teacher. He was then sent to Brioude, Haute Loire, where he remained for 21 years. In 1873, he was appointed Director of the Pensionnat Notre Dame in Le Puy. In November 1878, he became Visitor of the District, which had its provincial house in the same town. In the various functions he had, he gave proof of a bright intellect, his fine grasp of mathematics, and his gifts as an administrator. In 1882, at the age of 48, he was elected Assistant. In the exercise of this function, he was in charge in particular of the commission supervising the composition of school textbooks.

### – The Chapter of 1901

A circular dated June 14<sup>th</sup> 1901 announced the convocation of a General Chapter for October 15<sup>th</sup>, to be held at Arthis Mons. Its principal purpose was the examination of a revised draft of the Rule drawn up by an ad hoc commission in view of a new edition. A circular dated August 15<sup>th</sup> gave details regarding this revision: its aim would be to make the text of the *Common Rules* as a whole coincide with that of 1717 and 1726.

The Chapter was composed of 105 members, and of these 86 were delegates and substitutes. During the Chapter, Brother Pamphile (Paul Berger-Billon), born in 1848, was elected Assistant. During the 30<sup>th</sup> session, the proposition of the Superior to extend the mandate of existing Assistants by 10 years was adopted by the Assembly.

Regarding the examination of the revised draft of the Common Rules, a preliminary study of the 37 chapters was distributed among the various commissions. The examina-

tion of the text point by point was then made on the basis of the report of these commissions. Given the ultimate aim of the process, discussion centred mostly on choosing which part of the text to keep when there was a divergence of views on the matter. The intention of returning as much as possible to the 1717 text was good, because this text could be considered to be the original Rule of the Institute. But also, it was necessary to take into account the modifications made in 1726 regarding the vows, or those introduced following the decree *Quemadmodum*. Certain ancient practices had also been modified, as well as references to suffrages for deceased Brothers.

Work on the Rule of Government began in the 24<sup>th</sup> session. In this connection, the Chapter had more leeway, but it had only just less than 15 sessions to devote to it. The examination of the notes sent in by the Brothers, which was somewhat expedited, took only 5 sessions.

The Chapter ended with the 43<sup>rd</sup> session on November 8<sup>th</sup> 1901. The Superior General informed the Institute of the results of the Chapter in a circular dated December 25<sup>th</sup> 1901. From this moment onwards, the pressure of events on Brother Gabriel Marie was so great, that his activities in the few years leading up to 1904 have already been dealt with in the previous chapter.

## Conclusion

As we shall see in the supplement that follows this chapter, one of the characteristics of the period considered here was the continuity of the efforts of the Superior Generals to stimulate the Brothers' spiritual life and their apostolic activities. However, the rapid succession of 3 very - one might even say, excessively - different Superior Generals did not facilitate this continuity. And also, each of the three was elected at a fairly advanced age: 61 for the first two, and 63 for the third. In the case of Brothers Irlide and Joseph, both were hampered in their work by ill health in the final period of their generalate.

On the whole, the work of the General Chapters was not very striking and did not come to grips much with the events of the time. The 1882 Chapter, however, was an exception, in particular, thanks to the impetus given to it by Brother Irlide. The very special characteristic of the 1901 Chapter, was all the more decisive as the Institute, at least in France, was about to enter a period of great turbulence.

It can also be said that the period appears to have been marked, at least in the last ten years, by what we can call a "tightening up" in the way the Institute was run. This tendency can be seen first of all in the election of a certain number of Assistants known for

their great strictness, such as Brothers Aimarus, Louis de Poissy, Gabriel Marie, and Rericus. This tendency was already noticeable in the 1894 Chapter, but it was above all the 1897 Chapter which strengthened it by taking a certain number of decisions which subsequently the Superior General applied conscientiously.

The above impression seems to be confirmed by a note sent by Brother Louis de Poissy to Brother Imier de Jésus, elected Superior in 1913 (GA EG 151-1). According to this note, in the time of Brother Philippe, there had been "a falling off in regularity"; the generalate of Brother Irlide had been "disastrous"; Brother Joseph, whose qualities were recognised, had been wrong not to convene the Regime Council often enough; as for Brother Gabriel Marie, he had "reacted effectively against a number of abuses".

We shall have an opportunity to return to this reaction which can be explained by the events which marked the Institute in France during those same years.

**Brother Justinus (1842 - 1922).**

Hubert Bragayrac, was appointed Secretary General of the Institute in 1886. As a member of several government commissions, his statement in the Chamber of Deputies on March 28<sup>th</sup> 1899 created a sensation: "By showing all the advantages that could be found in the programmes, Brother Justinus demonstrated once again, that it was not the programmes, but the teachers, that ought to be changed" (Gustave Le Bon). In 1902, when the baccalaureate programme in Sciences-Modern Languages was being drawn up, his advice was particularly valuable in helping to avoid encyclopaedic programmes.

He ran *L'Éducation chrétienne*, a weekly pedagogical review, from 1891 to 1910. He organised the participation of the Brothers' schools in the Exhibition of 1900. After the suppression of the Institute, he worked in vain for the recognition of the "Missionary Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools".





## 2. GUIDELINES GIVEN TO THE INSTITUTE

During the period we are now considering, some of the guidelines given to the Institute through decisions of General Chapters or directives from Superiors differed little from those given previously, in particular, during the generalate of Brother Philippe. Others, however, indicated changes, some of which were noteworthy. Some of these changes were governed by circumstances, and in particular, circumstances connected with the context of French politics. This did not prevent them from influencing the Institute as a whole. This can be seen in three main areas.

### Formation of the Brothers

Despite a certain degree of development, the formation of the Brothers was still too rapid and quite summary. While little had been done to revise the content and objectives of formation, various measures were adopted to improve its organisation, both in the houses of formation and outside them.

#### – Houses of formation

Returning from a journey to Rome in 1885, Brother Joseph wrote that he had won the admiration of Roman congregations when he had told them that the Institute had 3,000 candidates in formation (*Notice biographique*, 129). But this number would not be sufficient if the formation given was not of high quality. Consequently, the Chapter of 1894 decided to draw up special regulations for each type of house of formation. The 1897 Chapter considered how to provide good Directors for these houses.

From 1876, the number of **junior novitiates** greatly increased, and in 1878, Brother Irlide took steps to provide them with regulations (*Notice biographique*, 82). Progress in this area was mostly numerical. In the 1894 Chapter, the reading of the report on preparatory or junior novitiates had given Brother Joseph “the opportunity of recalling the modest beginnings of junior novitiates, and the ardent desire of Brother Philippe to increase their number if he had the necessary resources. Since then, according to Brother Superior, the miracles of Providence had made it possible not only to open 33 of these valuable establishments, but also to have quite a large number of staff to run them...” (Register C, 274).

Up to then, the Institute had had a fair amount of leeway regarding the length of the **novitiate** and the age for admission of postulants. The 1882 Chapter decreed that, strictly speaking, the novitiate had to last one year and one day (Register C, 140). However,

we see, for example, that in the novitiate of the Béziers District, the first group to do a whole year's novitiate was the one admitted in 1887. In 1894, the Chapter decided that admission to the novitiate could not take place before the age of 16, but it left the possibility of a 3-month dispensation. In addition, as Brother Irlide had recalled in the 1882 Chapter, there had already been much progress regarding the choice and formation of novice masters. He himself, like Brother Jean Olympe 6 years before, had brought all the novice masters together for the "Great exercises".\*

But the most noteworthy development was the establishment of *scholasticates*. The 1834 Committee had asked for the re-establishment of what had existed before the Revolution, to give the Brothers time to become proficient. The 1837 Chapter had repeated this request, but this had led only to some limited experimentation. In the years that followed, "lack of staff" had been all the more easily used as a reason for putting off the establishment of such places, as, in France at least, the certificate of competence was not required of assistant teachers, that is, generally speaking, of beginners.

But it was becoming urgent to allow the Brothers to prepare for the certificate of competence after the novitiate, since this document was going to become obligatory for all primary school teachers in France. This is what Brother Irlide pointed out in 1880 when he announced the forthcoming opening of a "study novitiate" or scholasticate at the Mother House. Already in 1879, the District of Besançon had opened a scholasticate for 17 young Brothers who had just completed their novitiate. In subsequent years, various French Districts opened scholasticates. Statistics for December 31<sup>st</sup> 1895 mentioned scholastics for the first time, giving their number in France as 560. The number of novices was given as approximately 850.

The question of scholasticates did not concern only France: the obligation to have a certificate of competence in order to teach made it necessary to prepare young Brothers for it also elsewhere. The entry in the *Regime Council Register* for January 25<sup>th</sup> 1890 notes that a special grant had been allocated to enable 19 Brothers in the District of Rome to prepare for a teaching certificate (GA EG 430 Register 2, 397). From now on, the scholasticate became a basic stage in the formation of the Brothers. As the 1882 Chapter had requested, the scholasticate was to be considered as a second probationary year (cf. Register C, 140).

#### – The formation of Brothers already teaching

At least as far as France was concerned, before the creation of scholasticates, *courses* had been organised for Brothers already teaching, in particular to prepare them for the

certificate of competence exam. For example, in 1872, Brother Jean Olympe, Assistant at that time, had ordered the Brothers of the District of Besançon to gather at Dijon for written tests. The urgency created by the 1881 law which made the possession of the certificate obligatory, led the superiors to take advantage of the withdrawal of Brothers from certain schools to organise specific courses for them. And so, at the 1882 Chapter, Brother Irlide was able to say that he had managed “to bring together 1,100 scholastics whom the Minister of Public Instruction considered to be working teachers” (Register C, 120).

Subsequently, similar courses continued to be organised for Brothers without the lower level certificate, but also to prepare others for the advanced level certificate. This was the case in the District of Cambrai-Lille between 1880 and 1888, and later, from 1896 onwards. But there was a need also for a more advanced type of scholasticate to enable Brothers to improve the level of their formation, which included preparation for university diplomas. The 1894 Chapter had advocated it, but it was not thought possible; the 1897 Chapter preferred to leave it to Brother Superior to establish one.

At the same time, **religious studies** were given a great boost. The daily timetable included a period for the study of the catechism, and each day, young Brothers had to recite the lesson they had learnt. This system needed to be improved. At the 1894 Chapter, the Superior declared that “the religious textbook currently being published is the Institute Catechism”, and that he was “confident that the text being published will ensure that, from now on, the first and most important subject studied by the Brothers will be Religion” (Register C, 295).

During the same 1894 Chapter, the dean of the Provincial Visitors thanked the Brother Superior for what he had done in the field of catechetics. From 1896, catechism exams were organised.

### **Improvement of religious life**

On a visit to the Mother House in 1875, Cardinal Pitra, in his capacity as “Protector of the Institute”, had drawn the attention of the Brothers to the risks that “their growth and their success” could pose the Institute. The Superiors were aware of the dangers, and tried consequently to increase the religious spirit in the Institute.

#### **– Intensification of spiritual life**

As was said earlier in connection with Brother Philippe, the Superiors had various means to communicate with the Brothers, either on a personal level, by means of corre-

spondence and personal interviews, or as a group, by talks, and circulars. They made use of these means, but each in his own way. For example, there is little trace of the personal **correspondence** of Brothers Irlide and Gabriel Marie with the Brothers, while in the case of Brother Joseph, much of his correspondence is extant, both with the Brothers and a certain number of young people he had followed up in the Frangs Bourgeois school. When he became Superior, he continued to write to both, in his own hand, long, dense and cordial letters of encouragement. In the same way, when he spoke to groups, he won over his audience by the passion and conviction of his words.

Following the example of their immediate predecessors, the three Superiors made abundant use of **circulars** to communicate with the Brothers in general. The purpose of many of these circulars was to give information or directives concerning both the religious life and the apostolic activity of the Brothers. In this respect, these circulars differed little from one Superior to another, except perhaps those of Brother Joseph, which included frequent invitations to prayer, especially in the form of perpetual adoration, and the first mention of Brother Benildus. As for Brother Gabriel Marie, he wrote almost 120 circulars of different kinds, between 1897 and the end of his generalate in 1913 (cf. *Notices nécrologiques*: n° 61, 109).

Brother Irlide wrote at length on spiritual topics. He developed his arguments amply, but less systematically than Brother Philippe had done. The tone of what he said reflected that of other texts of a similar nature written at the time. They reflected also certain current trends in the Institute, as for example, when the author established a parallel between the Institute method of mental prayer and the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. Brother Joseph likewise sometimes lingered on topics to do with the ascetic life or prayer. In January 1892, he invited the Brothers to renew their spirit of prayer and mortification. In 1894, he explained the reasons for having a devotion to the Holy Child Jesus. In the circulars of Brother Gabriel Marie, there is little systematic development of topics relating to the spiritual life. He concentrated rather on the means of promoting it, such as retreats, a topic to which he often returned, and visits.

To nourish the spiritual life of the Brothers, Chapters and Superiors undertook to provide the Brothers with revised **works**, such as the *Manual of Piety*, published by Brother Irlide in 1877, or a new edition of the *Collection* in response to a request of the 1897 Chapter.

But the greatest characteristic of this period was the special importance attached in the Institute to retreats modelled on the **Spiritual Exercises** of St Ignatius. Chapters and

Superiors set about promoting this kind of retreat. One of its great proponents was the Assistant, Brother Exupérien. A few months after the 1875 Chapter, in response to a request, Brother Irlide brought together a number of Brothers admitted to perpetual vows, for a month-long retreat. In 1876, at the usual time for retreats, 300 Brothers from France, but also from Belgium, Italy and even America, came together for a similar retreat. In 1877, as a contribution to the success of these retreats, the Brother Superior wrote a short work entitled *Instruction pour les Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes sur les Grands Exercices*. These retreats were now common practice in the Institute.

Other groups were invited to follow the “Great Exercises”. Brothers Jean Olympe and Irlide had invited the novice masters. In the same year he was elected, Brother Joseph called together at Athis Mons, 4 Assistants, 3 Provincial Visitors, 11 Visitors and 23 Directors (*Notice biographique*, 12). In April 1885, Brother Assistants Aimarus and Patrick were chosen to preside the Great Exercises in the United States (Deliberations of the Regime, Register 3, 351), but only Brother Aimarus could do so.

Brother Joseph also wished to implement the wishes of the 1875 and 1882 Chapters by creating a **Second Novitiate** (cf. *Notice biographique*, 144). At the 1875 Chapter, when there had been question of acting on the desire expressed as far back as 1725, that perpetual profession be preceded by a return to the novitiate, Brother Exupérien had advocated the creation of an organisation modelled on the “Third Year” of the Jesuits. But it was not thought possible to free so many Brothers in the course of the school year. A circular dated July 16th 1887 announced a session for professed Brothers, to be held at Athis Mons from August 4th to November 5<sup>th</sup>. It was the beginning of the “second novitiate” lasting “100 days” whose purpose was no longer, therefore, to bring together Brothers before their perpetual profession. Its first Director was Brother Alban Joseph (Visitor of the District of Paris), followed, at the end of 1887, by Brother Réticius, who gave it a very directive character modelling it very closely on the kinds of novitiates that were run in those days.

### – Devotion to the Founder

The time was right for stimulating the Brothers to renew their devotion to the Founder of the Institute. The cause of the Founder continued to be pursued in Rome, even if at times there were hold-ups. And so, in a circular dated June 28<sup>th</sup> 1880, Brother Irlide invited Brother Directors to write to their bishops asking them to request the Holy Father to hasten the beatification of the Venerable De La Salle. On July 9<sup>th</sup> 1886, Brother Joseph announced the meeting of the “Preparatory Congregation” for the examination

of the miracles attributed to the "Servant of God", and on November 1<sup>st</sup> 1887, he published the decree declaring the authenticity of the miracles. The de tuto decree saying that the **beatification** could go ahead was promulgated on December 27<sup>th</sup> 1887, enabling the Brother Superior to write to all the Brothers in January 1888, inviting them to prepare for this beatification and to dispose themselves for it. The ceremony took place on February 19<sup>th</sup>, in the presence of Brother Joseph, six of his Assistants and 200 Brothers. Throughout the world, wherever there were Brothers, great celebrations were held to honour the new Blessed, the accounts of these celebrations filling 7 volumes.

When two new cures were obtained, including that of Brother N ethelme in Montreal, Canada, the canonisation cause could proceed, as Brother Joseph announced on March 31<sup>st</sup> 1890. The decree declaring the authenticity of the miracles was promulgated only on April 30<sup>th</sup> 1899, and on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Pope Leo XIII pronounced the decree authorising the **canonisation**. This took place on May 24<sup>th</sup> 1900, in the presence of Brother Gabriel Marie and numerous pilgrims who had come for the ceremony. Once again, John Baptist de La Salle, now declared a saint, was honoured in celebrations all over the world.

It was not enough for the Brothers to give honour to the new saint: they needed also to show greater fidelity to his example and teachings. Already in 1884, the Chapter had asked for a new edition of Blain's *Life* to be published, to enable the Brothers to know the Founder better and to help to make him known. In his circular dated May 20<sup>th</sup> 1887, Brother Joseph was able to announce that the Chapter's wish had been granted. Shortly before the beatification, an illustrated volume appeared including a life of the Founder written by Armand Ravelet, and a history of the Institute by L eon Gautier. With the *Annales de l'Institut* by Brother Lucard (volume 1 published in 1883), this was one of the first works based on other sources, and not simply a plagiarised version of Blain's *Life*. However, it was mostly by their teaching, based on the holy Founder, that the Superiors encouraged the Brothers to follow him more and more closely.

### – Revision of the Rule

For some years already, a need had been expressed for a new edition of the Rules. The 1858, 1861 and 1875 Chapters had considered the question. The 1882 Chapter, believing it was indispensable to undertake an examination of the Common Rules and the Rule of Government, created a 12-member commission which, with the Brothers Assistants and headed by Brother Superior, set about doing some preliminary work. Their work had not advanced sufficiently for the 1884 Chapter to make use of it. Brother Joseph was invited to pursue the study of the question. In 1894, he informed

the capitulants of the modifications that had been made, following the publication of the decree *Quemadmodum* on December 17<sup>th</sup> 1890, but the Chapter was not capable of undertaking a revision of the Rules as a whole. In the months which preceded the 1897 Chapter, the Regime began to draw up a draft to be presented at the Chapter, but it was not completed in time, and the Chapter was unable to work on it. In 1900, after the canonisation celebrations, the work interrupted in 1897 was resumed. A commission of 4 Brother Assistants made a first study of the text, establishing the norms according to which the envisaged revision was to be made. On the basis of this, the Regime drew up a draft to be presented to the 1901 Chapter, which had been convened for the purpose of revising the Rules.

As far as the Common Rules were concerned, all this preliminary work and that of the 1901 Chapter mentioned above, resulted in a text published under the title of *Rules of the Brothers of the Christian Schools* and carrying the date 1901.

In this edition, notes at the bottom of the page give references to the Bull of Approbation or to the decree *Quemadmodum*; an asterisk placed after the running number of certain articles refers to rules of application at the end of the volume, introduced by General Chapters. But, apart from these precautions, there is nothing to distinguish the original text of 1717 from the modifications subsequently introduced into this text.

In this way, this remains a hybrid text which, by basing itself closely on the 1717 text, has the disadvantage of maintaining practices whose application was already difficult, and runs the risk of encouraging fidelity which was excessively literal.

## Development of the apostolic spirit

The Superiors of the Institute were equally concerned with developing the apostolic spirit of the Brothers. For example, we read in the *Notice biographique* of Brother Irlide that he wrote to the Brothers on one occasion and “explained to them that, according to the spirit of the Institute, they should be inspired by an ardent zeal to instruct young people well” (p. 70). To develop this zeal, a new impetus was given the Institute in a number of different areas.

### – The teaching of catechism

The final years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century offered the Brothers, at least in France, an opportunity to demonstrate their attachment to the teaching of religion. In a circular dated

August 30<sup>th</sup> 1885, Brother Joseph expressed the wish “to keep religious instruction everywhere as a priority” (Rigault 7, 146). Since the law of 1882, there had been a problem in France regarding the teaching of catechism to pupils in public authority schools which had been laicised, that is, in schools in which the teaching of religion was not part of the school curriculum. Should the Brothers who were still in charge of 455 of these schools remain there? The question had been examined at the 1882 Chapter. The solution adopted had been to have catechism and the exercises of piety before school began. Subsequently, when the law of 1886 excluded religious from public authority schools, they lost even this possibility. But the zeal of the Brothers for catechism continued to be demonstrated in the private schools which were now entrusted to them in France, as well as in all their establishments all over the world.

The measures taken to enable the Brothers to improve their religious knowledge were intended also to induce them to improve the quality of their catechetical teaching. This was the reason for the publication of the *Méthode de l'Enseignement Religieux* announced by Brother Gabriel Marie in a circular dated September 22<sup>nd</sup> 1901. The zeal shown by the Brothers for the teaching of religion won for them the title of “Apostles of the Catechism” given to them by Pope Pius X at an audience on October 10<sup>th</sup> 1903.

### – Works of perseverance

After an initial expansion in the days of Brother Philippe, “perseverance” and “youth” groups entered a new period of growth thanks to the encouragement in particular of Brother Joseph. In the circular he published after his election as Superior General, he spoke of these associations and said that he considered it a duty incumbent on someone in his position “to recommend the ministry with which for 30 years our religious life had been greatly concerned” (quoted in *Notice biographique*, 156). While working with the young people of the Franc Bourgeois in Paris he had been able to judge the role that such associations played in promoting the “Christian perseverance” of these youngsters.

At the 1884 Chapter, he had given his views regarding this type of work. In his report in 1894, he had given a detailed description. On various occasions, Brother Joseph recommended this form of apostolate to the Brothers in his circulars:

- July 16<sup>th</sup> 1888: he announced a retreat for Brothers in charge of perseverance groups;
- December 1888: the moment seeming to have arrived “for fixing by more precise instructions the conditions in which perseverance groups should be organised in our Institutc”, he addressed a circular to the Brother Visitors “containing the wisest advice regarding this important subject” (*Notice biographique*, 169);



– February 1894: announcement of the celebration of the “golden anniversary of youth work” offered him an opportunity to return to this topic.

In Paris, Brother Joseph encouraged experimental retreats for young people organised in particular by Brother Assistant Exupérien.

But circumstances also played a part in giving a new role to the youth groups attached to many schools especially in Paris. The Brothers excluded from public schools found in these youth groups a means of having contact with children from secular schools. To encourage the Brothers to increase the number of youth clubs in the private schools entrusted to them, Brother Joseph could quote what Pope Leo XIII had said on this subject: “I wish the Brothers to establish associations of this kind in all the towns where they run schools” (quoted in the *Dictionnaire historique de l'éducation chrétienne d'expression française*, 503). The Superior also gave his full support to Brother Exupérien who, wishing to select from these clubs members whom a more solid formation would transform into the apostles of their companions, had formed the “Society of Saint Labre” in 1882.

### Pedagogical aspects

While the Brothers had never been pedagogical theoreticians, they had always tried to improve the practical side of their teaching. In the last part of the century, as in the time of Brother Philippe, some members of the Institute composed school textbooks or brought them up to date, in order to help the Brothers. In France, these books appeared under the initials of successive Superiors. Special commissions continued to supervise the composition of these works and to keep in touch with everything relating to their area of responsibility. For example, the geography commission, directed by Brother Alexis (Jean Baptiste Gocher), a Belgian geographer, was particularly active (cf. Rigault 7, 153). This specialised work was complemented by a review published by the Institute from 1891 onwards, entitled *L'Éducation chrétienne*. The inspiration for it came mainly from Brother Justinus, Secretary General of the Institute. This weekly review was intended mainly for primary-school teachers, but it included a supplement for those teaching at a more advanced level.

Work produced by the pupils of the Brothers was especially highlighted at the various **Universal Exhibitions** for which the Superiors did not hesitate to mobilise the Brothers. Brother Irlide, for example, thought it would be useful if the Brothers participated in the 1878 Exhibition in Paris (*Notice biographique*, 81). In the event, the Brothers were awarded 5 gold medals, 7 silver and 2 bronze. They won prizes at Exhibitions in London

(1884), Chicago (1893), etc. The Paris Exhibition in 1900 was a sort of culminating point for the Institute.

What was new, at least in France, towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was the interest shown in pedagogy. The register of the deliberations of General Chapters reports, with reference to the 1894 Chapter, that the Secretary General, "after distributing to each of the capitulants a copy of *Notes de Pédagogie chrétienne*", had read out the preface and the first chapters (*Register C*, 301). The 1900 Exhibition inspired the publication in 1902 of a work in two volumes entitled *Éléments de pédagogie pratique*.

The one responsible for this publication, Brother Paul Joseph (Paul Hanrot) was charged also with the revision of the *Conduct of Schools*, the most recent edition of which dated from 1877. This revision had been requested by the 1882 Chapter. An "Essay" appeared first in 1903 with the title *Directives pédagogiques*. In a circular dated December 3<sup>rd</sup> 1903 which announced the publication of the new *Conduct of Christian Schools*, Brother Gabriel Marie explained how this work had been restructured.

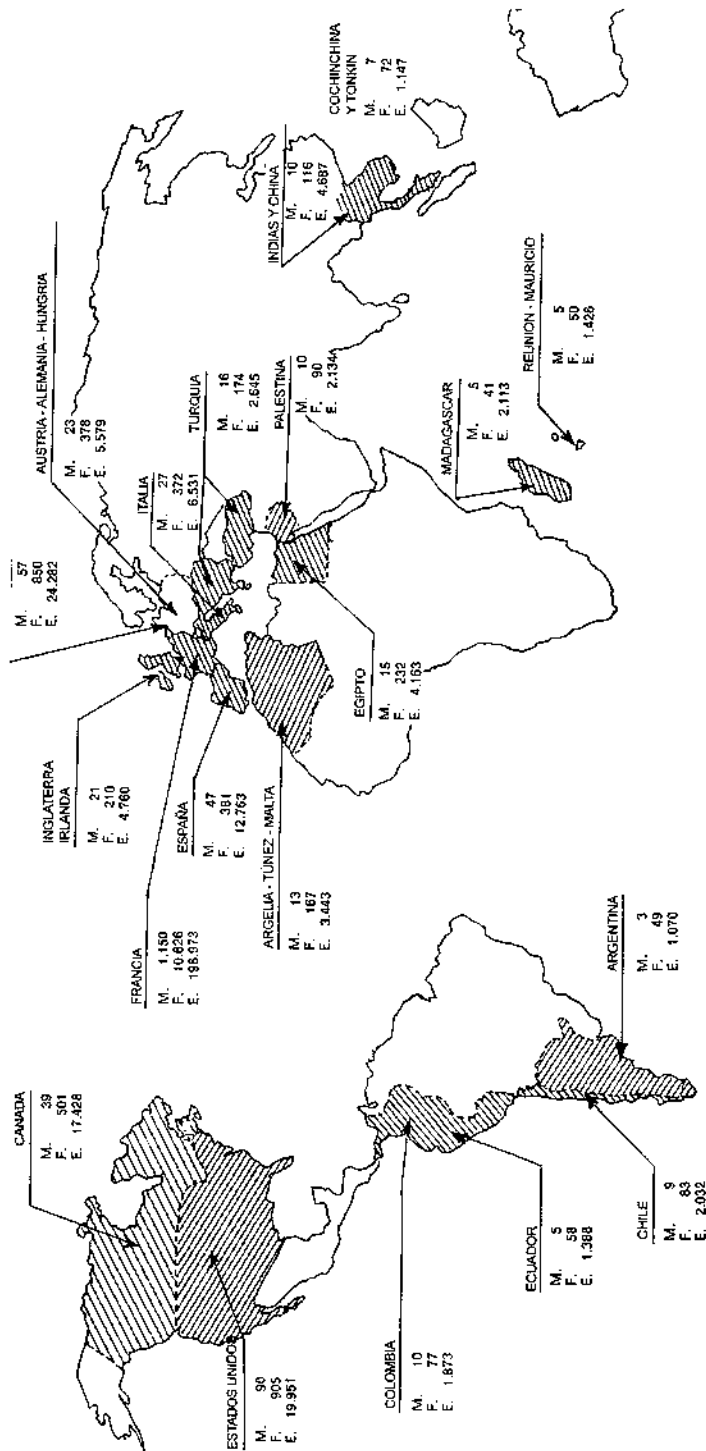
## Conclusion

The context in which the Institute found itself, particularly in France, certainly helped to create more favourable conditions for the formation of the Brothers, and enabled them to cope with the new conditions they had to work under. But above all, in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and right at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>, Chapters and Superior Generals realised the risk the Institute ran of becoming weakened as a result of its expansion, and took steps to strengthen it from the inside. And it seems that they had a certain amount of success if we are to judge by the positive trend in the ratio calculated every year between the number of Brothers leaving the Institute and the total number of the Brothers. This ratio which, after 1875, fluctuated around 1/20, reaching its highest point of 1/15 in 1880, remained around 1/35 from 1885 to 1890, and stayed between 1/30 and 1/25 from 1891 and 1899.

In these results we see no doubt a consequence of the emphasis given in the Institute at that time to the means of spiritual renewal: retreats, the Great Exercises, the Second Novitiate. However, the question arises why the means used were, by and large, borrowed from a spiritual tradition other than that of the Institute, even if Brother Irlide, for example, tried to show a similarity between the two. Despite a return to the Founder, the Institute failed to find in his teachings the source of an internal dynamism related more closely to the vocation proper to the Brothers.

Revising the Rules, publishing a new edition of the *Conduct of Schools*, claiming to return to an ancient text while introducing sometimes major changes, was doubtlessly conceivable in those times; but the disadvantage of perpetuating a practice longstanding in the Institute, was that the Brothers no longer had a clear idea of what the Founder had originally thought.

## The Institute in 1904



## The Institute in 1904

At the time of the anti-Congregation law, the LASALLIAN Institute comprised:

- In Francia:	M - Houses: 1,150	F - Brothers: 10,626	E - Pupils: 196,973
- Outside France	413	4,806	124,360
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>Houses: 1,563</b>	<b>Brothers: 15,432</b>	<b>Pupils: 321,333</b>

## Chap. 3 - THE INSTITUTE IN VARIOUS EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

### Introduction

The events related in chapter one made it necessary to spend a long time on what was happening in France. We now need to see how the Institute developed in other European countries in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Given the number of countries involved, our survey will necessarily be brief. We have grouped countries according to the length of the Brothers' presence in them. The amount of space we devote to various countries does not necessarily reflect the extent of the Institute's presence in them. The educational aspect properly so called will be considered in greater detail in the supplement which follows this chapter.

### Old-established presence

#### – Italy

After the fall of Rome, Pope Pius IX asked Catholics not to involve themselves in the political life of the country. This left the field clear for political parties which had in common their hostility to the Church, to govern the country without any opposition. Leo XIII became Pope in 1878 and confirmed the *non expedit* of his predecessor. Crispi, prime minister from 1887 to 1891, considered bringing about reconciliation with the Holy See but failed. The anticlericalism of political leaders turned into "laicism", as in France, and one result was that the obligation to teach religion in schools was removed in 1888. This was the context in which, in the years that followed, the Brothers, who had been forced to abandon numerous schools between 1870 and 1875, continued to pursue their apostolate in Italy.

After the closure of the house in Orvieto in 1875, the only houses of the 2 Roman Provinces located outside Rome that remained were those of Bolsena, Aquapendente (closed in 1886), Benevento and Castel Gandolfo. On the other hand, in Rome, the new capital of the kingdom, the Brothers continued to run the school of *Santa Maria ai Monti*, *San Salvatore*, and four other schools, and the French school created in 1851. In 1875, Pope Pius IX entrusted them with another school. During the pontificate of Leo XIII, new establishments were taken over by the Brothers or changed their purpose.

The novitiate set up for the French Province in 1874 produced good results, unlike the one for the Italian Province. This situation highlighted the anachronism of having

two separate groups. In 1885, a papal *rescript* suppressed the position of Vicar General, and all the Brothers were placed under the authority of a single Brother Visitor. In that same year, a joint novitiate was set up at Albano Laziale. In 1877, the two Provinces together numbered 113 Brothers: between 1885 and 1903, the number of Brothers in what was now the District of Rome fluctuated around 170.

In North Italy, in Turin, the Brothers who continued to run schools dependent on the *Regia Opera MendicITÀ Istruita* were able to return to their former premises in 1890. The novices of the Province of Piedmont had been going to Chambéry, in Savoie since 1864. From 1892 onwards, however, at the suggestion of Brother Joseph, Superior General, they did their training in Italy, at Albano. In 1900, the novitiate moved to a site in Grugliasco, near Turin, where the scholasticate had been opened in 1873, and the junior novitiate in 1894. Following the law of 1865 the Brothers had to modify their religious habit. In his circular dated July 1897, Brother Gabriel Marie, Superior General, made an appeal for "a return in all things to the traditions of our Institute": for the Brothers of the District of Turin, this was an invitation to return to their traditional habit. They did so in the year of the canonisation of the Founder of the Institute. In 1903, after remaining for a long time around the 150-160 mark, the number of Brothers in the District had increased to 200.

## – Belgium

The beginning of the period under consideration here was marked by an important political event: the return to power of the liberals in June 1878. A particularly sectarian minister of public instruction drew up a new education law. This law of July 1<sup>st</sup> 1879, called by Catholics the "law of great misfortune", removed the teaching of religion from the curriculum, withdrew the right of civic authorities to "adopt" private schools, and restricted to official teacher training colleges the right to issue teachers with the diplomas they needed in order to teach. The bishops reacted vigorously against this law and encouraged the creation of private Catholic schools. The proliferation of these schools opened up for the Brothers a vast field of action. Catholic teacher training colleges, such as those in Malonne and Carlsbourg, trained teachers for these schools, and a diocesan panel issued them with teaching diplomas. The greater internal freedom enjoyed by the Brothers' training colleges enabled them, from 1879 onwards, to re-establish spiritual retreats for teachers.

The 1884 elections brought the Catholic party back into power. A new education law, adopted in that same year, restored to civic authorities the responsibility for major deci-

sions regarding primary schools. The system of "adoption" was re-established, and religious teaching appeared once again on the timetable, although groups of parents could ask for their children to be exempt. The private teacher training colleges such as those at Malonne and Carlsbourg, regained their title and the advantages of "authorised" establishments. At Malonne, a department was set up in 1888 to train teachers for "middle schools". At Carlsbourg, Brother Achille (Achille Vanachter) became the promoter of a scheme to form a sort of Third Order for lay teachers. The plan was submitted to the 1884 Chapter, and the statutes drawn up in 1888. Throughout this period in Malonne, Brother Mutien Marie (Louis Joseph Wiaux), through "the unrelieved repetition of the same tasks" (H. Smullenberg), exercised his influence among those around him: its source was the intensity of his interior life which inspired his fidelity to the Rule.

These years were particularly favourable to the development of the Institute and its works. Such development presupposed that the Institute was capable of responding to it and ensuring that its members received well-organised training. The Brothers responsible for District services and formation groups had to leave the house in Namur which was taken back from them, while those who ran the schools took over another building. The junior novitiate moved first to Jemappes and then, in 1885, to Chaumont where it developed. The novitiate was set up in Alost in 1882, but conditions proved unfavourable. A scholasticate opened at Jemappes in 1880, closed in 1884. The Brothers acquired some land at Louvain and building began in 1888. The scholasticate was set up there and was recognised as an authorised teacher training college in 1889. The novitiate was transferred there from Alost in 1895.

For part of this period, Brother Marianus was Visitor of the District of Belgium and had a great influence over the Brothers. Anton Arens, born in 1821 in the Prussian Rhineland, was already a teacher when he asked to join the Brothers at Koblenz and was admitted to the novitiate at Namur. He remained in Belgium, in particular as a lecturer at the teacher training college in Carlsbourg, and then as Director of the novitiate from 1864 to 1869. In both of these posts and later as Visitor, he made an important contribution to the formation of the Brothers. In 1875, he was appointed Visitor General for Belgium, Germany and Austria. He continued to exercise his functions until his death in 1888.

The growth of the Institute in Belgium resulted in the creation of a second District in 1893. Basically, the District of North Belgium covered Flanders and Brussels; while that of South Belgium, the Walloon area. There were joint houses of formation. The District of North Belgium acquired a property at Groot Bijgaarden near Brussels in 1897, where

a novitiate was set up together with a junior novitiate and a house for the sick and the elderly. The scholasticate at Louvain was taken over by the South Belgium District in 1898. Statistics for December 1903 give the following figures: North District: 21 houses, 322 Brothers, 30 scholastics, 65 novices; South District: 36 houses, 528 Brothers, 76 scholastics.

### More recently established presence

#### – Switzerland

After 1872, the only house to remain in Switzerland was that of Neuchatel. In 1882, a plan to transfer the responsibility for education to the Federation was rejected by referendum. In 1886, with the Catholic Cantons regaining their freedom of action, the Brothers were able to take up residence at Attalens in the Canton of Fribourg, and set up houses in the city of Fribourg in 1888, and in Rue in 1894. At Neuchatel there was still only a primary school. During a visit in 1893, Brother Joseph, the Superior General, suggested the creation of a boarding school. This was done that same year, but it closed in 1896. As these houses were in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, they depended on the Districts of Chambéry or Besançon, and were therefore attached to France.

#### – Germany

In the German Republic, proclaimed in 1871, the Brothers continued to be present only in the Rhineland part of the Kingdom of Prussia. Because of the *Kulturkampf* policy pursued by Bismark, they were affected by the law of May 31<sup>st</sup> 1875 which abolished orders and congregations in Prussia not devoted to charitable works. Thanks in particular to the patronage of the Empress Augusta, the Brothers were granted 4 years' grace before being obliged to close their establishments. All the same, in 1875, they transferred their novitiate to Belgium to a location close to the German border.

In 1879, the Brothers left their houses in Koblenz and Kemperhof and opened a sort of German school with a boarding department at Verviers. But their presence in Belgium provoked the hostility of the public authorities, dominated by a liberal majority for the past year, and in the August of the same year, they were ordered to leave. However, the Brothers obtained permission to remain in Belgium on condition they were not all concentrated in one place. Ten or so Brothers and some of their pupils went to the boarding school at Longuyon in France and formed a German-speaking section there. Longuyon was in the French part of Lorraine, to which the Beaugard boarding school



had been transferred from near Thionville after the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. But the French authorities, because of their hostility towards both religious and Germans, obliged the Brother Director to leave that same year. In 1881, the Belgian government authorised the German Brothers and pupils to be divided up between Malonne and Carlsbourg. In 1884, all the pupils were reunited at Carlsbourg but, because of a lack of space, the German Brothers acquired a property at Grand Halleux, near Verviers. In 1898, they opened a boarding school there in which they followed the programme of a German *Realschule* \*.

With Bismark's disaffection with the liberals, various laws adopted in the period 1882 to 1887 progressively brought the *Kulturkampf* to an end. But the Brothers could not return to Germany. They tried at least to settle in the annexed part of Lorraine. As they had access to vocational education, they took over an orphanage at Guénange in January 1902 and organised a variety of skill-training courses.

Connected with the history of the Brothers in Belgium and Germany, there was an attempt during the period under consideration to set up a Brothers' community in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. In 1880, the founder of an agricultural college at Ettelbruck asked the Brothers to take charge of a small boarding school he wished to add to his establishment. He registered one of the three Brothers that arrived as a "French tutor". The liberals, who still had a majority in the House of Representatives, objected to the presence of three foreigners - and, in addition, members of a religious congregation - who had settled in their country without authorisation. The Brothers were forced to leave (cf. GA NB 311-312/4).

### - Austria

In 1879, the Brothers who lived in the German part of what was the Austro-Hungarian Empire benefited, as did Catholics in general, from the replacement of the liberals by the conservatives in the running of public affairs. To their existing works - the Imperial and Royal Orphanage in Vienna and a school in Funfhaus - an orphanage was added in 1880 at Pressbaum, near Vienna. While these works expanded over the course of years, no new ones were added.

A new impetus was given the district of Austria-Hungary by Brother Cosmus, appointed Visitor in 1887. John Joseph Knauff, born in the Rhineland, entered the novitiate at Koblenz in 1859. He was sent to Austria as the Director of the novitiate in 1884, and he continued to fulfil this function at the same time as that of Visitor until 1894. The novitiate continued to need the financial support of the Mother House for a

long time. The most promising event for the future was the acquisition of a property in 1887 at Strebersdorf on the outskirts of Vienna. A junior novitiate was opened there in 1888, and a scholasticate in 1889. In 1898, the latter received authorisation to issue teaching diplomas. Next to this house, the Brothers opened a middle school where the scholastics could learn how to teach. A boarding school was added in 1890. In addition, the Brothers were asked to run a Catholic teacher training college near Feldkirch, in the West of Austria, which opened in 1888. From 1900 to 1904, the Brothers had charge also of a *Lehrerseminar* (teacher training college) in Vienna.

During this same period, the Institute opened new houses in Vienna and in other places in Austria. The Institute spread also to other parts of what was known as the Austro-Hungarian "double monarchy". In Hungary, the Brothers took charge of a school in Csorna in 1894 and of an orphanage at Budapest in 1896. That same year, at Gortz in Slovenia, the Brothers accepted responsibility for a hostel for future seminarians, but they withdrew from it in 1901. In Bohemia, after a first attempt to open a house on the outskirts of Prague, the Brothers opened a small boarding school in 1898 at Bubenc. Several other foundations followed. In 1903, in the Polish part of the Empire, Brothers of Polish origin took charge of a school at Lemberg (Lwow in Polish) with classes for Polish children and others for German-speaking children. This expansion was made possible by the admission into the Institute of young people of Hungarian, Czech, Polish and Slovak nationality.

Brothers from the District of Austria-Germany contributed also to the spread of the Institute in Eastern Europe. When the Assumptionists in Sofia, **Bulgaria**, withdrew from a school where "teaching was based on the French language" (Rigault 8, p. 207), the Apostolic Vicar called for the Brothers. Four Brothers arrived from Germany and Austria in April 1885. In response to the needs of pupils of many different nationalities, a variety of languages was taught. In 1895, the Institute agreed to take charge of another establishment at Roustchouk, but in 1902, the Brothers withdrew because of disagreement over finances.

In response to a request from the Catholic Archbishop of Bucharest, **Romania**, a community of 10 Brothers was opened in this town in August 1898. Their two schools, which catered for Catholic pupils of various nationalities, admitted also Orthodox and Jewish pupils.

In December 1903, figures show that the District of Austria-Germany, including its houses in Eastern Europe, and its German Brothers in Belgium and Lorraine, had 23 houses, 378 Brothers, 57 scholastics and 35 novices.

## – England

The situation in which the Brothers in England worked was quite different from what could be found in the countries of continental Europe, in the sense that there was not the same confrontation between opposing ideologies. On the other hand, religious intolerance was still rife, in particular towards Catholics, even if their situation seemed to be improving. With regard to education, a series of laws gave the State a greater say in the matter, although a great deal was still left to private initiative. This was the context in which the Brothers continued to pursue their work in the same three areas as in the past. In two of these areas, the Brothers encountered various difficulties in expanding their work in England.

In 1875, the only school the Brothers still had in Jersey (Channel Isles) was in St Helier. In 1876, the Brothers, who were still in Liverpool, were offered an opportunity to contribute to the development of Catholic schools in that city. Despite an initial hesitation based on the “dearth of candidates”, Brother Irlide charged Brother Noah (Francis Curran), sent from the United States, to undertake this mission. In 1877, a first school was entrusted to the Brothers, followed by 5 others. Thanks to the pressure applied by their Director, a sufficient number of Brothers obtained the *Teacher's Certificate* to enable the schools to qualify for official grants. These grants, however, depended in part on the results assessed by inspectors, and the Brothers found themselves under pressure that was all the heavier because of the instability of the pupils they were dealing with. All the same, the results they obtained were on the whole satisfactory. To these difficulties was added the lack of understanding on the part of diocesan authorities. For example, the bishop refused the transfer of the novitiate to Liverpool. The Brothers wanted to leave as early as 1882, but they finally left in 1884. During this time, the school at St Helier was admitting more and more children from families arriving from nearby Brittany, and some Brothers from there were sent to the school. In 1885, the house at St Helier was re-attached to the District of Quimper. In 1900, the Brothers took over a school in Bradford in Yorkshire.

In 1875, the Brothers were still in Liverpool at the St Anne's Boys' Refuge where they ran *Industrial-School* type courses for resident children and helped street children. Despite the difficulty of the work, the Brothers had a strong influence over these children. But relations with the founder of the school, a certain Fr Nugent, grew somewhat tense. In 1885, the Brothers announced they would be leaving, which they did in 1886. Their departure made it possible to respond favourably to the wish of the Bishop of

Salford to open an *Industrial School* near Manchester. The Brothers took charge of the school in January 1887.

Despite all their efforts and their short-term progress, the Institute found it difficult to take root in the country and to spread. The novitiate created by Brother Liguori was only moderately successful. In 1875, there were only 14 English Brothers (GA DD 280/6).

The basic reason for what has to be called the failure of the Brothers in England was a lack of preparation on the part of the Brothers sent to the country, who had no means of learning the language; and the lack of religious and academic training of the local Brothers, who were put in schools after "little or no novitiate", as Brother Lothaire, recently arrived from southeast Asia, wrote to the Superior General in 1882 (GA NA 135/3). For a time, the situation improved with the arrival of Brothers, often Irish-born, from the United States. Would not prospects have been better, as Brother Liguori suggested, if Brothers had been recruited in Ireland? In fact, a novitiate had been opened in that country in 1880, but it does not seem to have had much effect on the situation in England in the 25 years that followed: in 1903, of the 21 establishments belonging to the District of England-Ireland, only 4 were in England.

## Institute foundations in new countries

### – Spain

The first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was a time of great upheavals in Spain: resistance to Napoleonic conquest was followed by a struggle between the supporters of religion and traditional monarchy and anticlerical liberals, heirs to the philosophy of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the French Revolution. After reigning for 20 years, Queen Isabella was deposed in 1868, and there followed an unsettled period during which a republic was established. In 1875, the monarchy was restored. The seemingly liberal Constitution of 1876 nevertheless recognised once again Catholicism as the State religion.

This context explains in part the delay in pursuing earlier negotiations to bring Brothers to Spain: attempts to do so in about 1832 had come to nothing. The foundress of an orphanage in Madrid, Dona Ernestina de Villena, obtained the support of Brother Irlide, currently Visitor of the District of Bayonne, for her wish to obtain Brothers for her establishment. Following a request submitted to him in 1866, Brother Philippe sent Brother Irlide and a Brother Assistant to study the question *in situ*. The Superior decided finally not to authorise the venture, and his hesitation appeared warranted when a

revolution broke out in 1868. With the return of peace, Dona Ernestina obtained a decree from the Council of State of the Kingdom, making it possible for Brothers to take charge of her orphanage. On January 24<sup>th</sup> 1878, the Regime Council accepted responsibility for the orphanage. On February 25<sup>th</sup>, 4 Brothers left Bayonne for Madrid, carrying the instructions given them by Brother Irlide, who was now Superior General (cf. GA NF 100-2/2). In the same way, Brothers were authorised to go to Barcelona, where they arrived in February 1879. Their arrival was followed by a succession of foundations. After 3 years, there were 60 Brothers in Spain and 10 communities: 4 in Madrid, 3 in Barcelona, and 1 each in Cadiz, Lorca and Manlleu (cf. Gallego, 117).

In 1878, the Superiors decided to constitute the District of Spain, placing at its head Brother Justinus Marie (Théodore Trévit), who arrived in Madrid in September 1879. With a view to the future, a novitiate was opened next to the orphanage in November 1878. Spanish postulants had already been trained at Béziers. Others, especially Catalans, continued to be trained there till 1892. To prepare the young Brothers to teach in their country, a scholasticate was opened in Madrid in 1881. In 1884, a junior novitiate began operating. Meanwhile, although the Brothers had been able to establish themselves in Madrid and Barcelona with the consent of the public authorities, the Brother Visitor was concerned about consolidating the position of the Institute in Spain. The fact was that, according to the Concordat of 1825, only 3 congregations were allowed entry into the country as a whole. Initially, Brother Justinus Marie had thought of obtaining the official authorisation required, for all the houses in general, but finally, in 1880, he requested it diocese by diocese. Unlike the original decrees, the new ones authorised the Brothers to open houses specifically where they were requested.

*From 1881 to 1892*, the Institute spread throughout the country. In 1889, the different formation groups were brought together in a house called *Las Maravillas*. In 1892, the novitiate and the scholasticate were moved to Bujedo (Old Castille) to an old monastery. In that same year, the District of Spain was split into 2: that of Madrid had 22 houses including Bujedo, and that of Barcelona, 11.

*From 1892 to 1904*, the Institute continued to expand in Spain, but it did so in a less favourable and sometimes hostile environment, as at Santander. A Ministry of Public Instruction created in 1900 made it its brief to check closely on private establishments, a category to which Brothers' schools belonged. In 1901, a decree was passed which applied rigorously to religious congregations an 1887 law regarding associations. The republican party did not hide its hostility towards the Church. In the towns, a rift appeared between it and the working classes. As for the Brothers, they continued their

work with the children and adults of the working classes, especially in the Asturias region.

By the end of 1903, in the two Districts, 83 Brothers including the two Brother Visitors and the Directors of the novitiate and of the scholasticate were French, but the number of the indigenous Brothers had risen steadily. And so, 25 years after their arrival, the Brothers numbered 381: 261 in the District of Madrid, and 120 in that of Barcelona.

## – Ireland

The Institute's interest in Ireland stemmed from the indigenous population's attachment to the Catholic faith, an attachment which resulted in its being politically and socially dominated by other groups in the United Kingdom. The economic situation of the country was bad at the best of times, but occasionally it became disastrous, as during the famines of 1845 - 46 and 1879. People emigrated from the country in their thousands and, in Canada and especially in the United States, the Instituted recruited many vocations from among their number. And so, in 1875, the Institute numbered 314 Brothers whose origins were in Ireland (GA DD 280/6). It is not surprising therefore if the Institute turned its attention to Ireland itself with a view to recruiting English-speakers to work in England and in mission countries where teaching was given in this language. Hence the need for the Institute to establish itself in Ireland.

It was a Brother from the United States, on a visit to his native country, who informed the Superiors in Paris that the Bishop of Elphin wanted Brothers to take charge of an *Industrial School*. Brother Irlide in person and Brother Assistant Patrick went to study the plan *in situ*. The contract signed with the bishop stipulated that the Brothers could also open a novitiate there. In July 1880, the Summer Hill School was opened. Not long after, a quarrel broke out over the way the contract was being applied: the bishop complained that the first Director had not managed the school well, and that the second one had spent money thoughtlessly and independently. In addition, it was seen that the presence of the novitiate near the school was not a good idea. The Superiors decided to move it, and in January 1882, to leave the school.

The novitiate re-opened in Castletown in November 1881. A junior novitiate was started in 1882. There was a scholasticate there also, and young Brothers practised their teaching skills in the local public authority school which had been entrusted to the Brothers. The presence of the scholastics at Castletown was thought unsatisfactory, and so a house was built for the Brothers' community near the school in St Stephen's Street,

in Waterford. The Brothers moved in 1887, and the scholasticate was set up in it in 1888. Brother Justin, a Visitor from the United States, set about obtaining for it the advantages enjoyed by British *training colleges*, by admitting lay students. Negotiations were completed in 1891. The establishments run by the Brothers increased greatly in number. At the end of 1903, the District of England-Ireland numbered 193 Brothers, 21 houses, and 31 novices.

## Conclusion

The diversity of situations encountered by the Institute in various countries makes it difficult to draw an overall conclusion. One can say, however, that generally speaking, the Brothers took this diversity into account. The supplement which follows this chapter highlights their capacity to adapt to the situations encountered, and shows at the same time how different countries shared common characteristics inherited from a common tradition.

### 3. SHARED CHARACTERISTICS AND DIFFERENCES OF THE BROTHERS' ESTABLISHMENTS IN EUROPE AND AMERICA

In the different countries to which the Institute spread in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the establishments run by the Brothers were characterised by certain common traits inherited from an educational tradition going back to their Founder. This did not prevent the Brothers, however, from responding to the specific needs of the countries where they were by the creation, in particular, of schools which specialised, which could be primary, secondary, orphanages or rehabilitation centres. This supplement concentrates on the countries considered in the preceding chapter, and on those in America, which will be treated in the next.

#### Shared characteristics

Because they belonged to a common educational tradition, Brothers' establishments inherited a number of common traits which characterised them the world over. This can be seen in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup>.

#### – Primary schools

One of the characteristic traits of the Institute's expansion throughout the world in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is that, practically in all the countries they went to, the Brothers began by opening primary schools, and above all, for children of working class background. Everywhere in their schools, the Brothers pursued the same aims, that is, to give children a Christian education as well as a grounding in the rudiments of knowledge. Everywhere also, they followed the same teaching methods as described in the *Conduct of Schools*, inherited from John Baptist de La Salle but revised as the need arose; and the *Explanation of the 12 qualities of a Good Teacher* contained in it, recalled the Christian inspiration of what they did. While many of these primary schools offered only an elementary education, others added a middle-school programme. Several of these schools, whether strictly elementary or not, also ran evening courses for adults and others for apprentices. There were schools which ran youth clubs or perseverance groups for students who had completed their studies.

Everywhere, the Institute did its best to ensure that primary schools were accessible to all children of that age group. This meant that the running costs and the upkeep of the Brothers had to be funded by people who were not the pupils' parents. This was the case in schools established by the public authorities, and in private schools funded by these



authorities. In other cases, the funds necessary to create and run private schools had to be provided by private initiative. Some private schools had the necessary funds to ensure that all the pupils were taught gratuitously. Boarding schools and weekday boarding schools were able to fund one or more gratuitous schools. Other schools, on the other hand, had financial problems. In the course of the preceding period we considered, the Institute had found it necessary, with the authorisation of the Holy See, to set aside the principle of absolute gratuity by accepting that parents, or at least some of them, should be asked to pay school fees. Where necessary, requests for this authorisation had to be repeated. This solution was, however, a source of dissatisfaction in the Institute. We have already mentioned what was said about this matter at the 1897 Chapter. Some Brothers, in particular certain Superiors, saw this abandonment of the principle of absolute gratuity as one of the areas in which laxity was being shown in the Institute. In this connection, Brother Assistant Réticius drew up a article in which he attacked those he called "remunerationists" because they supported the flexible approach that had been adopted regarding gratuity (GA EG 346/11).

### – Secondary schools

For our purposes, this category includes all establishments, called differently from country to country, which provided education which went beyond what was given in primary schools. The most typical of this kind of establishment was the **boarding school** which, following a tradition going back to the Founder, the Brothers had always run side by side with primary schools. In all of them, modelled on those in France, the aim was to help pupils prepare for their future in a Christian atmosphere. Except in special cases due to local conditions, these schools gave a broad-based education which did not include the study of the classical languages. Often, a vocational or technical type of training was offered also. Apart from the teaching programme, various boarding schools offered leisure or cultural activities, such as literary clubs, musical tuition, theatrical training. The particular stress on Christian education was shown also outside of catechism lessons, by the frequent times for prayer, the intensity of sacramental life, the diversity of extra-curricular activities, such as confraternities, charitable work groups, and so on.

The same aims could be pursued in other types of establishments which were fee-paying, such as weekday boarding schools or day schools. Some were created to give a specific type of education, in particular, technical or vocational. The set-up of these establishments made it impossible to provide the vast range of extra-curricular activities offered by boarding schools, but all the same they were not neglected.

## – Orphanages and rehabilitation centres

In many countries, the Brothers were asked to take charge of orphanages or rehabilitation centres. This was in line with their involvement with “forced confinement” or “General Hospitals” in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and with prisons in the 19<sup>th</sup>. In both orphanages and rehabilitation centres, the youngest children were given a primary education. When they were older, they received vocational training of one type or another. At the same time, the Brothers tried to compensate for the family life the children had never known, and to give them a Christian education.

## – School textbooks

Another thing the Brothers did in almost all the countries where they were established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was to publish school textbooks intended primarily for the pupils of their primary schools. We offer some examples.

The fact that French-speaking Canada shared a common language with France created a special situation there. This situation is examined, for example, by Brother Paul Aubin of the District of French-speaking Canada in an article he wrote for the review *Histoire de l'Éducation* (I.N.R.P. Paris) entitled *La pénétration des manuels scolaires de France au Québec*. The Brothers who arrived in this country wasted no time in ordering school textbooks published by their fellow Brothers in France. Their successors continued to do so, especially textbooks for teaching French. Other works published in France were purely and simply reprinted in Canada. This was the case of 26 out of the 119 titles published by the Brothers in France in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Brothers also published textbooks composed in France but adapted by them to meet local needs, as in the case of arithmetic textbooks, because of the differences in the units of weights and measures, or geography textbooks, because of local conditions. In the 1880s, the Brothers of Quebec obtained permission from the Superiors to publish their own textbooks, and this arrangement tended gradually to replace all others.

When the Brothers first arrived in Belgium, they had used books published in France, but they had quickly become autonomous in this matter. Regarding geography, Brother Alexis (J.B. Gochet), a lecturer at Carlsbourg, had even been called to the Mother House in Paris to compose books or devise teaching aids, such as wall maps, to be distributed subsequently from France.

Elsewhere, where the language used for teaching was not French, the Brothers were led either to translate existing works or to compose new ones directly in the language con-

cerned. For some time now, in the Papal States and in Piedmont, the Brothers had been publishing books in Italian. We have seen, for example, how the Brothers provided themselves with the means to teach the metric system.

At the same time, in almost all the countries where the Institute established itself in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Brothers wasted no time in beginning the work of publishing school textbooks intended initially for the pupils of primary schools, but subsequently also for those of other types of establishments, or even for adults who followed their evening classes. Brother Miguel (Febres Cordero) alone, for example, wrote more than 70 textbooks for a variety of subjects and for different levels.

In these countries and in others it is not possible to mention, we need to highlight also the special concern of the Brothers to revise, publish, sometimes adapt or translate, books composed by the Founder of the Institute, such as the *Duties of a Christian* or the *Rules of Politeness*.

## Differences

### – Differences in the official status of primary schools

The principal factor determining the status of a primary school was the way it was funded. The development of Brothers' schools could be helped or hindered by the system of funding adopted in a particular country.

### *Public authority schools*

In the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Brothers progressively lost their status as public authority school teachers, that is, teachers belonging to the public authority educational system. In **Italy**, the Brothers were excluded from the public authority schools in 1856. However, in the former Papal States, some Brothers still taught in public authority schools, but in an individual capacity. This situation was not without its problems, as in Castel Gandolfo and Benevento, where the Brothers acted independently of their Superiors (cf. Rigault VIII, 48, 49). In **Belgium**, by 1875 the Brothers had given up running municipal schools almost everywhere, and the law of 1879 made it no longer possible. Even though the right to do so was subsequently restored, the Brothers never returned to these schools.

On the other hand, from the very outset in **Ireland**, the Brothers had offered their services to the *National Board*, charged with the implementation of the *Irish Education*

*Act* of 1831, which was responsible for primary education in their country. The *Christian Brothers*, founded by Edmund Rice, however, always refused to do so (see LS 9, 91-92). This helped the expansion of the Institute in Ireland. In the **United States**, exceptionally, the Brother Director of the house at Bernadillo, in New Mexico, managed to have his school registered as a State school (cf. Rigault 9, 191). As for **Ecuador**, despite all the political vicissitudes, the Brothers continued to enjoy the status of public authority school teachers.

In **Austria**, a Ministry of "Religion and Education" was created in 1848, which was responsible for the educational system as a whole. In 1869, a law regarding primary schools was passed, applicable to the whole Empire, which fixed the duration of compulsory education at 8 years. Town authorities remained responsible for the funding of the schools. The Brothers had come to Austria before 1869 and had opened private schools, but these schools and others opened subsequently obtained official status by conforming to official regulations.

### *Publicly funded schools*

In several countries, schools founded by private initiative, could be funded by public authorities. This usually took the form of grants given by the State, town authorities or school commissions responsible for organising primary education.

In **Belgium**, schools which had benefited from the status of "adopted schools" had lost this status. The education law of 1879 suppressed the status altogether. With the return of Catholics to power in 1884, the system of "adoption" was restored, and the Brothers were able to benefit from it once more. The law of 1885 allocated official funding to schools designated as "municipal", "adopted" and "adoptable", that is, fulfilling conditions necessary to be adopted. Some of the Brothers' schools were in this last category also. Whatever the category, this funding helped the Brothers' schools to develop and to multiply.

In **England**, in the 6 schools run by the Brothers in Liverpool between 1877 and 1882, funding came principally from grants depending largely on the results obtained with particularly difficult pupils. This was one of the reasons which led them to leave these schools. On the other hand, when they took over a school in Bradford, they received no grants because it was a parish school (GA NA 123).

Regarding **Canada**, the Brothers depended on school commissions, which were official organisations responsible for the administration of schools. These elected commis-

sions were responsible for running the schools and paying the teachers whose appointment depended on them. When Brothers were appointed, they had the same rights as the other teachers. To the extent that their services were called upon, the Brothers could increase the number of their schools.

### *Private schools*

As was explained earlier, in all other cases, the Brothers could take charge solely of private schools.

In **Italy**, by force of circumstances, the Brothers found themselves in this situation in several places where they had managed to stay. In Turin, they continued to work in schools depending on the *Regia Opera MendicITÀ Istruita*. In Rome, by insisting on the foreign origin of the foundation of their schools, and declaring them private, they prevented their confiscation, and were able to keep *Santa Maria ai Monti* and *San Salvatore*. They also opened or re-opened a number of others by declaring them private.

In **Belgium**, as large towns and the Province of Hainaut did not always bring into force the system of "adoption", the Brothers still ran a number of completely private schools which received no grants at all.

In **Austria**, the possibility of opening private schools was maintained by the law of 1869. Among the Brothers' schools, some remained private even when most obtained an official status. Freedom of education was declared in 1876 in **Spain**. Under this system, once the Brothers obtained legal authorisation to establish themselves in various parts of the country, they were able to take charge of an increasingly large number of schools.

In the **United States**, because of the separation of Church and State, Catholic schools could not receive public funding. The bishops had organised, with the help of the faithful, an educational system proper to the Catholic Church. This is the context in which the Brothers ran a whole network of parish schools, especially in the large towns.

In **Latin America**, during the period we are now considering, when the Brothers were invited to a country, it was most often to run a school or some other institution for the poor. These establishments were privately funded, in many cases, by St Vincent de Paul Conferences.

Among the schools which depended on the generosity of the Catholics, some had sufficient resources to teach all the pupils gratuitously. This was the case of the schools in Turin, depending on the R.O.M.I, with an intake of 1,400. In Spain, in 1888, out of 45

schools run by the Brothers, 35 were totally gratuitous. Others experienced financial difficulties which obliged them to charge the pupils fees, at least some of them. Some schools shut down because of this.

### – Differences due to local conditions in countries and to the nature of establishments

Independently of their shared characteristics, the Brothers took into account local conditions in the countries where they opened secondary schools, or took charge of orphanages and rehabilitation centres. The result was a certain degree of diversity from country to country. We shall see, in particular, that often, depending on the country in which they were, the Brothers developed more of one type of establishment than of another.

### *Continental Europe*

In Italy, orphanages no longer had the important position they had once held. In a related field, we see that in 1900, the Brothers took charge of a school for the deaf and dumb in Turin, in which they used the "oral method". The Brothers had relatively few boarding schools. What was most characteristic of this country was the spread of establishments giving a secondary or technical education. In Rome, Brother Siméon (Charles Joseph Périer) continued to direct the college opened in 1851 for young Frenchmen. In 1885, the establishment was transferred to Piazza di Spagna. After the death of Brother Siméon, the *Collegio San Giuseppe* received an increasing number of Italian pupils. In 1903, the *de Merode* technical institute, entrusted to the Brothers in 1900, moved to the same site. In 1883, the Brothers took charge of a vocational school founded by Pius IX, called the *Artigianelli* (young craftsmen). In 1893, it was transferred to the Aventine hill and took the name of *Istituto Pio Nono*. In 1902, Pope Leo XIII asked the Brothers to take charge of the technical institute founded by Cardinal Mastai, which was then transferred to the *Santa Maria ai Monti* School.

In the North of Italy, Brother Genuino (Jean Baptiste Adorno), Visitor from 1863 to 1901 of what became the District of Turin, undertook the restoration of the *Collegio San Primitivo*. The new establishment, a secondary school, was completed in 1875, and took the name of *San Giuseppe*. Among the courses it offered there was Latin taught by lay teachers. In 1902, the Brothers opened the *Istituto de La Salle* in the same city, which put on an official footing the evening and day technical courses previously given at St Pelagia.

In **Belgium**, as has already been said, the two institutions training lay teachers continued their valuable work. They continued also to take in boarders. But, one of the most characteristic traits of this period for the Institute was the development of "middle school education", and the increase in classes offering "modern humanities". The establishments at Malonne and Carlsbourg adopted these programmes for their "ordinary" boarders. The main primary schools expanded their schooling to include middle school or modern humanities courses (cf. Rigault 8, p. 110).

Other establishments offered vocational or technical training. And so at Carlsbourg, a course in agriculture was started in 1877. In 1888, a department was set up which, in 1901, was authorised to award an official diploma. But the most typical form of vocational training adopted was no doubt that given in the St Luke Schools, which gave vocational training to students in artistic skills. The first was started at Ghent, born of a desire to give vocational training to apprentices frequenting a youth club supported by a Conference of St Vincent de Paul. At the end of 1862, Brother Marès Joseph (Charles de Pauw) was asked to run an evening art class at the club, and he chose to concentrate his teaching on the restoration of Christian art, which was much favoured in certain Catholics circles. The course lasted several years and, in 1866, became the St Luke Academy. During the period under consideration, similar courses were begun at Tournai (1878), Liège and Schaerbeek (1880) and Molenbeek (1897). With time, the courses given in the evening or on Sunday were joined by day courses, and the training in the various skills were given *in situ* in various workshops. The school at Tournai, for example, ran a course in decorative art, taught students house building skills, and trained apprentices in sculpture, cabinet making and as goldsmiths. Subsequently a course for printers was added.

As was said earlier, the Brothers in **Austria** ran a number of teacher training colleges as well as the boarding school at Strebersdorf. They opened other boarding schools also. But their most characteristic field of action was doubtlessly orphanages. Since their arrival in the country, the Brothers had been at the head of the Imperial and Royal Orphanage in Vienna. Brother Euchérius (J.B. Haas) who was director of the orphanage for 30 years, came to be called *Vater der Waisen* (father of the orphans). In 1881, a Catholic association for the aid of orphans entrusted the Brothers with another orphanage called the *Norbertinum* at Pressbaum, 20 kilometres from Vienna. In 1889, the same association opened a hostel for students and apprentices in Vienna, and a Brother was asked to take charge of it. In Hungary, Brother Bernhardt (Henrich Schaefer), called "the friend of the Magyars", took charge of an orphanage in Budapest in 1896.

The beginning of the Brothers' presence in **Spain** was linked with taking charge of an orphanage in Madrid, but the Brothers did not go on to open more institutions of this kind in the country. More characteristic was the creation, side by side with schools, of establishments called a "*colegio*", which gave post-primary education, often including business studies, to the children of better off families. Sometimes the establishments included a boarding department. For example:

- In Madrid, a college of this kind was opened in the house which housed the orphanage when the Brothers arrived;

- In Barcelona, a weekday boarding school, the *Colegio Condal*, ran mostly commercial courses from 1881 onwards. In the same town, in 1889, the *Bonanova* college was founded;

- At Santander, in 1882, the Hispanic-French-English College of the Sacred Heart was founded.

When Spain was divided into 2 Districts, the District of Barcelona had 3 colleges, while that of Madrid had 4. After this division, more colleges were founded before the end of the century:

- In Madrid, following the departure of the novitiate, a college was opened in the house of *Las Maravillas*;

- A college founded in Bilbao in 1893 became the *Colegio Santiago Apostol*.

### - *The British Isles*

In **England**, apart from the Brothers' involvement in rehabilitation centres, mentioned in the last chapter, their most characteristic contribution was the provision of a suitable education for middle class children. In the boarding school at Clapham, Brother Potamian developed the teaching of science which led to an increase in the number of university entries from the school. On becoming Director in 1885, he transferred the college to Tooting Common; but after his return from the United States, financial difficulties led to the sale of the newly erected buildings. After two successive moves, the college finally found a permanent home in 1903 at Beulah Hill. *St Joseph's Academy*, in another part of London, continued to give the same kind of education as the college. In 1880, Cardinal Manning asked the Brothers to take charge of a similar establishment in his diocese of Westminster. The objections put forward by Brother Potamian in particular, induced the Superiors not to pursue the matter.

To establish themselves in **Ireland**, the Brothers had accepted to take charge of the *industrial school* at Summerhill, but they did not stay long there: it was not the type of work they would do in this country. Instead, as more and more schools were entrusted to them, the Brothers opened a scholasticate near a school in Waterford, and decided to



train lay teachers also. Negotiations to obtain official recognition as a teacher training college were successfully completed in 1891. In 1894, the construction of a new building made it possible to admit 120 trainee teachers. In 1898, their number rose to 150.

#### – *North America*

Soon after their arrival in **Canada**, the Brothers had created boarding schools and academies which offered extra courses for pupils from primary schools. They continued to run and create this kind of establishments which offered an extended primary school or a secondary education, to which often commercial courses were added. To expand the latter type of course, they had already founded the Commercial Academy in Quebec in 1862, which continued to grow. With a view to creating a similar academy in Montreal, they bought land on the high ground of Mont St Louis where they put up a building bearing the name of the locality, which opened in September 1888. This establishment offered advanced courses in commerce as a preparation for admission to the Polytechnic College.

The secondary schools of the Toronto region (Ontario) were centred mostly on preparation for admission to university and so offered classical languages. But these establishments closed before the end of the century. On the other hand, *St John's Industrial School*, a rehabilitation centre, survived. It offered a *High School* curriculum and, in 1895, manual work was added.

In the **United States**, the Brothers had already created a network of *Academies* or *High Schools* preparing for the liberal professions and admission to university or seminary. Because of this, Latin and Greek were included in the syllabus. This type of establishment continued to prosper. A list drawn up in 1890 mentions 18 of them, of which 6 had a boarding section (GA NS 550/17). To ensure that their pupils did not frequent similar Protestant or State institutions, the bishops had asked the Brothers to open university colleges. A certain number of these existed already; in 1875, records mention 9. Before the end of the century, 3 others were opened. None of this prevented the Brothers from continuing to work with abandoned children, in particular, in the District of New York. The old rehabilitation centres continued to function: some were transferred, others were opened. At the end of the century, there were some 15 of them. In 1903, they were caring for some 3,700 young people.

#### – *Latin America*

The Brothers were invited to various countries in Latin America to care for poor children either in schools or orphanages, but with time they were led to open establishments

offering extended primary school or secondary education, preparing in particular for business professions. Some were boarding schools. Also, in some of these countries, the Brothers were associated with teacher training.

In **Ecuador**, the Brothers offered an extended primary school programme in their large establishment the *Beaterio*. In 1892, they were authorised to admit trainee teachers. The De La Salle Institute offering secondary education was opened in Quito in 1892, but it closed in 1895. Also in Quito, the Brothers ran a *Protectorado* in which they gave vocational training to abandoned children.

The Brothers came to Santiago in **Chile** to run the *Casa des Talleres* (workshop centre) offering vocational training to orphans. In 1893, they opened a similar establishment at Limache. In 1894, they opened the *Colegio San Jacinto* in Santiago. In 1901, a teacher training college was entrusted to the Brothers by the archbishop of the same town.

When the Brothers arrived in **Argentina**, they were given support by the Jesuits, who constructed a building for them in Buenos Aires in 1891. This establishment, called De La Salle College, housed 3 fee-paying and 2 gratuitous classes and, in 1894, had around 600 pupils. It was transferred in 1899 to a property bought from some Sisters and, in 1900, a secondary school programme was launched.

Unlike what happened in other Latin American countries, when the Brothers came to **Colombia** to stay, it was to run a day school called St Joseph's College in Medellin, which, in fact, catered mostly for deprived children. Another college was opened in Bogota in 1893. In 1896, the Brothers took charge of a St Joseph's College at Barranquilla on the Caribbean Sea, which closed in the course of a civil war at the end of the century. In 1902, the Minister of Public Instruction informed the Brothers of his intention to entrust a teacher training college to them, but because of intervening difficulties, the college opened only in 1905.

The Brothers were called to **Nicaragua** to run an orphanage at Leon on the Pacific coast. They arrived in November 1903. They were invited also to **Panama** to train teachers in the new republic. This was made possible in 1904 by the arrival of Brothers exiled from France.

## Conclusion

A brief glance at the statistical returns for 1903 will help us to evaluate the overall significance of the establishments in various countries we have considered in this supplement:

– in all, there were 393 establishments which represented almost 20% of the 1,918 existing in the Institute. The number of pupils represented around 30% of the of the Institute official number of 314,100 day pupils;

– of these establishments, 90 in Europe and 50 in America were listed as public authority, while 101 and 142 respectively, were listed as private. We can compare these figures with those of the Institute as a whole: 188 public authority schools and 1,730 private schools.

– statistics for boarders give 2,269 “boarders and trainee teachers”, and 1,413 “boarders of various kinds”, with 1,892 in Europe and 3,793 in America. The first category represents 15% of the Institute total of 21,250. The second category represents 5/6 of the 6,011 given in the Institute statistics which, it seems, refer to the young people Brothers looked after in orphanages and rehabilitation centres.

These figures show the proportion of Institute establishments in Europe and America, (excluding France), in the last year in which the situation inherited from the 19<sup>th</sup> century still prevailed.



## Chap. 4 - THE INSTITUTE ON THE AMERICAN CONTINENT

### Introduction

In 1875, when the Superiors of the Institute appointed Brother Armin Victor (Victor Nicolas Vigneulles) Provincial Visitor for the Districts of the American continent, they clearly thought that these Districts formed a single entity. In reality there were considerable differences between the North, where the Institute was expanding fast, and the South, where it was just starting to grow. Despite these differences, in this chapter, we shall bring together information relating to the Institute in the whole of the continent, in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>.

### North America

The shared history of the Brothers of Canada and the United States had ended in 1864, but links between these two parts of the Institute remained: from 1875, they both depended on the same Provincial Visitor; and Brothers continued to be given assignments across the frontier. However, each part developed separately.

#### – Canada

The “British North America Act” of 1867 had created favourable conditions for reinforcing the influence of the Catholic Church in the Province of Quebec, in particular, with regard to education. On the political level, however, in the various parts of the Confederation, liberals and conservatives vied for power. In the Province of Quebec, this opposition was particularly vigorous on the part of those Catholics whose support for positions adopted by the papacy won them the name of “ultramontanists”. The conflict had repercussions on the Brothers in the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario, but was far from hampering their development. We can consider this development in two parts.

#### 1875-1889

At the beginning of this period, Brother Armin Victor, who was simultaneously Visitor of the District of Montreal and Provincial Visitor, took the necessary steps to obtain legal recognition for the Institute in the Province of Quebec. His efforts were crowned with success on September 24<sup>th</sup> 1875, when the “legislature of Quebec recognises” that the Brothers of the Christian Schools “constitute a political body and will form a corporation” (quoted in Rigault 9, 15). In 1879, the conservatives returned to

power in Quebec, but the ultramontanists denounced the concessions made to the liberals by the prime minister (Voisine II, 66). In 1880, Brother Réticius (Louis Gonnet) was appointed Provincial Visitor for North America, and promptly espoused the cause of the ultramontanists. When he had left France, the republicans there were preparing to implement their educational policy aimed especially at secularising public authority education. And so, on arrival in Canada, it was not long before he began attacking the public education authorities in Quebec whom he accused of pursuing a similar policy. In particular, the conflict took on the form of a polemic with the Abbé Verreau, the Director of the Jacques Cartier Teacher Training College, which trained teachers for schools not run by religious congregations.

We need to look at the arguments put forward by each side to grasp what the real problem was. In a situation where most schools were run by religious congregations, Abbé Verreau had become the spokesman of lay teachers (lay, in the sense that they were neither priests nor religious) who, in any case, could not teach if they did not profess the Catholic faith. Even if people called him a "liberal", it is difficult to see how the director of an important institution in a Catholic province could have possibly defended "lay" education (lay, in the sense in which liberals understood the term, i.e. non-religious). It is true that Brother Réticius had witnessed in France the gradual deterioration of conditions which made it possible for town authorities to demand the replacement of teachers from religious congregations by teachers who were not only lay persons, but also lay in the sense that they taught without any religious reference. The problem lay in the fact that Brother Réticius applied to Quebec, without making the necessary adjustments, the situation he had known in France.

Regarding the life of the Institute, Brother Armin had already noted a weakening of religious life caused, according to him, by the excessively conciliatory directives given by Brother Philippe when the Brothers arrived in North America (cf. Rigault 9, 22). Likewise, in the report he wrote after his first visit to the Districts he had charge of, Brother Réticius makes some rather severe judgments about Canada. In 1880, he set in motion a process of renewal by means of annual retreats, the Exercises of St Ignatius, recollections. He promoted studies in community and worked for improvement in school textbooks. He wanted also a better formation for candidates. The Montreal novitiate was too small and he obtained authorisation to put up buildings on a property already acquired. But it was only in 1887 that the junior novitiate, novitiate and scholasticate moved into what became to be known as Mont de La Salle. A novitiate opened in Toronto in 1880, closed down before 1884.

Regarding establishments, Brother Réticius shared the views of those who wished to reduce their number. In practice, several houses closed because of certain circumstances:

– in the Province of Quebec: Beauharnois (1881), Chambly (1882), Cotes des Neiges and Sorel (1886);

– in the Maritime Provinces: the last school the Brothers had closed in 1880.

The disputes caused by Brother Réticius led the Superiors to call him back to France in 1886. Some bishops and Brothers asked for his return to Canada; others voiced their opposition to his return. Finally, Brother Christian of Mary (Joseph Panneton), Visitor of Baltimore, changed places with Brother Réticius. In the period from 1888 to 1896, the District of Toronto was formed, composed of 4 communities and 33 Brothers.

### 1890-1904

In the 1890s, Canada went through a period of political-religious unrest. This was most evident at the time of the "Manitoba question". This Province passed a law in 1890 which enabled it to organise its educational system without taking into account denominational differences. The Catholic episcopate protested, and Leo XIII wrote the encyclical *Affari vos*. In the end, the law was abolished at Federal level. Political tension had repercussions on the houses in Ontario. In Ottawa, an English-speaking faction wanted to eliminate the influence exercised by French-speaking Canadians, and since these latter were Catholics, the conflict took on also religious overtones. A press campaign attacked teaching religious. In 1895, a survey of the Brothers' schools resulted in some clearly damning judgments. The Brothers withdrew from all public authority schools. In the Province itself, various reasons - including the opposition of Brother Réticius, now an Assistant, to the Brothers preparing pupils for official examinations - led to the closure of the already well-established school in Kingston (1893) and of the more recent foundation in Hamilton (1896). In Quebec, the problem facing the Brothers was that of raising their salaries. In Montreal, an agreement was reached with the Commission for Catholic Schools which, however, refused to pay the salaries of any lay teachers the Brothers needed to sign on (cf. *Voisine II*, 150).

In 1896, the houses of the District of Toronto were transferred again to the District of Montreal. In 1903, this latter District had 39 houses, 501 Brothers, 50 novices, 18 scholastics.

## – United States

In the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the United States witnessed such economic growth that it took the place of Great Britain as the leading industrialised country. This growth was accompanied by a massive surge in population which, in the period 1880 - 1900, increased by 26 million, mainly because of immigration. As many of the immigrants came from Catholic countries and settled mostly in towns, the reasons which had led bishops and parish clergy to multiply the number of schools still remained valid. In 1874, a law which made education compulsory in the State of New York led to the fear that this would lead to the amalgamation of parish schools and *Common Schools*. The Visitor of the District of New York, Brother Paulian, stated that “Catholics would never abandon the religious education of their children into clumsy or suspect hands” (Rigault 9, 92). In the end, however, freedom of action was ensured. In 1891, Mgr Ireland, bishop of St Paul, thought he could sign a kind of educational concordat with the civil authorities of Minnesota. Catholics were up in arms at this, and the matter was brought to a close by a letter from Leo XIII dated May 31<sup>st</sup> 1893, in which he insisted on the opening of more and more Catholic schools. This was the context in which the Brothers pursued their apostolate in the same four types of institutions they had in the previous period. At the end of 1903, the Brothers had a network of 117 establishments spread over 27 States.

The proliferation of schools and their dispersion in regions separated by vast distances had already led to the creation of 3 Districts in the United States: New York, St Louis, San Francisco and, temporarily, New Orleans. In 1878, the District of Baltimore was formed from the houses of the southern part of the District of New York.

### *The Giants of old*

“Giants of old” is an expression used by the Brothers of the United States to describe the Brother Visitors who led the American Districts at the time.

– Brother Paulian (Patrick Fanning), born in Ireland in 1831, emigrated to the United States and, in 1852, entered the novitiate at St Louis. He was a lecturer, and then president, of *Manhattan College*, a position he kept when he became Visitor of the District of New York in 1873. In 1879, he was appointed Visitor of the District of St Louis.

– Brother Justin (Stephen MacMahon) was born in Ireland in 1834 and came to the United States with his parents in 1848, when he entered the novitiate of Montreal. He was placed in charge of the first Brothers to go to San Francisco in 1868 and, in 1879 he was called to replace Brother Paulian as Visitor of New York. He remained in this position for 20 or so years, broken up by a stay in Ireland from 1890 to 1892 (see p. 70).



– Brother Christian of Mary (Joseph Panneton) was born in Canada in 1844. He was Director of novices at Montreal when he was called to be the first Visitor of the District of Baltimore. In 1886, he replaced Brother Réticius at Montreal, and then subsequently returned to the United States to be auxiliary Visitor of New York, before becoming once again Visitor of Baltimore from 1896 to 1900.

– Brother Quintinian (Thomas Meade) was born in 1841, was a pupil of the Brothers in New York, and entered the novitiate in Montreal in 1860. In 1882, he went to Paris as secretary of Brother Assistant Patrick. In 1884, he was appointed auxiliary Visitor of the District of New York; in 1888, he became the Visitor of the District of Baltimore. After a short period as Director, he became the auxiliary of Brother Justin in 1891.

These were outstanding men with strong personalities, as well as religious who accepted fully their responsibilities in the Institute. It was above all to them that the Institute owed the dynamism that characterised it in the United States in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and up to the time when the “Latin question” had to be faced. The “Latin question” will be treated separately in the supplement which follows this chapter.

Each of the Districts took steps to train local young men to ensure its future. In the District of New York, a junior novitiate was added to the novitiate at Westchester in 1878. However, as it was an unhealthy locality, the two groups moved in May 1883 to Amawalk. In September of the same year, a scholasticate began to function there also. Major construction work undertaken by New York City to provide itself with a water supply, forced the Brothers to leave the house from 1896 to 1899, and in 1903, to send their junior novices and novices to join those of the Baltimore District. When the District of Baltimore was created, the Visitor brought together 5 novices and 3 postulants from New York and 3 postulants from Montreal. In 1880, the novitiate was located in a building put up on some land bought at Ammendale. In August 1880, a junior novitiate was opened there, and in 1885, a scholasticate, but the latter closed in 1888, it seems. The District of St Louis had a novitiate at Carondelet, not far from the town. In 1886, it was moved to Glencoe. In 1888, a junior novitiate was added and, in 1891, the beginnings of a scholasticate. The novitiate of the District of San Francisco had been at Oakland since 1870, next to a school called *St Joseph's Academy*. When it became a boarding school in 1879, the novitiate was transferred to a location near the town of Martinez. The slow development of scholasticates in all these Districts is explained by the fact that most of the young Brothers studied privately for their teaching certificate and then for their university degree (cf. Rigault 9, 115).

Districts :	Number of novices				Total
	New York	Baltimore	San Louis	San Francisco	
1880	34	25	25	17	101
1890	38	18	10	11	77
1900	31	20	14	8	73
1903	30	18	7	7	62

These figures show that numbers in the novitiates of St Louis and San Francisco were generally speaking quite low, which corresponds to the small increase in the number of Brothers in these Districts, as the following table shows:

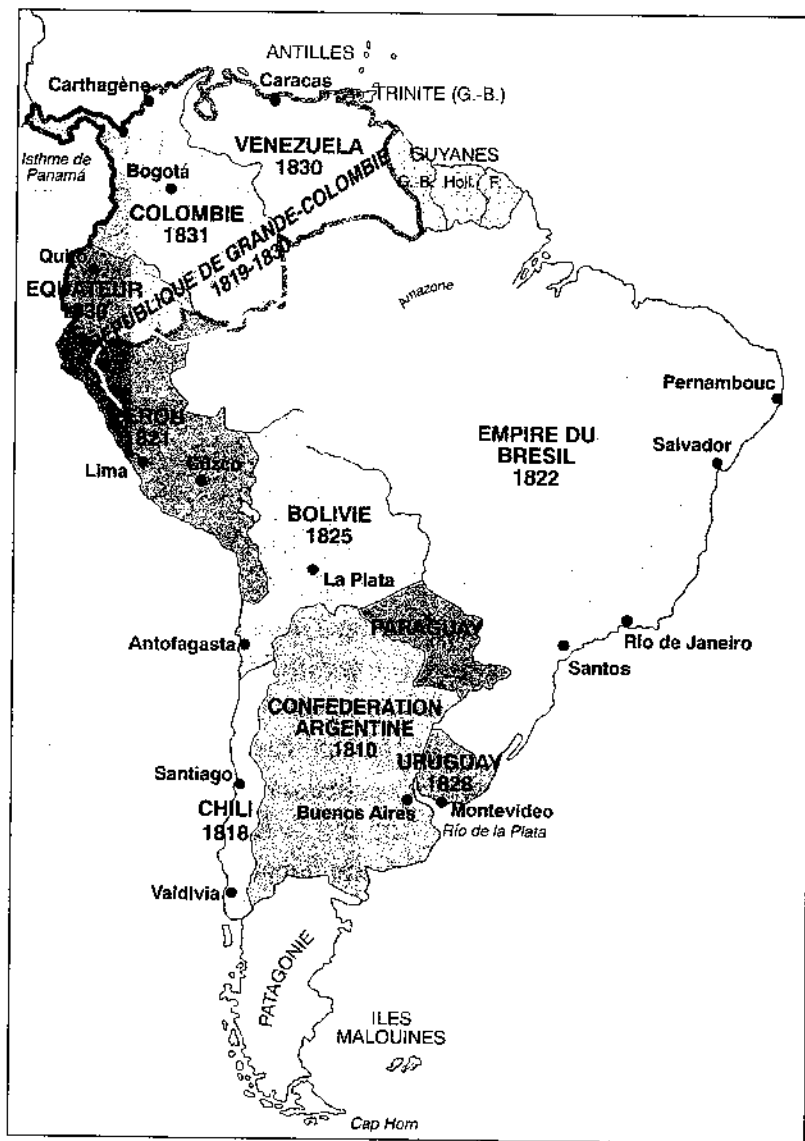
	Number of Brothers				Total
	New York	Baltimore	San Louis	San Francisco	
1880	277	124	166	70	637
1890	385	165	172	97	819
1900	417	211	193	101	922
1903	398	215	188	104	905

The decrease in the number of novices and the slower growth of the number of Brothers in these last years certainly reflect the crisis faced by the Brothers of the United States from 1894 onwards and, in particular, after 1897, as a result of developments in what was called the "Latin question".

### Latin America

The Brothers arrived in Ecuador in 1863. In the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they established themselves in three other countries and, in the very first years of the 20<sup>th</sup>, they either went, or were preparing to go, to two others. In all these countries, the political situation in which they found themselves was very similar: power passed - sometimes violently - successively from liberals to conservatives and back again. The Catholic Church in particular suffered from the conflict between the parties. The liberals, inspired by the approach adopted by certain sovereigns and the ideas of 18<sup>th</sup> century philosophers, tended to deprive the Church of all participation in public affairs. The conservatives,

who sided with the Catholic Church, wanted the Church to preserve or regain the position it had traditionally held. Where education was concerned, one party wanted to promote secular education, and the other wished to maintain the teaching of religion in schools. Even if the Brothers did not involve themselves in this political conflict, they could not escape its repercussions on themselves as religious and on their schools.



Formation of Latin American States (19<sup>th</sup> century to middle of the 20<sup>th</sup>). Cf. CHALLIAND, *op. cit.*, p.110.

These same countries suffered also from the economic and social consequences of having previously been colonies. As colonies, they had had to supply countries in Europe with exotic products and raw materials, while at the same time, by virtue of a trade monopoly, they had to obtain their manufactured goods from them. Subsequently, they continued to maintain these same relations with industrialised countries, without hardly becoming industrialised themselves. While the great majority of the inhabitants remained poor, being forced to accept poorly-paid work, a minority, mostly Creoles descended from colonial settlers, took advantage of commercial trade to make a fortune, forming a middle class which took over the running of public affairs. The Brothers, called normally to take care of children from families of modest means, with the support of the middle classes, found themselves being asked by the latter to provide their children with an education suited to their future careers. The first Plenary Council for Latin America, held in Rome in 1899, recommended bishops to open teacher training colleges, and to entrust those intended to provide staff for boys' schools. to the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

There will be no need to return to the general context of these countries, but we shall glance at specific aspects relating to the work of the Brothers.

## – Ecuador

Garcia Moreno who ruled the country when the Brothers arrived, and then ruled it a second time, was assassinated in 1875. His successor, a friend of the Febres Cordero family, pursued the same policies, and so the Brothers' novitiate continued to be funded by official grants. The teacher training college for the indigenous population failed, and the Brothers had to cope with the antipathy of the town authorities of Quito. In July 1876, the Institute had 9 communities in Ecuador. In that same year, General Veintimilla seized power. Brother Visitor Yon Joseph was called back to France by the Superiors, and Brother Provincial Visitor Armin Victor was sent to Ecuador: from the instructions he received, it was clear the Superiors envisaged the departure of all the Brothers from the country. He arrived in April 1877, and met the President who stated he was ready to honour existing contracts with the Institute. On May 11<sup>th</sup>, before leaving, Brother Armin gave the newly appointed Brother Visitor Aulin (Louis Souquière) instructions regarding the departure of the Brothers, despite everything. As it happened, they never found it necessary to leave.

A new military coup in 1883 resulted in the conservatives returning to power, which they kept for 12 years. For the Institute, it was a time of prosperity: in Quito, the

Brothers opened a secondary school, the La Salle Institute; and in 1892, in the same town, the *Beaterio* was recognised as a teacher training college. The novitiate continued to receive local vocations. In 1895, however, the conservative government troops were defeated by General Alfaro, who took power. State subsidies to the Christian schools were stopped. Brother Bernon Marie (François Piéron), the Provincial Visitor for South America at the time, ordered schools to close. The Ecuadorian Ambassador to the Holy See contacted the Superior General through the intermediary of the Brother Procurator General (GA NT 700-3/9). As a result of this intervention, schools re-opened in February, but the La Salle Institute stopped functioning and schools closed in various places. Some Brothers left the country, others, the Institute. On the other hand, the novitiate, which had been closed in 1895, re-opened under the direction of Brother Miguel. A relatively calm period from 1903-1904 enabled the District to take the first steps towards recovery. In December 1903, there remained 53 Brothers and 5 communities in Ecuador.

## – Chile

In the first half of the century, the country had no civil wars. Around 1870, the liberals, allied with the radicals who were even more anticlerical than they were, reduced the conservatives to impotence. They passed laws which tended to secularise the State: in particular, they suppressed the teaching of religion in public authority schools. On the other hand, in the second half of the century, the arrival in the country of numerous teaching congregations led to the proliferation of Catholic schools.

As far as the Institute was concerned, Brother Philippe had received requests for Brothers in 1852 or 1855. In 1862, the Archbishop of Santiago had obtained a decree from the President of the Republic granting a legal status to the Institute in the country. Other requests were made to the Superiors in 1870. However, it was only in 1876 that Brother Irlide asked the Brother Visitor of Ecuador to go to Chile and examine three projects that were being offered to the Institute. On March 6<sup>th</sup> 1877, the Brother Superior informed the Archbishop of Santiago that he had agreed “to send some Brothers to run the Casa de Talleres institution in San Vicente, and even perhaps another school” (quoted in GA NT 400/1), but he also asked him to consider the idea of creating a novitiate. On April 19<sup>th</sup> 1877, Brothers from Ecuador and some from France opened the *Casa de Taleres*, an orphanage offering various vocational courses. The Brothers found it difficult to restore order to the house, but Brother Laurent Martyr (Bernard Toulouse), from the protectorate of Quito, succeeded in doing so in 1878. In

the same year, Brother Théodald (Auguste Bastide) was sent from France with two Brothers to take charge of the school of *Nuestra Senora de la Esperanza*. He was joined also by some Brothers from Ecuador.

The work of the Brothers expanded very little during the period known as the "Pacific War" (1879-1883) in which Chili was in conflict with Bolivia and Peru. In 1885, the Brothers arrived at Valparaiso where they took charge of the *San Vicente* school: the Director was Brother Mateo (Pedro Sanchez), originally from Colombia and trained in Quito, who had only triennial vows. In 1889, the *San Jose* school was opened also in Valparaiso. The Brothers did not suffer as a result of the revolution in 1891. In that year and in those that followed, they took over a number of schools, including that of *San Vicente* in Limache (1893), resembling a similarly named one in Santiago. In 1896, the Brothers expelled by the revolution arrived in Ecuador. At the close of the century, after withdrawing from certain schools, the Brothers in Chile had the *San Jacinto* college founded in Santiago in 1894, 6 gratuitous schools and 2 orphanages. In 1901, the Archbishop of Santiago founded a teacher training college which he entrusted to the Brothers.

In 1878, two postulants were admitted to the house of the *Obra pia de Zambrano* on which the *Esperanza* school depended. The novitiate remained in this house until 1894 when it was transferred to a property located in Providencia. In 1888, a junior novitiate was opened there. Brother Théodald had been appointed auxiliary Visitor of Chile in 1884. At his death in 1901, the houses of this country, detached from those in Ecuador, joined those in Argentina to form a new District under the direction of Brother Sardien (Ange Joseph Roux), also called Angel. At the end of 1903, there were 83 Brothers in Chile, 9 communities and 7 novices.

## – Argentina

Around 1860, in Argentina, liberals inspired by positivism were in control. Their plans for developing popular education included making it neutral from a religious point of view. The Superiors had been asked to send Brothers there in 1865 and 1866. Further requests in 1876, 1879 and 1882 were prompted by a desire to meet the needs of a population greatly increased by immigration, and by that of "making up for the indifference of a State imbued with laicism" (Rigault 9, 286). The Superiors, however, refused to become involved.

The arrival of the Brothers in Argentina was the result of a particular set of circum-

stances. In 1888, a Jesuit announced that a donation had been made to the Institute by the Armstrong Foundation to fund the opening of a technical school like that of St Nicolas de Vaugirard in Paris (GA NY 200-1/1). Brother Joseph decided to send Brothers Calimer (François Sédillo), Visitor of the District of Bayonne, and Jumaélien (Gabriel Bernard Athané), from the boarding school in Toulouse, who embarked on January 5<sup>th</sup> 1889. On their arrival, they quickly realised that the transformation of the bequest into liquid assets would take a long time. Brother Calimer returned to France to make his report to the Brother Superior. Brother Jumaélien stayed behind and took charge of the school of the Lazarists, who had taken him in. The wish of the Lazarists to entrust their school to the Brothers fitted in with Brother Joseph's wish to see the Brothers begin with a gratuitous school. On May 26<sup>th</sup> 1889, five Brothers from France arrived in Buenos Aires. At the college of the Jesuits where they were lodged, they set about learning the language. At the beginning of 1890, they formed 2 communities, one running the Lazarists' school, and the other teaching in the primary section of the Jesuits' college of *San Salvador*. In the same year, the Brothers accepted an offer made to them by the parish priest of Lujan to take over a boarding school and a house to lodge their postulants. Conditions, however, were not suitable: the Brothers withdrew the postulants, whom the Jesuits in Buenos Aires agreed to lodge; and then they left the boarding school. Towards the end of the year, Brother Jumaélien was appointed Visitor of Argentina. On February 24<sup>th</sup> 1891, he reported that he had gathered 22 Brothers together for a retreat (GA NT 200-1/1).

The Superiors received other requests, but they preferred to consolidate the work they had begun which, in any case, expanded, as we showed in the supplement which precedes this chapter. The novitiate opened in 1896 was transferred the following year to a country house acquired at San Martin. An official list dated June 1903 gives the number of Brothers as 50: 34 Frenchmen, 13 Argentinians, 2 Spaniards and 1 Scot (GA NT 200-1/6).

## - Colombia

Brothers were asked to come to various places in Colombia as early as 1873. The Superiors had agreed to send some from Ecuador to Popoyan, but the Visitor of this District considered it preferable to send them to Pasto, in 1874. The conservatives' uprising in 1876 was defeated and, in the general upheaval, the Brothers' school was closed down.

A long period of unrest during which the ruling liberals had pursued an anticlerical policy, was followed by another in which the Church occupied a strong position: a concordat was signed in 1887, and education was put under the control of the clergy. Another approach was made to the Superiors by the Colombian Ambassador to the Holy See supported by the Bishop of Medellin, but it came to nothing. On the other hand, Mgr Bernardo Herrera, the new bishop of this diocese, saw his efforts rewarded: in October 1888, Brother Joseph endorsed an agreement made by his representative and himself (GA NT 800-2/2). Brothers from Ecuador arrived in Medellin at the beginning of 1890, followed by others from France. A day school called *Colegio San Jose* was opened in April; and on May 9<sup>th</sup>, the Institute acquired legal status. A new contract was signed in July of the same year with a view to taking charge of a second establishment, *San Jose* at Maranilla. This was followed by the opening of a school dedicated to Blessed De La Salle, and of a small orphanage. Made Archbishop of Bogota, Mgr Herrera signed a contract in September 1892 for the creation of a college: the *Colegio San Bernardo* opened in April 1893. Another contract was signed in November 1895, according to which the Brothers would take charge for 10 years of the *Asilo San Jose de ninos desamparados*. In 1897, also in Bogota, a boarding school which admitted weekly boarders also, was opened with the name of *Instituto La Salle*. In January 1896, at Barranquilla, a port on the Caribbean Sea, the Brothers took charge of a *Colegio San Jose*, also called *Biffi*, which had difficulty in finding a suitable location. In 1897, a school was opened at Honda.

In 1891, Brother Largion Jules (François Jules Mazens) who had presided over the establishment of the Brothers in Medellin, was appointed auxiliary Visitor of Colombia. In 1893, he located his residence in Bogota. In the same year, a novitiate was opened in a property at Chapinero. It admitted its first postulant at the beginning of 1894, and by May, the number had risen to 10.

The civil war started in 1898 by the opponents of the conservatives and of the Church lasted until 1902. The Brothers continued to work, but the school at Honda was burnt down and the establishment at Barranquilla closed. As the 20<sup>th</sup> century dawned, prospects seemed brighter: schools were opened in the country. The *Colegio San Bernardo* in Quito moved into a new building. Part of the old building was occupied by the cathedral choir school which was entrusted to the Brothers. In March 1902, the Minister of Public Instruction announced his intention to invite the Brothers to direct an establishment to form directors of teacher training colleges and qualified primary school teachers for the Bogota region. Brother Gabriel Marie gave his consent, but difficulties arose and the Brothers took charge only in 1905.



In 1903, the houses in Colombia, which was still part of the District of Ecuador, numbered 10, with 77 Brothers, 5 scholastics and 15 novices.

### – Nicaragua and Panama

The Brothers arrived in Central America at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They were invited to Nicaragua to run an orphanage at Leon on the Pacific coast, on the suggestion of a native of the country who had spent some time in Paris at the family house of the Frangs Bourgeois. Brother Gabriel Marie accepted the offer and a group of Brothers from France arrived on November 14<sup>th</sup> 1903. The situation soon proved to be difficult. A letter from one of the Brothers dated July 1904 gives us an insight: a taxing climate, lack of resources, dictatorial government, the establishment's bad reputation, and tension in community (GA NP 614/2). However, there was no question of the Brothers withdrawing.

The opposition of Colombia to ceding territorial rights over the area in which the canal linking the Atlantic to the Pacific was to be built was settled by an opportune revolution resulting in the creation of the State of Panama at the end of 1903. Its leaders, wishing to promote popular education in the zone, asked the Brothers to come and train teachers. The former Visitor of Colombia, Brother Largion Jules, currently at Leon, went to Panama to study the situation: he believed that the new republic offered the Institute bright prospects (cf. GA NP 400-1/1: letter dated May 1<sup>st</sup> 1904). In July, he made arrangements to welcome a first group of Brothers who were now forbidden to teach in France.

### Conclusion

What is striking when we look back over this chapter is the ease with which the Institute established itself and developed in North America, and adapted itself in Latin America in the countries where the Brothers settled. Recruitment of native or immigrant vocations to the Brothers was rapid in these different countries. Unfortunately, because of external but also internal reasons, the Institute's development encountered more or less long-lasting obstacles, as we shall now see in the case of the United States.

#### 4. THE LATIN QUESTION IN THE UNITED STATES

As we said in the last chapter, the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> were marked in the United States by what was known as the "Latin question". The importance that was attached to this question stems, it would seem, from the position occupied by the Institute in the United States at the time, and from the fact that Brothers believed that the particular circumstances of the country should be taken into account. They asked that in certain cases, such as the application of the principle of gratuity and the prohibition to teach Latin, the Rule should be applied less literally. Such a view inevitably clashed with the intransigence prevailing at the time, in particular, among certain Superiors.

This question has been treated in various works on the history of the Institute. These include W. J. Battersby's *The Brothers in the United States: 1900-1925*, which deals amply with the question and is particularly interesting because of the letters and other documents it quotes. This work will serve as the basis for the present supplement which, while not claiming to be exhaustive or definitive; will use also other sources of information.

##### How the Latin question came about

In the United States, the Brothers had been led to introduce the teaching of Latin and Greek into the curriculum of their *academies* and *colleges*. The first to do so was Brother Patrick, headmaster of the academy opened by the Brothers in 1853 in St Louis. The following year, as a delegate to the General Chapter, he explained the particular circumstances in the United States which had led to the adoption of these subjects. The capitulants gave him a sympathetic hearing, but there was no mention of the matter in the Chapter documents. In the years that followed, the study of the classics was introduced into the curriculum of several other establishments. In 1866, Brother Patrick and Brother Justin, Director of the house at Baltimore at the time, were invited to explain their situation to the second plenary council of the bishops of the USA. Satisfied with the explanations given, the bishops encouraged the Brothers to continue as they were doing.

Brother Patrick became Visitor in 1867 and was elected Assistant at the 1873 Chapter. In the 27<sup>th</sup> session of this Chapter, capitulants turned their attention to "the subject of the teaching of Latin in certain of our houses in America". The report on the session summarised the explanations given by the delegates from the USA, and stated that the motives given "justify, in the view of the Chapter, the experiment under discussion,

which could continue for as long as circumstances demanded”, but it stipulated a number of conditions (Register C, p. 439). The 1882 Chapter returned to the same question in the 34<sup>th</sup> session and adopted the following proposition: “The General Chapter believes that in foreign provinces Latin may be maintained in the curriculum of the establishments where it is taught, but subject to the conditions and reservations prescribed in 1873” (Register C, p. 158). The question came up again at the Chapter of 1884, but the Assembly accepted the conclusions of the competent commission, which was to continue to follow what had been decided in 1873 and 1882. However, the position adopted by the various Chapters regarding the teaching of Latin was not mentioned in the circulars that carried their decisions.

In a letter dated March 17<sup>th</sup> 1888, Brother Patrick described what was said at these Chapters:

“At that point, our situation in the USA left me no choice but to ask the 1854 General Chapter to authorise me to introduce the teaching of Latin in St Louis. The Superior General of the time [Brother Philippe] gave his permission. The question came up again at the 1873 General Chapter, and the same permission was renewed. The same authorisation was confirmed once again in 1882” (Battersby p. 29).

While Brother Patrick considered the matter settled, everyone else, beginning with the members of the “Regime”, was very far from sharing his views. For example, when Brother Aurelian, the Director of Memphis, returned from his 30-day retreat, he wrote to his Assistant on August 29<sup>th</sup> 1885 and, referring to the retreat president, Brother Assistant Aimarus, he said that “the latter thought it better if we excluded the teaching of Latin from our curricula” (Battersby p. 84).

Both the silence of subsequent Chapters regarding this question and the differences in the interpretation of the position they had adopted regarding it, maintained an ambiguous situation which would lead to many problems in the future.

## How the situation evolved

### – Official decisions

The question of Latin was raised again at the **General Chapter of 1894**. A number of capitulants were strongly opposed to the teaching of Latin; in particular, the Assistants Exuperien, Aimarus, Gabriel Marie, and Reticus (cf. Battersby p. 40). The discussion on the report produced by the “Latin question” commission ended with the adoption of a decision couched as follows:

“The General Chapter, imbued with profound respect for our holy Rules and our 200 year old traditions, decrees: All the prescriptions of Chapter XXVIII of the Common Rules remain in force and vigour for all our establishments”. (*General Chapters of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, 167).

This decree was not published but its terms were quite widely known in the United States. The Bishop of Halifax, who had obtained Brothers from New York despite the fact he was in the maritime provinces of Canada, appealed unsuccessfully to the Holy See against the decision of the General Chapter. Four archbishops in the United States made a similar appeal to the Congregation of the *Propaganda Fide*. Questioned by the latter, the Superior General Brother Joseph recalled the traditions of the Institute regarding the teaching of Latin. On July 9<sup>th</sup> 1895, the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation communicated his decision to the Superior General: the Brothers of the United States could not be dispensed from the point of Rule forbidding the Brothers to teach Latin. However, no deadline was indicated for the return to the strict application of the Rule regarding this matter. The Visitors of the United States, wanting a reversal of the decision, had eight archbishops make a new appeal to the Holy See.

This was the position when the death of Brother Joseph led to the convocation of a **General Chapter in 1897**. The Archbishop of Saint Louis, Mgr Kain, and that of Baltimore, Cardinal Gibbons, wrote to the President of the Chapter (cf. Battersby p. 64). The delegates from the American Districts prepared a report in which they set out the reasons justifying the maintenance of the teaching of Latin in the Brothers' establishments in the USA (cf. Battersby p. 70). The report was read at a Chapter session. A commission of 12 members was formed, and the discussion of the report occupied two sessions, on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. The main concern of the minutes of the Chapter sessions was to stress the position adopted by the Congregation of the Propaganda in 1895. Finally, the Chapter adopted a decree by 90 votes in favour, 3 against and 6 abstentions, which set out the means to be taken “so that all teaching of Latin comes prudently but surely to an end in our establishments where it has been introduced” and annulled “all the decisions of previous General Chapters concerning the teaching of Latin in our establishments” (*General Chapters of the FSC Institute*, 172).

As he wrote in the circular addressed to the Brothers on April 26<sup>th</sup>, Brother Gabriel Marie, the new Superior General, had not taken part in the discussion, but after the adoption of the decree he had manifested “his joy at seeing the body of the Institute solemnly witness through its highest representatives its filial obedience to the decisions of the Holy See and, at the same time, its inviolable fidelity to our holy Rules and traditions” (Circ. No 75, 67).

The official Chapter documents gave no idea of the tenor of the discussions, nor of the atmosphere in which they had taken place. We can gain some idea of the atmosphere from a letter addressed to the Superior General, in which Brother Maurelian stated in particular that a Brother Assistant had read out a reddition letter in public, and in which he complained of the marked coldness shown to the American delegates on their departure (Battersby p. 76, 77).

### – Visit of two Assistants to the United States

There is no doubt that the decisions of the Chapter were badly received in the USA. This is borne out by the correspondence of the Assistant Brother Clementian with various Brothers from the USA at the beginning of 1898 (Battersby p. 85). It was in this context that the Superior General decided to send two Assistants to visit the American Districts. He informed the Brothers of his intentions in a letter dated February 25<sup>th</sup> 1898. The letter was sent also to all the bishops and archbishops of the United States and to the Directors of the other houses of the Institute. The Assistants sent were Brothers Aimarus and Madir Joseph, chosen probably because they knew English. As for the Americans, they did not appreciate the fact that Brother Clementian was not one of the two Assistants.

We know the various stages of the two Assistants' visit from the *Calendar of Canonical Visits* kept by Brother Aimarus and which can be found in GA, EG 312. For each of these stages, the chronicler noted the meetings held, the reactions encountered and his own comments. This *Calendar* was used by W. Battersby and G. Rigault in their report of the main points of the two Assistants' journey. Lack of space prevents us from giving more than the most significant facts.

As far as the Brothers were concerned, Brother Aimarus noted three attitudes:

Unconditional support for the teaching of Latin:

- In New York (Manhattan) the Brothers are described as being very hostile to the suppression of Latin;
- In St Louis, “the Director of the College, Felix John, claimed that the suppression of Latin would mean the ruin of the establishment; he led the resistance movement”;
- In Philadelphia, the Director of the College thought all would be lost if Latin were suppressed: “real fanaticism among almost all the Brothers”.

Some positions were less uncompromising:

- According to Justin, the visitor of New York, it would take 5 years to transform the establishments;

– In Philadelphia, the Director of the Cathedral School, although a supporter of Latin, accepted the decision of the Superior General.

There were also those opposed to Latin:

- The Director of St Peter's Philadelphia was an enemy of Latin;
- At Eddington, the Director of the Orphanage “expressed the most ardent wishes for the complete suppression of Latin which is killing our schools”.
- As for the Director of Belmont, he was “an inveterate opponent of Latin because it divided the Brothers into two categories of religious”.

Among the archbishops and bishops we find similar positions:

- The Archbishop of St Louis “a great supporter of the Brothers’ teaching Latin” was in favour of the American branch of the Institute breaking away rather than “accepting that our Brothers stop teaching this language, because this would mean killing our establishment in St Louis”;
- The Archbishop of San Francisco supported quite strongly the teaching of Latin but he recognised the risk to which the Assistants had drawn attention of the creation of two categories of Brothers, and he feared that the less capable Brothers would be sent to the gratuitous schools;
- For the Bishop of Philadelphia, “the Latin question was closed, but one should proceed slowly and with great prudence”.

On the departure of the Assistants from New York, Brother Justin the Visitor wanted to suggest a compromise to Brother Aimarus. The latter, as he himself notes, had replied in substance that, if he had come for this purpose, after all he had seen and heard he would have changed his mind. From his notes, it is clear that, during his visit, this Assistant had established a very clear distinction between the supporters of the teaching of Latin he had met, especially in the establishments where it took place, and the opponents of the maintenance of this teaching, who were mostly working in reformatories and parish schools. He sided clearly with the latter group.

However, the disadvantage of relying solely on Brother Aimarus, is to leave the second Assistant in the shade. One cannot ignore either the reactions produced by this visit. Brother Quintinian, auxiliary Visitor of the District of New York, complained about Brother Aimarus’s approach in a letter to the Superior General dated March 25<sup>th</sup> 1898 (cf. Battersby, p. 90). It is clear that Brother Aimarus did not make it easier for the Brothers to accept the decisions of the 1897 Chapter.

### – Reactions in Paris and in the United States

The reports the Superior General had received from the two Assistants left no doubt regarding the views of the Brothers in the United States (cf. Battersby, p. 100). With the

intention of confronting a certain number of Brothers, the Superior General contacted the Congregation for Bishops and Regulars, which sent him a rescript dated June 20<sup>th</sup> 1898 authorising him to take the harshest measures he thought fit regarding the rebels (Rigault 9, p. 217). A new circular addressed to the American Brothers dated July 19<sup>th</sup> gave directives to start reducing the teaching of Latin (Circ. No 81 b). The Superior also asked the Brothers of the United States to sign a document submitting to the prescriptions of chapter XVIII of the Rule, to the decisions of the Chapter of 1897 and to those of the Sacred Congregation of 1895 (text in GA, NS 503/5). In addition, he decided to relieve the Visitors of the Districts of New York and St Louis, Brothers Justin and Paulian, of their functions, and called them to Paris.

All this prolonged the discontent of many American Brothers and resulted in renewed attempts by some of them to obtain from the hierarchy a new appeal to Rome. Mgr Byrne, Bishop of Nashville, wrote to the apostolic delegate in Washington on May 18<sup>th</sup> 1898; Mgr Kain of St Louis wrote to Cardinal Satolli who had once performed the same function and was now in Rome. The meeting of the Catholic hierarchy in October offering a favourable opportunity to examine the Brothers' case, Brother Maurelian contacted Mgr Spalding, Bishop of Peoria, sending him a letter dated September 9<sup>th</sup> 1898, accompanied by six documents (texts in Battersby, p. 117ff).

The archbishops held their meeting on October 12<sup>th</sup> at the Catholic University of Washington and invited Brothers Maurelian, Quintinian and Christian (Visitor of the District of Baltimore) to come and present their case. The assembly entrusted to the Archbishop of Saint Louis the task of preparing a petition addressed to the Congregation of Propaganda Fide asking the United States to be exempt from applying the decision of 1895 (cf. Battersby, p. 130). Cardinal Gibbons, delegated to find a bishop to carry this request to Rome, chose Mgr Byrne who knew Italian well.

As for Brother Gabriel Marie, he appointed as provincial Visitor for the United States, Brother Imier de Jesus (Jean Antoine Lafabregue), who was Visitor of the District of Moulins, France, at the time. In a circular dated October 23<sup>rd</sup> 1898, he informed the American Brothers of the appointment and announced that this Brother would visit communities accompanied by Brother Assistant Clementian.

### – Negotiations in Rome

In the period before the American bishops presented their petition in Rome, one or two Assistants were present in this city to follow developments in the affair. Mostly, this was done by Brother Louis de Poissy, who was in charge of Italy. In the Generalate

archives (GA, EE 281/16) we find the letters addressed to him by Brother Gabriel Marie in the period from November 5<sup>th</sup> 1898 to March 21<sup>st</sup> 1899. The information from these and from other sources, enable us to follow the negotiations made in the name of the American Brothers, and to know indirectly the evolution of their situation.

In the latter months of the year 1898, while Mgr Byrne was preparing his document, it is clear that the Superiors feared it would lead to a new decree which would water down that of 1895. They consulted one another also on when the "letter from the American bishops" would reach Rome. At the same time, the correspondence of Brother Gabriel Marie reveals his preoccupation regarding what was happening in the United States. We see that:

- information received between November 10<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> led the Superiors to believe that the "American Visitors were involved in a plot";
- at the beginning of December, the Superior General was worried lest a letter from Brother Irlide in 1881 to the Archbishop of Philadelphia, which he considered "unfortunate", should fall into the hands of the Brothers in the United States;
- while Brother Assistant Clementian was pleading for the return of Brothers Justin and Paulian, the Superiors were envisaging calling also Brothers Quintinian and Maurelian to Paris.

At the beginning of the year 1899, the situation becomes clearer regarding the negotiations in Rome in the name of the American hierarchy:

- a letter dated January 10<sup>th</sup> speaks of a "memorandum" presented to the Pope, signed by 80 bishops;
- a letter dated February 25<sup>th</sup> refers to a response to be given to the Sacred Congregation. The Superior General had in fact presented his observations in the form of "*Initial response of the MHB Gabriel Marie to the request of My Lord Bishops and Archbishops of the United States*" dated February 20<sup>th</sup> 1899 (Rigault 9, p. 220).

At the same time, in his correspondence with Brother Louis de Poissy, the Superior General frequently speaks about American newspaper articles sent to him. A press campaign had been started in the United States regarding the current situation involving the Brothers. Certain papers stressed the conflict which opposed the Jesuits and the Brothers of the Christian Schools over the teaching of classical languages: the former, who reproached the latter for not observing their Rule, quite naturally believed the latter were competing with them (cf. article on this subject by Ronald Isetti in the *Catholic Historical Review*: 1990 -76 (3), p. 535).

Correspondence sent to Rome up to mid-March:

- shows that the exchange of arguments between Mgr Byrne and the Institute continues through the intermediary of the Roman congregation;



– there is mention of a letter from Brother Potamian circulating in the District of New York, most probably connected with the “plebiscite” launched by Mgr Byrne among the Brothers to ask for the continuation of the teaching of Latin in their establishments (cf. Rigault 9, p. 221). The Bishop of Nashville who presented to the Congregation a second memorandum gives a figure of 698 signatures (Battersby, p. 162).

After March 21<sup>st</sup> there is no more correspondence from Brother Gabriel Marie to follow the evolution of the affair up to the end of 1899. From other sources we learn that:

– on May 24<sup>th</sup> of that year, the Superior general presented a second response in which he challenged the right of Mgr Byrne to style himself “the emissary of the unanimity of the [American] bishops” (quoted in Rigault 9, 220);

– a *Complementary Note* was printed in Rome on June 17<sup>th</sup> and signed by the Brother Assistants Louis de Poissy and Reticus, in which they reduced the number of signatures gathered by the Bishop of Nashville to 515, and denounced his interference and that of the Archbishop of Saint Louis in the affairs of the Institute (GA NS 503/20).

In October, at their annual meeting, the archbishops entrusted their colleague from San Francisco, Mgr Riordan, who was due to go to Rome, with the task of renewing the request presented in Rome on behalf of the Brothers. The archbishop wrote a third memorandum which he presented to the Congregation on December 8<sup>th</sup> (text in Battersby, p. 165ff).

On December 11<sup>th</sup> 1899, the Congregation of *Propaganda Fide* gave its findings “regarding whether the Brothers would be authorised to teach Latin and Greek” (quoted in Rigault 9, 222) The Fathers of the Sacred Congregation refused to grant the Brothers the dispensation from the Rule which forbade them this teaching. The Superior of the Institute was informed that this teaching would be tolerated in the establishments in America only until the end of the current school year. The decree of the Congregation was promulgated by Pope Leo XIII on January 11<sup>th</sup> 1900. Cardinal Ledochowski, Prefect of the Congregation, communicated this decision to Cardinal Gibbons and Brother Gabriel Marie, who informed the whole Institute in a circular dated the 18<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

## The Conclusion of the Affair

### – Reactions in the United States

Even before receiving the circular, the Brothers in the United States were aware of the decision of the Sacred Congregation. Inevitably it produced a reaction among them. In a letter to an Assistant dated January 13<sup>th</sup>, Brother Imier noted that in New York, after

“a few instances of bad humour and talk of wanting to break away, calm had returned”; that according to the Visitor of St Louis, “the college clique were working at breaking away”; and that in Philadelphia, the Director of the College “is extremely irritated and does not hide his resentment against the superiors” (GA EE 281/16). In a letter to Brother Assistant Madir Joseph dated February 2<sup>nd</sup>, the same Brother writes that “the decision of the Sacred College will not be the cause, it would seem, of the great number of departures that was feared”; and that according to the information he had, the situation was calm in New York, Rock Hill, Baltimore and Washington, whereas in St Louis, the two main “separationists” did not have much following. These two reports, however, are not sufficient to give an exact idea of the situation.

Whatever the Brothers may have felt and thought, the main concern of those in charge of establishments was to prepare new teaching programmes for the next academic year. This, of course, presumed that the competent authorities would agree to the changes envisaged. The response of the latter gave to understand that in academies and colleges, Latin and Greek could be replaced by modern languages, and the changes would not infringe the Charter granted to the different establishments.

#### – The Superiors bring the matter to a close

The canonisation of the Holy Founder in May 1900 could have been an occasion to restore peace, but neither before or after, was the event marked by any particular conciliatory gesture to the American Brothers. For all that, the Brothers of the United States celebrated the new Saint with great fervour and show.

By his circular dated April 11<sup>th</sup> 1901, Brother Gabriel Marie no doubt thought he would bring the whole matter to a close. In this circular, the Superior “recalled the principles which had inspired his correct procedure; he praised the submission of the American Brothers: he retraced the various stages of the affair since 1854” (Rigault 9, 225). The purpose of this circular was also to extend to the whole Institute the effects of the decisions taken regarding the Brothers in the United States. In some places, in fact, the teaching of Latin had been introduced into establishments run by the Brothers. This was the case, for example, in the Collegio San Giuseppe in Turin, where the teaching of Latin had already been suppressed in June 1900 at the end of the school year. The intention also was to prevent the introduction of Latin into any Brothers’ establishment in the future.

## Consequences of the affair

The 1901 circular served, if anything, to rekindle the argument. For example, Brother Gabriel Marie's view that no express permission had ever been given to the American Brothers to teach Latin, was seen as contradicting what Brother Assistant Patrick had always affirmed. This point was made, for example, by Brother Justin in his letter written in Toulouse on May 6<sup>th</sup> 1901 (cf. Battersby, p. 207).

The praise given by the Superior General for the Brothers of the United States for their submission was particularly deserved by those who had been sent into exile: the sentiments expressed by these Brothers, especially in their correspondence, bear remarkable witness to this. Some of them had already been recalled to the United States. This was the case of Brothers Potamian and Maurelian, who returned to New York as early as October 1900. But some, such as Brother Justin, for example, remained in exile. Their recall shortly after the publication of the January circular would have been a visible way of showing willingness to bring the whole matter to a close. But they were allowed to return to their country only after the Chapter held in October 1901 – a Chapter at which they were deprived of the right to vote for delegates or to be voted for. Brother Justin returned to the USA in July 1902 after having been first sent to the *Industrial School* in Manchester. Brother Fabrician had to wait until 1903 before returning. Despite their submission, certain Brothers never lost hope of seeing the Holy See modify its position and, with this in mind, they kept or established contact with certain leading ecclesiastics (cf. Battersby, p. 232).

In the establishments where the teaching of Latin and Greek had been replaced by that of modern languages, there was a noticeable drop in the intake of pupils when the 1900 school year began. As the circular of April 1901 indicated, at the beginning of the academic year in September 1900, the three higher learning institutes in New York had 86 students fewer (cf. Battersby, p. 208). This decrease threatened the future of certain establishments such as the Colleges of Saint Louis and Memphis, where the financial situation was already precarious. The direct effects of the crisis would be felt for a quarter of a century.

## Conclusión

One possible explanation for the great importance taken on by the "Latin question" in the United States is mutual misunderstanding. For example, the bishops wanted the Brothers' establishments to prepare candidates for the seminary. Were the Superiors suf-

ficiently attentive to the fact that, in the United States, these establishments were fulfilling a function performed in France by so-called "minor seminaries"? And in their turn, could the American Brothers, who knew of no other way of preparing candidates for the priesthood, be convinced by the argument of the Superiors that vocations to the priesthood came also from schools where the classics were not taught?

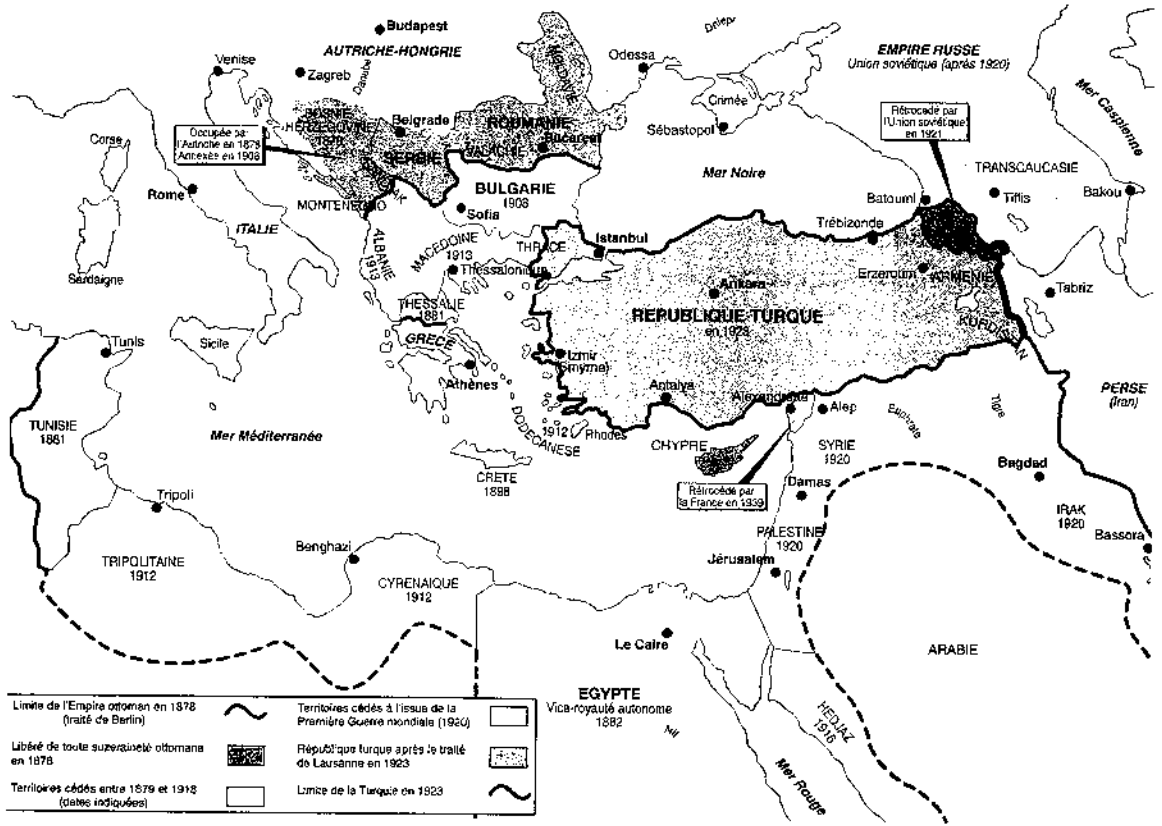
We can mention also that the reason for pursuing studies in Brothers' establishments in the United States was different. Generally speaking, courses of studies offered in the Institute were intended to prepare pupils for their future when they left school, at whatever level that may be. In the United States, there was a similar concern, but establishments strove also to make it possible for their students to go to university without having to frequent Protestant or neutral schools. And preparing for university normally involved the study of the classics.

However, to explain the fierceness of the crisis, a simple difference of opinion is not enough: we have to look elsewhere. If it is true, as was suggested in the conclusion of a preceding chapter, that towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was a "hardening of attitudes" in the Institute and, in particular, by Superiors, then the crisis connected with the "Latin question" in the United States is surely one of its principal manifestations. From the moment Brother Gabriel Marie, himself in favour of returning to the literal interpretation of the Rule regarding the teaching of Latin, was directed by the Chapter to impose it, no concession could be expected from him in the matter. Moreover, in dealing with it, he relied in particular on the most rigorous Brother Assistants. To these can be added Brother Exuperien who, as was reported in the correspondence of certain exiled Brothers, had presided a sort of tribunal in which he had said some very harsh things about them (cf. Battersby, p. 191). The resistance encountered among a large number of American Brothers could not be considered by the Superiors as anything else but a mark of insubordination. In addition, the impassioned tones used by certain American Brothers regarding the question served only to make matters worse.

The support the Brothers of the United States sought from the bishops of their country was of a nature to irritate Superiors who were very strongly attached to the principles they were defending, and who would back down only if forced to by a decision of the Holy See opposed to their position. There is a connection between the "Latin question" and another crisis which had concluded at around the same time with the condemnation by Rome of what was called "Americanism". The bishops who were considered "liberal" because they wanted Catholicism to adapt more to the American system, were the

same ones who supported the Brothers. The Superiors of the Institute were certainly more listened to in Rome than these bishops.

Not only with the passage of time, but especially because of the attitude adopted during their exile by those who, at the time of the crisis, were responsible for the Institute in the United States, it is legitimate to believe that the matter could have been settled in a different way. But the facts being what they are, one can only deplore the way things happened and the consequences which were long-lasting.



The end of the Ottoman Empire, from the Treaty of Berlin (1878) to the Treaty of Lausanne (1923).

## Chap. 5 - CONTINUATION OF THE MISSIONARY EXPANSION OF THE INSTITUTE

### Introduction

By "missionary countries" we mean those where Christianity was not the dominant religion. There will be some exceptions, however. Using the same geographical headings as before, we shall examine, during the period going from 1875 to 1904, what was the development of the Institute and its works in the missionary countries where it was already present, and in those in which it was introduced during this period.

Because of the vastness of the subject, it will not be possible to go into any great detail. In addition, in this chapter we shall restrict ourselves to a sort of description, leaving a fuller analysis of the presence of the Brothers in missionary countries to the supplement following this chapter. The supplement will be followed by an overall conclusion.

### The Near East

The Brothers were already present in the part of the Ottoman Empire known today as Turkey, as well as in Egypt. During the period which concerns us, we shall see that they spread to other parts of these countries, and established themselves in other parts of the Ottoman Empire.

Regarding the internal organisation of the Institute, two important changes took place in the region. In 1877, the houses in Turkey and Egypt joined to form one District. In 1898, this District was divided into three parts: Turkey, Egypt and Syria. A Visitor was appointed to each district, and a Provincial Visitor was appointed to oversee them.

To train Brothers for the District created in 1877, the novitiate which had been opened first in 1874 in Ramleh (a suburb of Alexandria) returned there in 1878. As the number of postulants was too small, others were brought in from Europe. Subsequently, in 1894, the novitiate was transferred to Bethlehem. But in the meantime, in 1885, to ensure "steady" recruitment, a novitiate and scholasticate were opened in France, at St Maurice l'Exil (in the Rhone valley). But the most interesting initiative was the transfer of the scholasticate to the Island of Rhodes in 1891. In addition to studying for the diplomas required for teaching, scholastics were required to study the languages currently in use in the region: Turkish, Arabic, Greek and Armenian.

There are two things worth noting about these educational establishments: on the one hand, the fact that some of them were inter-denominational; and on the other, the sup-

port they received from the French authorities, even when the policy they pursued in France hindered the activity of the Brothers in that country. The reason for this support lay in the right to protect Christians in the Ottoman Empire which the French State had been granted by the *Capitulations*\* of 1535, and which had been renewed by various treaties in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Even though the distribution of the houses of this District among three sectors occurred late in this period, it will serve as a basis for a rapid glance at the more notable events relating to these houses during the whole period.

## – Turkey

In the two towns in which the Brothers were already present, development was being pursued in two directions. On the one hand, the need to raise funds led the Brothers to establish **fee-paying schools**, open to pupils from various religious denominations. In Constantinople, the school at Kadikoy on the Asian shore was re-opened in 1870 following the fire at the school at Galata, which was on the European shore. On this shore, the day-boarding school of Saint Michael was opened in 1886, and a third school in 1897 at Ferrikoy. In 1880, the day-boarding school moved back to Smyrna where the premises had been rebuilt.

On the other hand, new **non fee-paying schools** were established: in 1883, in Constantinople, at Pancaldi near the Latin Cathedral; and in 1881 at Smyrna, in the suburb of the Point inhabited by numerous Catholics. A community took up residence here in 1885, and in 1887, technical study courses were begun.

In addition, **new houses** established in different parts of the Ottoman Empire were attached to Turkey.

– The Brothers were invited to Armenia by the Armenian-rite Catholic bishop of Trezibond: the school opened in 1881. In 1883, the bishop of Erzerum obtained some Brothers for his Episcopal city;

– In 1892, the Brothers opened a school in Ankara, in central Anatolia;

– In 1889, a school was opened on the Island of Rhodes. A boarding department was added in 1892;

– In Salonika, in the part of Macedonia that would later belong to Greece, the Lazarist Fathers asked the Brothers to staff the school they had established. The Brothers arrived in 1888;

– In 1901, a school was opened at Chania on the Island of Crete at the request of the French consul;

– In 1902, the Brothers returned to the Island of Chios.



## – Egypt

In the towns in which the Brothers were already present, the existing **schools** opened **annexes**, some of which became in their turn independent. In most cases, these annexes offered both fee-paying and non fee-paying classes, usually taught separately.

In Alexandria, in the College Ste Catherine, thanks to an extension of the premises, the non fee-paying classes were separated from those of the college in 1878. In that year, of the 625 pupils, 337 paid no fees. The French Government gave leave for the baccalaureate examination to be held at the college from 1884 onwards. In the various parts of the city a succession of annexes was opened, each one with its own name: Moharrembey (1887), St Joseph (1892), St Louis (1893). In 1897, the first of these became the College du Sacre Coeur. In 1898, the first steps were taken to open a technical school in the Maison de la Sainte Famille. At Ramleh, the college which opened in 1873, took in boarders in 1875, but the boarding section closed in 1897. An annexe of this college became later the College Saint Gabriel.

In Cairo, in the college opened at Khoronfish, courses preparing for the Egyptian baccalaureate were added in 1888 to the courses generally given in French. In 1890, courses in jurisprudence were started. These courses eventually gave rise to the Law faculty in Cairo. In 1888, an annexe was opened in the Ismailieh district and, in 1890, in that of Choubrah. This house became autonomous in 1894. In 1898, the Brothers made a modest start at Daher.

During this period, the Brothers established themselves also in various parts of Egypt:

– In the Suez Canal Zone, they opened a college with non fee-paying classes in Port Said (1887) and a school at Port Tewfick (1888).

– In the Nile Delta region, the Brothers came to Mansourah in 1889 and opened a college to which non fee-paying classes were added in 1890. In 1902, they established themselves Zagazig, in the ancient land of Gessen.

– In Upper Egypt, where the number of Copts, whether Catholic or not, was relatively high, the Brothers were called to Tahta in 1888, where they ran a completely free school. In 1895, a long-postponed project came to fruition at Assiout. In 1902, the Brothers came to Minieh where they made their school a centre for an intense Christian life. In 1903, they opened a house in Mellawi.

## – Syria, Palestine, Lebanon

During the same period, the Brothers arrived also in the part of the Ottoman Empire consisting of the administrative division of Syria. Here, however, most of the new foundations occurred in the two sectors already distinguishable as Palestine and Lebanon.

### *Palestine*

The establishment of the Brothers in Palestine was partly due, on the one hand, to a wish to work in the Holy Land – a note expressing this had been submitted to the 1875 Chapter – and on the other, to the approach made in 1876 by the Latin Patriarch to the Congregation of Propaganda Fide with a view to obtaining some Brothers. Brother Evagre (Henri Longuenesse), Director of the house at Ramleh, was sent, and he set about the construction of a building in Jerusalem, which received its first pupils in 1878. It had been part of the original plan to start up a teacher training college, but it came to nothing, as the attitude of the Patriarch towards the Brothers had changed, it would seem, for reasons of national rivalry. On the other hand, schools opened in Jaffa (1882) and at Caiffa (1883) took in pupils of different religions.

Brother Evagre planned also to establish a novitiate and a junior novitiate in Bethlehem, but the plan had to be shelved for the time being. While on the one hand Pope Leo XIII was encouraging the Brothers to multiply the number of schools in the Holy Land, on the other, the Superiors received a “regulation” from the Propaganda Fide in 1890, preventing in particular the Brothers from teaching Catholic and non-Catholic pupils together in the same class. Finally, a document submitted to the Pope for signature in 1891 safeguarded the freedom of action of the Brothers. A junior novitiate was opened in Bethlehem in 1892, and a school was started in Nazareth in the same year.

### *Lebanon*

In the part of Syria which had become the autonomous region of Lebanon in 1861, the population often included a large proportion of Catholics of the Maronite rite. By reason of the protection given to these Catholics by France, the French consul in Tripoli asked the Brothers to open a school there. The plan was opposed in particular by the Maronite archbishop. The Brothers arrived in 1886. They initially had few pupils and their living conditions were very hard, since the school could not charge fees. On the other hand, a fee-paying day school was opened in Tripoli Marine. The beginnings of the non fee-paying school opened in 1890 in Beirut were difficult also. A fee-paying school established in 1894 was the origin of the future College du Sacre Coeur.

### *Syria*

On the coast of Syria properly so called, the Brothers opened a school at Latakieh in 1890. In this region, inhabited by Alid Moslems, Catholics were few, and the school was frequented above all by Christians of non-Catholic oriental rites.

## Southeast Asia

In various places in this part of the world, the Brothers had been present since the preceding period (See LS 9, 186: map for the period 1852-1887). At the beginning of the present one, they arrived in the British colony of Hong Kong.

### – Dependencies of Great Britain

During the preceding quarter of a century, the Brothers had found it difficult to establish themselves in the dependencies of Great Britain in Southeast Asia. They had also experienced failure, in particular in India. “Too small a staff, insufficiently homogeneous, sometimes unsuitable; at times, misunderstandings with the clergy; elsewhere, a lack of goodwill on the part of civil authorities; at the head of the Congregation, hesitation, uncertainty...” (Rigault 8, 494) explained the situation. During the period which followed the arrival of the Brothers at Hong Kong in 1875, their position was consolidated, but the Institute made no further headway there before the end of the century.

Since 1874, the District of “India” had had at its head Brother Hermenegilde (Jean Chatel). In 1879, Brother Irlide granted him “faculties” in case of emergencies. From 1881 onwards, this Visitor found himself in charge in addition of the remaining houses of French Indochina. The task was particularly burdensome because of the great distances he had to cover and because of the climate. His two successors in the period 1888-1896, Brothers Bernard Louis (Ferdinand Gendron) and Abban (Francois Xavier Gendreau), were worn out by their responsibilities. The only novitiate to have survived was the one opened in Colombo, Ceylon, which was transferred to nearby Mutwal in 1884. It served as a formation centre for all the English-speaking Asian houses.

In their educational establishments, the Brothers had to adapt to the British colonial legislation. They could not run official schools, all the more so as these were undenominational. The Catholic missions which had asked for their services used the free hand they had been given to open non-paying schools. In the schools they ran, the Brothers tried to obtain grant-aided status to benefit from help given by the British government. On the other hand, these schools could not be entirely free (cf. GA NH 180). We can see in succinct form how the situation of these educational establishments evolved in the period from 1875 to 1904.

### *India*

At the beginning of the period, of the eight establishments founded between 1859 and

1863, there remained only those of Cannanor and Calicut on the Malabar Coast. They both disappeared in 1882. A letter written by Brother Irlide to Brother Assistant Patrick in March 1880 explains this total withdrawal from India by the lack of Brothers (cf. GA NH 301-1/4).

### *The Malay Peninsula*

At the beginning of the period, the Brothers in Singapore, in what was then called the Straits Settlements, were experiencing difficulties. In 1879, the Assistant questioned the Visitor about the situation. The vicar apostolic\* met two Assistants in 1881, following which, Brother Irlide wrote to the community. In the meantime, the Visitor withdrew the Brothers. Three years later, the vicar apostolic asked the Brothers to return, and they did so at the end of 1885. In 1901, the opening of a commercial studies class contributed to the development of the establishment.

In Penang, the Francis Xavier School remained small until its Director, Brother Aloysius Gonzaga (Louis Pin), who had been a pupil there himself, undertook the transformation of the college. The extension of the buildings from 1880 to 1883, permitted a notable increase in intake of pupils. In 1902, the Brothers took charge of a school on the Malay Peninsula and created St John's Institution in Kuala Lumpur.

### *Burma (now Myanmar)*

The Brothers continued to work at Mulmein. St Patrick's was still a middle school, but in 1884, the first steps to create a high school were taken, and the project would continue to develop in the future. The same thing happened in Rangoon where St Paul's High School moved into new premises in 1886. Following Great Britain's conquest and occupation of Upper Burma, the Brothers were asked to open an orphanage for the children of the soldiers killed during the expedition. In 1892, an "industrial" section was set up. The house at Bassein was closed for the second time in 1878. On the other hand, the Brothers took charge of a small school in Mandalay (Upper Burma) in 1897. In 1903, it became St Peter's English High School.

### *Ceylon (Sri Lanka)*

On the Island of Ceylon, the Catholic minority lacked schools to educate its children. Missionaries who had come to the island from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards had tried to multiply these schools. In Colombo, after a first attempt, the Brothers took

charge of an establishment in 1868. Under their direction, St Benedict's College grew larger and the level of studies rose. From 1889 onwards, barring one exception, successive headmasters were provided by North America. Another establishment, opened at Negombo in 1870 and closed in 1879, was re-opened in 1885. It prospered under the direction of Brother Timothy of Mary (Victor Rosario), an Indian from Calicut, but it had to be abandoned for good in 1889.

### – *Hong Kong*

Negotiations begun in the days of Brother Philippe with the vicar apostolic, Mgr Raimondi, were completed in the time of Brother Irlide with the sending of 8 brothers to Hong Kong in 1875. The Brothers took over an establishment founded in 1860, to which they gave the name of St Joseph's College. Its expansion led to its transfer to newly built premises in 1883. After a somewhat unsuccessful period, Brothers arrived from Ireland and North America and made the establishment famous.

In addition, an orphanage was entrusted to the care of the Brothers. In a letter dated February 1876, the Director of the College wrote that the orphan children "are usually Chinese picked up by the Holy Childhood; the Brothers today receive children who are sent to them if they are pagan or who may be sent to them from inland" (GA NH 171/4). It was difficult to find suitable staff to look after these children. A certain number of French Brothers were not familiar with the use of English; Brothers from America found it difficult to adapt; all needed to know a minimum of Chinese, but this was difficult even for the Annamese Brothers sent from Indochina who, moreover, suffered from homesickness. On the other hand, after a few years, relations between the Brothers and Mgr Raimondi and the administrators of the orphanage became strained. Finally, in 1893, Brother Basillise Marie (Joseph Macon), finding himself to all intents and purposes alone, gave up running the establishment (cf. GA NH 171/7).

### – **French possessions**

In the territory which France progressively occupied and which eventually would be called Indochina, the Brothers arrived in 1866 at the request of the French government. The government supported their work by providing scholarships for the indigenous pupils in their various schools. The Brothers would see the disadvantage of this connection when French policy changed direction. All this happened mainly in the area known as Cochinchina (present South Vietnam) to which initially the activities of the Brothers were restricted before they established themselves in various other parts of the same country.

### *Cochinchina*

In 1875, the Brothers were still in charge of the Adran College in Saigon and of the Vinh long and My tho schools. Brother Jaime (Joseph Rigal) was Director of the college as well as Visitor. But then there occurred a change in the attitude of government representatives, who now showed hostility towards schools run by religious congregations, and reduced the number of the scholarships they gave. This led the Visitor to withdraw Brothers from the Vinh long and My tho schools in 1881. As the house in Saigon was now alone, it was attached to the District of India. In 1883, the Brothers left the Adran College when the French authorities decided to laicise this establishment (cf. GA NJ 458-1/8).

However, 6 years later, the Brothers made a new start in the region. The Brothers returned to Saigon in 1889. At the beginning of 1890, they took charge of the Institution Taberd, founded by the Catholic mission. In 1896, a novitiate was opened at Thu duc. In the same year, Brother Ivarch Louis (Louis Gaubert), the driving force behind this revival, became Visitor of the reconstituted District. In 1898, a school was opened in the same locality as the novitiate, while the vicar apostolic of Saigon asked the Brothers to open non fee-paying classes in the grounds of the Taberd in order "to give religious instruction to Christian children" (GA NJ 458-1/15). A centre for the deaf and dumb at Binh dinh was entrusted to the Brothers in 1902. The Visitor suggested that vocational training should be introduced there.

### *Tonkin and Annam*

In this same period, negotiations in Hanoi, in a region called Tonkin (north Vietnam) were completed and three Brothers were sent there in 1894. The vicar apostolic signed a contract with the Brothers appointing them teachers of the French, Eurasian and Annamese pupils who frequented the Institut Puginier and the non fee-paying boarding school of Hanoi. In 1904, the Brothers arrived at Hue to open the Pellerin School in the central part of the country called Annam which, at that time, was a French protectorate.

### *Islands in Southeast Africa*

In 1875, the Brothers had been in La Reunion for almost 60 years, whereas they had arrived in Madagascar only in 1866. The first of these islands had already been for a long time a faraway possession of France: the second would become so in the period just beginning. In various ways, both would suffer from the consequences of the educational poli-

cies pursued by the French Republic. On the other hand, Mauritius, which shared its past history and its geographical situation with these two islands, benefited from a regime which was quite in favour of private enterprise.

From the Institute point of view, these three islands formed a single District. However, in 1879, Brother Irlide gave the Brother Director of the house at Tananarive, Brother Gonzalvien (Etienne Chambaron), the title of auxiliary Visitor for Madagascar. In 1899, the communities of the District were divided into two parts, each part having its own Visitor. La Reunion and Mauritius formed one part, and Madagascar the other.

The novitiate at St Denis in La Reunion for training indigenous Brothers was shared by the two Districts. However, the Brothers continued to go in particular to France. At the end of the century, the novitiate was in a state of chaos and, in 1900, it was transferred to Madagascar.

#### – La Reunion

At the beginning of the period under consideration, the Institute in La Reunion was borne along by the impetus of the preceding period during which 13 houses were opened: in 1869, there were 121 Brothers, 20 novices and 26 establishments. Subsequently, because the schools run by the Brothers were public authority schools, they suffered the consequences of French education legislation in the 1880s, and in particular, of the 1886 law which forbade members of religious congregations to teach in public authority schools. The "General Council" of the island was asked to make a statement on the matter in 1887. However, the law was due to come into force only in October 1890. By that date, the Brothers were running only 11 schools. Since the Brothers had to leave the principal one, that of St Denis, in 1894, the Visitor anticipated events and withdrew the Brothers in 1893, establishing a non-paying school with boarding facilities. He did the same elsewhere when it was possible. In the application of the policy excluding the Brothers, the public authorities had found allies among the colonials who were not in favour of the work the Brothers were doing among the local population (cf. Lucas, *Congrès de Lyon*, October 2001, p. 35).

#### – Madagascar

What had been achieved in 10 years in Madagascar was remarkable. In 1876, the Brothers taught more than 1,200 children at their schools in Tananarive. To do this, they had succeeded in associating with themselves young indigenous teachers from the island.

In 1876, they gathered for the first time to make a spiritual retreat. One of these teachers, Raphael Rafiringa, became Brother Raphael Louis on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1878. In 1882, the Brothers took over the College St Joseph.

However, in ruling party circles, the supporters of Protestantism showed their opposition to the Brothers: in 1876, they published a decree forbidding parents to change school. The Protestant party, which was also in favour of British influence, held sway in the Queen's court: in 1883, a breakdown of the agreements made with France led to war. The Brothers like all the other missionaries had to leave the country. Brother Raphael Louis remained all alone, but, with the help of young people, maintained the schools. He was appointed head Christian. A treaty put an end to the state of war in 1886. Brothers from France joined the Brothers who returned to the island. In 1886, three Brothers took charge of a school at Fianarantsoa in the Betsileo region.

A new breakdown in relations between Madagascar and France in 1894 obliged the missionaries once again to leave the island. Once again Brother Raphael Louis remained alone in charge of the schools and the leper centre. The hostilities ended with Madagascar becoming a French colony. The governor general was at first favourable to the Brothers. An agreement signed in 1879 between the Minister for the Colonies and the Superior of the Institute recognised officially the activities of the Brothers. In 1898, at Tananarive, six schools taught 2,000 pupils. Land made available at Soavimbahoaka made agricultural courses possible, and the same thing happened at Ambositra.

However, relations with the French government became strained. In particular, despite the efforts made by the Brothers to provide vocational training, Gallieni reproached them with not supporting sufficiently his plan to develop this type of education. In addition, the "laicising" policy of France reached Madagascar. In 1903, the 1897 agreement was broken: the Brothers left five schools in Tananarive, and all that they had left was the College St Joseph. They kept their freedom of action, but they lacked the resources to create new works.

#### – Mauritius

On the island of Mauritius the Brothers lacked the resources to maintain existing schools, and so in 1878, the four which had been opened originally no longer existed (cf. GA NM 370/1). On the other hand, a Director had conceived a plan in 1870 to set up a sort of sanatorium at Curepipe, where the climate was better, for the Brothers and children. This plan came to fruition in 1877. In 1893, the Superiors agreed to the request



of the Bishop of Port Louis to open a new establishment in this town. This involved reviving a primary school which was entrusted to Brother Felix de Valois (Felix d'Ormont), a native of the island.

### Brother Raphael Louis Rafiringa

(May 1<sup>st</sup> 1856, Tananarive – May 19<sup>th</sup> 1919, Fianarantsoa)

Initially a supervisor when the Brothers opened a school in Tananarive, he became a Brother in 1878. In 1883, when war broke out between France and Hovas, missionaries and other French nationals were expelled from the island. The Christians chose him to organise Christian life and the schools. He presided over meetings on Sundays, explained the Gospel, and taught catechism to all the pupils of the capital. He gathered all the teachers and made them make a retreat. The war ended in 1885, and the missionaries returned to find the Christian communities in a good state. In 1894-1895, another war called upon his devotedness once again.

As a corresponding member of the *Newsletter of the Archconfraternity of the Most Holy Child Jesus*, he wrote numerous articles for missionaries. He was very popular on the island: his name was put forward by the supporters of independence and he was arrested by the French authorities on Christmas Eve 1915. He was acquitted of all suspicion of subversive activity on February 18th 1916. For the sake of promoting peace, he accepted to be sent 300 kilometres south. His cause for beatification has been introduced. (Based on the *Dictionnaire historique de l'éducation chrétienne d'expression française*, p. 138).



## French North Africa and Malta

In this part of Africa, the Brothers were already present in two countries: Algeria and Tunisia. These were countries with an overwhelmingly Moslem population. The

Brothers, however, had dealings above all with Christian children of European origin. From the point of view of Institute organisation, the houses in the two countries formed a single District with a Visitor residing in Algiers. While an attempt was made to start up a novitiate in the El Biar property on the outskirts of Algiers, this District depended essentially on France for the Brothers it needed. For reasons to do with the Institute, the first paragraph will speak also of the first foundation of the Institute in Malta.

Regarding educational establishments, in Algiers from the very beginning, and in Tunisia from the establishment of the French protectorate, the Brothers suffered the consequences of the vicissitudes of French politics. In Malta, a British possession since 1815, the conditions were, of course, different.

### – Algeria

In 1875, the Brothers had managed only in the past one or two years to return to work in the public authority schools in Algeria. In fact, in 1871, the town authorities of Algiers and other towns where the Brothers were, had excluded them from their schools. Their return, however, was only a reprieve: in 1876, the Brothers had to withdraw from the school at Bab el Oued in Algiers. Then the directive from the *Ministry of Public Instruction* in 1878 and the education laws which followed had the same effect as in France: the Brothers were replaced by lay teachers in all the public authority schools they ran in Algeria.

Side by side with the non-paying schools which existed - a choir school in Algiers, the Miliana school - the Brothers opened similar schools, in most of the towns in which they were present. This was not possible everywhere, as at Mostaganem. At El Biar a boarding school was opened in 1882. Cardinal Lavigerie asked for Latin to be taught there, but the Brothers imposed conditions. In 1889, the Brothers arrived in Bone where they replaced the Brothers of St Joseph of Le Mans. In 1896, a boarding school was set up, and technical courses were begun. At Oran, a boarding department was added in 1896, and at Constantine a workshop was established in 1900. To the difficulty of running schools, even if fees were charged in some, would be added the consequences of the application in Algeria of the law of July 7<sup>th</sup> 1904.

### – Tunisia

In this country, the Brothers were present in Tunis and La Goulette. Both France and Italy coveted this country, and this national rivalry meant for the Brothers a decrease in

the number of pupils in Tunis at the beginning of the period we are considering. When France imposed its protectorate in 1881, things improved. However, education policy was not exactly the same as in France: in 1886, teachers from religious congregations were not expelled from their schools when they became public authority schools. On the other hand, in 1903, members of non-recognised congregations were excluded from their schools. In 1904, the Brothers of the Christian Schools were not debarred by reason of the French law of July 7<sup>th</sup>, but because of a decision of the Tunisian authorities to laicise their schools with the exception of one which became once again non-paying (GA NL 170/1). Their three schools in Tunis at that time numbered 180 French pupils, 450 Italians and 300 Maltese.

### – Malta

The Island of Malta is not considered to be a part of Africa, but there is a reason to mention it here. In 1884, Brother Assistant Aimarus notes that Brother Assistant Renaux, having paid a visit to the island, thought it could be “a good place for a pied a terre in case of trouble” (GA NE 100/1). In 1886, negotiations were begun to bring the Brothers to Malta, but they came to nothing. They were renewed in 1903 because of the policy in France regarding religious congregations. Delegated by the Superiors, the Director of the house in Tunis managed to find a building formerly occupied by Sisters at Cospiscua, near Valetta. Brothers were sent there to start a school. The beginnings were modest and, in particular, difficult, because of the composite character of the community which was composed of French, Irish and Italian Brothers.

## 5. *THE MISSIONARY WORK OF THE BROTHERS*

After describing the missionary expansion of the Institute in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we need to examine it as a whole to identify what it was that characterised the work of an Institute such as that of the Brothers of the Christian Schools throughout this century. We shall look first at its apostolic dimension properly so called; next, assess it from an educational point of view; and finally, consider the commitment of the Institute as a whole to this work.

### **Participation in the missionary apostolate**

When the Institute responded to a request to send Brothers to a missionary country, the primary consideration was normally to provide young Catholics with a Christian education. The Brothers wished also to promote Catholicism wherever their services were demanded. This dual objective guided them in their admission of pupils, and inspired their approach to their religious formation.

#### **– Admission of pupils**

The first countries to which the Brothers were called - the Ile Bourbon, later called La Reunion, and French Guyana - were generally speaking Catholic. In practice, the poor children, whether white, creole or sons of freed slaves, who were entrusted to the Brothers, had as much need to be instructed in their religion as in the rudiments of knowledge. The children of slaves who were not admitted to schools had hardly any Christian formation at all.

In the countries to which the Brothers were called by missionaries, the latter wanted them above all to cater for the children of Catholic families, often of European origin, who were too poor to send their children to the few fee-paying schools run by private enterprise. Their intention also was to save them from non-denominational schools or those which taught another religion, where there was one.

The same thinking could also exist in the minds of those who called the Brothers to countries or regions where Catholics formed large minorities. This was true particularly in the case of the Armenian Catholics in certain parts of the Ottoman Empire, or of the Maronites in Lebanon. The same situation existed in regions where Catholicism had always been present, and in which a revival had occurred thanks to the arrival of missionaries. This was the case on the Malabar Coast in India, in Ceylon and in French Indochina. The same thing could happen also in recently evangelised countries, such as Madagascar.

When non fee-paying schools were funded by Missions, even when these received aid from a government or other funding organisations, such schools were a very heavy financial burden, and other resources had to be found. It was the same for the Brothers when they had to fund themselves. The usual solution was to open a boarding school, a day boarding school or a fee-paying day school. As Catholics who had the means to send their children to these establishments were few in number, the Brothers were led to admit non-Catholics, which was also a means to influence them. And so, in the Near East, among the pupils of the Brothers, could be found oriental Christians not attached to Rome, Jews, Moslems and sometimes Protestants. In Southeast Asia, the majority were Buddhists. This mixture of religions could exist in schools where the number of Catholic pupils was too low, as in Syria, Crete, and Rhodes. In some non-paying schools could be found so-called "pagan" children, as in Cochinchina, or in orphanages, as in Hong Kong.

This way of mixing Catholics and non-Catholics was not always allowed by the ecclesiastical authorities. The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem was a case in point. This happened also in Ceylon, where Mgr Bonjean, who had called the Brothers, believed that "the presence of non-Catholics had a bad effect on the Catholic spirit and hindered the teaching of Catholics in their school (*Education in the Roman Catholic Missions in Ceylon*, 317). On the other hand, we read in the report drawn up following the visit of two Brother Assistants to the Near East in 1885, that the Apostolic Delegate for Constantinople, with whom they had discussed the question of admitting non-Catholics to schools, admitted that "since families know that religious instruction is given to all pupils, there is no coercion" (quoted in Rigault 8, p. 413).

### **The practice of the Brothers regarding the religious formation of the pupils**

In schools in which the Brothers had solely or almost exclusively Catholic pupils, Christian instruction and formation was no different from what they normally gave their pupils: prayers punctuated the day, all had catechism and went to Mass together on school-days, Sundays and feast days; there was a Christian atmosphere in the classroom.

Regarding establishments frequented by young people of different religions, we can probably apply to them too what the author of the report quoted below said of the education given at St Benedict's in Colombo: "All the teaching of secular subjects was permeated with the Catholic religious atmosphere created by the Brothers... [This] enabled the Brothers to provide a Catholic social culture and a Christian approach to life different from that of Hindus, Buddhists or agnostics". Another characteristic of these estab-

ishments was the harmony there was in most cases among the pupils of different religions, which favoured better mutual understanding.

In the Near East, where their experience of teaching pupils of different religions went back further than anywhere else, the Brothers had adopted a series of practices which are systematically explained in a number of documents. One of these - we shall explain later its presence in a dossier relating to Sofia in Bulgaria - entitled *Note on the religious regulations for schismatics, infidels, etc: July 1900*, described what was done in a "big college", which we can place in Egypt: [the words *in italics* are underlined in the text].

1°. During class-time all the pupils follow the same *religious* regulations.

2°. During prayers, *all* the Christians kneel down...the Jews and Moslems remain standing in their place.

3°. *All* the pupils have, study and recite the catechism.

4°. *All* listen and answer according to Institute practice in the daily catechism lesson and, on Sunday, during the explanation of the Holy Gospel. (There follow details on how to go about things and what results one can hope for, and the prudence needed in case of conversions or returns to the Catholic faith).

5°. *All* Christians follow the offices in the chapel except Holy Communion.

6°. The Moslems and Jews during this time go to the study room to work.

7°. During annual retreats at the beginning of the school year, efforts should be made to make *all* the pupils follow the retreat.

8°. Jews and Moslems are not obliged to go to the preacher's sermons.

All the pupils take part in *Good Works* organised by the establishment. No mention should be made of those supporting Catholic missions (GA NG 803/3).

A *Note on the Catholic work of the Brothers in Cairo*, dated 1908, analyses what "religious influence" the Brothers can exert on Jews, Moslems, schismatics and Catholics. Regarding the first three groups, the Note highlights the difficulties encountered at home or in their social circle by pupils wishing to convert to the Catholic faith. Speaking of Catholics, the document stresses in particular the promotional role that could be exerted by pupils belonging to pious or apostolic organisations (cf. NL 200/13).

*Some notes on English India* drawn up in 1906 by Brother Imier (future Superior General) records similar practices among the Brothers in this region. He notes the small number of conversions (only 9) despite the large number of non-Catholics (2,852), explained by the fact that parents often refuse their consent; but he remarks that fre-

quently it is among these families that missionaries find support and it is not rare for them to become converted (GA NJ20161/2).

On the other hand, it seems that in the few schools in Romania and Bulgaria the practice was different. At least, this is what one can deduce from a letter dated 1900 and addressed to the Director of the house in Sofia by Brother Assistant Madir Joseph. He said he had noted during the visit he had paid that non-Catholic pupils left the class before the prayer and catechism. The Director answered that this practice was already established when he arrived and no one had said anything to him about it since. He was prepared to change it, but it could make him lose some pupils (cf. GA NG 803/3). It was probably following this exchange of correspondence that this Director wrote to a fellow-Brother in a "big establishment" who sent him the Note mentioned previously. The different practice in Sofia may be explained perhaps by the fact that the Brothers had taken the school over from the Assumptionist Fathers who no doubt did things differently.

Circumstances could lead the Brothers to use a different approach. In the Hong Kong orphanage, for example, in line with the aim pursued by the Holy Child organisation which supported the institution, the Brothers tried as much as possible to persuade the young "pagans" to adopt the Catholic faith, and each year, in the report sent to the director of the association, they listed the results of their endeavours (GA NH 171/7). In Indochina, at Bac Trang, according to what Brother Neopole de Jesus (Paul Bayet) wrote to the Superior of the Institute, the situation was quite the opposite:

"Our Brothers worked there for several years with great patience without the consolation of winning over a single soul, without even being able to have a single prayer said: the least move in this direction would have ruined everything, and the pupils would have left us in droves. We just had to wait" (GA NJ 458-1/4).

### **Contribution to the advancement of education**

When the Brothers were called to a missionary country, it was to run schools. Independently of apostolic aims, they were required to teach secular subjects to children often in countries where schooling was not widespread. And so, they were called to contribute to its advancement. In addition, as missionary expansion coincided with a period in which European countries were seeking to extend their influence to other parts of the world, certain governments sought to multiply the number of schools in which the language and culture of their country were diffused. The Brothers suffered from the consequences of this policy.

### – Contribution to the spread of education

Most often, those who had recourse to the services of the Brothers did so with the intention of entrusting primary schools to them, admitting freely that they did so because of their experience and efficacy in this domain. And so there was no reason why the Brothers should not use their traditional approach to education in missionary countries. This was particularly true in French possessions, such as La Reunion, Algeria, Indochina and Madagascar.

As we know, the Brothers quite rapidly extended their field of action by creating boarding schools, day boarding schools and fee-paying day schools, in which the education given went beyond the elementary level. In countries depending directly on France, education could be limited to the “advanced primary” level, as was the case in the Adran College and the Taberd Institution in Saigon. In these same countries, or in those in which France exerted its influence, especially in the Near East, the curriculum followed was rather that of the so-called “special education” created by the Brothers in France. It was officially endorsed by the Second Empire, and subsequently became the model on which modern secondary education was based. And so we see the Foreign Affairs Minister, Jules Ferry, co-signing a French government decision “recognising that the studies pursued at the College Sainte Catherine (in Alexandria) were equivalent of those which, in France, led to the baccalaureate awarded for special secondary education” (GA NL 200/5). The first examination session was held in 1885.

As for the dependencies of Great Britain in Southeast Asia, the Brothers there developed their education within the framework of the British system. In the report already quoted, Brother Imier described this system as follows: schools normally had 9 grades. Those with 9 grades or standards were called *High Schools*; those with 7, *Middle Schools*; and those with fewer than 7, *Primary Schools*. In 1906, the District of India and China had 7 *High schools*, 2 *Middle schools* and 2 *Primary schools* (NJ 201-1/2). In addition, St Benedict's in Colombo was the first establishment in Ceylon to start a commercial studies course (cf. Battersby History of the Institute 1850-1900, 195). Also, industrial courses were begun in Rangoon (id. 98).

### – Repercussions of the European countries' fight for spheres of interest

The missionary expansion of the 19<sup>th</sup> century coincided, and was connected with the trend which led a certain number of European countries to extend their influence over other countries, either by taking control of them, or by obtaining from them treaties giv-



ing them special rights. As they saw education as a means of exercising this influence, the leaders of these countries were eager to encourage the opening of educational establishments where their own co-nationals would be instructed in their own language and according to methods in use in their country of origin. At the same time, it was a way of propagating this language and approach to education among the local population.

The education policy pursued by France was of particular concern to the Institute because its headquarters was in France, and the majority of the missionary Brothers were French. Very early on, at the request of the French government, the Institute had provided Brothers for what was still known as the Ile Bourbon, and for Guyana. They had benefitted from certain advantages there and had been subject to regulations governing state primary school teachers. Subsequently, these arrangements were applied to those who were sent to Algeria and Indochina. The Superiors were in constant contact with the public authorities regarding these Brothers. But the disadvantage of such a situation was that the vicissitudes of French politics had the same repercussions in these missionary territories as in France.

There was another reason why the French government was interested in the development of the Brothers' schools especially in the Near East. Ever since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, France had been considered as the official protector of the Christians in the Near East (cf. Rigault 8, 382). Given this role, France sought to extend its influence in the countries still dependent on the Ottoman Empire, or in those which had been a part of it. And so French consuls supported the requests for Brothers made by prefects or vicars apostolic, and tried to obtain subsidies from their government. Sometimes they would take the initiative themselves to contact the Superiors. This was the case in Chania (Crete) and Tripoli (Lebanon). The Superiors appreciated this solicitude and showed their willingness to contribute to the diffusion of the language and the influence of the country to which almost all of them belonged. This kind of arrangement was not affected by political changes in policy which followed when the Republicans took control of the country. As one of them said in 1880, "anticlericalism is not for export". Such links, however, were not without their risks. In Egypt, for example, in 1882, the work of the Brothers, especially in Alexandria, was threatened by a revolt that was strongly anti-European (cf. Rigault 8, 392).

France took interest also in the new States in Eastern Europe, but here it encountered competition from Germany or Austria. And so, in Sofia, when the Vicar apostolic asked for Brothers, he stipulated that :

"one of the Brothers should be Austrian or German, so that he can teach the German language,

because the Austrian government gives a grant for this purpose. The two others, or at least one of them, should be French. Teaching is French-based" (GA NG 803/1).

In some places, the struggle for influence between France and Italy had an effect on the Brothers. Tunisia was coveted by these States when the Brothers first arrived there. The presence of numerous Maltese and Italians led them to open first of all Italian classes, before providing teaching in their own language to the French pupils, who were fewer in number. With the establishment of the French Protectorate, the teaching of French was extended to all classes. In Palestine, the national rivalry the Brothers encountered was the result of the fact that, since the "Custodianship of the Holy Land" was entrusted to Italian Franciscans, these could be tempted to promote the influence of their country. The fear of seeing French influence benefit from the development of the Brothers' work no doubt influenced the Latin Patriarch's decision when he opposed the creation of a teacher training college due to be entrusted to the Brothers in Jerusalem. It influenced also his attempt to limit the recruitment of pupils by the Brothers by the regulations he imposed in 1890. On the other hand, it is quite certain that the interest taken by the French representative in the establishment of the Brothers on Rhodes, was nourished by his resentment, mentioned in a letter, at seeing that "the heirs to the old names of France... spoke and knew only the deplorable Greek of the island, or the Italian of the Franciscan school, if it was not that of the new secular school which has just opened" (GA NG 561/1).

In the British dependencies in Southeast Asia, because of the great scope offered for private initiative, the public authorities did not intervene, either by supporting the appeals made to the Institute by missionaries, or with greater reason, by having recourse themselves to a religious Institute known to be French. On the other hand, the British influence was too strong in these countries for rivalry between other European countries to play a part. But in Madagascar, as we know, the Brothers suffered from the activities of the supporters of English and Protestant influence. In Egypt, the Brothers suffered some repercussions of the growing British presence in Cairo, but more so in Upper Egypt. In Mauritius, the Brothers pursued their mission without any discrimination, and they did so also in La Reunion and even in Madagascar, and this did not create any problem for them.

### **Involvement of the Institute in missionary work**

From the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Institute was asked to send Brothers to far-off countries, and these requests were multiplied during the course of the century. We

know that the Institute responded to many of these requests, but how much importance did it attach to this aspect of the Brothers' work?

The correspondence of the Superiors of the Institute with those who made the requests often stated it was impossible to give a favourable response because of the lack of Brothers, or showed a certain reluctance on account of past failures. Promises were given, however, often in response to the insistence of those asking. The *Register of the deliberations of the General Council* records a number of decisions made relating to these requests. The register gives information about the administrative aspects of the new foundations, but hardly any about the underlying motives for these decisions. The Council's response gives the impression that decisions were made on an ad hoc basis, without there being any discernable overall policy.

Within the Regime, the Assistants had their assigned missionary territories. They maintained a regular correspondence with the local superiors, but the slowness of the mail made it difficult to build up relations, and the long distances involved made it impossible for the Assistant to know the Brothers personally. And so, in a letter which will be quoted several times, Brother Hermenegilde, Visitor of the "British Indies", expressed his regret at this state of affairs to Brother Assistant Facile (GA HN 301-1/4). In the obituary of Brother Gonzalvien, a promoter of the Institute in Madagascar, we read that the first time Brother Assistant Apronien Marie visited the island was 1889.

The houses of La Reunion were the first to be formed into an independent District in 1835. In 1854, Algeria followed suit. In the case of other territories, first they became Provinces and later they became Districts. In all cases, a Visitor was appointed to lead them. Especially initially, the person appointed would be a local Director of a large establishment. In other cases, outsiders were sent. The task was often a crushing one, especially because of the great distances to be covered and the punishing climate. Several of these Visitors, who adapted to the country in which they worked, were particularly outstanding men. Others were not able to adapt and quickly became worn out.

The basic problem was finding the necessary Brothers to open and run the houses, and in particular, giving them Directors capable of being in charge of communities and establishments. Time and time again, in correspondence between Brothers with responsibilities at one level or another we find:

- references to this lack of Brothers;
- complaints about the lack of formation and of religious spirit;

– but we find also mention of the religious value and professional qualities of a certain number of Brothers, and of the tendency, on this account, to overload them with responsibilities and risk exhausting them.

One of the characteristic of these Brothers is their diversity of origin. For example, the India District, according to a list drawn up apparently in 1874, had 11 French Brothers, 2 Germans, 1 Canadian, 13 indigenous Brother, 9 Burmese, of whom 4 were novices, and 3 Malays (GA NH 301-1/2). But a distinction must be made especially between Brothers sent to missionary countries and indigenous Brothers.

#### – Brothers sent to missionary countries

The backbone of the houses was formed of Brothers of senior status in the Institute who had responded to a general or personal appeal of the Superiors. Young Brothers, sometimes still without vows, were also sent to faraway countries. This could be a way for them to obtain exemption from military service, especially in France after the 1889 law was passed. Other Brothers came from the missionary novitiate and scholasticate. Whatever their origin, these young Brothers lacked a certain robustness. All of them had to cope with living conditions very different from those in their own country, and most suffered from the effects of the climate which they found particularly trying. Exhaustion and illness caused many to return to their country, others died where they were. All this reduced the barely sufficient number of Brothers whose replacement was not always assured, and at times this led to the use of lay teachers.

One of the problems these Brothers had stemmed from their ignorance of the languages used in the countries to which they were sent. This was not a problem if they had to teach in their own language, but when they had to teach in a language which was not their own, certain difficulties arose. For example, some of the French Brothers teaching in the English-speaking part of Southeast Asia found it difficult to master this language: in Colombo, when the Brothers first began working there, some parents complained that some taught English with a heavy French accent (*Education in the Roman Catholic Missions in Ceylon*, 192). There were problems too when the Brothers had to teach pupils whose language they did not know, and who did not know that of the Brothers. This was the case of the young Annamese or Cambodians who were sent to them when they first came to Indochina.

Some Brothers were keen on learning these languages. For example, there was one Brothers sent to Bac Trang who was able to converse with the young Cambodians after a relatively short time; or Brother Neopole de Jesus, who used his knowledge of the lan-

guage of the Annamese pupils in the college in Saigon as an argument to support his request to the Superior General to allow him to return to them after a period spent in France recuperating from an illness. When Brother Scubilion spoke to the slaves or former slaves in La Reunion, he used creole. For other Brothers, learning languages proved an insurmountable obstacle. We saw how this was the case of some of the Brothers who had to look after the orphans in Hong Kong. At Cholon, a town near Saigon which had quite a large Chinese population, the Brothers failed partly because they had no one who could understand Chinese writing (GA NJ 458-1/6).

Brothers often had little success when learning languages because they could not devote enough time to it, and they worked under bad conditions. In a letter to the Brother Assistant dated September 1892, Brother Ivarch Louis expressed the wish to have "2 or 3 extra Brothers so that he could send them to stay with a missionary in the interior for at least 6 months..." (GA NJ 458-1/13). One of the reasons for establishing a scholasticate on Rhodes was to enable the young Brothers to learn the languages spoken in the Near East (GA NG 564).

#### – Indigenous Brothers in missionary countries

In the missionary countries to which they were sent, the Brothers tried to train young people for entry into the Institute. Often, before the creation of novitiates became possible, they would admit them to their communities. Over a long period of time, the number of admissions was quite respectable: Brother Imier in his 1906 report writes that at Murwal (Colombo) "since 1896, the novitiate had admitted 68 (postulants), of whom 50 had taken the habit, and 4 were still postulants" (GA NJ 201-1/2). On the other hand, formation groups were small. And we find Brother Hermengilde writing with some vehemence to his Brother Assistant:

"Accustomed as you are in France and in Belgium to have numbers such as 10, 20 30 or 40 at your taking of the habit ceremonies. ... You haven't got the slightest idea of what our conditions are like in these countries. For the last three years, I've been trying to make you understand that the Brothers in India, who have been wearing themselves out for the last 25 years or so in this punishing climate, are very happy when they can find and train one good young man and admit him to their number..." (GA NH 301-1/4).

And then, the perseverance of these young Brothers was severely tested. Those who were destined for the classroom received hardly any preparation; and this would continue until they received a solid pedagogical formation - as was the case in "British India" where the Visitor Brother Bernard Louis promoted it (cf. Battersby, *History of the*

*Institute*, 1850-1900) - or a scholasticate was established. In addition, the situation in communities was not always helpful. We see Brother Hermenegilde condemning the antipathy shown by such or such Brother towards his indigenous fellow Brothers, or deploring the situation in which the latter find themselves. He writes without mincing his words: "It often happens that these young Brothers, with their black or bronze-coloured face, are not always happy to see a European, French or American Brother, drink alcohol, go out, and feel free to do this or that against the Rule or propriety, etc". And in the same letter, he said that his hopes rested on these Brothers: "When these Brothers join our ranks with their training completed, and are employed as their merits, talents and capabilities deserve, then, yes, we can be self-sufficient".

Others saw things from a different angle. In his 1906 report, Brother Imier mentions that in communities some of the pro-Directors and sub-Directors were Irish, but most were indigenous. The latter, especially in the largest communities, were great supporters of regularity and piety, and were the best teachers. But, he added: "Having indigenous Directors has not proved to be a good idea" (GA NJ 201/2). And if Brother Neopole de Jesus in his letter to the Superior General notes that, at the end of their first period of presence in Indochina, half of the Brothers were indigenous to the country, we see him add that this proportion ought not to be increased (GA NJ 458-1/4). After the return of the Brothers to Indochina, Brother Ivarch Louis, Director of the house in Saigon at that time, wrote to a Brother in France informing him about an answer he had received from the Brother Assistant:

"Our good Brother Assistant adds: if you are short of Brothers, train some of the local population. However, the Brother Visitor won't hear of it for two reasons 1. He wants to draw up special Rules and Constitutions for the indigenous Brothers; 2. He states he has neither the necessary staff nor the means to open a novitiate in Cochinchina" (GA NJ 458-1/14).

At the time, the recruitment of indigenous Brothers in missionary countries would not have been sufficient to maintain existing works or to create new ones. But it is clear that the Institute was not ready to allow these Brothers to prepare themselves to take over from the missionary Brothers.

## Conclusion

Our analysis raises a legitimate question: Did the Institute have a policy directing its choice of missionary commitment, and was there a set of principles underpinning its approach?

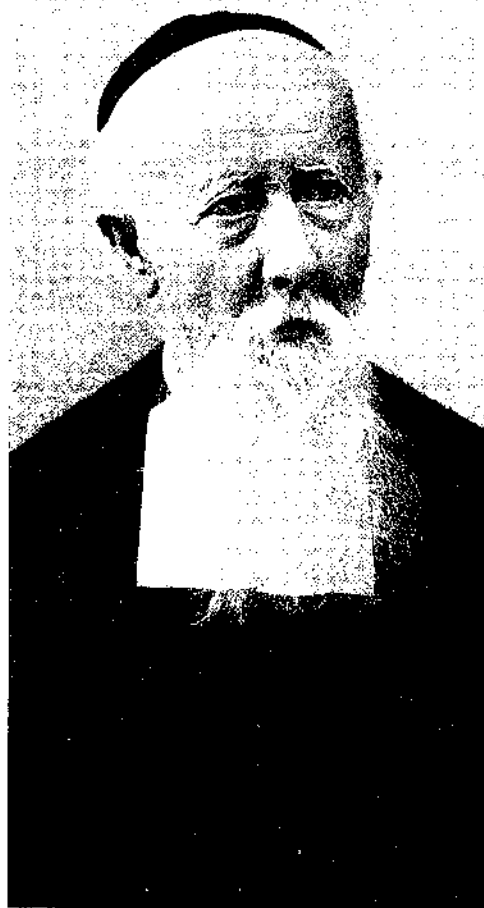
What we have said about the decisions taken by the *Regime Council* leads us to conclude that the Institute had no policy regarding the choice of missionary territory or type

**Brother ÉVAGRE**, Alexis Joseph Longuenesse, St Omer July 15<sup>th</sup> 1831 - Bethlehem January 26<sup>th</sup> 1914.

A novice in 1850, he had been a Brother for 12 years when he obtained permission to go to the Near East. From 1862 to 1873, he taught literature at the boarding school in Alexandria. Next he was chosen to found the house at Ramleh. In 1876, he opened the first French school in Jerusalem, and subsequently helped with the opening of houses in Jaffa, Nazareth and Caiffa. He was successful in raising funds for these establishments.

He opened a junior novitiate in Bethlehem in 1892 and dreamed of making it a spirituality centre. He obtained permission from the 1905 General Chapter to launch there the Association of the Most Holy Child Jesus, which was recognised as an Archconfraternity on July 26<sup>th</sup> 1909. The influence of the *Écho de Bethléem*, with its 20,000 subscribers, quickly spread to all the houses of the Institute.

Brother Évagre became Visitor of the Levant, a sector of Syria, in 1899, and in 1902, Provincial Visitor. He was a legendary figure with numerous friends, including Père Lagrange. On November 21<sup>st</sup> 1912, he received an award from the French Academy for his work to make French the predominant language in the Levant. (See BEC 1914, p. 145 and 236; 1913, p. 99).



of work. More research needs to be done regarding this, but until it is proved otherwise, we have to recognise that the Institute had no missionary policy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

As for “missionary principles”, the letter Brother Guillaume de Jesus addressed to the Brothers sent to Cayenne on June 14<sup>th</sup> 1823 (GA EE 272-1/22 let.38) contains points which could serve as a basis for such a set of principles. But what repercussions could such a letter have had in the Institute? We know how quickly the Brothers in Cayenne were dispersed by the ruin of the foundation. As for the rough copy from which we know about the letter, who could have known of its existence and shown interest in it?

Other useful points can be found in various documents, but they were too dispersed and confidential to have any widespread influence. It was in order to stress the lack of a set of principles guiding the missionary work of the Brothers that we have concentrated in our analysis on their approach which, it must be admitted, bore much fruit.



## B. THE ORDEAL (1904-1928)

'Our title is quite appropriate for the period of Institute history we are now considering, since some 9,000 active Brothers in France were affected by the law passed on July 7<sup>th</sup> 1904. A large number of them were affected immediately, while the others were always in danger of being so in the ten years that followed. But for all the Brothers, it was a break with what they had known before.

In 1914, the outbreak of the First World War was a further ordeal for a great many of these same Brothers and for those of other nationalities. For all it was a radical change in their lives: those involved in the fighting or in the care of the wounded came into direct contact with suffering and death. Other Brothers were forced by the war to leave the countries where they had settled, many of them having already been expelled from their own. Some suffered when their region was invaded, and many experienced privations.

In 1914 also, the Brothers who had been working for ten years in Mexico were forced to leave because of the threat posed by revolutionaries violently hostile to religion.

When the war ended, the Brothers belonging to the defeated countries had to face a different ordeal. The German Brothers were able to return to their own country but had to face the task of completely reconstituting their District. Those who had belonged to the former Austro-Hungarian Empire were dispersed among the newly formed countries which were not always very welcoming.

Whatever the form taken by the ordeal, for those who had to face it, it meant a moment of truth which either strengthened or destroyed them. Even if not all the Brothers were affected, the Institute as a whole suffered from the repercussions which were often negative but also positive.

...

In France, the 1904 law marked the culmination of a process aimed at "the secularisation of civic power and of all the social institutions", as Jules Ferry declared. The Brothers who had been associated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the movement to promote school education in France, having been first excluded from the State educational system, were now forbidden, as religious, to undertake any form of teaching in their country.

Many Brothers were affected as early as July 1904. Even for economic reasons, given that the Institute could not support thousands of Brothers for any length of time, a solution had to be found for each one of them. For some, it was an opportunity to make a definitive break with the Institute. Those who had reached the official retirement age of 60, could go to a retirement home. For the others, they had the same two options which had been available in 1903 when the "non-authorized" congregations were suppressed: expatriation, that is, departure for a nearby or faraway country; or "secularisation", in reality only apparent, which consisted in abandoning all external signs of religious life in order to continue the apostolate in France. Most often the choice was made by the individual Brothers with the agreement of the Superiors. We see, however, that the solutions adopted varied greatly according to who was Visitor in a particular District in France.

In the ten-year period allowed for the law to come into full force, the Brothers had the same options. As the years went on, however, the conditions governing their choice changed. The First World War and its consequences altered noticeably the situation of those who had opted for apparent "secularisation". Under this guise, the Brothers could once again lead their religious life without hindrance.

...

In the period 1904 - 1914, the Institute suffered the after-effects of what was happening in France. It was affected by a decrease in numbers in this country brought about by Brothers leaving, and by the fact that those who died were not matched by the number of admissions. This decrease seemed even greater because "secularised" Brothers were not included in statistics.

The events in France affected the government of the Institute. The General Chapters called in 1905, 1907 and 1913, had as their principal aim to examine the situation of the Institute in France. The directives given to the Brothers, at least at the beginning of this period, reflected these circumstances. And so, all the Brothers are invited to find a motive to accomplish better their "duties as religious and as Christian teachers", and to accept God's will without pausing to consider "secondary causes" (Circ. No 133).

The manner in which the Superior General and a number of Assistants dealt with the repercussions of the 1904 law was characterised by the same rigidity we noted in the preceding period. This inevitably affected the way the Institute was run at least up to the 1913 Chapter, when Brother Gabriel Marie resigned and the last of the Assistants concerned were replaced.

The war which broke out in 1914 had other consequences for the Institute. The Superiors had to leave the Mother House established in Belgium in 1905. From his residence in Paris, Brother Imier de Jésus, appointed Superior General in 1913, was cut off from a certain number of countries. He was very concerned in particular by the Brothers directly involved in the conflict and by those who suffered its consequences.

After the war, the Institute resumed its development with new impetus under the direction of Brother Imier and of Brother Allais Charles, elected at the General Chapter of 1923. This new impetus was marked in particular by the resumption of growth in the Institute. This growth was due also, in part, to the fact that "secularised" Brothers were included once again in the statistics.

...

Some countries where the Institute was established benefited from an influx of Brothers exiled from France. The arrival of experienced men, many at the height of their powers, was a great boost to the development of the Institute in these countries. Other exiled Brothers established the Institute in new countries. However, the recall of many such Brothers from the countries they had gone to during the war, or their expulsion from them, produced uncertain results. It was the same in the case of other Brothers who, after the war, started returning to their countries of origin.

The establishment of the Institute in new countries by Brothers, other than those who had been expelled from France, contributed also to emphasise the international character of the Institute. In practice, however, this character had difficulty in making headway.

...

As far as school establishments are concerned, the expatriation of a large number of Brothers resulted in spreading more widely in the world what can be called the "French model". Wherever they went, Brothers coming from France tried in practice to establish primary schools as a priority, complementing this by creating and developing vocational or technical secondary establishments intended to prepare pupils directly for their future professions.

The "French model", however, did not prevail in the same way everywhere. In the United States, above all, the secondary schools run by the Brothers had the additional aim of preparing pupils for entry to the seminary or university. The decision regard-

ing the teaching of classical languages in the Institute had put a stop to it in the High schools or Colleges where these courses had been offered. The lifting of the prohibition to study and teach Latin, at the 1923 Chapter, made possible a new growth in the number of these types of institutions in the United States. Other countries also benefited from the possibility they now had to offer teaching of the classics in some of their establishments.

In many instances, changes took place. As in most cases, the schools entrusted to the Brothers were private, it became difficult, especially after the First World War, to find the necessary resources to maintain them, in particular, if one wanted to maintain gratuity. This also discouraged the Brothers from opening new primary schools. The number of secondary schools which had the means to fund themselves tended to increase. In addition, although this was not something new, the employment of lay teachers became more widespread in some parts of the Institute.

Whatever the types of courses the Brothers gave, they never lost sight of the apostolic aims of their establishments. This concern is reflected in the importance attached to the teaching of catechism. The same apostolic concern led them to complement the Christian formation given at school by extra-curricular apostolic activities, some of which were of a new type. The same was true of activities designed to enable the Brothers to continue influencing past pupils.

...

The various aspects presented in this introduction will be treated in the following four chapters and developed further in the supplements connected with them.

Chap. 6: Consequences of the suppression of the Institute in France.

Chap. 7: Government of the Institute.

Chap. 8: The Institute in the context of the policies of European States.

Chap. 9: The Institute in the various parts of the world.

The year 1904 was so important for the Institute, that it marks clearly, the beginning of a new period in its history. The year 1928 which brings this period to an end, was chosen for two reasons. As far as the Institute is concerned, a General Chapter elected a new Superior General; and in a wider context, the year that followed was that of the great economic depression which shook the world order.

## Chap. 6 - CONSEQUENCES OF THE SUPPRESSION OF THE INSTITUTE IN FRANCE

### Introduction

The law promulgated on July 7<sup>th</sup> 1904 was implemented in the days that followed by a series of application decrees\*. These decrees seriously affected the educational establishments of the Institute and, given the number of Brothers involved, decisions regarding them had to be taken rapidly. There were various options possible. However, the Superiors were not unanimous about the solution they should adopt, and this gave rise to problems which were felt especially at the beginning. Subsequently, before the full force of the law was applied, some developments took place, and the war which broke out in 1914 changed the situation significantly.

### Application of the law of July 7<sup>th</sup> 1904

The law affected the Institute in three ways:

- article 1 specified that “teaching of any kind or nature is forbidden for congregations”;
- article 4 that “congregations will be legally dissolved ipso facto by the closure of the last of their establishments”;
- article 5 that “the liquidator appointed immediately after the promulgation of the law will be charged to draw up an inventory of the goods of the congregations... with a view to the liquidation of the goods and assets of the congregations dissolved according to the terms of the present law”.

### – Closure of educational establishments

#### *First measures (1904)*

Once the law had been adopted and promulgated, the government was in a hurry to announce in the *Official Gazette* (O.G.) the first orders of closure of the establishments targeted by the law. As these orders had to come into force at least a fortnight before the end of the school year, a whole series of decrees was published on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup>. By these first decrees, 801 out of 1,359 (Circ. 135, 18) establishments of the Brothers of the Christian Schools were closed, that is, almost 3/5 of the total run by the Institute.

All regions were affected, but some seem to have been targeted especially:

- in the District of Rheims, 47 out of 72 establishments were closed, 12 of them in Rheims itself;
- in the District of Rodez, 41 out of 49 establishments were closed.

The number of establishments closed varied from District to District:

- in the District of Moulins, 44 out of 56 were closed;
- in the District of Cambrai, only 21 out of 60 were closed.

This disparity in numbers stemmed from the differences in attitude of local authorities, prefects, mayors, municipal councillors, but also from the greater or lesser local capacity to provide places in State schools for the extra pupils.

These legal measures affected all the various types of establishments run by the Brothers. Although the majority of the schools closed were primary, boarding schools such as those in Marseilles, Bordeaux and Rheims were also shut down.

### *Further closure measures*

In January 1905, new decrees were published in the O.G., and these were followed by others in July. 179 establishments were affected. A further 151 were closed in 1906, and 85 in 1907. After that, the number of closures diminished: 28 in 1908, 22 in 1909, 10 in 1910. After 1905, we have to add the 10 or so schools in Algiers which fell foul of the same laws.

In the O.G. dated July 1<sup>st</sup> 1914, orders were published decreeing the closure on September 1<sup>st</sup> of the last 13 schools of the Brothers in France, and of the 2 in Algeria. However, as war was declared on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, the application of the law was suspended. And so, after a period of 10 years by the end of which the law was supposed to have been totally applied, some Brothers were able to pursue their apostolate openly on French soil. During the course of the war, this situation was never reviewed. It was the same after the war, except in 1924, when the government tried to revive the anticlerical policy pursued in the preceding period. This attempt was blocked by the Catholic lobby.

### – **Dissolution of the Institute**

By virtue of article 4 of the law, the closure of the last establishment of the Brothers was to entail the dissolution of the Institute. This dissolution should have occurred therefore with the application of the last decrees published in 1914. Faced with this prospect, Brother Justinus (Hubert Bragayrac), Secretary General of the Institute, announced to the Archbishop of Paris and to the French hierarchy that:

“After two centuries of existence devoted especially to the cause of popular education, the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools has been proscribed. The date of September 1<sup>st</sup> next will mark the end in France of the legal entity of this great institution”.

When the declaration of war suspended the closures decreed in July 1914, did it also prevent the dissolution of the Institute? The maintenance of a few schools, retirement homes and missionary novitiates was not apparently enough to prevent this dissolution. As the decrees which appeared in the O.G. of July 1<sup>st</sup> 1914 were not revoked they produced their intended effect. What is quite clear is that from this point onwards, all official documents concerning the Institute in France speak of "the dissolved Congregation of the Brothers of the Christian Schools". A plan to have the Institute recognised as a missionary institute almost succeeded in 1922. Another attempt was made in 1929, but, in the end, it fell through.

### – Liquidation of goods

Article 5 of the July 1904 law decreed the confiscation by the State of the goods of the congregations concerned. In theory, this confiscation was meant to fund the pensions of the members of the dissolved congregations, to renovate or build school premises and contribute to a workers' pension fund which was being set up. The "Congregation thousand million" - an expression based on an estimate of the value of these goods in gold francs - became a myth for some, and inspired a great deal of envious greed. By virtue of the law, as establishments were closed, their possessions were inventoried to check whether they belonged to the congregation. If they did, the fixed and movable assets were sold. The whole operation was entrusted to "liquidators".

The liquidator appointed for the Institute on July 27<sup>th</sup> 1904 was a certain Edmond Duez. Already responsible for the liquidation of 13 non-authorized congregations, he now had to concern himself also with the goods of the Brothers of the Christian Schools throughout France and, from 1905, in Algeria too. Consequently he had recourse to a certain amount of delegation.

The time taken by the inventories, current leases, and court cases bought by the heirs of persons who had bequeathed goods to the Institute, meant that this first phase seemed to go on for ever. Where sales were possible, proceeds were far below what might have been expected: loans secured by these goods had to be reimbursed as a priority, and this lowered the proceeds of the sale; certain buildings were sold well below their value. Also, the liquidator and his team had themselves reimbursed for costs which were inflated, and lawyers involved in the court cases exaggerated their fees. The liquidator Duez was accused of embezzling funds and was found guilty in 1910, as were some of his collaborators. On June 21<sup>st</sup> 1911, he was condemned to 12 years' hard labour.

From 1911 onwards, the liquidation of the goods of the Institute was the responsibility of the department for the Administration of Property \*. This department, in its turn, encountered many obstacles which prevented it from settling most of the outstanding business, while the buildings which could not be sold, such as the houses for sick or elderly Brothers, had to be funded by the State. As for the pensions the Brothers were due to receive, they were reduced to nothing. When all was said and done, the "Congregation thousand million" was nothing more than a mirage!

### Consequences of the law for the Brothers

As soon as the first decrees applying the law were published, the question arose: what would happen to the Brothers working in the suppressed schools? As the closure of the schools was staggered, a number of Brothers could be moved to those still open, but there were so many Brothers involved that some other solution had to be found.

In this section, we shall deal above all with expatriation and apparent secularisation. These two questions will be treated in greater depth in two supplements, one at the end of this chapter, and the other at the end of chapter 7. In any case, what is said in this section refers mainly to the beginning of this period.

#### – Attitude of the Brothers to the various possible options

When the law of July 7<sup>th</sup> 1904 began to be applied, what Brother Lémandus, the famous history writer of the Toulouse District, wrote about the reactions of his Brothers was probably true everywhere: the legislative measures "had created particularly in the District worry and concern which the decrees of closure and the inventories increased daily. The Brothers asked themselves: Should we remain in the Congregation? Should we become secularised, that is, leave it? What do the Superiors think? What do the bishops think?" (French District Archives, Fonseranes deposit, 28). As for the Brothers not yet affected, the threat hung over their heads like the sword of Damocles. And so, the Brothers of Beaune (Côte d'Or) could write in their house journal: "the famous closure decrees published in 1904 have not affected us, and we continue working in our classes with some anxiety" (FDA Besançon deposit, 71-06). Their school was closed in 1905.

Sooner or later, all the Brothers targeted by the law had to make a choice. No doubt, generally speaking, they did so with the agreement of their Superiors, so that the preferences of the latter were able to influence individual decisions. In the end, however, each Brother had to choose one of four possible options as we have already explained.



In a farewell letter to the parents and pupils of his school, Brother Vulgis, Director of a small boarding school at Confort sur Bellegarde (Ain), set out clearly these four options. He said that, personally, "having passed the age for secularisation, I am leaving to retire...and it is on this retirement that all my thoughts and desires are focused" (FDA Caluire deposit). He was planning, therefore, to join other Brothers who were over 60 years of age who had been told to go to a retirement home. One can understand what a sacrifice it was for these Brothers to have to give up their professional and apostolic activities when some of them were still at an age and in a fit state to pursue them.

In his letter, Brother Vulgis speaks of the "new headmaster, an old friend of mine, a fine member of the former Institute of the Brothers, who has left it in order to devote all the energy of his 35 years to the children and youth that will be put into his care". The case of this Brother who left the Institute and continued to pursue his educational mission was not unique. As early as March 28<sup>th</sup> 1904, J.B. Ozier, "formerly Brother Parascève de Jesus", Director of the small Savoyard school at Cognin, had already informed his Visitor that "seeing that the dissolution of the Congregation is more than likely, and given my need to find a livelihood..." (FDA Caluire deposit, 20-3), he was becoming secularised, was remaining headmaster, and was breaking off all contact with the Congregation. Other Brothers, mostly young, assured their own future in a similar way by leaving the Institute and, in most cases, pursuing their careers as teachers.

When the time came to leave a locality where they were appreciated, it often happened that the Brothers were invited to stay, and pretend they had become secularised. This was the case particularly in the District of Le Puy, where the Visitor supported this form of "secularisation". With the Visitor's agreement, some Brothers accepted. Others hesitated, such as at Brioude (Haute Loire), where the Brother Director "was strongly urged to accept to become secularised at the place where he was, with his whole community, but he refused obstinately" (FDA Caluire deposit, 40-2). Following an approach to the Superior General, he finally accepted, but the new situation lasted only a year. The point was, that often those who became secularised and remained "in situ" were taken to court for "false secularisation". In order to avoid such problems, Brothers who became "falsely" secularised were moved to some other school, and were replaced by Brothers with a similar status from elsewhere. In the case of large schools, it was often the bishop who made arrangements. In other cases, the initiative came from the Brothers. Whatever the circumstances were which led the Brothers to become "secularised", it must be said that, especially initially, not everybody weighed up the risks of such a process.

For this reason or “to save their vocation”, as they would say, some of the Brothers invited to become secularised preferred exile. For example, in 1906, the Brothers at the École St Michel in Dijon, in reply to the parish priest’s remark that “secularisation is going on everywhere”, replied, basing themselves on the 1905 letter from Pius X, that “for Superiors, the safeguard of vocations was their most important task” (FDA Besançon deposit, 71-25). It has to be said that expatriation was particularly encouraged in their District. There were many other Brothers who, on their own initiative, accepted to face the unknown by deciding on expatriation. Whatever the circumstances, their decision called for all the more courage as they had to envisage the possibility of never returning.

### – Diversity of solutions adopted, depending on the Superior

When the law targeting the Institute was adopted, the Superiors were not taken by surprise. They had followed the various stages of its preparation, and had understood that nothing would prevent it being passed. They had already taken a number of decisions, such as, for example, sending the young Brothers off for formation. But they seem to have been thrown into total confusion by the first decrees applying the law. Obviously they were surprised by the extent of these measures.

This was the case of the Superior General. “He gave a cry of alarm and left it to the Assistants to sort out, each in his own way, the difficult problems that had arisen in the wake of the sectarian law” (LS 1, p. 39). As far as the Brother Assistants were concerned, it seems that the need to make rapid decisions increased the divergence of their choice between pretended secularisation and expatriation as a solution. Also, some of them who were already old or ill, found it more difficult to cope with the situation. This explains the quite considerable diversity of solutions adopted by Districts. The Visitors too had an influence on the choice of solution adopted.

### *Districts where “secularisation” was relatively widespread*

Among the Assistants, Brother Exupérien was certainly the one most in favour of the “secularisation” of the Brothers, even though he thought expatriation was more suitable for some, in particular, for the youngest Brothers (cf. LS 1, p. 39). He was concerned about saving the schools in Paris and its suburbs. This concern was extended to the District of Le Puy for which he was also responsible, and where he was supported by the zeal of the Visitor Brother Altigien Louis (Étienne Valès). When Brother Exupérien died, the 1905 Chapter replaced him with Brother Allais Charles, who was

inspired by the principles of his predecessor. As "secularisation" continued, he gave personal support to the Brothers who continued their apostolate in Paris or the District of Le Puy.

Brother Dosithée Marie was responsible for the Districts of Saint Omer, Caen and Le Mans. He too wanted to save the schools. This concern led him to ask the Brothers to become secularised. But he was not sufficiently aware of the difficulties this created. The 1907 Chapter replaced him by Brother Maurice Lucien. The "secularised" Brothers in the Districts concerned felt the aversion their new Assistant had for the kind of life they had adopted.

In the Districts of Moulins and Rodez, Brother Apronien Marie left the choice to the Brothers. In the District of Moulins, the Visitor Brother Rainfroy (Joseph Javaux) was in favour of "secularisation", and the same was true in the District of Rodez, where the Visitor Brother Namasien organised it. In these Districts, the Brothers who adopted secularisation were relatively numerous, but while they kept in contact with their Visitors, they felt abandoned by their Assistant.

In 1904, the Assistant for the Districts of Quimper and Nantes was Brother Aïmarus. Personally, he was quite in favour of expatriation, but because of his age, he gave a free hand to the Visitors Carolus (Joseph Le Guével) and Célien Marie (François Renault), both of whom wished to save the schools. The 1907 Chapter replaced Brother Aïmarus by Brother Imier de Jesus. As some of the "secularised" Brothers were wavering, the new Assistant invited each Brother to choose between returning to regular observance as far as possible, and total secularisation. Few accepted the latter option.

Brother Pamphile had charge of the Districts of Lyons, Saint Étienne and Grenoble, which resulted from a recent three-way split of the very large District of Lyons. Given the large number, of Brothers available, he encouraged them to leave for the Near East, allowing at the same time quite a few "secularisations". The lack of firm leadership from the Assistant left the "secularised" Brothers in a state of confusion, and the Visitors watched helplessly as numerous Brothers left the Institute. The Assistant was rarely seen in these Districts before 1907.

Responsible for the Districts of Rheims and Clermont, Brother Viventien Aimé was not hostile towards "secularisation" before the law was adopted. He offered this option as an alternative to expatriation. As the same time, he began arranging for Brothers to leave for Latin America. In addition, Brothers and establishments of the District of Rheims were transferred to Belgium.

### *Districts where expatriation prevailed*

In 1904, Brother Madir Joseph, already responsible for Belgium and Central Europe, was put in charge of the District of Cambrai. He had no preference for either solution. On the other hand, the Visitor Brother Maurice Lucien was opposed to "secularisation". Appointed Assistant in 1907, he kept his responsibility for the District of Cambrai. He continued to promote the transfer of Brothers to Belgium, and made arrangements to send Brothers to Brazil.

Brother Junien who, at the age of 82, was in charge of the Districts of Toulouse, Bayonne and Bordeaux, preferred expatriation. He promoted the opening in Spain of houses attached to the Districts in his charge. On the other hand, Brother Léandris, Visitor of Toulouse, was initially in favour of "secularisation" in his District. In 1907, when he was elected Assistant, the three Districts came under his jurisdiction. Now opposing "secularisation", he pursued the development in Spain of establishments run by French Brothers.

Brother Perial Étienne did not hide his preference for expatriation. However, in the District of Chambéry, the Visitor Brother Urbain Joseph (Jean Cardinal) agreed he would keep a number of schools open thanks to secularised Brothers. Other Brothers opened establishments in Switzerland or in north Italy. The District of Avignon, for which the Assistant was responsible also, was transferred to the Balearic Islands.

Brother Louis de Poissy had no inclination at all to encourage "secularisation". Besides being in charge of the Districts of Béziers and Marseilles, he was responsible also for Italy and Spain. He encouraged the Brothers of the District of Béziers to open houses in Catalonia, and those of Marseilles to do likewise in neighbouring Italy, in Liguria or in Sicily.

As for Brother Réticius, who had responsibility for the District of Besançon as well as for Canada, he would not accept secularisation at any price. In 1904, he began to organise the transfer across the Atlantic of a large number of Brothers made available by the closure of establishments. He continued to do this up to 1908. The Visitor, Brother Bernard Louis, allowed a certain number of "secularisations" to take place.

### **– Overall evaluation of the choices made**

Whatever the choices made by the Brothers and the Superiors, and the way they were made, we feel justified in attempting to assess the number of Brothers to adopt one solution or the other. Such an assessment can be made at different times.

*First year*

Not all the Brothers in France were affected in the first year. Sufficient were, however, for us to try to discover what their final choice was. This is possible thanks to the answers to a questionnaire sent to the Visitors by the Superior of the Institute in the course of 1905 (DD 275-1 and 2). The table below which lists the results of a breakdown of the answers allows us also to show in a concrete manner the solutions adopted by the Districts.

District	1903	Ret.H	CH.Fr	H.Abr.	D.Abr.	Dec.	Sol.	Secul.	Left	Misc.	1905
Paris	(1.367)	125	564	71	74	36	34	249	93		1.249
Avignon	(403)	53	125	34	20	14	18	58	55	6	382
Bayonne	(229)	22	57	58	3	10	5	74	1		230
Besançon	(333)	64	19	9	137	17	3	30	53		332
Béziers	(445)	51	149	68	49	11	20	20	70	2	440
Bordeaux	(380)	56	76		41	11	16	112		65	377
Caen	(357)	45	76	1	17	5	25	109	49	27	354
Cambrai	(437)	65	235	29	35	15		8	54		441
Chambéry	(325)	46	40	55	30	11	11	76	33	5	307
Clermont	(494)	43	59	5	110	13	4	174	80	4	492
Grenoble	(455)	82	122		71	14	4	92	78		463
Lyon	(433)	57	125		46	6	3	108	85		430
Le Mans	(358)	65	35	3	18	7	19	160	11	29	347
Marseille	(450)	54	135	86	13	12	15	16	97		428
Moulins	(424)	61	68		58	11	8	182	32		420
Nantes	(598)	55	147	14	32	21	21	221	87		598
Le Puy	(409)	39	140	5	8	8	14	146	29	1	390
Quimper	(476)	26	219	10	15	12	20	139	28		469
Reims	(502)	69	79	104	67	16	2	84	87		478
Rodez	(494)	56	22	18	89	11	7	229	80	1	513
St Erienne	(433)	60	66		43	11	4	158	94		436
St Omer	(421)	56	165		1	12	5	126	62		427
Toulouse	(428)	41	103	47	20	17	4	137	33	26	428
TOTAL	(10.651)	1.291	2.826	617	997	304	262	1.708	1.261	166	10.432

## Observations:

– The questionnaire covers the Brothers present at the end of 1903. In the totals for 1905, we do not find exactly the same figures as in the statistics for 1903. This is due to a certain margin of error. If not, we fail to see what the explanation is.

– The number of the Brothers remaining in the houses in France (*H.Fr*) varies greatly from District to District.

– The figures for the Brothers running houses established abroad (*H.Abr*) and for those who have joined a District abroad (*D.Abr*) are not always reliable. What is most important is the total of expatriates.

– Under the heading miscellaneous (*Misc*), are included mainly Brothers listed as “gone home”. Many of these, no doubt, ought to be listed under *Left*. The same can be said about some of those listed as *secularised*.

What is most important to note is the relative size of the three groups which are of special interest to us. Thus, for the first year, the expatriates are fewer in number than the secularised. Those listed as having left are no doubt more numerous than is indicated.

### The years 1905 to 1914.

We can assess the changes which occurred in the space of a few years thanks to information collected in 1907 or 1908 under headings similar to those of the 1905 questionnaire. This information, kept in the Generalate Archives, is limited only to a few Districts. We shall therefore compare the figures for 1905 and 1907-08 for the same 12 Districts.

District	1903	Ret.H	H.Fr	H.Abr.	D.Abr.	Dec.	Sol.	Secul.	Left	Misc.	1905	
12	(6.153)	719	1.835	318	575	186	119	1.556	716	2	6.026	
			Active Brothers									1907-08
12	(6.153)	752	1.299	966	417			1.163	1.490	62	6.149	

We should note above all the changes that have occurred in the space of a few years in the situation of the same Brothers. The heading Active Br(others) covers the number of Brothers in the houses in France (on the decrease) and of those in houses abroad (on the increase). Given this, we cannot assess as before the difference in number of the two categories of Brothers abroad. Be that as it may, the number of these latter has increased. On the other hand, compared with 1905, the number of “secularised” Brothers has diminished, while that of Brothers leaving has increased, mostly because “secularised” Brothers had subsequently left the Institute.

For the years leading up to 1914, the number of expatriates or “secularised” Brothers among the Brothers present in 1903 could no longer increase in any significant way, as fewer and fewer Brothers were available each year. On the other hand, the number of Brothers leaving was always likely to increase.

### *The years following 1914*

The first change which occurred when war broke out in 1914 was that the closure of the last 13 establishments in France and of the 2 in Algeria was suspended by the gov-

ernment of "Sacred Union". In addition, expatriated Brothers returned to France to take part in the war, or because they had been expelled from the countries where they were.

When the war finished, some of these Brothers remained in France. Other expatriates began to return also. Many Brothers in both of these groups took up their apostolate again under the cover of pretended secularisation. And there were Brothers even, especially among those who had fought in the war, who took up their apostolate again, wearing their religious habit. In addition, from 1920 onwards, the statistical returns of French Districts record the names of "secularised" Brothers who had remained faithful to their religious obligations, and of a number of those that had left but had returned to the Institute. The consequences of 1904 had not been wiped out, but they could no longer be evaluated in the same way.

## Conclusion

What happened to the Institute in 1904 raises a few questions. In the conclusion of the first chapter of this volume, we asked ourselves what could have been the reasons for the Brothers finding themselves in such a predicament. It seems fairly pointless, however, to wonder if the consequences of the legislative measures affecting the Brothers could have been different. It is clear, obviously, that greater consensus among the Superiors would have influenced their decisions especially regarding "secularisation". But you cannot rewrite history!

Two different ways of interpreting what happened to the Institute in 1904 highlights how difficult it is to understand such an event if one does so in a way that is too one-sided.

When the consequences of the 1904 law began to make themselves felt, Brother Gabriel Marie drew the following lesson: "We were not sufficiently apostolic. God constrains us to look beyond our country of origin; to go everywhere, since all the earth belongs to the Lord..." (Quoted in LS 1, p. 75). It is true that these events favoured a further expansion of the Institute. But the Institute had not waited for this moment to spread throughout the world.

After some years, as one Brother recorded, Brother Allais Charles confided to him the following: "Saints see further than others: in the Regime, Brother Exupérien was in favour of secularisation, but as he was the only one to hold this view, he was not supported" (FDA Besançon deposit, 71-36/05); that is, he thought this solution would be advantageous for the future. But then, it would have had to be better accepted and taken more into account by the Institute.

No doubt these events should have led the Institute to reassess at a more profound level the way it understood the vocation of the Brother. This would have supposed that, at that time, in the Institute, there prevailed a concept of religious life attaching more importance to what constituted it, and more in keeping with the mission of the Brothers. However, very certain of what it was that made the Institute famous - reflected in the tone of the *Bulletin of the Christian Schools* published at the time - the Brothers were hardly ready for such a reassessment.

**Brother Savinien** Joseph Lhermite, Villeneuve lès Avignon (Gard), January 11<sup>th</sup> 1844 - Avignon (Vaucluse) January 10<sup>th</sup> 1920.

During his novitiate (1857), Brother Savinien revealed his intellectual and pedagogical capabilities. He first taught in the Avignon boarding school, became Director of Arles in 1882, obtained the diploma making him an Inspector of State Education, and worked to promote in the teaching of French (and Latin) the Provençal language spoken by pupils in Languedoc. A member of the "felibrige" movement, he published books, which have been recently republished, and was invited in 1896 to present his pedagogical ideas at the Sorbonne. In the same year, he was appointed Inspector of Schools in the District of Avignon. He was a member of the 1897 and 1901 Chapters.

When the 1904 law was passed, Brother Savinien was in Rome, where for the previous three years he had been coordinating the teaching of French at the Merode Technical Institute of the *Collegio San Giuseppe*. He disappeared from Institute statistics for 15 years as he was "secularised". He was Director at Bourg Saint Andréol, then at Lyon (the La Salle vocational school), and returned to Avignon in 1908, where he returned to teaching and was inspector. He continued to publish under the name of Lhermite. It was only in 1919, at the age of 75, that he entered the retirement home in Avignon.





## 6. "SECULARISATION"

The preceding chapter dealt at some length with so-called "secularisation", a term used to designate an apparent withdrawal from the Institute by Brothers, following the enactment of the law passed on July 7<sup>th</sup> 1904.

This process had such consequences for those concerned and took on such importance for the Institute that we need to deal with it at greater length. We shall do so by examining the situation of the "secularised" Brothers, showing how this situation evolved, and examining what importance this question had for the Institute.

The question of "secularisation" in the Institute was studied by Georges Rigault in the 1950s at the request of the Superiors. However, as some of the persons involved were still alive, the diffusion of the author's work was postponed. It was eventually published with the title "*Les Temps de la Sécularisation*" in the first volume of the Études Lasalliennes series (EL 1). G. Rigault relied to a great extent on the information he gained from Brothers who had lived through this experience. The 124 answers to the questionnaire he had drawn up can be found today in the archives of the District of France (FDA) in Lyons, in the deposit: Paris, rue de Sèvres. We shall make use of these answers in this supplement.

NB. Whenever the words secularisation or secularised are used between inverted commas, it means they refer to apparent secularisation.

### The situation of the "secularised" Brothers

From the very start, "secularised" Brothers found themselves in a very complex situation because of their position vis-a-vis the law, but also on account of the attitude of certain ecclesiastical authorities, or because of the stance adopted in the Institute regarding them.

#### – Consequences of the application of the law

In 1903 or 1904, when religious congregations in France were forbidden to teach, some of their members wished to continue their apostolate in that country, while at the same time remaining faithful to their religious commitments. The fact that, in order to do this, they had become secularised, but only in appearance, did not escape the attention of those whose task it was to ensure that the legislation targeting members of religious congregations was applied. Those who were suspected of not having really abandoned their previous status were liable to be charged with "the crime of reconstitution of a congregation".

To obviate such legal proceedings, the Brothers had to avoid anything that could arouse the suspicion that they were still living in community, such as the fact, for example, that they were eating together or living in the same house. It was important above all to ensure that it could not be proved that they maintained contact with the congregation to which they had belonged, and in particular, with its Superiors. Given this, it was a good idea for Brothers to show that they had changed their lifestyle, for example, by accepting invitations to go to town, or to receive a wage packet.

Of the Brothers who answered Rigault's questionnaire, several described the effect such precautions had on their lifestyle:

- According to Mr Grève (District of Lyon), much prudence had to be shown, accommodation had to be separate, and community life was reduced to having meals together with some pupils;
- Mr Moisans (District of Nantes) noted: no more religious exercises in common, a life without the Rule for a long time;
- Brother Albert de Jésus (District of Paris) wrote: at the Francs Bourgeois, no exercises, accommodation outside.

One of the points stressed was the free use of money:

- This is a point mentioned by Brother Albert de Jésus;
- Brother Clément Albert (District of Quimper) noted that the observance of the Rule was possible except where poverty was concerned;
- According to Brother Ildephonse Raymond (District of Rodez), observance was relaxed regarding exercises and the vow of poverty.

Many of the former "secularised" Brothers noted in particular the lack of contact with Superiors:

- Brother Ismidon Denis (District of Moulins) complained he had no contact with Superiors for 5 years;
- Brother Ildephonse Denis (District of Rodez) wrote: no contact with major Superiors; verbal contact with the Visitor'.

In this connection, several Brothers spoke of being abandoned, at least for some time:

- Brother Olivier Paulin (District of Lyons) noted: for the first years, the Brothers were left to manage on their own;
- Brother Clovis de Jésus (District of Quimper) wrote that the lack of instructions in the first two or three years proved fatal for many Brothers.

However, remarks such as these were not the only ones received from Brothers who had been "secularised". Several said that they had been able to observe the Rule in its entirety or its essential parts, and had kept in regular contact with the Visitor of their

District, either directly or through the intermediary of his delegate, or even with their Assistant.

In addition, some Brothers admitted that they had not been pestered by the authorities charged with ensuring respect for the law. However, despite all the precautions taken, this was not the case for all:

– Brother Nesson (District of Le Puy), whose community led a regular life, said he had been bothered by an inspector;

– Brother Pontien Ambroise (District of St Étienne) mentions two searches at Ste Barbe;

– Brother Vidal Eugène (District of Chambéry) was questioned by a magistrate but the charge was dropped.

A number of Brothers were acquitted in court, but some were found guilty. A *historique* of the District of Marseilles notes that the "secularised" Director of a school in town had to pay a fine, but he benefited from an amnesty, and his school was not closed down.

#### – Difficulties caused by the attitude of certain ecclesiastical authorities

Of the bishops in France, those who clung most strongly to establishments giving a Christian education, wanted members of religious congregations to become "secularised" in order to maintain them. In certain cases, however, they went so far as to prefer them to abandon their religious state altogether so that they could run private schools dependent solely on the diocese.

And so, when asked to provide Brothers with "letters of secularisation" which confirmed their departure from the Institute, certain bishops thought they were also dispensing them from their vows. This is attested by a number of Brothers who answered G. Rigault's questionnaire:

– Brother Corèbe (District of Quimper) notes that he received a letter of secularisation from the archbishop of Rennes by which the latter believed he was dispensing him from his vows;

– Brother Basile Henri (District of Paris), "secularised" and still living at the Francs Bourgeois, said he had been dispensed from his vows by the archbishop of Paris;

– Brother Chérubin Joseph (District of Nantes) received a letter of secularisation from the bishop of Nantes who claimed he was dispensing him from his vows.

In addition, the desires of the bishops were carried out by the heads of various organisations responsible for the maintenance and development of private education on the diocesan level. In their concern to find staff for their schools, they sought to attract to

them members of religious congregations who were now available. However, they insisted that the secularisation of these religious should be real. What they wished to avoid, in particular, was the risk that the condemnation of a “secularised” religious for the “crime of reconstitution of a congregation” would entail also the closure of the establishment, a penalty which, in certain cases, could be imposed.

Instructions issued by the education committee of the diocese of Toulouse stipulated that their private schools could be staffed by lay teachers or secularised religious, “so long as the latter were truly and sincerely secularised” (FDA Fonseranes deposit, 5).

A circular dated March 1904 from the “Committee for the protection of society and religion”, based in Saint Étienne, could not be clearer in stating its position. With the aim of “maintaining private education after the destruction of education provided by religious congregations”, it states:

“We can hardly recruit staff for our schools anywhere else except among the suppressed congregations. But such staff cannot be effectively employed unless, in reality and legally, they are no longer bound by obedience to the Superiors of their congregation...”

Hence, it is advisable to employ in the future only brothers and sisters who have really left their former congregation, who no longer obey their former superiors, and who, in both spiritual and temporal matters, are truly independent...” (FDA Caluire deposit: District of St Étienne, 43).

This concern was shared, it appears, by the board of directors of the Parents’ Association of the Pensionnat St Louis of St Étienne when, in a report published by the *Mémorial de la Loire* on November 15<sup>th</sup> 1905, it said that it had asked every teacher “to guarantee on his honour as a gentleman, that he had really severed his links with the congregation to which he had belonged...” (Id.). As it happened, all these teachers were Brothers of the Christian Schools, “secularised” in *situ* or from elsewhere. It is understandable, that in such circumstances, if certain “secularised” religious wished to maintain their basic religious commitments, they could do so only very discreetly and on an individual basis. Unless, of course, the publicity given to this report was simply a means of exonerating those concerned!

While the attitude of certain ecclesiastical authorities could lead to situations of this kind, in practice, the effect it had above all was to encourage total and complete secularisation involving departure from the Institute.

## – Repercussions of the position adopted in the Institute

As we said in the previous chapter, secularisation, even if only external, was not gen-

erally approved of by the Superiors. It is true that the conditions in which often this "secularisation" was undertaken hardly helped them to understand fully such a measure. It is also true that it was important for the Superiors, on their part, not to let people think that their subordinates had not severed their links with them. But carrying the necessary prudence to extremes, some Superiors were led in practice to break off all contact with the "secularised" Brothers. And so, in his answer to G. Rigault, Brother Albert Valentin (Louis Léter) wrote: "Brother Dosithée Marie to all intents and purposes no longer concerned himself with us. The Superior maintained he had to "stand by his signature" - that is, his signature on the "letters of secularisation" attesting that the Brothers no longer had any links with the Institute.

Other Superiors, on the contrary, while making sure they were not endangering the "secularised" Brothers, sought ways of maintaining their support for them by such means as meeting them at retreats or in different ways. Brother Nessian noted, for example, that he had continued to have the same contacts as before with his Superior in secular dress. In the Haute Loire, the Assistant Brother Allais Charles, accompanied by the Visitor Brother Altigien Louis, met the "secularised" Brothers at picnic lunches. Other Brothers also, on their own initiative or designated by the Superiors, gave support to the "secularised" Brothers. And so, in the St Étienne region, Mr Jean Barlet (Brother Paramon Cyprien), officially an insurance agent, organised retreats for "secularised" Brothers and undertook to act as a link for them with the Superiors (cf. EL 1, 149).

In the wider context, "secularised" Brothers could find themselves under suspicion from Brothers who still continued to live a normal religious life, if only because the establishment where they were had not yet been closed. And so, Brother Chérubin Joseph wrote: "we no longer had hardly any contact with the Superiors, nor with those who had kept the religious habit. They seemed to ignore us. Some of them even considered us as deserters. They were all afraid of becoming compromised". Prudence led "secularised" Brothers also not to make contact openly with Brothers from "regular communities", to use an expression common at the time in Institute texts.

## How the situation evolved

### - The early years (1904-1908)

The situation we have described is mostly restricted to what was experienced in 1904-1905 by the Brothers who suffered the effects of the measures applying the law. As for the position of the Institute, it was stated in particular at the General Chapter held in

May 1905. Even before the July 1904 law was passed, the Superior General had gone ahead with the election of delegates, with a view to calling a Chapter as soon as circumstances permitted. Following the elections, some of the Brothers chosen as delegates were "secularised". To ensure that the presence of these latter Brothers at the Chapter did not caused them problems with the French authorities, the Superior General sought permission from the Sovereign Pontiff to replace them "by non-secularised substitutes elected by the District".

At the Chapter, Brother Gabriel Marie outlined the events that had occurred in 1904, and the preparations in the period leading up to this date. He then informed the Chapter of a letter in which Pope Pius X reaffirmed the supremacy of religious life over apostolic works. This letter offered a means of countering the point of view and actions of certain bishops, and of supporting the position of the Superiors of the Institute. According to Brother Gabriel Marie's obituary, "the letter was in response to an appeal by the Superior".

At the Chapter, a commission was chosen to examine the notes and memoranda sent by Brothers regarding "secularisation". On May 25<sup>th</sup>, the commission rapporteur presented the contents of these texts and, while praising their authors for being well-meaning, he concluded nonetheless that: "Secularisation is immensely dangerous for the Brothers. This danger cannot be denied even if the common life and poverty are more or less safeguarded. With isolation, independence and the use of money, it becomes more pressing and irresistible" (ED 228-3 Reg. 3, 117). The first recommendation made by the commission was "that in the future, "secularisation" should not be tolerated except in cases of grave necessity, because of the dangers it represented for religious vocations" (id. 120). Other recommendations of the Chapter can be reduced to recalling, in connection with a variety of points, that "secularised" Brothers had to remain faithful to their basic religious obligations. In the course of the discussions, a letter from one of them - it was decided to reproduce it in the register - was read out to the assembly. Its author insisted on the need he had to maintain contact with the Superiors, and this led him to raise the question: "are we, or are we not abandoned by the Institute?" (id., 141).

And so, even if the situation of the "secularised" Brothers was examined at the Chapter, the delegates do not seem to have understood to any great degree the reality of what these Brothers had to face. It seems also that, by reinforcing the opposition to "secularisation", the letter from Pius X played a part in preventing a suitable response being made to the questions raised by this situation.

As each year more and more schools were closed, the Brothers continued to choose "secularisation". But it was an option that was increasingly discouraged. One of the reasons for this was that, in many places, the first "secularisations" had occurred in unfavourable circumstances, and these places included Districts where the Superiors had taken care of the Brothers concerned. The letter from Pius X helped to strengthen the position of those who were against "secularisation". The Superior General maintained that, after the Pope's letter, "secularisation" was no longer possible. In his circular dated July 17<sup>th</sup> 1906, he ordered the Brothers presiding retreats to include the Pope's letter in one of their talks.

In 1907, another General Chapter was called. The Superior General obtained permission from the Holy See to recall the capitulants of the 1905 Chapter. No one representing the "secularised" Brothers therefore could attend the Chapter, but the latter could send notes. As happened in the 1905 Chapter, a "secularisation" commission was set up. The rapporteur presented the notes and memoranda received. He said he "recognised the profoundly religious dispositions and the supernatural spirit of quite a large number of "secularised" Brothers, but these memoranda reveal a real evil, a slow disintegration" (quoted in EL 2, 45). The wishes of the commission adopted by the Chapter were intended to remedy the shortcomings that had been observed: Visitors were invited to induce "secularised" Brothers to return to the "true path", that is, to one that did not include "secularisation", or at least, to be faithful to their vital obligations and to the regular life. Visitors were to assure "secularised" Brothers that the Institute was ready to grant them, if they were "faithful to their religious duties, the material and spiritual help provided for the Brothers" (quoted in EL 2, 51).

During this same period, "secularised" Brothers had to face searches and interrogations aimed at proving their secularisation was not real. Some of them had to appear in court. This occurred fairly rarely in such places as Paris and Brittany, but in other places it was systematic. This was the case in the District of Rodez, where teachers in more than 20 establishments were harassed. Court cases were particularly numerous in 1905. They often ended with the charges being dropped, but sometimes fines were imposed. Others benefited from amnesties in 1905 and 1906. The most important trials involved the teachers of the boarding schools in Rouen and Bordeaux. The trial in the latter place was initially stopped by the two amnesties, but was restarted in 1907, and ended with an acquittal.

#### - The years preceding the war (1909-1914)

A certain number of "secularisations" occurred. The most striking case was that of 40

Brothers from the Pensionnat Notre Dame de France in Le Puy who became “secularised” *in situ* in 1910. This blatant provocation cost the Brothers concerned a court case, but they were acquitted. During this period “there reigned a sort of truce from which “secularised” teaching religious benefited” (EL 1, 203). However, as war approached, there was a resurgence of anticlericalism. Brothers who had no reason to become “secularised” were threatened with court action in Nîmes and Lille, but this came to nothing.

During this same period, a number of “secularised” Brothers returned to a greater observance of the Rule. And so we read that:

– Brother Gérald (District of Clermont) notes a return to the observance of the Rule regarding poverty in January 1910;

– Brother Agathange Marie (District of Paris) said that up to 1913, Brothers had money but did not render an account.

It was noted also that relations with the Superiors had improved.

The Chapter called in 1913 marked a certain change. In this Chapter, “secularised” Brothers could vote but were still not eligible. To ensure this, Brother Gabriel Marie had asked the Holy See to agree that “only religious living the ordinary and traditional life of the Institute in a properly so-called community could be voted for...” (GA ED 228-4, 70). During the course of the Chapter, Brother Gabriel Marie resigned and was replaced by Brother Imier de Jésus who had taken active care of the “secularised” Brothers in the Districts in his charge.

The 6<sup>th</sup> commission communicated to the Chapter the contents of the notes sent in by “secularised” Brothers, which the rapporteur said were “almost all remarkable”. He observed in particular that, “in some of these notes, regret was expressed that, in certain cases, judgments expressed about them seemed insufficiently friendly and paternal” (GA ED 228-4, 99). The first recommendation of the commission, therefore, was that “unfavourable judgments about “secularised” Brothers should be avoided as far as possible in the Institute” (quoted in EL 2, 54). The second recommendation was a positive response to the request of “secularised” Brothers to be able to meet their Assistant individually. Other recommendations advocated various ways of practising the Rule as well as possible. And so, the requests of “secularised” Brothers were now being taken more into account.

#### – The war and the post-war period (1914-1928)

Once France entered the war, “secularised” Brothers could lead their religious life more



and more openly, as public authorities had more important things to do than to pursue those claiming this status. Some "secularised" Brothers were mobilised, as were expatriates who had returned for the same reason. Other expatriates, especially those in the Near East, who had been forced to leave the countries where they were, also became "secularised". This was the case, for example, of:

– Brother René Guillaumin who, returning from Turkey in 1915, "came into sudden contact with "secularisation" in St Étienne";

– Brother Gilmer Edmond, coming from Egypt, was "secularised" in 1915 at Rodez.

But, for these recently "secularised" Brothers the situation was very different from that experienced by the first to go through this process: they no longer encountered the same obstacles to leading the religious life, and they were in constant contact with their Superiors. In a study on this question, Brother Lémandus said that "good and true secularisation took place then, in 1918-19" (FDA Fonsèranes deposit, 28).

After the war, the new situation it had created was not challenged, except in 1924. In secular dress, the Brothers were free to lead their religious life in its entirety. This is mentioned in the reminiscences of several former "secularised" Brothers:

– M. Moisans noted that after the disorganisation of the war, the Rule was given once again the place of honour at Angers;

– Brother Albert de Jésus recalled that after the war, precise instructions were issued at the Francs Bourgeois regarding the reinstatement of community life.

Expatriated Brothers continued to return to France to take up their apostolic activities again under the cover of "secularisation", but this term no longer had the same meaning as before, as we gather from what these newly "secularised" Brothers said. Some Brothers even started to wear the religious habit: Brother Arèse Maurice (District of Rheims) wrote that he had had no problem in doing so in 1922.

At the Chapter of 1923, the only mention of "secularised" Brothers occurred in the report drawn up by the commission responsible for examining the financial situation of the Institute, where it says that "communities of so-called secularised Brothers were to pay for the general expenses of the Mother House like other communities" (ED 228-4 Reg. 2, 7). This Chapter elected as the new Superior General, Brother Allais Charles who had done his best to offer effective support to the "secularised" Brothers in the Districts under his responsibility.

At the Chapter held in 1928, following the death of Brother Allais Charles, the only mention of "secularised" Brothers occurs in the recommendations of the 2<sup>nd</sup> commission,

where it says "it would be good to make "secularised" Brothers wear the robe on all possible occasions".

At the date chosen to mark the end of the period we have been studying here, "secularisation" in its final form no longer seemed to pose a problem for the Institute.

### **Relative importance of "secularisation" in the Institute**

#### **– Some figures**

Given the confidential nature of fictitious secularisation, it is not easy to know how many Brothers availed themselves of it. On the basis of data supplied by Brother Justinus, Secretary General of the Institute, in lists he kept up to date, G. Rigault established in his text, published in EL 1 (p. 77), that 2,488 Brothers became "secularised" in 1904. This overall figure is then itemized District by District. In addition, similar data gathered for the whole of the ten-year period 1904-14, and published in table-form, led the author to write that "of the 9,591 Brothers present in the 23 French Districts in mainland France, there were, therefore, 3,781 "secularised" Brothers..." (EL 1, p. 78). But these figures do not allow us to distinguish between those who, when a choice had to be made, opted for fictitious secularisation, and those who left the Institute.

An analysis of the answers to a questionnaire sent to Visitors in 1905, the results of which are given on p. 137, indicates that, of the 10,432 Brothers officially registered 2,708 were "secularised" and 1,261 had left the Institute. According to these figures, the total of "secularised" and departed Brothers, after one year, matched to a comparable degree the total given by Georges Rigault for the whole 1904-14 period. If the Brothers had continued to adopt "secularisation" at the same rate as in the first year, of the 10,432 Brothers registered in 1905, 3,700 would have become "secularised". However, as new "secularisations" tended to diminish after 1905, the total of "secularised" Brothers could be nearer 3,500. As for the Brothers who left the Institute without going through the process of fictitious secularisation, on the basis of the same figures, their number could be between 1,500 and 2,000.

#### **– An assessment of "secularisation"**

The aim of fictitious secularisation was to maintain schools which, it was feared, would disappear. There were not enough teachers in the private sector to take over the schools the Brothers had to leave, especially in cases where large establishments were involved. Often, these establishments were old foundations to which the Brothers were

attached. Added to this, there could be the feeling that, in the hands of other people, these schools would be less well run. But, apostolic concern was far from absent. How many schools were saved? It should be possible to find out. What is certain, is that the number of these varied from region to region, as can be deduced from the great difference in the number of "secularised" Brothers from District to District.

From the outset, in order to run these schools, the "secularised" Brothers called upon the help of former members of the Institute or of other teaching congregations, or of lay teachers. It happened that, in schools where all the teachers were lay persons, only the Director was a "secularised" Brother. As the number of "secularised" Brothers diminished because of death, expatriation or departure from the Institute, those who remained worried because of a lack of replacements. And so it was suggested at the 1913 Chapter that expatriated Brothers should be recalled to France to ensure the survival of certain schools by becoming "secularised" in their turn. (Cf. EL 2, 54).

If it is true that "secularisation" had some positive effects, it is likewise true that the way it was handled in the Institute was characterised by a number of negative aspects we have had occasion to mention. Quite clearly, the fact that some "secularised" Brothers found themselves abandoned and were the object of suspicion, weighed heavily upon them. If we add to this the difficult conditions these "secularised" Brothers had to cope with, especially at the beginning, we can understand readily how a relatively high number of them subsequently severed all links with the Institute, and joined the ranks of those who had left religious life straight away. It is difficult to calculate their number. What we can say, however, is that it could have been smaller.

## Conclusion

If "secularised" Brothers were not totally abandoned by the Institute, they certainly were officially ignored: from 1904 to 1914, the official lists of Brothers in French Districts included only Brothers in "regular communities" situated in France or abroad. Of course, this was inspired by prudence. However, it is difficult to explain, for example, how, in the reports submitted by Assistants to the Regime Council in 1909, there was never any mention of "secularised" Brothers. And yet, there was no danger of the *Register of Regime Deliberations*, which was kept at the Mother House in Belgium, of ever falling into the hands of the French authorities! On the other hand, from 1915 onwards, there is increasingly more mention of Brothers in "a special situation" who, it seems, were "secularised" Brothers.

In retrospect, it is difficult to understand the position generally adopted in the Institute regarding "secularised" Brothers. It is surprising, in particular, to see the Superior General explaining to the Pope that "secularisation" was sometimes justified and even desirable, when one knows, from another source, his harsh attitude towards "secularised" Brothers. Could the sole motive of prudence justify such intransigence? Did this not demonstrate a condemnation of "secularisation" on his part? And should we not see in this an example of a "hardening of attitudes" in the Institute, provoked, it would seem, by a policy to laicise society and, in particular, education, which was pursued in France in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup>?

## Chap. 7 - GOVERNMENT OF THE INSTITUTE (1904-1928)

### Introduction

However important the events concerning the Institute in France may have been, there were also other events which affected the Institute as a whole. Three successive Superior Generals left their mark on the Institute during this period. Two General Chapters were held to examine the questions raised, in particular, by the current situation, and to appoint new Assistants. Their combined efforts also influenced the direction the Institute took during this period.

### Continuation of Brother Gabriel Marie's generalate (1904-1913)

Brother Gabriel Marie had been at the head of the Institute since 1897. He remained in that position until 1913. As we have already shown, he had had to face the consequences of the 1904 law affecting the Institute in France. In the second period of his generalate there are three main areas we need to consider.

#### – Repercussions of the 1904 events on the Institute as a whole

##### *Guidelines given by the Superior General*

On December 25<sup>th</sup> 1904, the Superior General sent a circular to the Brothers in which he spoke, quite naturally, of the major event which had affected the Institute in the course of the year. Speaking to all the Brothers, he said:

“You are aware, our Very Dear Brothers, that in these times of trial, God imposes on us, if not new obligations, at least more perfect dispositions in the accomplishment of our duties as religious and as Christian teachers...” (Circ. 133, 4).

He went on to describe the dispositions the Brothers should have. The first disposition he invited the Brothers to have was perfect submission to God's will. As he said:

“And why should we become lost in vain reasoning and examine the secondary causes of our trials? Alas! They are only too evident. By looking for signs which appear to indicate the end of the storm, our mind would stray into disappointing illusions. God alone and his most holy will are the solid foundations on which faith bases our peace and our hope...” (Circ. 133, 5).

After exhorting the Brothers in this way, Brother Gabriel Marie expressed his gratitude “to the Brothers who have left France” and “to the Brothers and communities which have accepted them with so much charity...” (Circ. 133, 12). And he went on to recall how the Institute had spread to various countries.

One year later, following the expulsion of the Brothers from the Mother House in rue Oudinot in Paris, the Superior took the opportunity to invite the Brothers as a whole to take advantage spiritually of the trial which the Institute continued to experience. After recalling that "it was the second time that our houses in France have been destroyed", he wrote: "Courage, then! Our predecessors in 1792 experienced a situation more critical than ours". And he mentioned at this point the presence of the Institute "in twenty different countries" (quotations from Circ. 137, 6). Next, the Superior suggested a detailed history should be written of the Mother House, covering its different locations.

In the circular dated January 1<sup>st</sup> 1906, he returned to the events of 1904, in connection with new measures applying the 1904 law. Subsequently, he would do so less systematically.

### *Effects on the government of the Institute*

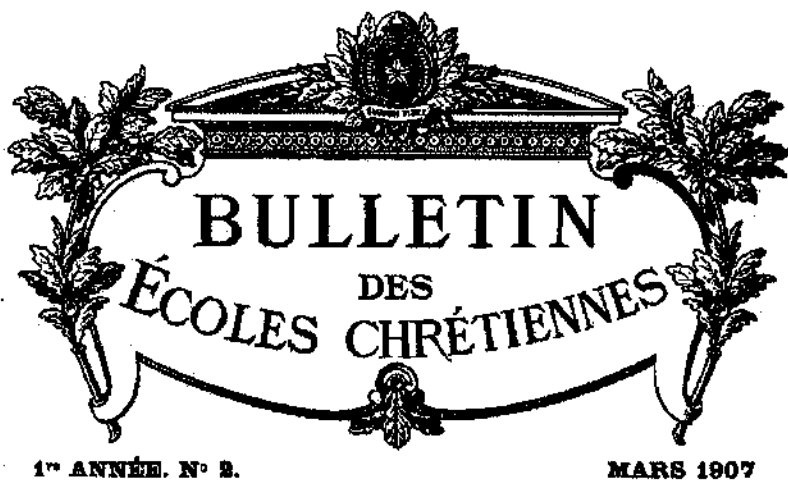
If, before the 1904 law and when it was initially implemented, one can say that the Superiors did not work sufficiently as a team, it appears that subsequently a new approach was adopted by the Regime. In the *Registre des délibérations*, we see at various points that a series of meetings lasting several days was devoted to examining the situation in the different Districts. We have already noted such meetings being held in 1909.

An effect of a different kind was the transfer of the Mother House to Lembecq lez Hal, in Belgium, from 1905 onwards. The Superior found they were more free there than in France, and because the transferred services were safe from investigation by the French authorities, it was decided even to reconstitute the dossiers destroyed in 1903. In this house, it was possible also to bring together the Visitors or the Directors of houses of formation for retreats or meetings. In the same way, the Second Novitiate could function there, and formation groups were also housed there. The relics of St John Baptist de La Salle were transferred there on June 29<sup>th</sup> 1906. A circular dated October 7<sup>th</sup> 1906 announcing the event gave the following reason for their transfer:

"Might one not see again one day, when feelings are running high, a repetition of the profanations that have been deplored for the last four centuries by the Church in England, France, Germany and Italy, Spain and Poland? That is why the transfer of June 29<sup>th</sup> last calms our anxiety and fills us with fervent gratitude to God" (Circ. 144, 4).

We can link to the events of 1904 in France, the desire expressed by 1905 General Chapter to see "published soon a modest but interesting review on the Work of the Institute" (quoted in the circular dated October 15<sup>th</sup> 1906). It was seen as a means, among others, "of strengthening the bonds of charity among all the members of our

Congregation". This review was published first in 1907 under the title *Bulletin of the Christian Schools*. This bulletin dealt mainly with historical topics concerning the Institute and its establishments, and it spread news. It sought in particular to highlight whatever could contribute to the "glorification" of the Institute.



**Sommaire :** I. L'Archiconfrérie de Saint Joseph, au pensionnat des Frères, à Beauvais, p. 65. — II. Les Écoles chrétiennes dans le Levant, p. 73. — III. Les Frères à Puebla, p. 77. — IV. Le Collège de Memphis (E.-U.), p. 83. — V. Le tremblement de terre au Chili, p. 86. — VI. Le Scolasticat de Rhodes, p. 91. — VII. L'Association du Sacré-Cœur de Jésus, à l'école du Trastevere, à Rome, p. 102. — VIII. Les premières Écoles des Frères en Belgique, p. 108. — IX. Traduction anglaise de la Notice sur le Frère Exupérien, p. 114. — X. Chronique et Correspondance, p. 116.

### – Collegial Institute decisions

Brother Gabriel Marie continued to be at the head of the Institute. During this period, three General Chapters were held. We can summarise under two headings the essentials of what took place.

### *Reasons for calling Chapters*

We have already said how the calling of the 1905, 1907 and even 1913 Chapters was

connected with the 1904 law and the conditions governing the choice of delegates to these Chapters.

Two of these Chapters were called also in the place of an "Election Committee", to see to the replacement of Assistants who had either died or resigned. Even though this had not been planned in 1905, the Chapter went ahead with the replacement of Brother Exupérien by Brother Allais Charles (a future superior general). As for the other Assistants, the Superior General was of the opinion that they should remain until the completion of their mandate. In 1907, one of objectives fixed for the Chapter was the replacement of three Assistants. It was under these conditions that the following appointments were made: Brother Maurice Lucien (Gustave Lemoine), born in 1853, Brother Imier de Jésus (future superior general) and Brother Léandris (Jean Dhers Lachem), born in 1854. In 1913, the intention of the Superior was to have further elections of Assistants. His choice was made easier because all the current incumbents offered their resignations, and five of them made it known that they would refuse re-appointment. The Chapter replaced them by Brothers Godefroy des Anges (Léon Baufort), born in 1855, Séridon Isidore (Lin Pons), born in 1860, Anthime Louis (Louis Triborn), born in 1866, Petronius (Michel Peltram), born in 1846 in Austria, and Candido (Gerolamo Chiona), born in 1860 in Italy. Following the election of Brother Imier as Superior General, the blood brother of Brother Allais Charles, Brother Adrien (Adrien Petiot), born in 1867, was made Assistant. Two Assistants elected in 1911 by the Election Committee were confirmed in their position. These were Brothers Macaire Joseph (Joseph Louis De Witt), born in 1856 in Belgium, and Benezet Thomas (Roderich Kane), born in 1846 in Ireland.

### *Chapter deliberations*

In line with established practice, deliberations were centred on reports drawn up by commissions on the basis of notes sent in by the Brothers. The disadvantage of this way of doing things was that attention was centred on points "of observance", of varying importance, and consideration of more fundamental questions was neglected.

As in previous Chapters, we see the same reluctance to change things considered sacrosanct, or even simple practices. For example:

– Regarding formation, in 1905, a director of novices asked for a commentary on the Rule to be written: his suggestion was not accepted. The suggestion to introduce an elementary-level catechism diploma to go with the advanced level diploma created in 1897, was met by the objection that those who obtained this diploma would have to be dispensed from the reciting their catechism! Also in



1905, a request was made to extend the length of the scholasticate to three or even four years, and also to establish a more advanced scholasticate. Neither request was accepted. In 1913, several suggestions to extend the length of the novitiate received a negative response.

– Regarding **educational establishments**, the recurrent question of the teaching of Latin figured in numerous notes. They included also a new element: the suggestion to suppress secondary modern teaching in the large schools so that they could concentrate on more practical studies. Neither suggestion was accepted. In 1907, regarding school textbooks, while it was said they had enhanced the reputation of the Institute, some Brothers deplored the fact that those intended for primary schools or for civic and social studies were not of a sufficiently high standard to satisfy needs. In 1913, we find the same complaint.

– The question of **gratuity** was raised again in the deliberations. Among the propositions adopted by the 1905 Chapter, we find one which specified that, when a new school was opened and had to charge fees, a gratuitous school had to be attached to it as soon as possible (cf. ED 228-3/3 Reg., 146). In 1907, Brothers deplored the fact that in certain places there was a preference for fee-paying schools.

– Notes concerning the **religious habit** were always very numerous. In 1905, through a concern not to change the habit, the use of celluloid rabats or knitted socks in hot countries was not accepted. The same thing happened in 1907. The same request was made in 1913, and the use of celluloid rabats in hot countries was permitted.

There were some changes, however, and some new proposals:

- In 1905, a proposition calling on Brothers to learn foreign languages was favourably received.
- In 1907, a new proposition was made to reduce the length of mandates of elected Brothers. It was repeated in 1913.
- In 1907, the request was made “not to keep candidates who did not commit themselves by vows”.
- In 1913, concern was expressed regarding the health of young Brothers.

## – Contact of the Superior General with the Brothers

Apart from the normal procedures associated with government, Brother Gabriel Marie used the same means as his predecessors in his dealings with the Brothers. He established direct contact with some at retreats, which he presided from July 15<sup>th</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup>, and during his visits in France or to neighbouring countries. He reached all the Brothers by the circulars he frequently sent them, containing information or guidelines.

## *Information*

Information is frequently given regarding relations with the Holy See. We find the

Superior General telling of his meetings with Pope Pius X on such occasions as:

- September 24<sup>th</sup> 1904, when he spoke to the Pope about the situation of the Institute in France;
- November 12<sup>th</sup> 1906, when he thanked the Holy Father again for “the important letter of April 1905”, and for the authorisation to transfer the remains of the Holy Founder to Lembecq lez Hal;
- September 19<sup>th</sup> 1910, when the Pope had expressed his satisfaction more particularly regarding “the Association of Voluntary Catechists established in several towns”.

In addition, Brother Gabriel Marie did not fail in his circulars to draw the attention of the Institute to a variety of documents emanating from the Holy See. For example:

- a document regarding frequent communion, dated May 6<sup>th</sup> 1906;
- the “Letters Apostolic”, dated July 26<sup>th</sup> 1909, constituting the Archconfraternity of the Divine Child Jesus;
- the “Consistorial Decree”, dated June 29<sup>th</sup> 1912, regarding the Church’s position regarding the interpretation of Holy Scripture, and in which there figured “a certain Père Lagrange”;
- a “Papal Brief”, by which the Pope gave his support to the Institute in its dealings with bishops and parish priests regarding the recruitment of junior novices.

He informed the Institute also of favours granted to it, in particular, in the form of indulgences.

The Superior General stimulated the interest of the Brothers in matters connected with the Founder and the beatification causes of certain Brothers:

- on December 25<sup>th</sup> 1904, he announced the erection of the statue of St John Baptist de La Salle in St Peter’s in Rome;
- el 15 de agosto de 1908 presentaba al Hermano Scubilion y anunciaba que tras un examen de sus escritos nada impedía la prosecución de su causa;
- on May 15<sup>th</sup> 1912, he introduced Brother Scubilion to the Brothers, and announced that following an examination of his writings, nothing prevented the pursuit of his cause.

Other information concerned the Institute more directly. For example:

- on November 21<sup>st</sup> 1907, the journeys made by the Assistants to various parts of the world;
- on January 6<sup>th</sup> 1912, a text of the *Meditations for the time of retreat*, which included a plan of the meditations and instructions regarding their use.

### *Guidelines*

In his circulars, Brother Gabriel Marie rarely wrote at length on subjects concerning the religious or apostolic life of the Brothers. Sometimes he would include a text produced by someone else, such as the panegyric by Fr. Tesnière, the Superior General of

the Congregation of the Most Holy Sacrament, on the *Eucharistic mission of St John Baptist de La Salle* (May 15<sup>th</sup> 1906).

In circulars concerning the making of vows, such as that of June 25<sup>th</sup> 1905, the Superior General recalled the conditions relating to age and seniority which continued to be in force in the Institute for pronouncing vows, as well as the obligation for Directors and professed teaching Brothers to give their opinion regarding those requesting to make vows.

He insisted a great deal on the requirements of the catechetical mission of the Brothers. For example:

- on November 21<sup>st</sup>, in the circular on the catechism exam results, a whole section was devoted to the Institute catechism diploma;

- on August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1907, he announced the publication of the *Catechist's Manual*, the object of a Papal Brief.

The Superior General was also interested in the pedagogical competence of the Brothers. In 1909, he arranged to have published a *Manual of pedagogy for the use of the Christian Schools*, and a *Method for teaching reading*, in 1911. Translations and adaptations of these works were published in various languages (cf. GA EE 282/1).

Brother Gabriel Marie had been at the head of the Institute for 16 years when he offered his resignation at the 1913 Chapter. He believed that the circumstances which had prevented him from doing so earlier no longer existed. On the acceptance of his resignation, he immediately left the Mother House. He died in Paris on October 25<sup>th</sup> 1916.

### Generalate of Brother Imier de Jésus (1913-1923)

Brother Imier de Jésus was elected Superior by the 1913 Chapter. He had been responsible for various mission areas which had extended his knowledge of the Institute, as can be seen from his biographical notes.

#### – The Institute in the current circumstances

The period in which Brother Imier de Jésus was Superior General corresponded almost exactly with what has been called the First World War and the years that immediately followed it. He was very conscious of the situation, and the Institute was inevitably affected by it.

**Antoine LAFABRÈGUE** was born and baptised on January 9<sup>th</sup> 1855 at Sainte Radegonde (Aveyron). Orphaned by the age of 10, he was taken in charge by an uncle in Rodez. In this town, he attended successively two local authority schools run by the Brothers.

On August 19<sup>th</sup> 1869, he entered the novitiate in Rodez. At the age of 18, he obtained his "brevet de capacité" and the right to teach, which he did in a number of different schools. In 1883, he made his final vows. In September 1886, he was sent to the boarding school at Moulins, where he taught physical and natural sciences. In 1888, he was called to the Second Novitiate. In 1891, he was appointed Director at Chateauroux (Indre) and, two years later, of the boarding school at Moulins. In 1896, he became Visitor of the District of Moulins. After two years, he was sent to Ireland to learn English in preparation for his appointment as Provincial Visitor of the United States. In 1906, he was sent to visit the houses of the Institute in the Far East. At the 1907 Chapter, which he attended as an ex-officio member, he was elected Assistant, with responsibility for the Districts of England and Ireland, "India", Indochina, and Nantes and Quimper. In these last two Districts he put new heart into the Brothers. In the missionary countries, he concentrated in particular on setting up English-language houses of formation.



### *The Superior General and the course of events*

The year 1914 was marked by an event which concerned the Church. Pope Pius X died on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, and the conclave elected Pope Benedict XV. In the circular in which he spoke of this, the Superior told the Brothers he had had an audience with Pius X on July 15<sup>th</sup>.

The conflict which broke out at the beginning of August quickly involved Belgium which was invaded. The Superior General left Lembecq. In a circular dated October 2<sup>nd</sup> 1914 and sent from Lyon, he asked the Brothers to pray for the Institute. He also gave information about the situation of the Brothers in Belgium, Turkey and generally in the Middle East.

In his New Year circular dated January 1915, besides expressing his desire for peace,

he said that "trust which honours the Heavenly Father so much does not prevent us from feeling, sadly perhaps, the repercussions of the conflict". His thoughts were also with the "absent Brothers", involved in the fighting, suffering in hospitals or field ambulances, or killed. He ended by saying "let us pray! let us pray!". For as long as the war lasted, at the beginning of each year, the Superior General never failed to tell the Brothers what feelings these events should inspire in them:

– in 1916, he showed them how the Institute was involved in the war, and he added that it was "before Jesus Christ that religious should think about the war".

– in 1917, he wrote that "none of us has been insensitive to the upheavals that have shaken Europe, to the distress of so many souls called to the judgment seat of God, to the dangers of our fellow Brothers caught up in the fighting, to the losses and the affliction suffered by our Institute".

– on January 1st 1918, in answer to the seasonal greetings of the Brothers, he remarked on the fact that their letters often referred to "our trials".

### *Consequences of the events for the Institute*

At the outset of the conflict, Brothers from both sides of the conflict were called up\*, either to fight or to gather up and nurse the wounded. Apart from these Brothers, others also were affected by the war. This was especially true of Belgium, where:

- Belgian Brothers shared the anguish of the population in Dinant, Louvain...
- Brothers in the French schools at Erquelines and Momignies were expelled, as were the youngsters in formation from the houses at Warchin and Kain at the end of the war.

Elsewhere, Brothers were interned because they belonged to the opposing side: German Brothers suffered the same fate in Alexandria in Egypt.

Some schools were thrown into confusion by the departure of Brothers who had been called up or expelled from the country where they were working, as in the Ottoman Empire. Other schools were damaged, as in Rheims. In addition, houses for retired Brothers or boarding schools were taken over, at least in part, by military hospitals. Many Brothers shared the privations of the local population.

The running of the Institute was likewise disturbed. Cut off from certain Assistants stranded in various countries, the Superior General and a number of Assistants took up residence at Athis Mons, near Paris, from where they continued to govern the Institute. This explains why a register contains the minutes of the deliberations of the Regime Council for the years 1915 to 1919. Several Assistants died during the war, and election committees replaced them. In this way, the following appointments were made: in 1916,

Brothers Judore (Joseph Cornu), born in 1865, and Ismaelis (Alexandre Vernet), born in 1860; in 1917, Brother Médard Camille (Jules Liffrig), born in 1867 in Belgium.

The war or its consequences affected the Institute also in other ways. At the end of the war, the total of Brothers killed came to 300, and others had been wounded. German and Austrian Brothers suffered the consequences of the defeat of their countries, as we shall see. After the war, the Superior General was able to say to the Brothers in a circular dated January 6<sup>th</sup> 1920 that, with the return of peace, religious congregations faced many tasks. This was certainly the case for the Institute.

### – The Institute is given a heading to follow

After the Chapter which elected him, Brother Imier de Jésus, in a circular dated May 30<sup>th</sup> 1913, drew the attention of all the Brothers to what he had said to the capitulants regarding “the close and supernatural union which should reign among us” and the consensus of opinion “concerning everything which is essential for our lives as religious and apostles”. He urged them also to be “apostles of the catechism” and to ensure that their schools “were more than ever Christian and Christian in everything”. He did not neglect, therefore, any aspect of the lives of the Brothers.

He returned to these topics in the New Year circulars he addressed to the Institute, in which he developed one or other of them systematically and at length. In 1914, the theme was “The holiness of the religious vocation”; in 1915, “The apostolate of the religious educator”; in 1917, the circular proposed a certain number of examples of “holiness and apostolate according to the Rule”.

Other circulars informed the Institute of various occurrences which affected it:

- on February 16<sup>th</sup> 1919, the Brothers were informed about a “brief” sent by the Pope to the Institute to mark the 200th anniversary of the death of St John Baptist de La Salle;
- on July 25<sup>th</sup> 1922, they were told of the publication of a new edition of the Meditations of the Holy Founder.

Certain circulars reflected various concerns of the Superior General. For example, on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1921, he informed the Brothers of certain rescripts it had not been possible to bring to their attention earlier:

- one permitted the re-admission of secularised Brothers who had asked for dispensation from their vows, after “a six-month period of probation”;
- another dispensed junior novices who had remained at least a year after reaching the age of 14, from letters of reference.

The Superior General revealed also the efforts made in the Institute to apply the new *Code of Canon Law* which had been published on May 27<sup>th</sup> 1917. It was necessary, in particular, to adapt procedures in the Institute regarding vows. A circular dated January 10<sup>th</sup> 1921, said that, because of circumstances, the Holy See had been asked to allow the Institute to maintain current practice for three years, and this had been granted by a rescript dated February 7<sup>th</sup> 1918. This period having expired, the Regime had made a proposition after due deliberation, and it had been approved by a rescript from the Pope, dated July 23<sup>rd</sup> 1920. In the future, at the end of the novitiate, Brothers would pronounce vows for one year, which could be renewed at least once. From the age of 19, triennial vows (renewable once) would be made. Brothers could be admitted to perpetual vows from the age of 25, which brought practice into line with the Bull of Approbation (Art. VIII).

Brother Imier was particularly interested in the formation given at the various stages of the preparation of new Brothers. Like his predecessor, he wished to improve the pedagogical competence of the Brothers. In the GA, there is an exchange of correspondence with Brother Paul Joseph, dating from the first half of 1914, regarding a pedagogical review intended to replace *Éducation chrétienne* which had ceased to appear in 1910. However, the outbreak of war prevented further action (cf. EE 282/2,3).

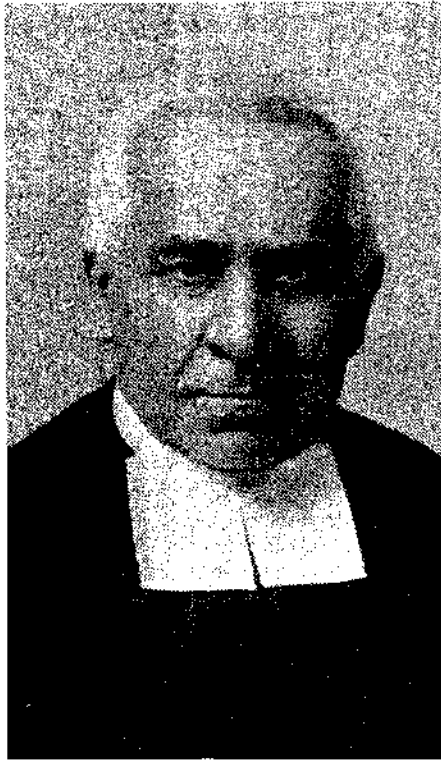
Ten years after the 1913 Chapter, the Superior General called another one for April 26<sup>th</sup> 1923. The intention of the Chapter was especially to elect a certain number of Assistants. What was unexpected, was the Superior's announcement that he was resigning. He gave as his reasons his state of health and the thinking of the Church regarding the duration of mandates. The Chapter accepted his resignation and passed a vote of thanks to Brother Imier, who immediately left the Chapter and went away. He died on December 26<sup>th</sup> 1927, in his 73<sup>rd</sup> year.

## The generalate of Brother Allais Charles (1923-1928)

### – The 1923 Chapter

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, the Chapter elected Brother Allais Charles as Superior of the Institute.

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, the Chapter set about re-electing the current Assistants, who included Brothers Anacletus (Joseph Prescher), born in 1872 in Germany, Arèse Casimir (Noël Valentin Bression), born in 1862, who had been chosen by the Election Committee in 1920. The Chapter then appointed Brothers Junien Victor (Auguste Détharré), born in 1864, Abban Philip (Philippe Gagnon) born in 1871 in Canada, Mandellus (Joseph



Born on November 14<sup>th</sup> 1858 at Bas en Basset (Haute Loire), Jean Petiot was baptised the same day. He attended the Brothers' school from 1865 to 1872. He entered the junior novitiate in Paris in 1874, and the novitiate in 1876. On leaving the novitiate, he was sent to teach at the juniorate. In 1879, he began his stay at the École de St Nicolas at Vaugirard, where he progressed through the ranks, finally becoming Sub-Director. Appointed to St Nicolas at Igny as Pro-Director, he was promoted to Director in 1896. Three years later, he became one of the three auxiliary Visitors of the District of Paris. In addition to his normal responsibilities, he was also Sub-Director of the Second Novitiate for 3 years. At the 1905 Chapter, he was elected Assistant. With this post came special responsibility for the Districts of Paris and Le Puy, of the new District of Mexico, and later of the new District of Cuba. In 1913, he was given responsibility for the Districts of Montreal, Besançon, Chambéry and Caen. From 1920 onwards, he was responsible only for the first two. In particular, "he was greeted in Canada as a messenger from God" and "as everywhere, he won over hearts by his simplicity and cordiality", we read in his obituary notice (p. 181 and 189).

Bourque), born in 1873 in Canada, Gordien Désiré (François Xavier Aubonard), born in 1879, Athanase Émile (Louis Ritimann), born in 1880, Pedro Luis (Ricardo Barrenco), born in 1873 in Spain, and Nivard Joseph (Joseph Léotier), born in 1877. The Regime was greatly strengthened by its new composition.

As was usual, the Chapter set up commissions. From their reports we can pick out the following points:

- it was proposed that serving Brothers with perpetual vows could make the same vows as teaching Brothers. This would make it possible to do away with the distinction between the two categories of Brothers, especially when elections to the General Chapter took place (ED 228-4/Reg. 2, 16);

- the administration commission requested the Regime to reside in Rome, the Assistants to see their Districts every 3 or 5 years, the Superiors to have the same nationality as their inferiors, and the prescriptions of the Bull concerning the duration of mandates to be applied (id. 5).

An important task undertaken by the Chapter was to bring the text of the Common



Rules and the Rules of Government into line with the new code of Canon Law. But the Chapter was above all dominated by an unforeseen event: during the 16<sup>th</sup> session, the Superior announced that he was going to read out “a serious document from the Holy See”. The document in question was a letter from the Secretary of State, dated April 17<sup>th</sup> 1923, and addressed to Brother Imier de Jésus. In the letter it said that for the reasons which were given:

“His Holiness believed that the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools should henceforth extend its teaching to classical studies even for well-off classes. The Sovereign Pontiff does not intend, very explicitly, that, in addition to this, anything else should be changed in the nature of the Institute, which must remain lay, as its Founder had wished...” (ED 228-4/Reg. 1, 197).

In the minutes of the session, we read: “The Institute submitted immediately to the orders of our Holy Father the Pope, and the Chapter Assembly appointed a commission of 12 members to prepare the modifications to be made to chapter XVIII of the Rule, so as to restructure it in a spirit of total obedience to the prescriptions of the Holy See”. The Chapter accepted the modifications proposed by the commission. And so, the Latin question we considered earlier on was finally laid to rest. Regarding the letter sent to Brother Imier, his obituary notice raises the following question: “was there a connection between the letter and the decision to resign?” Probably yes, given the role Brother Imier had been called upon to play during the “Latin question”.

### – Leading the Institute

When he was elected, Brother Allais Charles told the capitulants that he had thought his age would spare him the task of being Superior General. Despite that, he proved to be active and led the Institute wisely.

### *Particular characteristics*

In November 1923, the new Superior went to Rome to see the Pope. On his way there, he stopped in the South of France, and at Bordighera and Genoa. He undertook other journeys of this kind, but what was most characteristic in this connection, was the fact that Brother Allais Charles visited countries outside Europe which had never before received a visit from a Superior General:

- in 1925, he went to the United States, Mexico and to the District of the West Indies;
- in 1926, he visited the Brothers in Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt;
- in 1927, he went to Central America, Ecuador and Colombia.

Among the decisions made by the Regime council, we can mention:

- one concerning the suppression of the scholasticate at the Mother House, on March 6<sup>th</sup> 1924. It seemed preferable for the young Brothers to be given this formation in the countries they were destined for;
- one regarding holidays taken at home by Brothers working abroad or by junior novices, in January 1925;
- one, made in April 1927, stipulating that, on the retirement of Directors of houses of formation, a report should be presented to them on the perseverance of young Brothers.

### *Points for reflection and information*

Like his predecessor, at the beginning of the year, Brother Allais Charles would offer the Brothers some subject to think about. For most of the years he was Superior General, he gave a commentary on a text reminding the Brothers of their religious commitments:

- in 1924, he chose the External Supports of the Institute, and in 1925, the Interior Supports;
- in 1926, he commented on the Promises made at the taking of the habit, and in 1927, on the formula of vows.

In other circulars, he liked to offer as models Brothers whose cause for beatification had been introduced in Rome:

- on January 30<sup>th</sup> 1924, he gave a biographical sketch of Brother Mutien Mary, and on August 21<sup>st</sup> 1925, he informed the Brothers of the progress of this cause;
- he did the same regarding Brother Benildus on January 26<sup>th</sup> 1926 and March 15<sup>th</sup> 1927. In this circular, Brother Alpert was mentioned also.

Other subjects treated include:

- recruitment in the Institute, June 24<sup>th</sup> 1926;
- the “good government of religious houses” or “the qualities and virtues of a good superior” in two circulars intended for Visitors and Directors.

The Superior General also drew the attention of the Brothers to more well-known happenings:

- in 1924, with the Assistants, he planned how to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the approbation of the Institute by the Bull on January 26<sup>th</sup> 1725, and he informed the Brothers about this;
- in a circular dated January 26<sup>th</sup> 1926, he announced the forthcoming beatification of Brother Solomon with that of the martyrs of September 1792 in Paris. On November 1<sup>st</sup>, he gave a description of the ceremony.

The death of Brother Allais Charles on May 24<sup>th</sup> 1928 made it necessary to call a

General Chapter. This Chapter marked the beginning of what can be considered as a new phase in the history of the Institute.

## Conclusion

To try to give an account of matters concerning the Centre of the Institute spanning a quarter of a century in a relatively succinct, but also complete and significant manner, is something of a gamble. No doubt the account should have been more summary, identifying the major trends, following the example of Brother Pedro Gil in No 4 of the *Lasallian Studies series*. In the present state of our knowledge of these years and the part played by the Brothers - this is the first time a study has been attempted of this period involving the whole of the Institute - this was difficult to do. This is simply a sketch, and needs, therefore, to be followed up by a study which is broader in scope and more detailed.

On the other hand, the need to treat the present subject independently of the one considered in the previous chapter could make us lose sight of the fact that these events were concomitant. No doubt, connections were made at the time between the different things that happened in France in 1904 and in the years that followed, and during the First World War. But this is not enough to dispel the impression that the running of the Institute was in some way disconnected from the events which, however, affected it. Obviously, it was necessary to ensure that the Institute continued to function, but should not more account have been taken of what was at stake as a result of current events? But, as always, with hindsight, it is easy to ask such questions.



## 7. EXPATRIATION

Expatriation, that is, the departure for another country of Brothers who could no longer teach in France, was one of the solutions envisaged even before the law of July 7<sup>th</sup> 1904 was passed. It took different forms. Its implementation was subject to a number of conditions involving both Superiors and Brothers. This question is worth considering, coming as it does after what we said in the preceding chapter, and before turning our attention to the presence of the Brothers all over the world in the period between 1904 and 1928.

### Forms taken by expatriation

When the threat hanging over the Institute at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century became more specific, expatriation was seen as the solution to favour in order to enable the Brothers to pursue unhindered both their religious life and their apostolate.

Also, the departure of Brothers for other countries had been organised even before the law was passed. Those involved were mostly young Brothers in formation. And so it was, that on February 20<sup>th</sup> 1904, 4 non-teaching Brothers\*, 19 scholastics, 7 novices and 4 junior novices from the District of Besançon left for Canada (DFA Besançon deposit, 71-55).

In the first year the law was applied, Brothers who had become available left for other countries. To return to the example of the District of Besançon: 49 Brothers, 3 novices and 2 junior novices left for Canada on July 30<sup>th</sup> 1904; on September 24<sup>th</sup>, they were joined by another 21 Brothers. The table given on page 137 gives us an overall view of the departures for other countries, which took place in the course of the first year the law was applied. As more Brothers became available in the years that followed, and especially in 1908, there were further departures, and this continued up to 1914.

During this period, expatriation took two forms. In the first case, Brothers coming from France were asked to join existing Districts or those being constituted. These Districts could be far from France or near. In the second case, Brothers left their country to set up houses in neighbouring countries, but these remained dependent on French Districts, whose continued existence, however, was not put at risk by the gradual diminution of the number of their Brothers.

In this supplement our intention is to provide examples accompanied by figures. These figures are based on the annual statistical returns which can be found in the GA, or on documents from the archives of the former Districts of France. We shall often refer to the report made by each of

the Assistants in 1909. These different reports presented at the May Regime Council meeting, are reproduced in the *Register of Regime Council deliberations*. The text runs to 13 pages and is entitled: "Summary of what happened between January 1904 and the month of May 1909: by Assistant".

## – Brothers joining other Districts

### *Existing Districts*

Certain Assistants were responsible for French Districts as well as for Districts created in other countries, which made the transfer easier of Brothers from France to these countries. For example:

- the Belgian Districts, for which Brother Madir Joseph was responsible, received Brothers from the District of Cambrai, dependent at the time on the same Assistant. In 1904, 19 Brothers were transferred together with 17 junior novices, 7 novices, 4 postulants (FDA, Annappes deposit, *Essai d'Historique du Distict de Cambrai*).

- Brother Viventien Aimé, who was responsible for various Districts in Latin America as well as for the Districts of Clermont and Rheims, organised the departure of Brothers from these two Districts as well as from others. In the GA (DD 287-1 & 2), we find envelopes on which are written the dates of departure, the number of travellers, their destination, and containing the requests of the Brothers concerned, and the consent of the parents of the youngest. We see, for example, that from July 1904 to December 1908, there were 30 journeys, involving some 220 Brothers, travelling to Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Nicaragua and Cuba, not to mention a number which took place later.

- Brother Pamphile was responsible for the District of Constantinople as well as for Districts in the area around Lyons. 40 Brothers from the District of Lyons, 43 from that of Grenoble and 21 from that of St Étienne, were expatriated to the District of Constantinople between 1904 and 1908 (GA DD 274).

The Assistants did not send Brothers exclusively to the Districts that depended on them.

- In Brother Pamphile's report in May 1909, we find, after the mention of the 105 Brothers sent to the District of Constantinople, "a list of Brothers sent to other Districts" indicating the following: Alexandria-Jerusalem, 26; Algeria, 13; Belgium, 11; Austria, 4; Central America and Lembecq 20, plus 6 junior novices; United States, 10; India, 7; England, 3; Spain, 2; Switzerland for Savoy, 2. In total 246.

- Of the 156 Brothers from the District of Nantes who went abroad between 1904 and 1915, 69 went to Great Britain, 18 to Indochina, 13 to Chile (these three Districts depending on Brother Imier de Jésus), 11 Brothers plus 18 scholastics and 14 novices left for the United States, 5 for Spain, 8 for Australia, 16 for Cuba, 10 for Mexico, 2 for Peru, 3 for Belgium, and 1 for Egypt (FDA, Talence deposit, CI 9).

– According to Brother Réticius's report in 1909, by this time, the 151 Brothers from the District of Besançon sent to Canada, had been joined by 36 from Le Puy, 18 from Paris, 10 from Le Mans, 4 from Caen and 1 from Quimper.

Also, when Assistants were responsible solely for French Districts, Brothers from these Districts could move to those dependent on other Assistants, outside France. For example:

– A statistical return dated December 31st 1908 mentions that 44 Brothers from the District of St Omer "have been transferred to other Districts" (abroad) (GA DD 275-1), whereas the Assistant Brother Maurice Lucien had not yet been made responsible for any.

– For the District of Chambéry a "list of Brothers released to Districts abroad" drawn up in December 1905 gives a total of 59 Brothers (*same reference*), whereas Brother Péral Étienne was responsible solely for French Districts.

### *Districts being constituted*

The expatriation of French Brothers made it possible to respond to new appeals for Brothers from various countries:

– In Panama, negotiations begun earlier were concluded successfully, and of the Brothers sent to Latin America by Brother Viventien Aimé on July 11<sup>th</sup> 1904, six were destined for Panama. He sent 4 others on August 11<sup>th</sup>. Other Brothers were sent to the same country in the course of subsequent visits.

– The exodus of French Brothers made it possible to respond to the requests for Brothers made by Mexico, which up to then had not met with success. In November 1905, three Brothers left France for Puebla, and were joined by a dozen others at the end of the year (Br Alban, 328). In his 1909 report, Brother Allais Charles, who was responsible for this new District, listed 11 communities with a total of 122 Brothers.

– In 1905, the Brothers arrived in Cuba. The foundation was made by Brothers coming from Canada several of whom were expatriates from France. Brother Allais Charles's 1909 report noted that 11 Brothers had been sent to Cuba in 1905 to start up a college in Vedado and a free school in Belen.

– In January 1907, Brothers from the District of Cambrai - and of Belgium -left for Brazil. Others followed in subsequent years. The houses in Brazil remained attached to the District of Cambrai until 1909, when they were formed into a new District. In his 1909 report, Brother Maurice Lucien noted that in Brazil there were 4 houses and 40 Brothers, 22 of whom came from the District of Cambrai.

### – The creation of French establishments in neighbouring countries

Expatriation took another form also. Sooner or later after the 1904 law was passed, some French Districts opened scholastic establishments depending on them on foreign soil. This process was easier for Districts bordering on frontiers. In some cases, this led to the transfer abroad of almost all the active Brothers of a District.

### *Transfer of existing establishments*

This involved in particular large boarding schools, because the new establishments could accommodate all the pupils during their schooling and because, thanks to the fees paid by pupils, the establishments had the necessary resources. The following table gives some idea of these transfers.

Host country	Former establishment	New location
Belgium	Passy-Lille St Pierre	Froyennes
“”	Le Quesnois	Givry lez Mons
“”	Roubaix (day boarding)	Estaimpuis
“”	Rheims (boarding)	Momignies
“”	Longuyon	Hachy
“”	Rheims (Arts & Métiers)	Erquelines
Netherlands	Saint Omer	Sluis or l'Écluse
Switzerland	La Motte-Servolex	Rolle (shore of Lake Geneva)
Italy	Marseilles (Saint Charles)	Bordighera (Liguria)
Spain	Béziers (Immaculée Conception)	Figueras (Catalonia)
“”	Toulouse (St Joseph)	Lès (Val d'Aran)
“”	Bayonne (St Bernard)	San Sebastian (Guipuzcoa)

### *– Taking charge of new establishments*

In a certain number of Districts, especially in those with few “secularised” Brothers, Brothers made available by the gradual application of the 1904 law opened new scholastic establishments in countries bordering on France. To the Districts of France can be added that of Algeria affected in 1905 by the application of the 1904 law.

#### **In Italy:**

- in 1904, the District of Marseilles opened houses in Sicily, at Noto and Catania. In the latter town, the Brothers took charge of a hostel caring for abandoned children;
- between 1906 and 1908, other establishments belonging to this District were opened in Sicily and Liguria.

#### **In Spain:**

- The District of Béziers opened establishments in Catalonia. In his 1909 report to the Regime, Brother Louis de Poissy mentioned 16 houses of which 4 were quite large.



– In the Balearic Islands, a more or less new District was founded by that of Avignon (LS 1, 67). In his 1909 report, Brother Périol Étienne mentions 9 houses including a novitiate.

-- The District of Toulouse multiplied establishments beyond the Pyrenees. In his 1909 report, Brother Léandris speaks of 10 houses including a novitiate.

– In the same report, this Assistant mentioned 9 scholastic establishments run by the Brothers of the District of Bayonne, and 2 by Brothers from the District of Bordeaux, over the Spanish border. The latter District founded subsequently other establishments there.

– The District of Algeria opened houses in the Canary Islands.

### **In Switzerland:**

– Brothers from the District of Chambéry, already back in this country with the opening of a boarding school at Rolle, helped the founder of a large institution at Immensee in the German-speaking part of the country. They had houses also in two places in the French-speaking part, as Brother Périol Étienne informs us in his 1909 report.

– In the same part of Switzerland, the District of Lyons took charge of an orphanage at Montet Broye.

### **In Malta:**

– The District of Algeria, which already had a house there, opened some others.

## **The opening of houses of formation outside France**

After the events of 1904, a number of Districts lost no time in opening houses of formation in countries bordering on France, with a view to ensuring a supply of Brothers for the establishments set up in these countries. After a few years, there grew also the desire to help establishments run by “secularised” Brothers. In the same context, other houses were opened to train Brothers destined to work in far distant countries. As the Brothers trained in these latter houses often came from France, they can be taken into account here. All the more so, as in certain cases, French Districts often sent their own formation candidates there.

### *Houses for French Districts*

Districts which had set up establishments abroad, and even others, opened houses of formation outside France. The following table will enable us to see the overall picture, even if it does not indicate all the changes which affected these houses in the course of a quarter of a century, especially after the 1914-1918 war, when certain formation groups returned to France. The in bold formation groups are those which began functioning on the date indicated.

Host country	Districts				Location
Great Britain	Nantes	jun	nov.	sch	Les Vauxbelets (Guernsey) 1905
""			nov.		Dover 1912
""	Quimper	jun	nov.	sch	Vimiera (Guernsey) 1906
Luxembourg	Rheims & others	jun	nov.		Bettange sur Mess 1904
Belgium	Paris-Le Puy	jun		sch	Lembecq 1905; Warchin 1912
""			nov.		Hal 1913
""	Cambrai	jun			Kain 1910; St Genois 1922
Switzerland	Besancon	jun			Neuchâtel 1912
Italy	Chambéry	jun		sch	Frassineto-Po (Piedmont) 1911
""	Marseilles	jun	nov.	sch	Loano (Liguria) 1904
Spain	Avignon	jun	nov.	sch	Pont d'Inca (Balearic Is) 1906
""	Bayonne-Bordeaux	jun	nov.	sch	Zarauz 1904; Irun 1909 (Gipuzcoa)
""	Béziers	jun			Los Hostalets (Catalonia) 1905
""	Toulouse		nov.	sch	Lès (Val d'Aran) 1905
		jun			Calaf 1908; Mollerusa 1912 (id)

### *Houses for missionary Districts*

The 1904 law authorised the existence of novitiates in France intended for the formation of Brothers destined to work in countries under French influence, but in order to be admitted, candidates had to be at least 21 years of age. Two of these novitiates were opened a few years later at Caluire, near Lyons, and at Talence, near Bordeaux. Formerly, the junior novices and novices destined for the Middle East missions, who had had to leave St Maurice l'Exil, had found refuge in Piedmont: at Biella (1904) then at Favria (1905). In 1908, the novitiate was transferred to Rivalta, and a juniorate was opened there for the District of Constantinople. At certain times, these houses took in also young men destined for French Districts, such as those in the Lyons area or that of Chambéry. Up to the First World War, scholastics destined for the Middle East continued to go to Rhodes. In 1908, the District of Clermont opened a house at Premia de Mar (Catalonia) to prepare young men from France and Spain for the apostolate in Latin America. It was there that the saint, Brother Miguel (Febres Cordero) died in 1910. In 1921, a missionary novitiate was opened at Lembecq lez Hal.

### *The process of expatriation*

Expatriation was considered in the Institute as the best way of "safeguarding vocations". But in 1904, it would have been utopian to think it was a possible solution for

the 9,000 or so active Brothers in France. How could such a large number of Brothers be integrated with just under 5,000 Brothers spread out over the rest of the world? In practice, the implementation of the process depended finally on a certain number of conditions, involving both Superiors and the Brothers concerned.

### – Conditions involving Superiors

In 1903, a survey had been made by the Superiors to ascertain how many French Brothers could be received by “foreign” Districts. On the basis of this, a scheme was drawn up for the *pro rata* distribution of Brothers from each District, the details of which can be found in LS 2, p. 16. It involved 2,000 Brothers, but the scheme remained on paper, except perhaps where possible destinations were concerned.

When the question had actually to be faced, the response was conditioned by the fact that, while all Superiors were in favour of expatriation, not all were favourable to the same degree. Several thought it was not the only possible solution. For example, Brother Viventien Aimé, one of the most active in the organisation of departures for foreign parts, allowed “secularisations” to take place, as well as the creation of French establishments outside France. As for those most in favour of expatriation, they had to bear in mind a number of facts: not all the Brothers were prepared to go to other countries, and a certain number had left the Institute. Brother Réticius sent half of the Brothers in the District of Besançon to Canada, but it seems that he was not able to send any more.

### – Conditions involving the Brothers

For expatriation to produce the results the Superiors expected from it, it was necessary for a sufficient number of Brothers to share the same views and volunteer to leave, or accept an invitation to do so. In practice, it seems that many Brothers prepared to go abroad shared the views of the Superiors. This can be seen from letters written to Brother Viventien Aimé by Brothers before leaving for various countries:

– in January 1904, Brother Hélin Marcel wrote from Billon (Puy de Dôme): “After prayer and reflection, I ask you to save my vocation, and therefore to send me abroad with the first group that leaves” (GA DD 287-1 dos. 3);

– on August 10<sup>th</sup> 1904, Brother Ariston wrote from Troyes: “As I did not attend the retreat, I was not able to tell you once again of the wish I have often expressed not to abandon my holy habit... That is why I ask you to be so good as to put my name down on the list of Brothers being expatriated over the border, or for expatriation in any form” (id. dos. 7);

– on September 28<sup>th</sup> 1904, Brother Hermanfroy informed his Assistant of the letter he had sent

to the mayor of the commune where he was, to express his regret to the latter that he had to leave the "so friendly population of Corrèze". In the letter he explained his motives for leaving: "As God's cause and that of souls comes before my personal satisfaction, I have already asked my superiors to make use of me however and wherever they wish. I am now in their hands" (id. dos. 8).

It was necessary also for parents - at least in the case of Brothers who had not yet reached their majority (21 years of age) - to give their consent by filling in and signing a form to be sent to the Superiors.

The motives of Brothers prepared to go to houses opened just across the frontier must have been equally strong because, at least initially, they had to leave their country not knowing whether they would ever be able to return. However, when these Brothers arrived in the establishments to which they had been sent, they did not feel disorientated, seeing that they found the same system there they had known in France. The greatest risk they ran was locking themselves away in a world closed in on itself.

On the other hand, Brothers who had to join communities belonging to other countries had to acclimatise to a different situation. This acclimatisation was more or less difficult according to the persons involved. It was conditioned also by the situation the Brothers found when they arrived. In practice, it was not the same thing to find oneself in a country where the Brothers had already been for some time, as it was to come to a country where the Brothers were still not known. And living with Brothers of the same nationality was not the same as living with those of a different nationality.

A priori, it was easier for expatriates to settle in countries where French was spoken. If it was not, it was indispensable for them to learn the language of the country. This was the reason for introducing the use of Spanish in the Talence scholasticate before its closure and, under the cover of a "colonial novitiate", for organising a Spanish course in Clermont for Brothers destined to go to Latin America. At Annappes, in the District of Cambrai, Brothers going to Brazil were brought together to learn Portuguese. This learning of languages was all the more necessary as teaching had to be given in these languages. Initially, what happened - as a Brother who had lived a long time in Cuba loved to relate - was that pupils would say to him: "Brother, you don't say it like that..."

On their departure, the Brothers leaving felt bitter at being banished from their country, but at the same time they were filled with the desire to make their country known and loved; they wished also the country they were going to profit from their competence and experience. But they had also to be prepared to serve it in an effacing and disinterested manner.

1904

## Consentement.

Je soussigné

demeurant à (Commune)

Canton de

Département de

donne à mon fils

né le

l'autorisation de s'expatrier, même dans les  
pays hors d'Europe, pour y suivre librement  
la carrière de son choix.

Fait à le

(Signature)

Brothers who were too sure of themselves ran the risk of not being made very welcome. It is true that particular circumstances could influence the way in which expatriated Brothers were perceived when they came to a place. We are justified in thinking, for example, that the decision of Brother Réticius to replace most of the Directors in the District of Montreal by French Brothers, and to appoint one of them Visitor in 1908, was not the most obvious thing to do to help those affected by these decision to accept the numerous Brothers transplanted from France to Canada.

Despite their good intentions, it happened that some Brothers did not adapt or had an unfortunate experience. For example, it was because this had happened to one of his other sons, that the father of Brother Génébaud Joseph opposed his departure for Latin America, but allowed him to go to Spain (DD 287-2 dos. 13). Also, difficulties encountered,

and the wear and tear of time, caused other expatriated Brothers to leave the Institute. We see in the statistical returns dated August 1<sup>st</sup> 1929, that, of the 156 Brothers from the District of Besançon shown as having left for Canada, 24 had left (FDA Besançon deposit, 71-57).

#### — Extent of expatriation

The departure of exiled French Brothers ended at the latest in 1914 when war broke out. In fact, the war obliged a certain number of expatriated Brothers to return to France. After the war, some of these remained, and others also began to return. And so in 1919 we see that in the District of Besançon, Brothers returning from Canada began again to take charge of schools, wearing civilian clothes.

Finally, how many Brothers went abroad as a result of the 1904 law? We can at least try to arrive at a figure.

In George Rigault's text published in No 1 of the Lasallian Studies series, we read: "The circular reporting on the 1905 Chapter puts at 4,000, in round figures, the total number of Brothers from France who, by this date, had already left for foreign countries" (p. 66). We could suppose that the Superior General was well informed. However, it is not sure that he was, because, in the same year, he had sent a questionnaire to the Visitors of French Districts to find out what the exact situation was. An analysis of the answers received reveals quite different figures regarding expatriated Brothers: the total number of Brothers in French houses abroad and Brothers integrated in Districts in other countries comes to about 1,600. Elsewhere in G. Rigault's text, we read: "Statistics for April 1907, kept in the Generalate archives, give the number of Brothers in French communities abroad as 1,019 (not counting the novices)". From these statistics (DD 284-2/1), which are reproduced in the form they were given, it appears that, if we leave out the number of Brothers given for the Mother House, which does not enter into this study, we arrive at a total of slightly under 900 Brothers. To know how many Brothers had been expatriated, at a comparable date, we would need to work out how many Brothers joined "foreign" Districts.

The table on pages 150-151, referring to 12 French Districts, gives the figure as 966 Brothers in this situation in 1907 or 1908, out of a total of 6,149 Brothers. By extrapolation, this gives us a figure of 1,650 Brothers out of a total of 10,432 listed in the 1905 census. This would mean for the two categories of expatriated Brothers a total of about 2,250. After 1908, other Brothers included in the 1905 census also were expatriated but, inevitably, the number of those going abroad gradually diminished. In the final analysis, according to the calculations we have made here, the number of expatriated Brothers would seem to be nearer to 3,000 than to 4,000. Further research would be needed for a better grasp of the question.

## Conclusion

The results of expatriation did not perhaps live up to the expectations of the Superiors. But, given the situation, could they have been better?

We can, however, consider the overall results as positive. Expatriation certainly helped Brothers to remain faithful to their vocation without having to encounter the difficulties experienced by "secularised" Brothers. On the other hand, they had to accept being far

J. M. J.

J. B<sup>c</sup>

April 1907

Brothers from French Districts in French communities abroad, not counting novices and junior novices.

Districts	Houses	Brothers	Districts	Houses	Brothers
Avignon	5	64	Nantes	1	35
Bayonne	9	87	Paris	1	107
Besançon	1	9	Le Puy	"	"
Béziers	14	116	Quimper	1	27
Bordeaux	"	"	Reims	4	121
Cacn	"	"	Rodez	"	"
Cambrai	1	12	Saint-Etienne	"	"
Chambéry	5	57	Saint-Omer	"	"
Clermont	1	4	Toulouse	10	106
Lyon	"	"	Tunis-Algérie	3	22
Le Mans	"	"	Lembecq	1	34
Marseille	1	2	{ Anciens		
Moulins	8	129	{ Scol.		
"	"	"	{ Junior Nov.	10	
			Total	66	1019

Of the 66 establishments, 9 are houses of formation.

from their families and leaving their country. For the majority, this helped to strengthen them and put them into contact with situations different from those they were used to.

As for the Brothers who ran establishments set up outside France, they are no less deserving of praise because, when they left their country, they did not know whether they would be able to return. From a personal and apostolic point of view, their departure proved to be as beneficial for them, as it was for those who joined new Districts. On the institutional level, especially where large establishments were concerned, the Brothers probably fell prey to the temptation of living in a "closed circuit", which possibly made it more difficult for them to come to terms with the conditions under which religious and apostolic life had to be lived in France, when this became possible again without any hindrance.

Expatriation also enabled the Institute to extend its international dimension. It had already been present in 40 or so countries, and the arrival of French Brothers added another half a dozen to the total. Even if the initial formation of these Brothers was often rudimentary, the experience they acquired helped them to create works which met the needs of the country where they were established. As for those who returned to France at the end of the First World War, they helped to relaunch the Institute in their country of origin, and to give young people the desire to join them in the Institute. A good example of this is what happened in the District of Saint-Étienne when Brother René Guillaumin returned from Turkey. Sometimes, returning Brothers restored life to a District, as in the case of Besançon.



## Chap. 8 - THE INSTITUTE IN THE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN STATES (1904 - 1928)

### Introduction

In the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, European States still bore the marks of the ideological conflicts which had characterised the previous century, and suffered from the increase in mutual rivalry which eventually led to the outbreak of the 1914-1918 War. The conclusion of the conflict brought with it changes which profoundly altered some of these States.

As was the case throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Institute was affected in both a positive and a negative way by the fluctuation in policies pursued by different countries. In many countries, it had to bear also with conflicts arising from international rivalry.

Within this general framework, we shall examine the situation of the Institute in the various countries concerned, in the period from 1904 to 1928. We shall do this following the chronological order of the dates on which the Brothers first established themselves in a country or a group of countries. We shall mention only very briefly the establishment of French houses outside France, as this was treated with sufficient detail in the supplement on expatriation. We shall not concern ourselves with Switzerland or Malta whose Institute houses were dependent respectively on either France or Germany, or on the District of Algeria.

### Italy

Since the unification of the country in 1870, Italian politics had been characterised by hostility towards the Church and by the abstention of Catholics from political life (see p. 61). This situation continued until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For example, in 1907, a violent defamatory campaign was launched against priests and religious, especially against the Salesians (cf. GA ND 102/2). As far as the Institute was concerned, however, the years preceding the First World War were propitious.

In the District of Rome, the Brothers took charge of various establishments: in 1905, *Collegio Sant'Angelo* in Fano; in 1906, *Collegio de La Salle* in Benevento; in 1907, the boys' section in a school for the children of prisoners in Pompei.

The District of Turin was given a new lease of life in 1900 by the canonisation of the Holy Founder and a return to the wearing of the habit. Houses were reopened or opened within the confines of the former District: in 1906, the *Istituto San Giuseppe* was opened at Vercelli, and the

*Artigianelli* institute in Genoa. Also in 1906, houses were opened outside the bounds of the former District: the *Istituto Gonzaga* in Milan, and the *Oratorio* in Venice for children in State education. The Brothers here earned the appreciation of the future Pope Pius X. After the conquest of Cyrenian Libya by Italy, the Brothers agreed to open schools in Tripoli in 1912, and Bengazi in 1913. The house of formation established at Grugliasco, just outside Turin, continued to maintain its numbers.

In 1915, Italy joined the war on the side of the western allies, despite its alliance with Germany and Austria. It was the beginning of a time of trial for the country. The Brothers were affected: if they were of the right age and able-bodied, they were called up for military service. As a consequence, there was an upheaval in their schools, some becoming military hospitals. The Brothers withdrew from the *Oratorio* in Venice.

In 1919, when the peace Treaty of Versailles was signed, Italy considered it had been treated unjustly: Mussolini would speak of a "*vittoria mutilata*". This feeling fuelled nationalism which favoured the rise of fascism. In 1922, Mussolini came to power. Catholics began once again to take part in politics. Some of them supported the nationalist movement. Others laid the foundations of the Christian Democrat party. The moment seemed to have come for the rescue of Christian institutions. The education law of 1923 put all candidates for State diplomas on the same footing. The same law made Latin the basis of teaching in secondary schools and in teacher training colleges.

The Institute came out of the war weakened: some Brothers had been killed, others were invalids, and some had left the Institute; recruitment had slowed down. The political climate, however, was more favourable. Secondary schools in particular benefitted from the advantages coming from the 1923 law. But they had also to conform to the directives of the same law regarding the teaching of the classics. The removal of the prohibition to study and teach Latin by the Chapter of 1923 came at a very opportune time, unless, of course, it was partly a consequence of the law. At the same time, it enabled the Brothers to study without constraint for the diplomas needed for teaching, including at primary school level, and made it possible for some to go to university. At this same period, Brother Alessandro Alessandrini, founder of the *Associazione Educativa Italiana*, held negotiations with Mussolini regarding the teaching of religion in State schools. He was appointed the official inspector for this aspect of education. In addition, Italian Brothers took charge of State establishments intended to spread Italian civilisation in the Dodecanese Islands, annexed finally by Italy, as well as in Greece.



The Institute in Italy in 1932: 42 Houses, 615 Brothers, 9,407 Pupils

## Belgium and Holland

### – Belgium

At the conclusion of the “school wars” (1879-1884), elections brought the Catholics back into power, where they stayed until the 1914-1918 War. The Liberal party went into decline while the Belgian Workers party grew stronger. The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a time of great economic change in which Belgium took its place among the leading industrial powers. There was plenty of work for young people, supported by a great increase in vocational training. Side-by-side with the high society of financiers and industrialists, there was an emerging lower middle-class, avid for social advancement, and a working proletariat seeking to escape from its social status, sponsored by socialists and Christian democrats. All social classes saw schools as the key to a better future.

In a climate of relative peace where education was concerned, Catholic schools formed a network of non-State schools, which was as extensive and varied as that run by the State. This situation favoured the development of the Institute.

In 1913, statistics for these Districts give the following figures: in the South, 505 Brothers; in the North, 716. This latter figure included the French Brothers attached to these Districts, but not those in French establishments established on Belgium soil since 1904, nor those in the Mother House, or the German Brothers in Grand Halleux.

Following the division of the Lasallian Province of Belgium into two Districts in 1893, these Districts maintained joint houses of formation, infirmary and “*procure*”. In 1897, the North District had acquired the site of a former abbey at Groot Bijgaarden, to which it had successively transferred the provincialate, novitiate and infirmary. The decision to speed up the autonomy of these two Districts was taken on April 6th 1908, at a meeting of the Visitors with the Assistant Brother Madir Joseph. Each District had to provide itself with its own services. In 1908, the South District acquired a former sanatorium at Bokrijk where it gradually established a junior novitiate, a novitiate and an infirmary. It set up its “*procure*” at Namur (1908-1910). The North Districts established pre-juniorates at Overijse, Barrle Hertog and Roeselare. But the scholasticates at Louvain and Malonne remained as joint ventures until the 1920s, when the North District established teacher training colleges at Roeselare and Brussels.

During this same period, Belgian Brothers took part in the establishment of the Institute in Brazil from 1907 onwards. In response to a wish expressed by King Leopold II, Brothers from the two Districts began establishing houses in the Belgian colony of

Congo from 1909 onwards (see p. 200\*). We shall see also how the North District spread to Holland.

The 1914-1918 War caused untold suffering. The Brothers were not spared the deprecation inflicted by the German troops on the population: Louvain was burnt down. A hundred or so young Brothers were called up to the Belgian army as stretcher-carriers and served on the Yser front or in hospitals in Calais. To give them support in their difficult circumstances, the Superior Brother Imier de Jésus sent them Brother Fidentien Paul as Director. Most of the French or German Brothers had to leave Belgian soil.

Despite the shortage of Brothers, compensated for in part by lay teachers; despite the material damage and privations, schools and houses of formation continued to function in the two Districts, and numerous recruits came forward. When the war ended, the losses of the Belgium Districts were very heavy: defections, premature deaths, departure of many Brothers from neighbouring Districts. The decrease in the number of Brothers, and the desire to reduce the number of lay teachers, made it necessary to withdraw Brothers from dozens of schools, so as to redistribute them, according to an established plan, among the various dioceses.

A law passed in 1914, but put into effect only from 1919 onwards, made primary school education free and obligatory up to the age of 14. The Brothers could continue to run non-State or "subsidised" schools. This, together with a new increase in the number of Brothers, in particular in the North District, made it possible to take charge of new schools, especially in industrial centres and the Limbourg Campine region where coal-mines began to be exploited from 1918 onwards.

## – Holland

The Brothers had already been requested to come to this country, but their entry had been blocked by a government dominated by anti-clericals and Protestants. Finally in 1908, following an agreement between the Visitor of the District of North Belgium and the administrators of an orphanage run by Sisters at The Hague, 5 Flemish Brothers and a Dutch Brother took charge of the boys in this establishment. In the same year, at Baarle Hertog, a Belgian enclave, a house was bought with a view to establishing a junior novitiate to train boys born in Holland. The house was opened in 1910 with an intake of young Flemish Belgians, but these were gradually replaced by boys born in Holland. Nearby, at Baarle Nassau, but on Dutch soil, a teacher training college was opened in 1915 to train young Dutch Brothers. The revision of the Constitution in 1917 made it

possible for the Brothers to take advantage of the equal footing it established between State schools and Catholic or Protestant schools. The development of the Institute was relatively slow, however. The Brothers had arrived a little late in a country already well provided for by Catholic schools and congregations similar to their own.



The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Belgium and Holland in 1932:  
120 houses, 1,429 Brothers, 35,988 pupils.

## Central Europe

### – Germany

In the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Germany was a leading economic power, which gave it a feeling of superiority, and which was reflected in its policy of expansion in Europe and throughout the world. Catholics formed a party, the *Zentrum*, which because of its position had a key role to play. Mistrust of religious congregations remained nevertheless.

The Brothers who had to leave their country in 1879, were able to settle in Belgium and, from 1902 onwards, in Lorraine, annexed by the German Empire. In the years that followed, they continued their efforts to rebuild a District:

- in 1905, a junior novitiate was opened at Sterpenich in Belgium, near the Luxemburg border;
- in 1909, a scholasticate was set up at Montigny-lès-Metz (Lorraine) with links with the teacher training college;
- in 1911, Brothers returned to Germany and, wearing civilian dress, joined teaching staffs of Catholic schools in Hamburg;
- in 1912, the District of Germany was re-established with Brother Philippus Neri (Philippus Niedere), Director of Guenange, as Visitor;
- in 1914, with a view to being recognised again in Germany, the Brothers took charge of a mission school at Vunapope, in the Bismark Islands in New Guinea.

With the outbreak of the international crisis in 1914, Germany entered the war with its ally Austro-Hungary at its side. Its troops wasted no time in invading Belgium. German Brothers in Belgium and in Lorraine were called up for military service.

When the war ended, German Brothers had to leave their establishments in Belgium and Lorraine, the latter having been restored to France. The houses they left were taken over by the District of Rheims. All that remained was a house in Hamburg and, until 1921, the one at Vunapope. In addition, some 10 Brothers had been killed during the war. Expelled and demobilised Brothers regrouped in a house bought in Waldernbach (near Coblenz), where they lived in destitution, not knowing what the morrow would bring. In 1919, the Visitor succeeded in finding employment for some Brothers as supervisors in hostels for apprentices in Munich and Trier, or in a rehabilitation centre in Bruchsaal (Baden). Similar centres were taken over also at Drognefs (Switzerland) and Klein Neudorf (Silesia), as also a boarding school offering courses in commerce at Cochen (in the Coblenz area).



The Institute in Central Europe in 1932

COUNTRY	HOUSES	BROTHERS	PUPILS
Germany	18	207	1887
Austria	16	296	3650
Hungary	3	47	255
Czechoslovakia	7	90	1545
Poland	3	17	169
Romania	5	34	1713
Switzerland	6	44	534

Germany was experiencing great difficulties at the time. The Brothers' house in Munich was located just where clashes took place between the Spartakists - supporters of a Bolshevik regime - and the army. The Brothers left this town in 1920. During the period in which the District of Germany was being formed, a dispute broke out between it and the District of Rheims over the property of Grand Halleux, which each one



claimed for itself, and over the reimbursement of expenses previously incurred at Guenange. The Superior General who tried to act as referee in the dispute recognised the right of the German Brothers to the property of Grand Halleux (GA NB 111-2/1).

In 1919, the District bought a former hotel at Kirnach (Black Forest). The Brothers found life easier there. A novitiate was opened. From 1920 onwards, new houses were regularly opened in Germany. These were:

- boarding schools with commercial courses as at Bitburg (Rhineland) in 1921, or at Honnef (near Cologne), in 1927;
- secondary schools, as at Erfurt (Saxony) and Meersburg (shore of Lake Constance), in 1925, or Illertissen (South Bavaria), in 1923;
- rehabilitation centres, as at Juliusburg (Silesia) or Knutwil (Switzerland) in 1926.

The house at Kirnach was extended to accommodate some 30 retired Brothers, between 25 and 30 novices, and a hundred or so junior novices. In 1928, the novitiate was transferred to Honnef. By this time, the District was reconstituted. In the period that follows, all this was reduced to nothing or almost.

#### – Austria

The system of dual monarchy, introduced in 1867, continued to function at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the Emperor of Austria, who had put himself at its head, ensured its unity. However, the claims of the different peoples dominated by the Germans in the Austrian part of the Empire, and of the Magyars in the Hungarian part (see p. 66) constituted a constant threat of disintegration.

As for the Institute, there were Brothers of a variety of nationalities in the District of Austria-Germany. This District, which included the whole of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Romania and Bulgaria (which will be treated later), continued to flourish. New establishments were opened in the Empire: in 1908, the Institute opened a commercial school at Meran (South Tyrol) in response to a request by the local population. Outside the Empire, the Brothers took charge of a school for the children of local leaders, and an orphanage, at Scutari, in Albania.

In 1914, Austria launched a preventive attack on Serbia and, in so doing, triggered a European conflict (see p. 8). Initially, the different peoples of the Empire maintained their loyalty, but the lassitude engendered by a long drawn-out war gave rise to movements advocating secession. The Brothers inevitably suffered the consequences of the war. Some were called up, and establishments could no longer function regularly: the

orphanage in Vienna became a hospital. On the other hand, an establishment was opened in 1916 in Sarajevo (Bosnia-Herzegovina).

After the war, the disintegration of the Empire endorsed by peace treaties gave rise to the birth of a series of small States. The situation of the Brothers there reflected the evolution of these different States.

In November 1918, a republic was proclaimed. The economic situation affected, for example, the orphanage in Vienna: the reduction in revenue coming from endowment funds, caused by inflation, made it necessary to reduce the number of orphans. For the same reason, the orphanage at Goisern was replaced by a boarding school. As the South Tyrol was incorporated into Italy, the Austrian Brothers left Meran. They left also Scutari in Albania. In the years that followed up to 1928, the situation improved.

### – Hungary

Defeat gave rise to a short-lived Bolshevik regime. A programme imposing State secular education was applied to the schools of the Brothers, especially at Budapest. Because of the change in frontiers, a house established under the jurisdiction of the former Hungarian monarchy was transferred in 1923 to Homok in the newly constituted Hungary, and took in numerous war orphans. The situation improved and so a scholasticate was opened near the Catholic teacher training college at Szeged.

### – Czechoslovakia

In the new republic, the Brothers had to reckon with a trend to establish a monopoly in the field of education. In 1920, in response to the demands being made on the Institute by the authorities of the new republic (cf. GA NB 450/1), the Superiors created a District of Czechoslovakia. A novitiate and a juniorate were opened at Bojna, but the novitiate had to be moved. A boarding school and a teacher training college were entrusted to the Brothers by the bishop of Spisska Kapitula. Other foundations followed.

### – Poland

Following the war, Poland regained its independence. The Brothers' school was reopened at Lemberg (now called once again by its Polish name of Lwów). In 1922, a house of formation was established in Czestochowa. These houses would be attached to the District of Czechoslovakia in 1935.

## – Romania

The two houses opened at Bucarest had belonged to the District of Austria since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Two houses were opened, one in Craiova in 1904, and another at Breila in 1913. In 1916, when the country entered the war on the side of Great Britain, France and Russia, 15 Austrian Brothers were interned with the rest of their compatriots. After the war, houses were founded at Satu-Mare, a former Hungarian town, and in 1926, at Oradea Mare, where a juniorate and a scholasticate were established also. These houses continued to be a part of the District of Austria.

## The Ottoman Empire

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Institute was established in all the parts of what was still the Ottoman Empire, with the exception of Mesopotamia (Iraq). The change of sultan in 1908 had no effect on the Brothers. On the other hand, in the second decade of the century, various wars brought about important changes which affected the Institute.

## – Turkey

The District of Constantinople included the Ottoman Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia-Minor. In 1904 and in the years that followed, an influx of Brothers from France made it possible to develop existing works and to create new ones. Subsequently, however, war between the Ottoman Empire and various Balkan States in 1912, and that between these States in 1913, led to changes which affected several Brother' houses:

- in 1912, Italy acquired the Dodecanese Islands where the Brothers were already established in Rhodes. Brothers from the Districts of Rome and Turin came to Rhodes (1921) and Cos (1928);
- in 1913, the houses at Salonika (Macedonia), La Canea (Crete) and Chio (on the Island of Chio) became part of Greece.

These houses had been little affected during the wars. At Chio, however, the Brothers had given refuge to some Turkish families who felt threatened (GA NH 601-1/13).

On the other hand, the war which broke out in 1914 had important consequences for the Brothers:

- In August, when France entered the war, French Brothers liable for military service returned to France. In the case of the District of Constantinople, 155 Brothers left for their country (GA NH 600-1/13).
- In November, the Ottoman Empire sided with Germany and Austria, and the Brothers still in

Turkey were expelled, with the exception of a dozen Brothers from Luxembourg at the Pancaldi school in Smyrna who put themselves under the protection of the US embassy and of the Apostolic Delegate\* (id.).

When the war ended, numerous French Brothers returned to Turkey. However,



The Institute in Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Dodecanese Islands, Greece and Bulgaria in 1932:

COUNTRY	HOUSES	BROTHERS	PUPILS
Palestine	5	56	1560
Syria	5	88	2863
Turkey	7	94	2236
Dodecanese Islands	2	23	606
Greece	5	52	1028
Bulgaria	2	28	713

schools in Anatolia (Asia Minor) and Armenia could not be re-opened. The defeat of Turkey encouraged the Greeks to invade the region of Smyrna in 1919. When they were repulsed, a fire which engulfed the town destroyed the Brothers' college and one of their schools. The treaty of Lausanne which put an end to this war was followed by the proclamation of a republic and the establishment of a secular State. One of the effects of the treaty was to confirm the suppression of the Capitulations\*. From then onwards, the Brothers' schools were dependent on the Turkish authorities. In 1924, the latter ordered crucifixes to be removed from classrooms. When the Brothers refused, their schools were closed. They asked for the support of Herriot, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, who was Head of Government at the time. After six months, a compromise solution was agreed upon: the Brother Director had the right to have a crucifix in his office. In 1926, the nationalisation of further education brought about the closure of the Advanced Institute of Commerce at Kadikoy.

The departure or massacre of numerous Greek and, particularly, Armenian Christians, brought about a change in the clientele of the Brothers' schools: there was an increase in the number of Moslem students. In the years that followed, the establishments which survived remained prosperous. They did not increase in number, however, as there was no longer a steady supply of Brothers from the missionary novitiate of St Maurice l'Exil, which had re-opened in 1921.

### -- Syria-Palestine

In the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the District of Jerusalem comprised the Brothers' houses in the Ottoman provinces of Syria, which included Lebanon, and Palestine or the Holy Land. This District also benefitted from the contribution of French Brothers after the 1904 law. Among the foundations of that period, we can mention that of Alexandretta, whose territorial position was special.

The war which began in 1914 had the same consequences here as in Turkey: 17 establishments with 122 teachers were affected in the 1914-1915 school-year, following the departure of French Brothers who had been called up, and then by the expulsion of others when the Ottoman Empire entered the war. The only ones to remain were 14 Austrian or German Brothers (cf. GA NH 701-1/4). In 1917, a first incursion by the British forces liberated a great part of Palestine. At the beginning of 1918, Cambon, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, turned his attention to the reorganisation of the educational and welfare institutions in the Holy Land, and stressed the urgent need to

send new missionaries there (id.). The withdrawal of the Turkish forces made possible the re-opening of schools in Nazareth, Caiffa, Beirut, Tripoli (GA NH 800/10). In 1919, the schools in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Jaffa re-opened with the help of French soldier Brothers assigned to teaching.

Peace treaties placed Syria, which included Lebanon at the time, under the mandate\* of France, and Palestine, under that of Great Britain. This situation favoured the resumption and development of the Brothers' works in the years that followed. However, this was hindered, as in Turkey, by the decrease in the number of new missionaries sent there.

## **Balkan States**

There were too many links between the political situation in the Balkan States and that of the Ottoman Empire, for us not to consider, at this point, the situation of the Institute in two of these States

### **– Bulgaria**

In 1904, the Brothers had been in Sofia since 1885. The community consisted mostly of Austrian and German Brothers, but also of French Brothers who were there to teach French - the original foundation had been French. In 1912, during the first Balkan War, the Brothers opened a hospital in part of their establishment where they looked after wounded Bulgarians. They were more affected by the 1914-1918 War. Initially, Bulgaria remained neutral: the Brothers from Constantinople came to Sofia. When Bulgaria entered the war in October 1915 on the side of Germany and Austria, the French Brothers had to leave the country. Some of them had to make a tour of Europe in order to reach France via friendly countries (cf. GA NG 803/13). From November 1915 to October 1918, the German and Austrian Brothers had to manage by themselves. But when Bulgaria was defeated, they too had to leave Sofia. The establishment was re-opened after the war by demobilised French Brothers, under the direction of a Brother from Alsace Lorraine who had taught there earlier. From then on, the house belonged to the District of Constantinople. A school in Roustchouck, entrusted to the Brothers once before in 1902-1903, was taken over again by Brothers from the District of Constantinople in 1921 (cf. GA NG 800/1).

### **– Greece**

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were no longer Brothers' schools within the existing frontiers of Greece. Following the Balkan Wars, Chio and La Canea became a part of Greece, but the houses the Brothers had there continued to belong to the District of Constantinople. The same was true of the house in Salonika which had reverted to its former name of Thessalonika. While the houses at Chio and La Canea were closed in 1920 and 1921, the house in Thessalonika continued with an intake of pupils of different nationalities and religions. In 1914, a school entrusted to the Brothers was re-opened at Syra (on the island of the same name). In 1926, the Brothers of the District of Constantinople took charge of an establishment in Piraeus, the outer harbour of Athens. As for the Brothers from the Districts of Rome and Turin, they opened establishments at Patras (1923), Corfu (1923) and Athens (1924).

### The British Isles

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Great Britain and Ireland formed the United Kingdom. The main political problem which faced it stemmed from the demands of the Irish for national independence. A plan which offered Ireland *Dominion\** status was adopted in 1914 but met with opposition from the Protestant majority in Ulster. In 1919, the Nationalists took matters into their own hands, and in 1921, Ireland, apart from Ulster, gained its independence. Despite the fact that initially Great Britain and Ireland formed one entity, they will be treated separately here for the whole of the period.

#### – Great Britain

In Great Britain, the Brothers were affected by political factors especially in the form of educational legislation. In 1902, a law valid for England and Wales, put on an equal footing State schools and schools run by private organisations. This meant that both benefitted from revenue raised by taxes to fund the establishment and maintenance of primary schools. But this measure did not include secondary schools. Because of this, Catholic secondary schools had to be fee-paying and were run mainly by religious. The Brothers in England had two secondary schools in London. The school at Beulah Hill was taken in charge by French Brothers who had been trained in the United States. Other French Brothers opened 3 schools which were added to the one already existing in Bradford. In 1914, some of these Brothers were called up for military service, while British Brothers were not affected, conscription not having yet been established in Great Britain.



The Institute in England and Ireland in 1932:  
 England: 28 Houses, 332 Brothers, 4,481 Pupils.  
 Ireland: 27 Houses, 237 Brothers, 5,388 Pupils.

After the war, in 1923, the Brothers opened *St Illtyd's* school in Cardiff and another one in Sheffield. In 1924, a third school was opened in Salford. In these same years, they opened primary schools also, in Sheffield in 1919, in Darlington in 1922. In 1925, they



took charge of a *selective central school*, intended to offer an extended primary school education to pupils coming from 40 Catholic schools in Liverpool, and admitted on the basis of an entrance examination.

This development did not depend on the availability of French Brothers: it was made possible by the arrival of novices trained at Castletown in Ireland and, from 1921 onwards, at the novitiate opened by the District of Nantes at Dover.

### – Ireland

In Ireland, the Brothers were not affected by the constraints encountered in Great Britain, and their schools were supported by public funds. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Brothers had 15 or so schools, to which were now added 2 other schools in Belfast, Ulster. Here, the Brothers also looked after children below the age of 10, who worked during the day, and came to them in the evening for instruction and Christian formation. Similarly, during the summer holidays, the Brothers at Kiltanny looked after children who had not been able to attend school during the rest of the year. More schools were opened throughout the period under consideration. Irish Brothers took charge also of schools in Great Britain: in 1912, in St Helens, in the industrial area of Manchester, and in Liverpool where they ran a large secondary school; in 1913, at Market Weighton (Yorkshire), where they took over a centre for delinquents.

The time when Ireland gained its independence coincided with the period in which town authorities and diocesan administrators called upon the Brothers to develop secondary education. Most often, the Brothers responded to this request by adding a secondary section to their existing establishments. They were able to do this all the more easily as, from 1912 onwards, Brothers had been attending the Catholic University of Dublin, opened in 1911. Also, the lifting of the ban on studying and teaching Latin in 1923, enabled the Brothers to add classical studies to the curriculum.

The continued development of the Institute in Ireland was made possible by the influx of young Irish boys to the juniorate and novitiate at Castletown.

## – Spain

During the period under consideration, the situation in Spain was full of contrasts. King Alphonse XIII remained in power, but the foundations of the State were being undermined: the separatist movements in certain regions were growing; workers' trade unions were moving towards anarchy. The Church appeared to be maintaining its dominant position, but de-christianisation was spreading. This situation had a number of repercussions which affected the Brothers, but the Institute continued to grow in a remarkable manner.

In the period 1904 to 1914, as we have seen, Brothers expelled from France founded a number of their own establishments in Spain. In the meanwhile, existing Spanish Districts continued to grow. The District of Barcelona set up a house for three formation groups at Cambrils. The number of Brothers increased by 122, and 7 new houses were opened. The District of Madrid, in its turn, increased its numbers by 144 Brothers, and opened 22 new establishments. On the other hand:

- in 1909, the Brothers in Catalonia were the victims of what became known as the “tragic week”: in July, revolutionary activity of a decidedly antichristian nature broke out and, when peace was restored in August, the Brothers found that 6 of their schools and the house at Premia de Mar had been destroyed by fire;

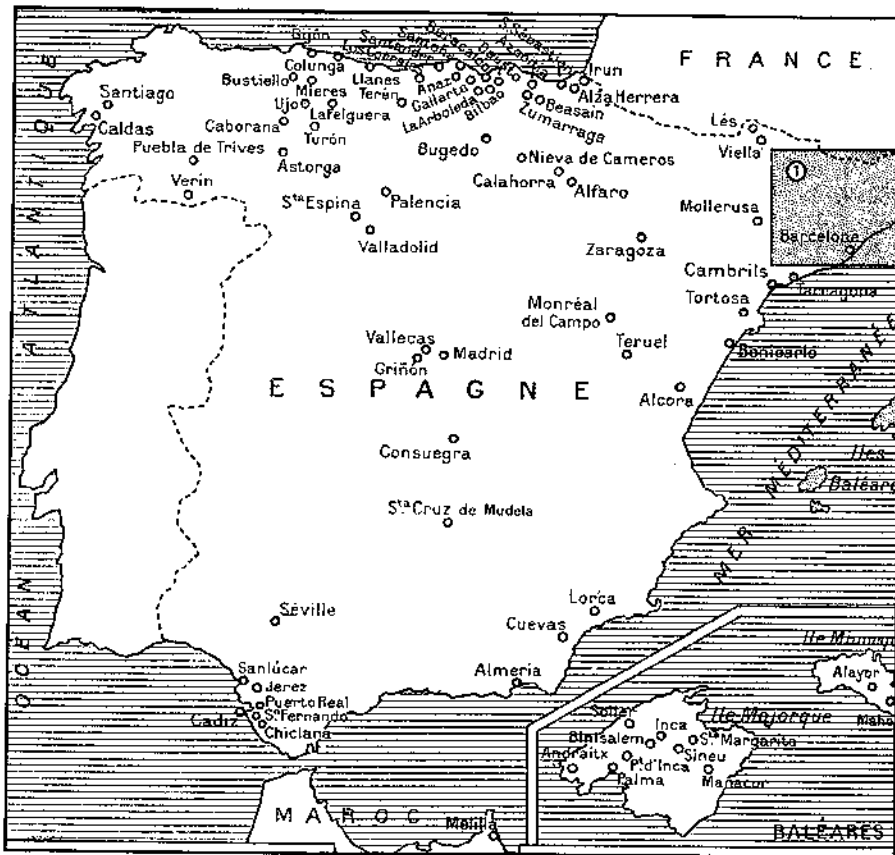
- in 1910, the draft of a law concerning associations, unfavourable to religious congregations, was submitted to the *Cortes*\*. Eventually, a *modus vivendi* was reached with the Vatican in 1913;

- in 1912, a law was passed which made the Brothers liable for military service. However, as they could avoid it by transfer to a Spanish colony, a house was opened in September of the same year at Melilla, an enclave on Moroccan soil.

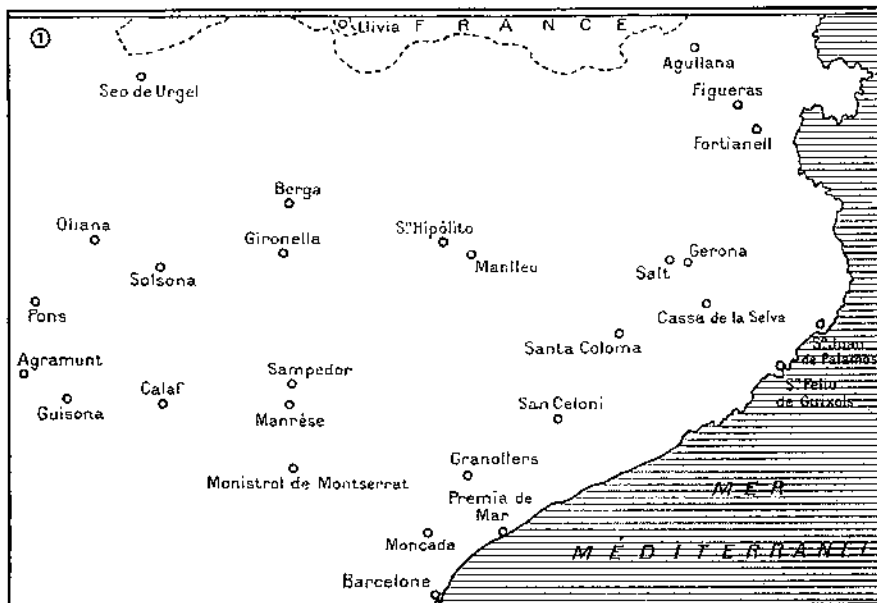
The war which broke out in 1914 affected the French houses because numerous French Brothers were called up for military service. The houses of the Spanish Districts were not affected because Spain remained neutral. In 1914, new norms were introduced regarding the qualification of teachers: in future, there would be one diploma which could be obtained only after four years' study at a teacher training college. However, the Assistant Brother Seridon Isidore decided that Brothers could take this examination only after three or four years in community. During the World War, Spain faced an internal crisis; there was unrest in the army, Catalonia was trying to set itself up as an autonomous province, and there was a succession of strikes. In 1921, a defeat in Morocco increased the unrest. The Brothers in Melilla made their house available for the care of the wounded (Gallego, 426). Apart from this, the Brothers were not particularly affected by these events but, like many in the Church, they did not understand the deep

significance of this unrest.

In 1923, the King handed over power to General Primo de Rivera who established a dictatorial regime which was to last for seven years: a single party was formed, separatist tendencies were curbed, anarchists were eliminated, and Morocco pacified. During the dictatorship, schools received tangible support. A law passed in 1926 regulated all that concerned studies, the necessary qualifications, but also school textbooks. The Brothers now found themselves in a new situation: there were few places which did not have a State school. There was a danger of rivalry as the number of potential pupils was reduced (cf. Gallego, 422). We shall return to this question in the **supplement** which follows.



The Institute in Spain in 1932:  
130 houses, 1309 Brothers, 28249 pupils.



Detailed map of Northeast Spain.

As for the Institute, its impetus in the Spanish Districts properly so-called continued unabated. Because of the increase in the number of Brothers and houses, the District of Valladolid was formed in 1924 with 32 houses taken from the District of Madrid. This led to the establishment of a new house of formation for the District of Madrid. It was located at Griñon where a juniorate was opened in 1916. As for the French houses, a new factor intervened when the war ended: expatriates could now return to their country. This, together with the decrease in recruitment in France, meant that more and more of these houses were taken over by Spanish Brothers. In 1929, a decision was made to hand over the French houses to Spanish Districts.

In 1928, when the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the Brothers in Spain was celebrated, optimism reigned supreme. Despite discernable portents, the Institute was far from foreseeing the tragic events which would befall it eight years later.

## 8. CHANGES BROUGHT ABOUT IN THE INSTITUTE BY THE EVENTS OF 1904

We have already said that the official suppression of the Institute in France had a number of consequences for the Institute as a whole. It also brought about changes which affected it in other areas, such as the way of understanding the vocation of the Brother, the composition of the Institute, and its international character.

### Changes in the way of understanding the vocation of the Brother.

As we mentioned earlier with reference to a previous period (see LS 9, 187), the Brothers were always tempted, in practice, to separate what concerned their religious life properly so called, from what concerned the exercise of their professional duties. Some managed to overcome this temptation, others less so.

The change which took place in this regard at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and which was reinforced by the events of 1904, stemmed from the fact that this way of seeing the different aspects of the Brothers' vocation as being separate, tended to become in some way the official way of viewing it in the Church; and that these separate elements had now become opposing elements.

Further information regarding this question can be found in a study by Brother Michel Sauvage, entitled *The vow status of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in France at the time of the Secularisation*. The first part of this study appeared in volume 2 of the Lasallian Studies series, and is published in full in volume 10 of the same series. This study is based on a number of documents published during this period, including a *Memorandum*, identified as being the work of Brother Assistant Louis de Poissy, and which can be dated to after 1913. This *Memorandum* condemns in particular the fact some Brothers remained in the Institute without having pronounced vows.

As the number of congregations in which men and women religious pronounced "simple vows" had greatly increased during the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Holy See tried to regulate these foundations. And so "on December 8<sup>th</sup> 1900, Leo XIII promulgated the Constitution *Conditae a Christo* which set out the canonical legislation governing congregations with simple vows" (LS 10, 33). In line with this Constitution, the Congregation for Bishops and Regular Clergy published in 1901 the *Normae* - the norms for the approval of this type of religious congregation. These *Normae* endorsed in particular the practice established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century which obliged congregations to make a clear distinction in their Constitutions - their Rules - between what were called "the two

ends of religious life". The first and overall end was the sanctification of the members of the congregation; the second, particular to each institute, was the charitable purpose for which it was founded.

Such legislation did not affect the Institute since it had been approved by the Church a long time before. There was no such distinction in the original 1718 Rule, nor in the 1726 edition, published after the granting of the Bull of Approbation, even though the *Preface* of the latter edition insisted in a very unilateral manner on fidelity to the Rule and to the vows. When the Rules were revised in 1901, this idea of dual finality was not introduced into the Rule properly so called. On the other hand, in the Rule of Government, this dual finality is mentioned in the very first article.

In practice, however, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this distinction was not always avoided. And so, in his *Memorandum*, Brother Louis de Poissy, looking for an explanation for Brothers remaining without vows, believes that one of the causes is "the scarcity of Brothers", which creates a dilemma: how to reconcile "the maintenance of apostolic works" and "fidelity to religious life" (cf. LS 10, 26). It could be said that, in order to ensure the first, "second class" Brothers were kept on.

With the passing of the 1904 law, "secularisation" posed a similar problem. In order to "save the schools", was it necessary to give up, if not religious life itself, at least its external signs - habit, religious name, community life, regulated use of money - and risk, by doing so, losing its spirit at the same time? The Superior General submitted the problem to Pope Pius X and obtained from him the letter which was read out at the 1905 Chapter. Regarding the principle involved, the letter resolved the dilemma in very clear terms: "What we absolutely do not want is that, among your members and in Institutes similar to yours, whose purpose is the education of children, the opinion should be propagated, which we know is becoming widespread, which says that you should give priority to the education of children, and only the second place to religious profession, on the pretext that the spirit and the needs of the time demand it" (quoted in LS 10, 36).

The letter was more flexible when it came to the way it should be applied, but it still established an antagonism between two aspects which Brothers were supposed to combine in their lives, and assigned to each its relative importance: religious life was considered more important than apostolic works. This had consequences for the Institute:

- it led to a preference for Brothers who accepted to be expatriated;
- "secularisation" in order to save the schools was considered to be a kind of infidelity.

This way of viewing things would be perpetuated and expressed, for example, by such sayings as: "let's not forget we are first and foremost religious".

### A new numerical distribution of the Brothers

The application of the 1904 law brought about a great change in the distribution of Brothers among the French Districts and those in the rest of the world. This is shown by the table below which, beginning with the figures for the end of 1903, shows by increments of 5 years the changes in the number of Brothers in French Districts, in the other Districts, and in the Institute as a whole, up to 1928.

	Number of Brothers			Number of houses		
	French Dist.	Other Dist.	Total	French Dist.	Other Dist.	Total
1903	10.651	4.806	15.467	1.157	412	15.69
1908	3.578	6.530	10.108	163	538	701
1913	4.459	6.960	11.419	147	593	740
1923	4.100	7.415	11.515	513	723	1.236
1928	4.277	8.661	12.938	462	781	1.243

Notes: There are no figures for 1918. During the 1914-1918 War it was not possible to draw up statistics for the Institute. As the Mother House was included in the District of Paris in 1903, the statistics for the Mother House District continued to be included with those of the French Districts throughout the period, and all the more so, because it was mostly composed of French Brothers.

The dates shown in the table have the advantage of corresponding to significant moments in the period under consideration.

1903 is the last year it was possible to have an overall view of the distribution of the Brothers in the Institute as it was before the events of 1904.

1908 is a year when can already note important changes in the number of Brothers in French Districts. Figures refer solely to Brothers present in houses which have not yet been closed, those in retirement homes, and Brothers in houses set up abroad. The number of Brothers in the other Districts is on the increase, but one has to take into account the presence of Brothers from France in many of them. The noticeable decrease in the overall number of Brothers, by comparison with the 1903 figures, is due to Brothers leaving the Institute, but also to the fictitious secularisation of a certain number of Brothers who were, as a consequence, not included in the figures at that time.

1913 was the last year in which the direct effects of the 1904 law were felt in France. The increase in the number of Brothers in the French Districts is due above all to the development of houses created outside France, and to the influx of Brothers newly trained to work in these houses. This influx, together with that enjoyed by other Districts, explains the overall increase in the number of Brothers in the Institute.

1923 sees a change in the situation of the Institute in France. Exiled Brothers, who had returned to France because of the war, remained there; others returned at the end of the war; and "secularised" Brothers were once again included in the statistics. However, all these Brothers together were not enough to compensate for those who had been killed or had left the Institute. The changes which occurred in France can be seen above all in the number of houses listed. The increase in their number is due to the inclusion once more of the figures for establishments run by "secularised" Brothers with the help of a relatively high number of lay teachers. The increase of Brothers in the other Districts is no longer due to the arrival of newly exiled Brothers from France: it is due rather to the development of the Districts themselves.

1928 the increase in the number of Brothers in France or in other countries reflects an upturn in recruitment. The number of houses does not increase at the same rate. This could be due to better staffing in existing schools.

Overall, one can say that after a sharp fall, the number of Brothers in French Districts became stabilised at about 4,000 in the dozen or so years following 1913. On the other hand, beginning with the same year, Districts outside of France increased in numbers as a result of their own development. However, despite a regular increase in numbers, the overall number of Brothers had not yet risen to the 1903 level.

By the end of the period, we find that, by comparison with the statistics for 1903, the respective number of Brothers in French Districts and in the others has been inverted. In this new situation, however, a new phase of expansion had begun in both of these areas.

### **Greater diversification in the origin of the Brothers**

Up to 1904, Brothers of French origin were easily in the majority in the Institute, whether they were in France, or had been sent to other countries. In 1904, there began to take place a noticeable change in the situation regarding the origin of Brothers. This can be shown by the change in the respective number of novices in French Districts and in other Districts, indicated by the table below.



Change in the number of novices					
	1903	1908	1913	1923	1928
French Districts	529	120	236	275	258
Other Districts	380	358	610	679	819
Total	909	478	846	954	1,077

## Remarks:

– In 1903, the number of novices in French Districts was already dropping because of the threats to the Institute.

– In 1908, the number of novices given for French Districts reflects the opening of new novitiates abroad. As for the novices in other Districts, there is a temporary decrease in their number which, in 1904 and in the years that followed, hovered around the 400 mark.

– In 1913, the figures given indicate an improvement in the situation of Districts as a whole.

– This improvement is confirmed in the 5 years following the First World War.

– Between 1923 and 1928, there is very clear progress in non-French Districts.

For Districts which, in 1904 and in the years that followed, received quite a large number of French Brothers, this was a real godsend, all the more so as these Brothers were relatively young. And so, of the 208 French Brothers sent to Canada, 130 were under 30 years of age (GA NO 111/4). This, however, could become a great disadvantage if their number decreased. This happened when a certain number of these Brothers returned to France when war broke out in 1914. After the war, some of these did not return to the countries they had gone to. Circumstances made it possible for others to return to their native country. This led to a reduction in numbers in several Districts. The effect of this was particularly felt, for example, in the Middle East and Egypt, where establishments, closed because of the conflict, could not be re-opened.

In the case of missionary Districts, the problem of replacing Brothers had changed in nature after 1904. The replacement of Brothers was guaranteed to a great extent by the apostolic novitiate set up in France and which, after having moved to Italy for a time, returned to St Maurice l'Exil in 1921. This return did not prevent the decrease in the number of French vocations. Postulants from other countries had to be found. And so a number of young Slovaks, brought by a zealous "recruiter" were admitted. The situation was the same at Premia de Mar, where the novices were increasingly of Spanish nationality. As for the novitiate set up at the Mother House at Lembecq lez Hal, it had been overwhelmingly international in character from the outset.

As we saw, from 1913 onwards, the number of novices in French Districts increased. On the other hand, even in countries which benefitted from an influx of foreign Brothers, or in those to which large numbers of French Brothers had been sent, it was realised that those who would continue the work of these Brothers in the future would have to come from among the young people of these countries. Elsewhere, the need was felt to intensify recruitment. And so in 1928, one can observe a marked increase in the number of novices in Districts outside of France. We should note also that in that same year, every District of the Institute had novices, even if in certain countries numbers were small and, in some cases, novices were sent to other Districts for training. The result was that never before had the origin of the Brothers been so diverse, as is shown in the table on a following page.

### **Affirmation of the international character of the Institute**

During the period under consideration, the Institute spread to a dozen countries or territories belonging to other States. In 1928, the Institute was present in 50 countries or territories, and some of the Brothers were natives of these countries. The international character of the Institute was therefore increasingly affirmed. However, in some aspects, it was slow in making practical adjustments.

#### **– The international character of the Institute becomes more pronounced**

Up to 1904, because of their number, French Brothers were undoubtedly predominant. A table indicating the number of Brothers according to their nationality, included in the minutes of the deliberations of the 1907 Chapter, shows that, according to their place of birth, of the 10, 453 “religious living in regular communities” in the Institute, 6,229 were French. The other Brothers were of 45 different nationalities, of which several had only one or two representatives (GA ED 228-3, Reg. 3, 176). In the years that followed, the number of French Brothers decreased noticeably, while the diversity of the nationality of Brothers became more pronounced. This had a number of consequences.

#### *On the choice of superiors*

It is fair to suggest that it never occurred to anyone that the Superior General of the Institute could be anything but French. However, the fact that Superior Generals took the international character of the Institute more into account can be deduced from the extension of their visits abroad. Those of Brother Gabriel Marie were limited to Europe, as were those of Brother Imier de Jesus. Brother Allais Charles, however, visited the Middle East and crossed the Atlantic and visited America.

## Statistical table

Distribution of members of the Institute by nationality, based on their place of birth, on the following dates: 1906, 1923 and August 1928 (GA DD 250).

Nationality	1906	1923	1928	Nationality	1906	1923	1928
French	10600	5.566	50324	Syrian	27	22	16
Spanish	324	930	1.284	Egyptian	5	8	14
Belgian	896	1.103	1.205	Hindu	4	5	13
Canadian	533	730	1.020	Maltese	4	9	12
US American	418	630	749	Cuban	0	2	12
Irish	580	476	562	Lebanese	4	0	7
Italian	397	476	556	Nicaraguan	0	2	5
German	258	308	383	Burmese	0	3	5
Colombian	57	222	267	Yugoslavian	0	6	5
Austrian	149	153	168	Chinese	0	0	4
Czechoslovakian	24	51	155	Venezuelan	0	2	4
Luxemburg	84	114	131	Romanian	0	0	3
Ecuadorian	50	112	124	Palestinian	0	2	3
English	22	38	98	Armenian	4	1	3
Annamese	14	83	95	Greek	0	0	3
Dutch	38	43	92	Cochin-chinese	0	0	3
Argentinian	8	38	73	Tonkinese	0	0	2
Mexican	2	25	65	Bulgarian	0	3	1
Chilean	33	43	50	Congolese	0	2	1
Eurasian	12	36	40	Malayan	2	0	1
Swiss	22	26	37	Russian	0	1	1
Brazilian	1	9	32	Dominican	0	1	1
Australian	0	8	26	Honduras	0	1	1
Polish	13	16	21	Tunisian	0	1	1
Creole	20	17	19	Bolivian	0	0	1
(Reunion & Mauritius)				Peruvian	0	0	1
Malagasy	2	1	16	Turkish	0	0	1

Among the Assistants, there had been an American since 1873, and a Belgian since 1894. In 1913, with the election of Brother Petronius, an Austrian, and Brother Candido, an Italian, the international character of the Regime became more pronounced. In 1923,

the wish of the Canadian Brothers to have an Assistant to represent them was granted with the election of Brother Mandellus. In 1928, the importance attached to the increase in number of the Spanish Brothers led to the appointment of Brother Pedro Luis as Assistant. At this point, the number of French Assistants was matched by the number of Assistants of other nationalities.

In countries where the Brothers had already been for a long time, Districts had Brother Visitors who were indigenous. This was not the case, however, in "missionary" Districts and in Latin America. In countries where the Institute had become established more recently, we find that the District of England-Ireland had had an Irish Visitor since the end of the 19th century, but that in Spain, it was only in 1925 that the Visitors appointed in the three Districts were Spanish. As for newly-founded Districts, more often than not, the Brother Visitors were French, as was the case in Latin America.

### *On the constitution of communities*

The practice of setting up communities composed of Brothers of different nationalities was not new. The 1904 exodus of French Brothers led to a great many such situations. Other circumstances also could lead to the constitution of such communities. The efforts of each Brother made a fraternal community life possible. We give an example.

Peace treaties at the end of the First World War confirmed the possession of the Dodecanese Islands by Italy. The college run by the Brothers on the island of Rhodes was basically French. Circumstances hastened the decision of the Brothers there to leave: their departure was fixed for the end of the 1921-1922 school year. Three Italian Brothers from the District of Turin arrived in November 1921. As the author of *An account of the last two years of the French Brothers in Rhodes* (GA NG 510/1) tells us, "we received them with open arms, as Brothers who were sons of the same family". However, because of a lack of space, the Brothers had to lodge elsewhere. But, in 1922, after celebrating the feast of John Baptist de La Salle together, all the Brothers would meet for spiritual exercises and meals. The difference of nationality was no obstacle. It should be said also that some of the French Brothers were natives of Savoy, a province linked for a long time to Piedmont, from where the Italian Brothers came.

### **– The difficulty of translating the international character of the Institute into concrete terms**

While the events of 1904 in France contributed to make the international character of the Institute more pronounced, it proved difficult in certain cases to reflect this character in concrete terms. It is true, however, that circumstances did not always make this easy.

### *During General Chapters*

The convocation of General Chapters was done by means of circulars in different languages, and all Districts were represented. However, because of the numerical superiority of French Districts, and the presence of French Brothers in other Districts, French representatives were always more numerous than the others. For the 1905 Chapter, elections were held in 1904 on the basis of the situation existing prior to the law of July 7<sup>th</sup>, and so the composition of the Assembly was very similar to that of preceding Chapters.

It was the same thing for the 1907 Chapter, since its participants were the same as those in 1905. The reasons which led the Superior General to make this decision have already been explained. What we can add is that, at least in Canada, this decision was badly received. An anonymous handwritten note, dated February 21<sup>st</sup> 1907 and intended for distribution among the Brothers of the country, denounces the fact that, out of 90 capitulants "there are at least 40 who have no right to be members of the Chapter because their Districts have been destroyed". This is seen as a means for the French "to maintain their position in the Regime", whereas Canada, which accounts for at least a tenth of all the members of the Congregation, ought to have the right to an Assistant (French archives, Besancon deposit, 71-57).

In subsequent Chapters, French delegates were less numerous, but their number was still relatively high, since all the French Districts continued to exist despite a sharp reduction in the number of Brothers in some of them. Independently of that, another factor reflecting French preponderance was still in place: the exclusive use of the French language marginalised those who knew it badly. To mitigate this situation, at the 1913 Chapter, one of the two delegates from the District of Madrid, a Spanish Brother called Just Felix (Teodoro de la Puente), asked for capitulants to be allowed to express themselves in their mother tongue, before translation, but his proposal was rejected (cf. *Sembraron con amor*, p. 297).

### *In the way the Institute currently functioned*

French was currently used by Institute superiors in their official dealings with one another. French was the language used during meetings of the Regime Council. When Brother Assistants who were away from the Mother House corresponded with the Superior General or with one another, most often they did so in French.

The circulars sent to the Brothers were written initially in French, but at least were sometimes translated into English. Other works intended for the Brothers were also writ-

ten in French initially, even if later they were translated into other languages. General Chapters insisted on the importance the Institute attached to the learning of French by the Brothers. For example, in the minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> session, which was concerned with the learning of languages, we read that "it is important also, as was said at the 1901 Chapter, for the French language, which is the language of the Founder and consequently the official language of the Institute, to be understood by the vast majority of the Brothers" (GA ED 228-3, Reg. 3, 83). In 1913, the request was made "that henceforth, the language of the holy Founder should be included in the material examined when teaching Brothers requested admission to vows, and be given the same importance as other special secular subjects, that is, not be a reason for dismissal" (GA ED 228-4, Reg. 1, 97). Circular 153, dated January 19<sup>th</sup> 1908, dealt with the study of the French language.

### *In relations between Brothers of different nationalities*

Certain circumstances could complicate relations between Brothers of different nationalities. Sometimes this had to do with the decisions made by Superiors. We shall deal later with the reaction of the Brothers in Canada to the way Brother Assistant Reticus acted. Another situation too deserves a mention. It came about when Brother Assistant Aimarus sent Brothers of the Nantes District to Australia. We shall explain what happened in the next chapter. At this point, we should like to draw attention to relations between the French and Irish Brothers who were sent initially to this country.

Preceded by Brother Anthony Jerome (Joseph Flood), Visitor of the District of England-Ireland and two Brothers from the District of Nantes, seven French Brothers and five Irish Brothers were sent to Australia in November 1905. There are two documents referring to this journey in the Generalate archives, each with its own version of the facts. Brother Didyme (Manuel Landais), one of the three Brothers who came first, reports that, on their arrival in Australia, the Brothers of the two groups did not want to mix with one another on the journey from Sydney to Armidale, which was their destination. The same thing had happened on the journey to Australia. They continued to live separately at Armidale. If we are to believe this Brother, it was the fault of the Irish Brothers if relations were bad (cf. NK 200/2).

The Notes of Brother Benignus Patrick (Richard White), who had been one of the twelve Brothers who travelled together, tell a different story. Throughout the long voyage, relations between the two groups of Brothers had been "splendid". If the French and Irish Brothers had travelled separately from Sydney to Armidale, it was because the Brother Visitor Anthony had told them to. Once they arrived, it had seemed normal for

the two groups to lead a separate community life because each had its own set of duties. Relations, however, remained cordial. The diocesan authorities, however, were not enthusiastic about the French Brothers who, not knowing English well, would have difficulties in fitting in. Also, Brother Marius James (James Byrne), who had been transferred from Colombo and wanted to return there, encouraged the French Brothers to leave with him, which they did in June 1906. However, Brother Benignus Patrick recognised "that the Irish Brothers, and especially Brother Anthony, were totally responsible for the failure of the scheme to transfer the District of Nantes to Australia" (GA NK 200/1). Having summed up the causes of this failure, he then lists a series of facts which make one think that, even with the best will in the world, this "bicephalous" enterprise was doomed to failure.

The upheavals of this period created problems in communities of mixed nationality. This was notably the case when war broke out in 1914. For example, in Sofia, in Bulgaria, as has already been said, the community there included Brothers who were German or Austrian and French. The entry of their respective countries into the war inevitably had repercussions on them. As we read in the *Historique* of this house, "It was difficult to run the "dual" school in Sofia without friction: the head of the community was a fiercely patriotic Frenchman, while the majority of its members were German-speaking" (GA NG 800/13). When the Brother Director wanted to celebrate the feast of St Joan of Arc in 1915, a conflict arose "with the most German members of this community which belonged to the District of Austria" (id). The sequence of events in this house has already been described.

There is also the interesting case of young German Brothers, trained in France and sent to Brazil, who lived in community with French Brothers. One of these young men, Brother Ferdinand Charles, wrote as follows to Brother Assistant Viventien Aimé:

"I have no antipathy for Brothers of a different nationality, for I have lived several years with Frenchmen, quite happily and enjoyed cordial relations with them. These cordial relations continued during the war, not without my having to really restrain myself from giving any signs of quite legitimate patriotism. However, I had to say to myself that, after the war, life in community with Brothers whose countries had been enemies would become quite difficult" (cf. GA NB 111-2/1).

This Brother, having returned to Germany and having fought in the war for 18 months, asked to stay in his country. In support of such requests, the District Council of the German Province sent a report, dated February 24<sup>th</sup> 1920, to the Brother Assistant on whom it depended. The strong terms in which this report was couched shows that the war had left its mark.

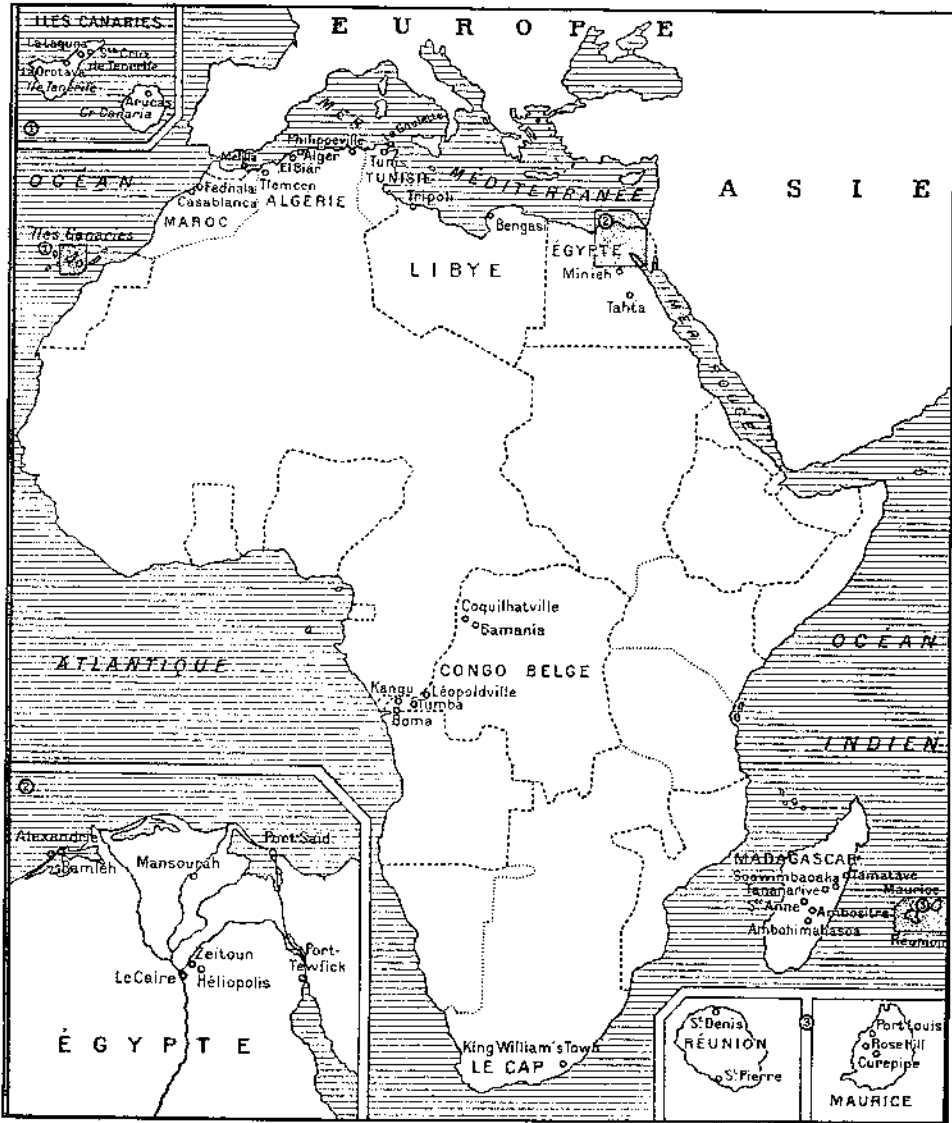
## Conclusion

From what has been said about the international character of the Institute, one can see that, in the period under consideration, French Brothers continued to exert an influence over the Institute which was very much the same as they had, in particular, in the preceding period.

It seems that those who objected to this state of affairs, referred to it as the "French spirit", an expression which occurs in various sources. For example, according to one of the pamphlets produced in Canada, "the FRENCH spirit has replaced the spirit OF FAITH" (quoted in N. Voisine II, 63). The author of the work *La Salle Brothers: Malaysia and Singapore* compares the former Brother Visitor with the one who replaced him in 1926: "Brother James had a French and legalistic formation, while Brother Paul Gallagher, on other hand, seems to have a more fraternal relationship with the Brothers" (F. Brown, 168). Although the expression "the French spirit" does not occur in this passage, it is clear what was being referred to. Other Brothers, on the other hand, saw it as a value that ought to be maintained. For example, in a note dated June 1912, concerning schools in the Middle East, in which reference is made to the fact that, because of the decrease of recruitment in France of "candidates intended for the Middle East", it had been necessary to appeal to young persons of other nationalities, its author draws the following conclusion: "If this arrangement continued indefinitely, the foreign staff of these establishments could increase considerably and have a deleterious effect on *the French spirit* (underlined in the text) which until now has held sway exclusively" (GA NH 600/6).

We should not conclude from all this, however, that this negative view of things was widespread in the Institute. In certain parts of the Institute, Brothers from France are remembered quite differently. And even where, in practice, they justified the criticism we have referred to, it was far from being levelled at all their fellow-countrymen. When we see who the French Brothers were who were taken to task in Canada, we are hardly surprised that they aroused such resentment. On the other hand, when one thinks of the personal qualities of many others, one wonders how they could have been so different once they had crossed the Atlantic! However, perhaps it is not the role of the writer to express such opinions.





The Institute in Africa in 1932.

## Chap. 9 - THE INSTITUTE IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD

### Introduction

For the period between 1904 and 1928, we shall have to undertake a world tour if we are to give an overall picture of the presence of the Institute in the countries we have not yet considered. We shall consider successively the countries of Africa, Asia and Oceania, then those of North and Latin America, following the order in which the Brothers arrived in these various countries. Some complementary aspects have already been touched upon in the preceding supplement and others will be included in the supplement which follows this chapter. Given the ever-growing number of these countries, it will not be possible to dwell at any great length on each of them. Despite that, this chapter will have to be divided into two parts.

### Part 1: The Institute in Africa, Asia, Oceania

This first group of countries or territories is characterised by the fact that all of them, during the period under consideration, depended more or less directly on States which were generally European, and from a religious point of view, were considered by the Church as being missionary countries. We shall not concern ourselves with a number of countries or territories we have already dealt with in one of the preceding chapters. These include Algeria, Tunisia, Canary Islands and Spanish Morocco, in Africa; Palestine, Syria and Lebanon, in Asia; and New Guinea, in Oceania.

### Southern Africa

The Institute had been present on the islands of Reunion, Mauritius and Madagascar for varying lengths of time. During this period, they all formed one District. In 1904, the Institute established itself in the British Cape Colony.

#### – La Réunion

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the work of the Brothers in La Réunion had not yet recovered from the expulsion of the Brothers from State schools at the beginning of the 1890s. On the other hand, following the 1904 law, they were not obliged to leave the few private schools they still ran. In 1928, they still had schools in St Denis and St Pierre, run by ten Brothers; and 35 junior novices, trained by four Brothers (GA NM 360-1/9). This was a far cry from more prosperous times.

### – Mauritius

In Mauritius, the situation of the Brothers which had improved in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, remained stable between 1904 and 1928. In 1928, fifteen or so Brothers helped by around twenty lay persons were running two schools (Port Louis and Rose Hill) and a college at Curepipe, and were teaching 1,570 pupils (GA NM 360-1/9 - BEC 1928, 33).

### – Madagascar

The work of the Brothers was severely restricted in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but conditions began to improve at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>. While it was not affected by the consequences of the 1904 law, the recall of the Brothers for military service in 1914 caused problems. By 1928, the six schools run by the Brothers at Ambohimahasoa, Ambositra, Sainte Anne, Tananarive and Tamatave were flourishing. Twenty Brothers, a dozen of whom were indigenous, helped by 28 lay teachers, taught 2,435 pupils. In addition, there were 30 junior novices spread out over three houses, because of a lack of space and formation staff; and in the novitiate at Soavimbahoaka, near Tananarive, there were 18 novices belonging to the District as a whole (GA NM 360-1/9 - BEC 1928, 33).

### – Union of South Africa

In 1900, Great Britain had asserted its sovereignty over the provinces of South Africa following a long war with its erstwhile Dutch occupiers, the Boers. In 1904, at the request of the Vicar Apostolic, some Irish Brothers arrived at King William's Town in the English Cape Colony. They opened a primary and a secondary school, half of whose pupils were Catholic. These Brothers continued to belong to the District of England and Ireland.

### Northern Africa

Under this heading we include a country in which the Institute had already been established for a long time, and a territory where the Brothers arrived in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### – Egypt

In the years between 1904 and 1914, the nationalist movement, begun in 1881, gathered momentum. England made its protectorate official. Untouched by the tensions in

Upper Egypt resulting from Anglo-French rivalry, the Institute found conditions conducive to its development, all the more so as, in 1904 and in the years that followed, the District of Alexandria benefitted from the arrival of numerous Brothers from France.

The First World War put a stop to the current expansion, as 216 French Brothers were called up for military service, 32 of whom would be killed. On the other hand, Brothers expelled from Turkey or Syria-Palestine came to the help of the Brothers who remained. At the end of the war, Faoud I gave up his title of sultan and declared himself King of Egypt. In 1923, a new constitution was proclaimed. As far as the Institute was concerned, its expansion was greatly helped by the return of quite a large number of French Brothers, and the arrival of young Brothers from the missionary novitiate, some of whom were natives of the country.

In the period from 1904 to 1928, 13 schools, of which 6 were free, were added to the 24 already existing: 8 in Cairo, 3 in Alexandria, 1 in Upper Egypt, 1 in the Delta. However, 3 of these, 2 in Upper Egypt, were subsequently closed. At the same time, diversification occurred in the courses offered by the creation of:

- a commercial course at St Catherine, in Alexandria, in 1905; and at Khoronfish, in Cairo, in 1907;

- a vocational course at Bab Sidra, Alexandria, in 1909, whose printing works was used to produce school textbooks;

- in 1919, a course in law studies, as well as an advanced technical course, at St Catherine, preparing for entry to the Public Works School in Paris.

## – Libya

In the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Brothers had been asked to go to Tripoli on the “Barbary Coast”, as modern Libya was then called (see LS 9, 226). This territory had been acquired by Italy after its victory in 1911 over the Ottoman Empire. Brothers from the District of Turin arrived in Tripoli in September 1912, at the request of the Vicar Apostolic, and opened a school for poor children of various nationalities. In 1913, a second group of Brothers from the same District opened a similar school in Benghazi.

## Central Africa

### – Former Belgian Congo

The Congress of Berlin (1884-1885), which presided over the partition of Africa, had created the independent State of Congo, which became the personal property of Leopold

II, King of Belgium. The king encouraged Catholic missions to establish schools, in particular, for the indigenous children. At the International Exhibition at Brussels in 1900, he had informed Brother Alexis Marie, the geographer, of his wish to see the Brothers evangelise the Congo. In the period from 1908 to 1910, the independent State became the Belgian colony of the Congo. The Minister for the Colonies recommended that the Brothers of the Christian Schools should be asked to organise education in the Congo. With this aim in view, at the beginning of 1909, he asked to see the Visitor of the District of North Belgium, Brother Macaire Joseph. It was agreed that the Brothers would take charge of three institutions. In practice, they took over only two in an area at the mouth of the River Congo.

On September 20<sup>th</sup> 1909, five Brothers left Antwerp for Africa.. They went to Boma, which was the capital at that time, to replace some missionary priests at what was called a "school colony". This had been created initially to care for children rescued from slave traders, but now took in other abandoned children. In October 1909, the Brothers had 146 in their care, fifty or so of whom were baptised. The structure of the establishment had to be renovated and everything reorganised. Despite harsh living conditions, the work of the Brothers was rewarded with success. In 1912, the Brothers added vocational training courses to the teaching given to the children. In 1918, they ran a course for aspirant civil servants.

A second group of Brothers arrived at Leopoldville (Kinshasa) in 1910. The school opened on May 12<sup>th</sup> provided primary school education for indigenous children. In addition, evening classes for adults were organised, but there was room only for 75 of the 500 who had initially applied. A vocational school was opened in 1919. After the First World War, the Brothers opened a third establishment at Tumba. Here, their plan was to create a school to train primary-school teacher-catechists for the country. This plan came into effect in 1921. In addition, in 1920, two young Congolese were sent to the novitiate at Grand Bigard (Groot Bijgaarden) to prepare them for entry into the Institute. In 1927, Brother Visitor Veron Ignace (Joseph Tordeur) opened a junior novitiate and tried to have a novitiate established in situ, despite the opposition of the bishops.

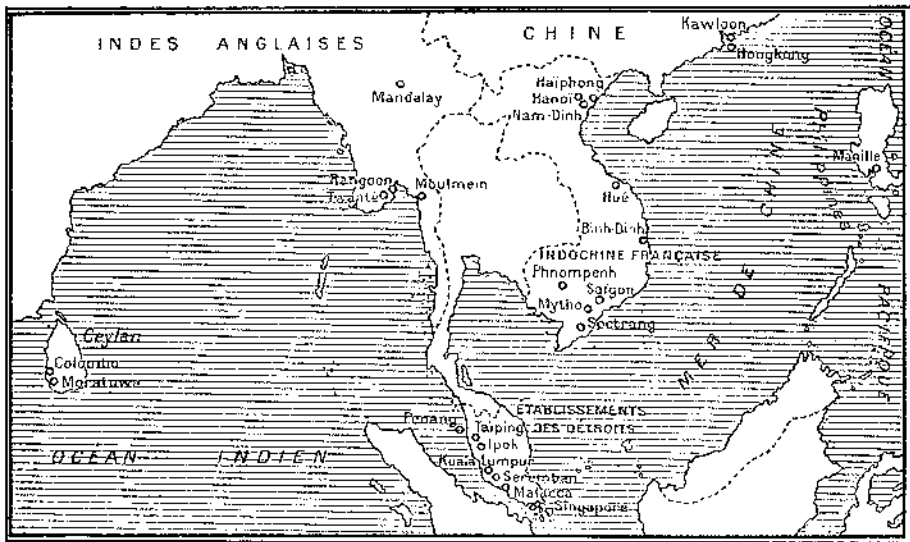
### **British Far East**

The Institute had already taken root in several British dependencies in the Far East. Where schools were concerned, the situation in all these countries was quite similar since they followed the British educational system. From the Institute point of view, these counties constituted what was still known as the District of India. In 1919, this District

was divided up into the District of Colombo, composed of the Island of Ceylon, and the District of Penang.

### – Malaysia and Singapore

During the period from 1904 to 1928, Malaysia had a flourishing trade in tin and rubber. As a result, the need for the teaching of English and for commercial courses was greatly increased. The Brothers responded to this need in the establishments they already had in Penang and Singapore, and in others they opened during this period: at Kuala Lumpur in 1904, Seremban in 1907, in Ipoh in 1912, and in Taiping in 1915.



The Institute in the Far East in 1932.

COUNTRY	HOUSES	BROTHERS	PUPILS
Ceylon	5	70	2.946
English speaking Indo-China	14	135	8.900
French speaking Indo-China	12	152	4.400
China	2	20	1.195
Philippines	1	14	825

The opening of these establishments was greatly helped by the arrival of 30 or so French Brothers, and the support given by the colonial government. From 1911, the Visitor of the District of India was Brother Marius James (James Byrne), an Irishman who had made his formation in France. In 1912, he established the headquarters of the District at Penang. During the 1914-1918 War, he obtained exemption for the Brothers from a form of obligatory civic service (cf. GA NJ 201-1/11). He successfully opposed any discrimination between Brothers from western countries and those from various Asian countries regarding salaries. In 1919, he set up a novitiate near Penang.

#### – **Burma (now Myanmar)**

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Burma was not as prosperous as Malaysia. At that time, the Brothers had establishments at Rangoon, Mulmein and Mandalay (see p. 108). They ran schools for pupils from a variety of ethnic groups and social backgrounds. Access to these establishments was made easier by the scholarships given by the Burmese General Government. The same diversity existed where religion was concerned. In 1920, the Brother Director of St Paul's in Rangoon, Brother Valdebert Jean or John (Francois Marin) founded an institution for poor and orphaned children. Supervised by the Brothers, these children ran an agricultural scheme and provided for their own material upkeep.

#### – **Hong Kong**

In Hong Kong, the commercial gateway to China, the Brothers continued their educational and apostolic work with European and Chinese young people at St John's College. The curriculum based on the so-called Oxford course prepared pupils for the Matriculation examination which gave access to university. Irish and American Brothers ensured the success of this institution which had to be transferred to larger premises in 1921.

#### – **Ceylon (now Sri Lanka)**

In Ceylon, the Brothers continued their work in St Benedict's College in Colombo, and in the house of formation at Mutwal on the outskirts of the same town. In the period from 1904 to 1928, the work of the Brothers expanded. In 1905, a school was opened next to the novitiate. Another poor school funded by St Benedict's was opened in the Grandpass district. In 1917, the Brothers reopened another annexe of the college in the Petah district. In 1920, the college added commercial courses to existing courses

in modern languages and sciences. In 1923, classical studies were introduced. In 1926, the Brothers reopened St Sebastian's College at Moratuwa, 20 kilometres south of Colombo. In 1923, the novitiate at Mutwal, which supplied Brothers for the region, was transferred to Penang, and a scholasticate was established in its place.

### **Other countries in Southeast Asia**

The countries concerned are French Indochina, to which the Brothers had returned in 1889 after six years of absence, and the Philippines, where the Brothers arrived in 1911.

#### **– French Indochina (now Vietnam and Cambodia)**

On July 27<sup>th</sup> 1905, the Governor of Cochin-China sent a letter to the Governor General of Indochina, asking whether the laws of 1901 and 1904 concerning religious congregations should be applied in the colony he was responsible for (GA NJ 450-2). They were not applied where the schools of the Brothers of the Christian Schools were concerned, as can be seen from a brief history of each of the houses of the District drawn up in 1928 (NJ 450-3/2). The houses mentioned include the Taberd Institute in Saigon, the school at Mytho and the establishment opened at Hanoi in Tonkin in 1894. In the years that followed, other establishments were opened in various parts of Indochina: in Hue (Annam) in 1904; Haiphong (Tonkin) in 1906; Phnompenh (Cambodia) in 1911; Soctrang (Cochin-China) in 1913; Binhdinh (Annam) in 1921; and Namdinh (Tonkin) in 1924. These new foundations show that the Brothers not only did not encounter obstacles, but also proved to be very dynamic. At this point, they had some 3,200 pupils, plus 200 future lay teachers in training at Namdinh. Also, there was a junior novitiate and novitiate for "native vocations" at Hue (GA NJ 450-2/2).

#### **– Philippines**

Following the defeat of Spain in 1898, the Philippines became the possession of the United States. One result of this was the introduction of the study of English in the place of Spanish in schools, and the establishment of the American educational system. The religious neutrality which characterised this system led the Catholic hierarchy to establish a network of private schools. However, the Spanish religious congregations which had run schools up till then were ill-prepared to bring into effect the necessary changes. As a consequence, the first American archbishop of Manilla, turned his attention to congregations with American religious, and approached the Brothers of the Christian Schools whose pupil he had been in St Louis (Missouri). He arrived in 1903, and the



following year he contacted the Brother Visitor of the District of "India", who came to study the situation in situ.

Negotiations between the archbishop and the Superiors and, in particular, with Brother Gabriel Archange (Bernard Costerousse), Visitor of Colombo at the time, lasted several years. It would take too long to go into all the details. Despite good intentions on both sides, the main stumbling block proved to be the inability of the archbishop to finance the plans he had formed. In 1909, while visiting Rome, he interested Pius X in his plans. Cardinal Merry del Val, the Secretary of State, approached the Institute. Finally in April 1911, three Brothers arrived in Manilla, and six more joined them in May. Among these, there were five French Brothers who had been in various countries, and an American. In June, the Brothers opened a secondary establishment called De La Salle College, intended for children from "better class" Filipino and European families.

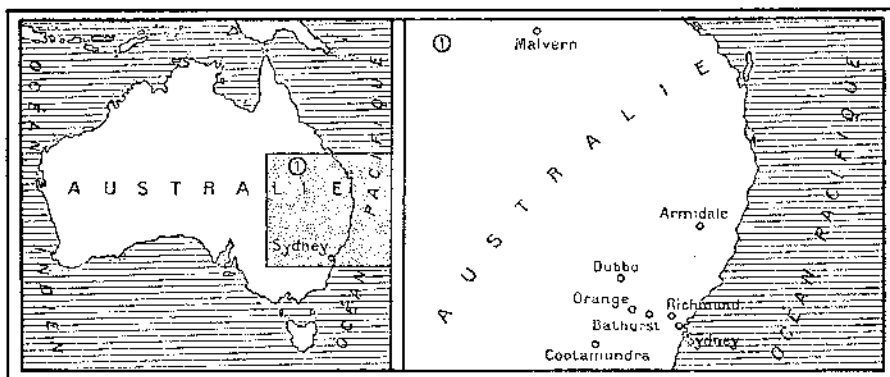
The first years of the history of the college (1911 to 1921) could be called the "French phase", because the first headmasters, who gave the institution solid foundations, were all French Brothers. The school offered primary education and three years of a Commercial High School programme. Expansion was hindered by lack of space and the unsuitability of the premises. The second phase began with the transfer of the establishment to the south of Manilla. The move was coordinated by Brother A. Michael, an American of Irish origin, and this period was marked by the arrival of a steady stream of young Irish Brothers. Consequently, this period was called the "Irish phase". It would be followed by a third, the "American phase", a period during which Brothers from the United States took charge of the schools in the Philippines. In the first two phases, the Brothers of the Philippines belonged to the District of Penang.

## Oceania

### – Australia

Australia, which now had the status of a British Dominion, had been a federal State since 1900. In 1880, State education had been secularised and grants to denominational schools has been suppressed. Most of the Catholics were Irish or of Irish origin and, for the most part, they were poor. In order to provide children with Catholic schools in which they could be brought up in their faith, the bishops appealed to religious congregations for help. Even before this, the Brothers of the Christian Schools had been asked to come on a number of occasions. Finally, the Brother Visitor of the District of England and Ireland arrived, accompanied by two Brothers from the District of Nantes, followed

later by five Irish Brothers and seven French Brothers. They arrived at Armidale in New South Wales on February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1906, and took charge of a secondary school, with Brother Marius James from Penang as headmaster.



The Institute in Australia in 1932: 13 Houses, 86 Brothers, 2,473 Pupils

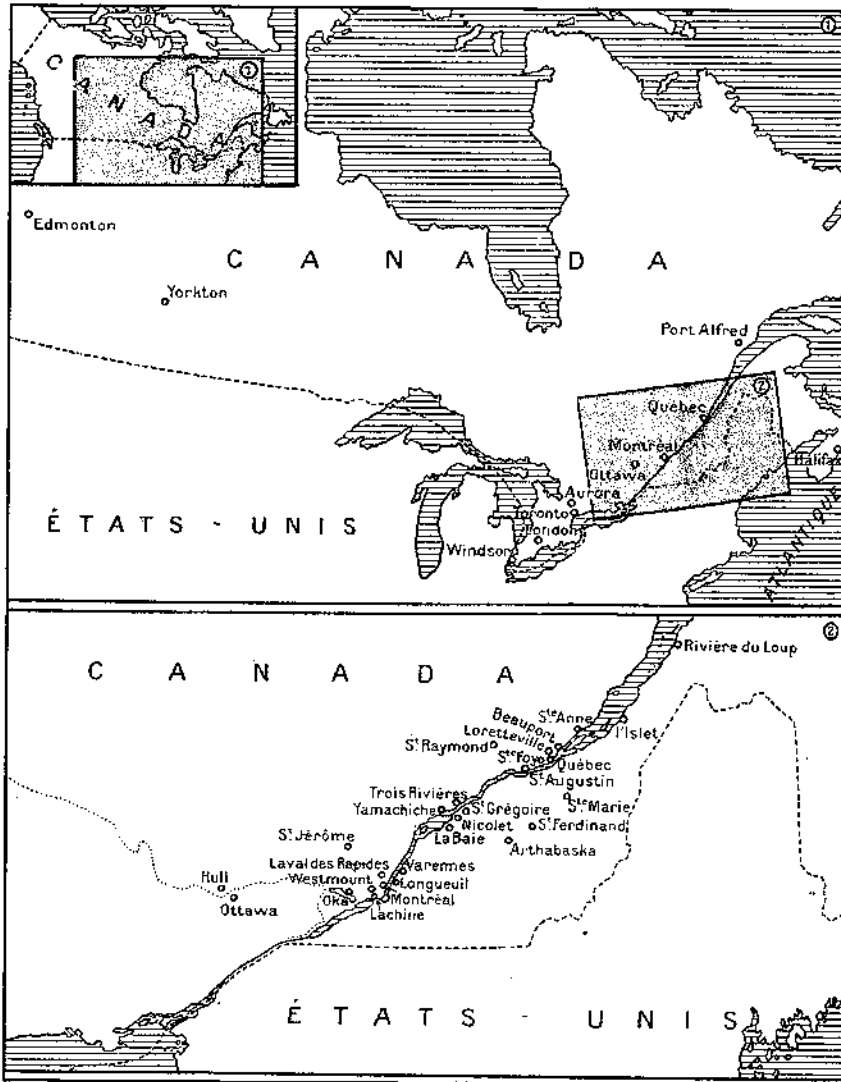
As we mentioned in the preceding supplement, the beginnings of the new foundation were overshadowed by misunderstanding. Local expectation was that there would be only Irish Brothers. The Superiors thought otherwise: Brother Assistant Aimarus envisaged making Australia a kind of annexe for the District of Nantes, where Brothers with no right to teach in France could be sent. Such thinking reflected an ignorance of the Francophobia of the local inhabitants due to Franco-British rivalry: the "Entente Cordiale" would come about only in 1909-1910. As far as the ecclesiastical authorities of Armidale were concerned, there was no place for the French Brothers who had been sent to them, who in addition, had a poor command of English. The problem was solved by the departure of these Brothers for Colombo in June 1906.

At Armidale, the Brothers had opened a secondary school. The establishments opened in Sydney in 1909, and at Malvern, a suburb of Melbourne, in 1912, began as primary schools and gradually added secondary school teaching. In 1913, the Brothers were asked to run schools in small towns. They chose to go to Cootamundra because there was a possibility to open a novitiate there, which happened in April 1914. In the same year, the District of Australia was established. Brother Paul Andrew (Thomas Phelan) became the first Visitor while still remaining the headmaster of Armidale. He was interested in opening especially primary schools. In Armidale, he opposed the bishop over the question of teaching Latin, and even considered moving the Brothers out of this town.

The question was settled for the Institute as a whole in 1924, the year in which Brother Paul relinquished his post. Under his successor, the expansion of the District continued. In 1928, there were 9 establishments.

## Part 2: The Institute on the American continent

Our only reason for looking at the evolution of the Institute in the countries of North America and Latin America in the same section, is the habit of considering America as



The Institute in Canada, in 1932: 81 Houses, 1,116 Brothers, 29,879 Pupils.

forming a single continent. In reality, of course, the context in which Brothers there found themselves was quite different. In Canada and the United States, the Institute had taken firm root in the time it had been there. In Latin America, the Institute was already established in various countries, but its greatest territorial expansion took place in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Canada

During the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the overall situation in Canada made it possible for the Brothers to expand their work without any hindrance. However, they did have to cope with the consequences of the rivalry between Canadians of French origin and those of English origin. They also had to take into account educational laws which, for example, in 1905 and 1923, revised the curriculum (cf. *Voisine II*, 363). As far as the Institute is concerned, the period under consideration here can be divided into two parts.

### *1904 to 1913*

This period continued to be marked by the personality of Brother Reticus, elected Assistant and put in charge of Canada in 1891. His influence at the time was all the stronger as he relied on the support of the French Brothers who came to Canada between 1904 and 1909. Of these 221 Brothers, 154 came from the Besancon District, and their transfer abroad had been organised systematically by Brother Reticus. French Brothers were appointed Directors of a number of houses; many formation groups were entrusted to Brothers of the same nationality; and even two Brother Visitors were chosen from among these expatriated Brothers.

The arrival of these Brothers had a positive effect, as many of them had much experience and were in the prime of life. However, the kind of "junior partnership" to which the Canadian Brothers had been reduced was resented by a number of them, especially in the Montreal region. Anonymous articles appeared in the press, questioning the form of leadership adopted by Brother Reticus, and attacking the Brothers who had come from France, sometimes by name. Basing himself on documents in the Generalate archives, Nive *Voisine* reveals the virulence of these articles (cf. *Vol. II*, 162 ff).

Appointed Visitor in 1908, Brother Bernard Louis (Ferdinand Jeandron), who came from France, was a cultured man, the author of a much appreciated catechism, and he put pressure on the Brothers to improve themselves. At the same time, the Brothers who

returned to Ottawa found themselves obliged to obtain official qualifications, but the conditions governing their acquisition made this difficult for Brothers already teaching.

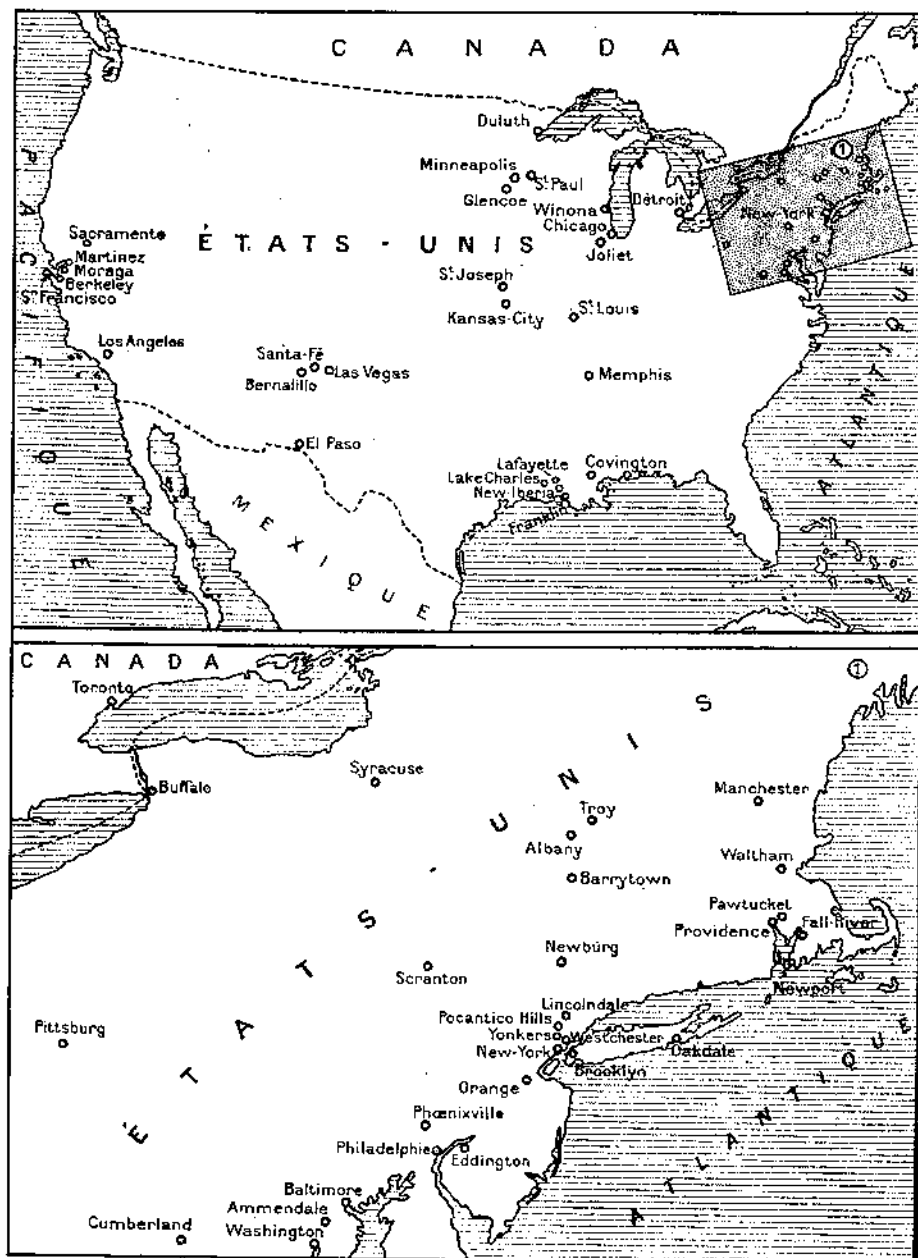
Brother Bernard Louis and Brother Philadelphus (Edmond Sancier), Director of the Brothers' Academy in Ottawa, drew up a plan which included, in particular, the opening of a junior novitiate for the youngsters of the region. Brother Reticus disavowed them. Brother Philadelphus, feeling that he could not destroy what he had created, left the Institute. Brother Bernard Louis, recalled to Paris, was stripped of his functions because of "administrative errors". The crisis became acute. Brother Regis Francois (Albert Renaud), another Frenchman, was appointed Visitor in 1909. He was thought to be the "liegeman" of the Brother Assistant. Three years later, in a document addressed to the Brothers, he informed them that "special reasons prevent me from accepting a new obedience. In any case, we understand perfectly well that Canada can now assume the reins of its own government" (GA NO 111-3/10). And in fact, a Canadian, Brother Sigebert King (Augustin St Pierre), was appointed Visitor, and another, Brother Mandellus (Joseph Bourque), was appointed his auxiliary Visitor.

### *1913-1928*

The situation changed with the resignation of the Assistant, Brother Reticus, at the 1913 Chapter, and the allocation of Canada to Brother Allais Charles. With his combination of kindness and firmness he won over the Brothers. Every year, even during the war, he would cross the Atlantic to visit them. In June 1914, he announced in Toronto the formation of a District centred on this town, and which included the houses of Ontario and the English-speaking communities of Montreal.

In the years that followed, the new District spread to the western provinces. In 1919, the Brothers opened a college at Yorkton in Saskatchewan so that the children of the Catholic Ukrainian families in the region could be educated according to their faith. In 1927, the Brothers took charge of an institution at Edmonton in Alberta catering for Catholics attending university which, because of its status as a college, could offer them courses in religion, history and philosophy. However, during this same period in Ottawa, Brothers running French-speaking schools fell victim to Canadian Anglo-French rivalry, which led in particular to English being declared "the sole language of communication between teachers and pupils in all Ontario schools" (Voisine II, 215). The refusal of French Canadians to apply these official directives in their schools resulted in a "political and juridical saga" (N. Voisine) which the Brothers had to endure until 1920.

If, during the First World War, the involvement of Canada in the conflict and the call to arms it implied was contested in the country, the Brothers did not have to suffer in any particular way from this war. However, in 1918, Canada was affected by what was



The Institute in Canada, in 1932: 81 Houses, 1,116 Brothers, 29,879 Pupils.

called the "Spanish flu". A number of Brothers died from it, and in several places those unaffected helped to care for the local sick. In the years that followed, the Institute went through a new phase of development in the country. In 1927, the District of Quebec was created, something which had been envisaged since the beginning of the century. A huge building was constructed at Sainte Foy, near Quebec, to serve as a house of formation and a home for retired Brothers. Statistics for 1928 give an idea of the extent to which Canadian Districts had grown by this time. The District of Montreal numbered 519 Brothers and 30 communities; that of Quebec, 407 Brothers and 31 communities; that of Toronto, 140 Brothers and 16 communities.

## United States

Regarding the United States, the whole of the period under consideration here is characterised by the power acquired by this country through the development of its industries and of its agriculture, its application of scientific and technical advances, and the dynamism of its population. This power and dynamism were not undermined by the First World War into which the country was drawn in 1917. This date, however, marks a break in the history of the country. For the Institute, the real turning point was 1923. If we combine the chronology of the country with that of the Institute, we can distinguish three phases in the history of the Institute in the period between 1904 and 1928.

### *1904-1917*

During this period, there is a sharp contrast between the situation of the Institute and that of the country. The prohibition to teach Latin, which had been imposed on the Brothers in the last years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had, in practice, demoralised those of the United States. It had resulted in a decrease in new vocations and in the departure of a certain number of Brothers. Establishments where this teaching was given experienced a fall in the number of pupils, and the continued existence of some schools was under threat. On the other hand, with the development of the teaching of science, and the impetus provided, for example, by Brother Potamian, in the Engineering department at Manhattan College, the Brothers contributed in a certain way to the boom of the country. In addition, in 1904 and in the years that followed, a number of French Brothers came to the United States and, in particular, to the District of New York. Apart from those who came to study English, these Brothers were employed in the schools and commercial academies of the French-speaking towns of New England, or in reformatories and houses of formation.

### 1917-1923

The entry of the United States into the war in 1917 did not have any particular consequences for the Brothers, as the Superiors had obtained exemption for them from military service. However, the difficult situation of some establishments worsened: the university college at Memphis gave up its special status in 1915; the college at St Louis which was burnt down in 1916 did not reopen. The end of the war years was marked by the Spanish flu epidemic which led to a further reduction in staff.

After the war, the participation of the United States in the victory was a boost for national pride, but the majority of people were in favour of isolationism. Prosperity brought with it a comfortable and sometimes even an unrestrained lifestyle. Catholics tended to have more influence. Some began to occupy important positions in the medical, legal or political professions. The teaching given over a period of two or three generations in Catholic establishments of higher studies - including those of the Brothers - contributed to this. The Brothers continued to contribute to this evolution, but their participation in it did not increase. In fact, between 1912 and 1923 it diminished. For example, one of the old establishments, Rock Hill in Baltimore, was closed down in 1923 following a fire. However, the French Brothers who had been expelled from Mexico in 1916, first took over establishments in New Mexico, and then opened new establishments in the New Orleans area. In 1921, the District of New Orleans-Santa Fe was created, and French Brothers occupied most of the posts of responsibility.

### 1923-1928

The year 1923 marked the beginning of a renewal. In that year, the General Chapter removed the prohibition to study and to teach Latin. But this was not the only factor: the importance of this subject had diminished following changes in the curriculum reflecting the increasing importance of science. Also, the 1923 Chapter placed new men at the head of the Institute, such as Brother Abban Philip, who was elected Assistant and entrusted with the Districts of the United States.

In his work *The Christian Brothers in the United States - 1925-1950*, W. Battersby chooses a slightly different time-frame in the chapter entitled "The Golden Age", which covers the period 1925 to 1930. "Golden Age" was an apt description for a country enjoying an explosion of prosperity and rapid social change. It was true also of the Institute. For the Brothers it was a new lease of life. Efforts to find new vocations were crowned with success. Young Brothers received an improved spiritual and intellectual



formation: those who attended university could study, in particular, the liberal arts for which knowledge of classical languages was necessary. Improvement in training at this level was necessary, given the increase in the number of secondary schools or institutes of higher learning which the Brothers had taken or were taking charge of. The tendency in the Baltimore District to move out of primary schools and to open high schools



The Institute in Latin America in 1932

COUNTRY	HOUSES	BROTHERS	PUPILS
Cuba	8	139	2.271
Mexico	7	105	2.041
Nicaragua	3	32	498
Panama	2	34	795
Colombia	36	491	8.684
Venezuela	6	82	1.023
Ecuador	20	177	6.935
Peru	2	24	658
Bolivia	2	25	635
Chile	12	122	3.542
Argentina	14	199	4.536
Brazil	8	113	2.117

was not present, however, in other Districts, some of which, it is true, had hardly any parish schools. In addition, the assignment of Brothers to institutions for deprived children was maintained.

When the period ended, the recovery we noted was already having its effect. In 1928, there were almost 1,100 Brothers in the five Districts of the United States taken as whole, whereas in 1923 there had been only 923. Both figures included the French Brothers in the District of New Orleans-Santa Fe and New York, as well as Brothers who had come from Ireland before the imposition of immigration quotas after the war.

### Latin America

It might seem a daunting task to consider as a whole such a number and variety of countries as are to be found in Latin America. However, in addition to their shared past, these countries shared a common destiny at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Economically, they benefitted from relative development, which gave rise to a business class which, together with the great landowners, the *hacendados*, shared out among themselves the wealth of these different countries. The development contributed also to the emergence of a middle class which became important. On the other hand, agricultural and industrial workers, drawn from the indigenous population or from European immigrants, were poor. In politics, conservatives and liberals vied for power. Both sides were prepared to use force to obtain power and to exercise it in a dictatorial fashion.

However, new opposition forces were beginning to form among the new social classes and the masses.

We need to bear in mind this context if we are to understand the situation of the Brothers in the period from 1904 to 1928 in the countries where the Institute was already present or in those in which it was established in this period.

### – Ecuador

From 1896 to 1901, under the presidency of General Alfaro, the Institute was reduced by two-thirds (see p. 88). In 1904, there remained four houses and 51 Brothers. In 1906, a new constitution proclaimed the separation of Church and State, and secularised State education. In the same year, General Alfaro returned to power, but gave guarantees to religious in the country. The work of the Brothers recovered. In January 1907, a novitiate was opened in Quito, and was soon followed by a scholasticate. In 1907, a junior novitiate was opened at Cuenca. The *Colegio San Jose* in Guayaquil was reopened in 1910 and, in 1921, a free school dependent on the college was set up. Other schools opened during these same years (cf. Br. Alban, 206). In 1924, when the liberals seized power again, a law forbade the payment of grants to denominational schools. The Brothers lost these grants in three towns. The liberals were not long in power. During the period as a whole, Brothers skilled in various fields, introduced innovations into the country, such as the rearing of silk-worms, or the cultivation of eucalyptus trees. On the whole, by the end of this period there were clear signs that the Institute had recovered, numbering as it did, 184 Brothers.

### – Chile

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Chile was suffering from the consequences of its conflict with its neighbours in the North, as well as of a civil war. Thanks to its mineral wealth, the country was quite prosperous economically, but only a minority benefitted from this. As for the Institute, it was suffering from the effects of an affair which had affected adversely the reputation of the *Colegio San Jacinto* in 1904, and which had been magnified out of all proportion by the anti-clerical strife which was raging at the time. On January 7<sup>th</sup> 1905, the minister Rivera decreed the closure of the Brothers' establishments in the country, but the decree was rescinded (cf. Br. Alban, 402). At this point, Chile benefitted from the arrival of Brothers from France. Given the secular character of State schools, the Brothers opened new colleges at Temuco (1904), Valparaíso and San Felipe (1910), Cauquenes and Talca (1911). In order to survive, these colleges had to be

fee-paying. Commercial classes were introduced in the Zambrano Institute in Santiago in 1909, and in the establishments in Valparaiso and San Felipe in 1910. In 1907, an arts and crafts school (*Artes y Oficios*) was opened at Puerto Montt, and in 1909, the Brothers took charge of the agricultural college at Macul, attached to the Catholic university.

The Brothers continued to work with deprived children. For example, at the *San Vicente* orphanage in Santiago, courses were introduced to teach the children agricultural skills, gardening and bee-keeping. The Brothers also continued to bring adults together for evening classes, to prepare them for the reception of the sacraments, and to provide them with a Christian social formation. In addition, they trained lay teachers in the training college they ran in Santiago. In 1906, Brother Honorato organised a national association for Catholic teachers.

The years which followed the First World War were more difficult. Chile was in the throes of an economic crisis and there was widespread social unrest. In 1920, the liberals came into power. The 1925 constitution enshrined the separation of Church and State. It decreed also obligatory primary school education. As for the Brothers, the teacher training college at Santiago had to close in 1925 for lack of resources. On the other hand, in 1926, Brother Emilio gave his first lecture in pedagogy at the Catholic university in the capital. In 1928, the teaching of the classics was introduced in the colleges in Santiago, Valparaiso and San Felipe. Schools for the poor continued, but following the suppression of grants for private schools in 1914, they were totally dependent on the generosity of benefactors, and the Brothers had to close some of them. In 1918, Brother Rafael organised a group of Lasallian Cooperators who undertook social work in one of the districts of Santiago.

## – Argentina

Since 1890, political power found its support in the middle and lower classes, combining the ballot-box approach with that of insurrection. However, as we read in a report drawn up in 1904 on De la Salle College in Buenos Aires, “it has not yet occurred to them here to expel religious” (GA NT 200-2/1). The work of the Brothers continued to develop without any hindrance, thanks to a great extent to the influx of French Brothers. De La Salle College in Buenos Aires and a commercial institute opened in 1910 benefitted from their arrival, and free schools were opened in Buenos Aires (1905 and 1910), and at Rosario de Santa Fe (1907 and 1908).

In 1912, a law introduced universal suffrage. This enabled Hipolito Irigoyen to come to power in 1916. He adopted an authoritarian approach to government. The right to primary education was proclaimed, and vocational and technical education was developed. On their part, the Brothers, while continuing to open schools, created a variety of different institutions. At San Isidro, an establishment opened in 1912 included a teacher-training department for primary school teachers. In Cordoba, a college was opened in 1914. Another one, opened at Rosario de Santa Fe in 1918, included commercial studies in its programme. A technical school was established at Lomas de San Isidro in 1925, and a commercial institute at Florida in 1926. Thanks to the Armstrong Foundation which began its funding in 1913, the Brothers were able to acquire a property at Gonzalez Catan, near Buenos Aires, where they built an agricultural school. From 1915 onwards, it became possible there to give a primary education and courses in agriculture to boarding pupils.

In 1923, a dispute arose between the Argentinian government and the Church, and it was feared that the separation of the Church and State would be declared, and that educational laws hostile to the Church would be drawn up. There was a risk also that religious congregations would be expelled (cf. GA NT 200-2/2). But none of this happened, and the Institute continued to develop in this country. In 1928, there were 189 Brothers and 15 communities in Argentinia.

### – Colombia

The beginning of the century, saw the end of the Thousand Days' War (1899-1902), during which, following the death of President Nuñez, the liberals, supported by the Caribbean coastal region, had risen up against the conservatives, who had the support of the central region. It was the latter who were finally victorious. The Brothers, therefore, continued to benefit from the support of the government, at whose request they took charge of the Central Teacher Training College in Bogota in 1905. In 1905 also, Brothers depending on the District of Panama, took charge of the Higher Teacher Training College for the Atlantic coastal region in Cartagena, at the request of the local bishop. In Bogota, the Brothers ran the Central Art and Crafts School which, in 1904, replaced the *Asilo San Jose*. In 1919, the President of the Republic changed the name of the school to Central Technical Institute. The arrival of thirty or so French Brothers between 1904 and 1908, and even more so, the increase in local vocations, made it possible to open many more establishments in the regions of Bogota, Medellin and in the Caribbean coastal region. These establishments included free primary schools, but most were sec-

ondary colleges. In Barranquilla, a commercial college, opened in 1906, replaced the Biffi College. A new School of Arts and Crafts, the *Instituto San Bernardo*, was opened in Bogota in 1916.

Even though the overall attitude of the government had not changed, a note sent in 1921 to the District Council asking for an improvement in the formation of the Brothers, speaks of a threat to take the Central Teacher Training College away from the Brothers, and to reappraise the diploma awarded to the students of the Technical Institute (GA NT 800-2/5). Steps had been taken, however, to prepare Brothers for the teacher's certificate (NT 800-1/4). In 1928, a directive issued by the Sacred Congregation for Religious created a problem for boarding schools. It stipulated that boarding schools should henceforth be "closed", that is, that they did not let the boarders go home on Sunday, whereas this was the normal practice in the country (cf. GA NT 800-1/11). Despite these few problems, the District of Colombia became so large that in 1927 it was divided into two. Two-thirds of its 330 Brothers were allocated to the District of Bogota, and one-third to that of Medellin.

### -- Nicaragua

The Brothers had been established in Nicaragua since 1903, but under the dictatorial regime of President Zelaya which lasted up to 1909, it had been difficult for them to expand. In 1912, a new government which was conservative set itself the task to combat the evil of liberal atheism. It signed a contract with the Brothers according to which they were to open a teacher training college at Managua. It opened in January 1913, staffed by Brothers coming from a similar establishment in Panama. In the same year, a school dependent on the government and therefore free, was opened at Leon. In 1917, the government entrusted a new school to the Brothers in a district of the capital Managua: the Brothers were joined on the staff by four lay teachers from the first group of students completing the course at the training college. On Sundays, two of the Brothers went to the local prison to teach the detainees, suiting the instruction to the standard of education of the prisoners. In 1920, the Brother opened a school for the local children and especially the poor, at Jimoteqa, in a thriving coffee-growing region. The school became the source of many vocations. At the teacher training college, Brother Appolone Jules (Henri Spels) achieved fame by creating a natural history museum and, with the help of his fellow-Brothers, by drawing up a topographical map of Nicaragua. The map was published in 1925.

## – Panama

After the creation of the State of Panama in 1903, the leaders of the new republic, wishing to provide young people with a Christian education, had called upon the Brothers to take charge of two teacher training colleges, one for primary, and the other for secondary school teachers. The arrival of Brothers exiled from France, in July 1904, made it possible to open these two establishments, as well as a school at David. In the two years that followed, the Brothers took charge of five State schools: at Colon, Penome, Villa de los Santos and Santiago, in 1904; and in 1906, at Aguadulce, where they ran a boarding school for indigenous children up to 1909. It was here that they published a grammar of the Cuna language. After three years, the District centred on Panama had 12 houses and almost 100 Brothers.

In 1908, however, the liberal party came to power, and the education minister took away the two teacher training colleges in Panama from the Brothers. Between 1909 and 1922, the Brothers withdrew successively from all the State schools, finding it difficult to teach religion in them and unwilling to accept coeducation. The Brothers then opened two private schools, one at each end of the canal: De La Salle College in Panama and St Joseph's in Colon. In the latter establishment, where teaching was initially given in English, the Brothers had to cope with the complaints of white parents who objected to having their children taught side-by-side with coloured children. The college really developed only when it became a whites-only school. The Brothers also found it difficult to recruit vocations in this country. Initially, they were able to cope thanks to the arrival of Brothers from France. Subsequently, they were helped and then replaced by Spanish Brothers.

## – Cuba

In 1898, the United States had intervened in Cuba against Spain in support of the local people who wanted their independence. After four years of military presence, the Americans recognised the independence of the island, but obtained for themselves the right of intervention. On January 1<sup>st</sup> 1905, Brother Adolphe Alfred (Alfred Bouche) arrived in this new State, having been sent there by the Superiors. He was received by the archbishop, and help was provided by the president of the Conference of St Vincent de Paul and by former pupils from Barcelona. On September 1<sup>st</sup> of the same year, 15 Canadian or French Brothers arrived from Canada and opened a school in Havana called *El Nino de Belen*, which included two free and two fee-paying classes; and St John Baptist de La Salle College in the Vedado district of the town, which offered instruction in com-

merce and languages. The arrival of more French Brothers in the years leading up to 1914 made it possible to open half a dozen other establishments. The arrival of 70 Brothers expelled from Mexico in 1914 enabled the Brothers to expand further: in 1915, they opened the La Salle Commercial Academy in Havana, and in 1916, a free school depending on the college in Vedado.

In April 1907, the houses already established in Cuba ceased to depend on Canada and formed a new District. In 1908, a college founded by the District of New York on the island of **Puerto Rico** in 1905, was attached to the new District which became known as the District of the West Indies (Antilles). On August 1st 1920, Brother Imier de Jesus combined the Brothers in Cuba and Mexico to form a single District called West Indies-Mexico. In September 1924, the new District numbered 168 active Brothers and 15 houses (GA NR 100/1).

### – Mexico

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Mexico was still ruled by the dictator Porfirio Díaz who had come to power in 1884. This period was characterised by peace and economic development, but also by great social inequality. It was a liberal regime, but one which tolerated the Catholic Church. Secondary and higher education was well established, but this was not the case where primary education was concerned. The Brothers arrived during the final ten or so years of this regime. The Superiors had been receiving requests for Brothers for a long time. Finally they were able to accede to them thanks to the large number of French Brothers made available by the 1904 law. The first to arrive was Brother Pierre Celestin (Schneider) coming from Colombia, followed by four French Brothers in December 1905. The archbishop of Puebla entrusted two establishments to them which they opened in January 1906: the free *San Juan Batista de La Salle* school, and the *Colegio San Pedro y San Pablo*, a fee-paying secondary and boarding school. In the years that followed, more Brothers arrived from across the Atlantic. Their arrival made it possible to open three or four houses each year. Just outside Mexico City, at San Borja, a novitiate was opened in 1911, and a junior novitiate in 1912. When this foundation phase came to an end in 1913, the Institute in Mexico numbered 176 Brothers and 18 houses.

However, this exceptional period did not last. When President Díaz sought re-election in 1910, the discontent which had accumulated over the years exploded in a revolt. Francisco Madero who took power in 1911 was toppled in his turn in 1913. With the



new president, the counter-revolution gained the upper hand, but revolutionary forces returned with a vengeance. The "Constitutionalists" among them were violently anti-religious. In the towns which they occupied, they expelled the priests. At Monterrey, they forbade the Brothers to teach. At Zacatecas, the Brothers were arrested; the Brother Director and another Brother, considered to be supporters of Porfirio Diaz, were executed; the other Brothers were given permission to be escorted to the frontier on the payment of a large sum of money. The Brothers of the two communities at Queretaro were expelled also. The Brother Visitor ordered all the Brothers to make their way to Havana (cf. GA NP 111/7 - letter from Br Niceas Bertin). The houses were closed, and 183 Brothers left the country. Revolutionary forces entered Mexico City in July 1914.

In 1917, an article of the new constitution "which summed up all the hopes and ideas expressed since 1910", forbade the Church to own property, revoked its legal status, and excluded it from State education, while at the same time guaranteeing religious freedom (*Latin America in the 20<sup>th</sup> century*, 223). This uneasy situation continued until 1920. However, in 1916, Brothers in civilian dress re-opened the junior novitiate at San Borja, and took charge again of three establishments in Mexico City, calling them "French colleges". In 1917, a novitiate was added to the junior novitiate. At this time, in addition to the four houses in Mexico City, the District had seven houses in the United States and numbered 100 Brothers (GA NP 111/11). In 1921, the Mexican houses became a part of the West Indies-Mexico District, while those in the United States formed the District of New Orleans-Santa Fe.

In 1926, a law was passed permitting the dissolution of religious congregations and the closure of Catholic schools. In retaliation, the bishops suppressed religious worship in the churches. The Brothers continued nonetheless to run the schools they had re-opened and to teach catechism in them, despite the risk they ran. All the same, the house of formation was transferred to Cuba. In 1929, an accommodation would be reached through the intermediary of the Vatican, which gave the State more power over the bishops.

### — Brazil

In the immense territory of Brazil, which had become a republic in 1889, positivism was firmly rooted, resulting in the separation of Church and State. Already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, bishops and priests, anxious to strengthen the faith of young Catholics, had requested Brothers to be sent. The first to have his request answered was a former pupil of the Brothers in Belgium, now parish priest in Porto Alegre, the capital of the State of Rio Grande do Sul. This priest corresponded with Brother Assistant Madir Joseph. At

the end of April 1907, twelve Brothers arrived at Porto Alegre: eight were French, two Belgian, one German and one Portuguese who had taught the language of the country to the others. Six were sent to Vacaria where they opened a small college; the others remained at Porto Alegre where they took charge of the *Nossa Senhora dos Navecantes* parish school. With the arrival of reinforcements from Europe in the form of 22 Brothers, it became possible at the beginning of 1908 to open the *Nossa Senhora das Doras* school in Porto Alegre; an agricultural training centre with boarding facilities; a free school at Canoas, near Porto Alegre; the *Nossa Senhora do Carmo* at Caxias, a centre for Italian settlers; and another at Sao Lourenco. At Porto Alegre, in the Partenon district, the Brothers opened two classes, a junior novitiate and a novitiate.

Initially, the houses in Brazil depended on the Brother Visitor of the District of Cambrai who had organised the departure of Brothers from his District. When he accompanied new arrivals, he remained some time in the country to visit the houses and to attend the annual retreat. In 1909, the houses in Brazil were formed into an independent District. In 1913, there were 46 Brothers, running five establishments - the one at Vacaria had been closed because of its precarious situation. When the First World War broke out, the supply of new Brothers from Europe ceased. In 1916, the archdiocese of Porto Alegre entrusted the *Santo Antonio de Pao dos Pobres* (Bread of the Poor) orphanage to the Brothers, in which the children learned various crafts in addition to following a normal course of study. After the war, the Brother Visitor turned his attention to increasing local recruitment among German or Italian immigrants. The junior novitiate, the novitiate and the scholasticate which had been added in 1919, were transferred to Canoas in 1925. In 1928, the District numbered 91 Brothers and 8 houses.

### – Venezuela

A zealous priest had asked for Brothers as far back as 1894, but it was only in 1911 that another attempt to have them was made. At that time, there was a authoritarian military dictatorship in Venezuela which, however, promoted the development of education and of economic growth. Like many other Latin American countries, its outlook was influenced by the ideas of 18th century philosophers. In order to combat this influence, the bishop of Barquisimeto wished to establish for the local boys a college which would match the one already run by French nuns in his episcopal city. Contacted by the Father Superior of a French establishment in Caracas, the Institute Superiors agreed to send some Brothers. Four Brothers, followed by two others, arrived at Barquisimeto in January 1913, where they opened a fee-paying college. The quality of the formation of

the Brothers and of their teaching methods, as well as the Christian education offered by the school, ensured the success of the establishment. Similar schools were opened in Puerto Cabello, on the Caribbean coast in 1921; in Caracas, the capital, in 1922; in Valencia, where a free school was opened also, in 1925. The Brothers in Venezuela were attached to the District of Panama.

### – Bolivia

In this country, the ruling liberal party was only moderately anti-clerical, and the Superiors had been receiving requests for the Brothers since the beginning of the century. It was only in 1919, however, that three Brothers coming from Chile arrived at La Paz, the capital of Bolivia. They began by opening primary school classes in the junior seminary, and then in the college run by the Jesuit Fathers. In 1923, they established their own college. In 1924, they opened another, this time in Cochabamba, having been called there to combat Protestantism. In 1925, the District of Argentina was given responsibility for the houses in Bolivia which were particularly isolated because of communication problems.

### – Peru

A dictator with an iron fist, but favourable to the Church, the President of the Republic of Peru joined the Archbishop of Lima in asking for Brothers. In 1923, the District of Ecuador sent four to run the primary school classes in the junior seminary in Lima. In 1923, with the closure of this institution, the Brothers opened De La Salle College. In 1928, they were asked by the government to take charge of the teacher training college in Arequipa.

### – Trinidad

In 1922, at the request of the Archbishop of Port of Spain, Brother Viventien Aime sent three Brothers to Trinidad, an island off the coast of Venezuela and a British possession, to run a school in the town. The Director was Irish, one Brother was French and the other came from Luxembourg. The difficulty of replacing the latter when he left the Institute led the two others to withdraw from the island in 1926.

## 9. EVOLUTION IN THE WORK OF THE BROTHERS

Whereas in France a violent break with the past had occurred, in other countries, as far as the work of the Brothers was concerned, there was continuity between the period under consideration at present and the one which precedes it. However, in certain areas, there had been some evolution.

Where schools were concerned, this evolution was sometimes brought about by political events, or it was linked more generally speaking with social and cultural changes. As for evolution in the apostolic mission of the Brothers, it took the form of new types of apostolic work.

### Variation in the proportion of different types of educational establishments

As the work of the Brothers took place mostly in the context of educational establishments, we need to consider the changes which occurred in the proportion of the different types of establishments in which the Brothers worked.

#### – Public authority schools and private schools

First, we must make a distinction between public authority establishments and those whose existence and funding depended on private enterprise, even if some of them received grants from the public authorities. Depending on the country, the establishments run by the Brothers were either public authority or private schools, or both. However, while the situation remained stable in many cases, in others it changed with the arrival of each new government.

The following table shows the changes which occurred in this connection in the period between the beginning of the century and the outbreak of the First World War. The official statistics of the Institute for this period provide us with some useful information. We have chosen three dates: 1903 serves simply as a reference point; 1908 marks the mid-point of the period; 1913 is the last date for which there is information that can be compared with that of previous years, if we except the distinction which appears between private schools receiving public authority grants and those not receiving them.

From these figures we can conclude that in 1908, 32.5% of the pupils taught by the Brothers attended public authority schools. In 1913, if we add together pupils in public authority schools and those in private schools with grants, the percentage rises to 34.1%. This slight increase does little to alter the percentage difference between these two types of establishment.

### Number of pupils according to types of schools in the Institute

	1903	1908	1913
Public authority schools	46.667	56.021	34.731
Private schools with grants			31.163
Private schools without grants	267.437	115.984	123.456
Total	314.104	172.005	189.350

#### – Non fee-paying and fee-paying establishments

Another distinction which can be made regarding establishments run by the Brothers, is one based on whether pupils paid fees or not, even if in some cases, exceptions were made for certain pupils. The distinction is connected with the concern of the Brothers to maintain as far as possible the principle of gratuity in their establishments, or more specifically, in the primary schools they ran. This was possible in public authority schools and in private schools receiving grants. But the Brothers tried to ensure that those funding their private schools which were not grant aided also applied this same principle. We can see to what extent they were successful in the years following the First World War, from the official statistics of the Institute, which now included figures showing what proportion of the pupils were non fee-paying. In the following tables we have restricted ourselves to two dates:

Non fee-paying pupils in 1923: 129.097; 1928: 138.075. Total number of pupils in 1923: 268.781; 1928: 279.569.

In 1923, 48% of all pupils were non fee-paying, and for 1928, the figure was just over 49%. For these two dates, the percentage of non fee-paying pupils had stabilised at a relatively high figure. We need to remember that many of the schools run by the Brothers were the result of private enterprise. Those who supported these schools did not always have sufficient resources to maintain them, and as a result they had to have recourse to school fees. Also, in many countries, following the First World War, it had become increasingly difficult to provide financial support. And yet, at least up to 1928, we can say that the efforts made in the Institute to maintain gratuity in schools were crowned with a fair amount of success.

General Chapters continued to remind Brothers of this requirement. For example, in 1907, one of the Chapter decisions says:

“As far as it depends on us, we must maintain gratuity in our teaching... We must not have recourse to fee-paying day-schools unless it is impossible to do otherwise... Boarding schools or fee-paying schools must not be opened without the written authorisation of the Regime Council” (Circ. 148, 73).

The 1913 Chapter expressed the wish “that every college make it its duty, when it has the resources to do so, to maintain a completely gratuitous school at its expense” (GA ED 228-4, Reg. I, 192).

In Spain, the Brothers made it a rule for themselves:

- to maintain a higher proportion of free schools than of fee-paying schools;
- to establish small boarding schools only gradually so as not transform free schools into fee-paying schools;
- when free schools introduced moderate fees, the Superior General had to give special authorisation;
- presents could not be accepted from pupils in any schools (cf. *Sembraron con amor*, 353).

And so in 1913, gratuity was observed in this country in 105 schools out of a total of 208. However, as the author notes later in his text, because of their success, the Brothers sometimes had to choose which pupils to admit from among the many applicants, and so they held entrance examinations. These gave an advantage to more intelligent and better prepared candidates, which leads the author to wonder “where does it leave our option for the poor?” (*Sembraron con amor*, 422-423). We can see the difficulty there was to reconcile respect for a principle and fidelity to the spirit which inspired it.

#### – Primary and secondary education

In the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, legislation in many countries progressively made primary school education obligatory. In a certain number of them, it extended the duration of obligatory schooling. It was extended to the age of 14 in Belgium by a law passed in 1914 and applied in 1919; and in England, by a law passed in 1917. As a result, schools were led to give their pupils an education which went beyond the teaching programme of primary schools. The Brothers were aware of this trend, but their response varied from country to country.

In some cases, as had already happened in the preceding period, many schools ran both primary and secondary classes on the same premises. For example:

– In Belgium, following the 1904 law, most schools added to the six years of primary education (divided up into 3 stages of 2 years each), a 4<sup>th</sup> stage, funded by the public authorities, plus one or even two school-leavers classes. These establishments were called “middle schools”. Other establishments added six years of secondary schooling (or “humanities”) to their existing primary schools. These “humanities” could be either “classical” or “modern”. Modern humanities offered a choice of two courses: sciences or economics. Secondary courses could also be technical or vocational.

– In Italy, many existing or newly-opened establishments offered primary education and middle-school secondary education. In some cases, secondary teaching went up to baccalaureate level.

– In Ireland, there were similar developments, in particular after the country gained its independence.

Elsewhere, the current trend led to the establishment of a network of primary and secondary schools. In the latter, some of the primary school pupils could continue their schooling. This was the case in particular in Spain or in Canada, where in Montreal, for example, the 15 parish schools served as feeder-schools for Mont Saint Louis (*BEC* 1926, p. 238). In the United States, the Brothers had already complemented their parish schools in the major towns by “Academies” or High Schools which gave a secondary education.

What was new at that time, was that preference was sometimes given, not to primary, but to secondary schools. For example, in the United States, in Philadelphia, the Brothers began to leave primary schools and to open High Schools. In Belgium, after the 1914-1918 War, when some schools had to be closed down because of a shortage of teaching Brothers, it was the primary schools that were sacrificed, rather than the prestigious establishments offering secondary education.

There was a variety of reasons why the Brothers were led to invest more in secondary than in primary education. Some reasons had to do with distance and cost, as in the case of the boarding schools set up abroad by the French Brothers, which basically offered secondary education. And then, when Brothers arrived in a country, they might prefer to open secondary establishments because they could be financially self-sufficient, and could fund, if possible, a free school. In this connection, we can note, for example, that the first establishments created in Cuba were almost exclusively secondary; while in Mexico, the number of free schools matched the number of those charging fees (*GA NR* 100/1 and *NP* 120/1). In Panama also, when the Brothers were no longer allowed to work in public authority schools, they opened fee-paying secondary schools.

In overall terms, did the trend, whose manifestation we have just illustrated, result in a reduction in the relative importance in the Institute of primary as opposed to secondary education? To answer that, we would have to know the number of pupils who received primary or secondary education. As the official statistics for the years in question do not allow us to establish this distinction, only a thorough analytical study could achieve this, something which the scope of this work does not permit. We can say, however, that if we consider all the pupils together, the proportion of those in secondary schools was higher than it was in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but there was no reversal in the trend.

## Changes affecting education

### – Primary education

Educational thinking regarding primary education and methods continued to evolve. In the Institute, this led to changes being made in the pedagogical guidelines Brothers received. An example of this was the 1903 edition of the *Pedagogical Directory* and of the *Conduct of Schools for the use of the Christian Schools*. In fact, the contents of the latter bore little resemblance to the original *Conduct of the Christian Schools*, although it still reflected the spirit and essentially the practical approach of the traditional methods of the Institute. These methods were not overturned, however. A new edition of the *Conduct* in 1916 included quite numerous modifications, but it had the same characteristics as the preceding one. On the other hand, the 1928 Chapter invited the Brothers to find inspiration in the changes that had come about in pedagogy. It encouraged them not only to adopt new teaching methods, but also to introduce changes in their views about education. For example, in England, in the school at Bradford, manual work was added to lessons in class. According to Battersby, this approach reflected the methods advocated by Frobel and Pestalozzi.

### – Vocational training

By vocational training we mean teaching young people skills in view of future employment, or helping others, including adults, to improve their professional qualifications. The term “vocational training” is used in order to avoid possible confusion with “professional training” which is sometimes used in other cases.

In the Institute, there was a tendency to stop running courses for “apprentices” in the form of evening classes. The official statistics for 1908 show, already by then that, of the total number of pupils taught by the Brothers, only 932 were “apprentices”. The tendency was to give this type of course in conjunction with primary education; in institutions, which often were rehabilitation centres or orphanages, such as the so-called *Artigianelli* in Rome and Genoa; in various similar institutions taken over by the Brothers in the District of Germany after the 1914-1918 War; or in the “school colonies” run by the Brothers in Belgian Congo (*Bulletin of the Christian Schools* 1925, p. 379).

The evolution that occurred was mostly in the St Luke Schools in Belgium. Their intention continued to be the training of craftsmen in a variety of artistic skills. But, while originally, only evening classes were involved, now, more and more, this training



was given during the day in much larger establishments housing all the various workshops that were needed. Existing establishments were joined by others, in St Gilles, Brussels (1904), Mons (1908), and Namur (1913). A printing school was opened in Ghent in 1926.

In some countries, evening classes for adults took on some importance:

- In Belgium, they became courses in social betterment;
- In Italy, evening course continued in particular in Turin, at the St Pelagia centre, as part of the R.O.M.I. programme; and in the Collegio San Giuseppe, where industrial draughtsmen were trained for the FIAT factories. Also in Grugliasco. Overall, the statistics for 1908 record 4,824 “adults” following courses.

## – Secondary education

### *General education*

We showed earlier how there was a tendency for secondary education to develop in establishments run by the Brothers. This took place in particular in establishments offering the general type of education given in French boarding schools in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but which had already taken the form of the secondary modern education, introduced in France towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The **scientific nature** of this education reflected the scientific progress occurring at this time. In establishments run by the Brothers, science laboratories were built, or museums, especially natural science museums, were set up by French Brothers exiled from France, in the countries to which they had gone. The direction taken by education was welcomed in particular by middle-class families in industrialised countries, but also in those where there was economic growth.

Likewise, the education offered included **the learning of modern languages**. As in the past, this was particularly useful in countries under the influence of European countries, which now included the Philippines and Porto Rico, which depended on the United States. The teaching of modern languages spread also in countries where French Brothers arrived in great numbers in 1904 and in the years that followed, particularly in Latin America, as in Mexico and Cuba.

In the United States, secondary education took a particular form in Military Academies which gave their students intense physical training (cf. *Bulletin* 1922, p. 227 with regard to Clason Point).

In general secondary education, the main change which occurred concerned **classical languages**. The teaching of Latin was forbidden in the Institute up to 1923. The desire to see this prohibition lifted was felt mainly in the United States. There was a similar situation in Australia. In other countries, changes in educational legislation could also make a solution of this problem desirable. This was particularly the case in Italy, where educational reform took place in 1923. This reform gave an important place to classical languages, especially to Latin, in secondary and higher education, as well as in teacher training. The 1923 Chapter removed the problem the prohibition created for the Brothers in Italy, the United States and Australia, but also for those in Austria, Great Britain and Ireland, where it now became possible to prepare pupils and Brothers for literary studies at university.

### *Technical education*

By this is meant formation combining secondary-level courses in theory and hands-on training in direct preparation for a professional activity. With economic growth, this type of education became increasingly important.

In Brothers' schools, this type of education often took the form of commercial studies. This continued to be justified by the importance of commercial trade. Both before and after the First World War, the number of establishments or departments offering these courses tended to increase. This happened in countries where such courses already existed, as in Canada, Egypt, British possessions in Asia, and Spain. They were introduced in new establishments such as the *Istituto Gonzaga* in Milan, in Meran in Austria, and in Latin America.

In the sense in which it is understood here, that is, training skilled workers for industry, industrial training took on a new dimension with the second industrial revolution. In the Institute, it was confined mainly to industrialised countries:

- In France, most of the industrial schools created by the Brothers in the Lyon area were functioning again, run by "secularised" Brothers and lay people;
- In Italy, more recent foundations such as the *Istituto de La Salle*, or the Arts and Crafts Institute in Turin, continued to grow.

But the Brothers also created or were entrusted with establishments of this type. For example:

- In Colombia, the *Asilo San Jose* in Bogota became the Central Arts and Crafts School in 1905 (*Bulletin* 1907, p. 378-1921, p. 97);

– In Chile, the Arts and Crafts school in Puerto Montt was entrusted to the Brothers in 1907.

The Brothers ran also agricultural schools for future farmers and farm mechanics. Technical advances led to the development of **agricultural studies**. For example:

– In Belgium, at Carlsbourg, the course in agricultural studies was spread over the final three years of secondary education. In the final year, pupils could specialise in a number of subjects: agronomy, dairy farming, brewing, colonial farming (cf. GA NG 207, 16). There existed also courses of the same level in horticulture and forestry. The school at St Trond, organised along the same lines in 1898, specialised in 1923 in the growing of orchards.

Also new schools of this type were created:

– In Brazil, an agricultural college was opened in Canaas in 1908;  
 – In the United States, at Lincolndale, Brother Barnabas (Edward McDonald) opened an annexe of the *Protectorry* at Westchester, where the inmates lived in separate buildings and were taught to be dairymen or gardeners (*Bulletin* 1913, p. 332).

### – Higher education

It was above all in the United States that the Brothers offered this kind of education, and it was at this level in particular that, after 1923, the possibility of studying and teaching classical languages made it possible to give their university colleges a new lease of life, even if they attached less importance than before to the learning of these languages. There occurred, however, greater diversification in the courses offered. For example:

– In *Manhattan College*, New York, a new civil engineering department was opened by Brother Potamian (cf. *Bulletin* 1925, p. 199).

Elsewhere, higher education was given in establishments which specialised in a particular field:

– The Arts and Crafts School, located first in Rheims and transferred in 1911 to Erquekinnes in Belgium, became entitled to prepare students for the Arts and Crafts Engineer diploma created in Paris in 1907 (*Bulletin* 1924, p. 106 - 1927, p. 107).

– In Colombia, the *Instituto tecnico* in Bogota awarded various diplomas in engineering;  
 – In France, the *Institut Agricole* in Beauvais, run by “secularised” Brothers, was recognised in 1921 as a higher education agricultural department of the *Institut Catholique* in Paris (cf. BEC 1924, p. 133-134);

– In Chile, the Brothers ran an agricultural college in Macul, which was an annexe of the Catholic university;

– In Turkey, at Kadikoy, they ran a commercial college;

– In Egypt, the St Catherine law school in Alexandria prepared students for a degree in French law;

– In the same establishment, students were prepared for entry to the *École des Travaux Publics* in Paris.

### – Teacher training colleges

In this type of establishment, there occurred changes in the programme of studies and the duration of courses. The teacher training colleges run by the Brothers reflected these changes and increased in number. This was the case in Belgium, where diversification occurred with the opening of a training college for primary-school teachers in Brussels in 1918, to which was added another college for middle-school teachers. Also, a higher college of education running refresher courses for teachers received legal recognition in 1928. New countries also called on the Brothers to open similar institutions, especially in Latin America, in Panama, Colombia, Chile and Nicaragua. In missionary countries, the Brothers were asked to train local primary-school teachers. This was the case at Tumba in the Belgian Congo in 1921, and at Nam Dinh in Indochina in 1926. In Colombia, a Brother was appointed professor of education at the Catholic university. Brother Ludolph Honore or Honorato (Francois Ayrat), head of the teacher training college, organised an association for the Catholic teachers of Chile, which was both professional and apostolic in nature and served as a building society.

### – Specific forms of contribution by the Brothers in the field of education

#### *School textbooks*

The Brothers had been producing textbooks for their own use for a long time already. They continued to do this in almost all the countries in which they were and wherever they went. The extent of this operation as well as the diffusion of these works outside the Institute made it necessary to organise the diffusion better:

– In Canada, the Brothers were becoming the largest producer of school textbooks in Quebec. They had had their own publishing house since 1869;

– Relations with the Paris *Procure* were clarified. For example, the Namur *Procure* had an agreement with the Paris *Procure* regarding geography textbooks;

– Authorship of the textbooks published was attributed by the use of a surname: in Spain and Latin America, it was *Bruno* (from the surname of Br Gabriel Marie Brunhes); in Turin, where this was already being done, *A & C Publications* was used, derived from Adorno and Cathiard, the Visitor and Bursar respectively of the District.

### *Pedagogical reviews*

In France, *L'Éducation chrétienne*, the pedagogical review published by the Brothers, ceased to appear in 1910. An attempt to produce a similar publication failed because of the outbreak of the 1914-1918 War. In Belgium, the *Revue Belge de Pédagogie*, published by the teacher training college of Carlsbourg, began to appear in 1919 (cf. *Bulletin* 1923, p. 56). The *Échos de Conférences pédagogiques*, first published by the District of North Belgium in 1927, continued to appear for a number of years. The training college at Bogota published a *Revista Pedagogica* (cf. *Bulletin* 1921, p. 135).

#### – The use of lay teachers in Brothers' schools

There had been lay teachers in Brothers' schools since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1881, there were some in the schools in Paris, and a hundred or so in the rest of the world. In 1898, there were 243 in France, and 204 in other countries. They had been admitted for reasons of "staff shortage", and in missionary countries, such as those in the British Far East, or in Madagascar. In France, the need for them had been made more acute by the law of 1889 obliging young Brothers to do three years' military service.

Although annual statistical return forms had had a column for "lay teachers" since 1904, it is not possible to assess what effect the application of the 1904 law may have had on the use of lay teachers in Brothers' schools. On the other hand, the effect of the First World War in this connection is quite clear. In 1920, there were some 470 lay teachers in France, and about 580 in other countries, of whom 270 were in Belgium. This increase in number was due to the effects of the war: deaths, fewer vocations. In France, this increase was also partly due to the inclusion in the statistics of schools run by "secularised" Brothers with the help of lay teachers. This increase did not mean that the presence of these teachers was more acceptable for the Institute. Perhaps an indication of this is that, from 1921 onwards, the column devoted to them in the statistics referred to them now as "civilian teachers".

#### **New types of apostolic work**

The Brothers continued their apostolic work in their establishments and through activities connected with them. They undertook also new forms of apostolic work

#### – Religious formation of pupils

The strenuous efforts made by the Institute in the preceding period to improve the

teaching of catechism continued in the period now under consideration. In 1907, the *Manuel du Catéchiste* by Brother Bernard Louis was published. Although at the 1923 Chapter the fear was expressed that catechism was sometimes neglected (ED 228-4 Reg. I, p. 99), in practice, many Brothers deserved to have the title of "apostles of the catechism" given to them by Pope Pius X. Some of them extended their zeal to other children also: in New York, to Italian immigrants (*Bulletin* 1925, p. 35); in Cuba, to "caddies" (children working on golf courses) (*Bulletin* 1926, p. 123).

The Brothers in Italy were particularly active in this field. For example, they entered their pupils for catechism competitions organised for schools, parishes, dioceses and even nationally. The work of some Brothers extended beyond the confines of their establishments. Brother Candido, a future Assistant, began a tradition which has continued, by becoming Professor of Religious Pedagogy at the senior seminary in Turin. Brother Alessandro Alessandrini was appointed religious education inspector for state schools (*Bulletin* 1926, p. 123).

In countries where Brothers taught non-Catholic pupils, their zeal was equally great. The *Bulletin* recorded, for example, the good they did by teaching catechism at Soctrang, in Indochina (*Bulletin* 1925, p. 398), and it spoke of baptisms there as well as at Mytho (*Bulletin* 1924, p. 188). However, the Brothers could be led to waive their normal practice, as in Egypt, and allow non-Catholic pupils to be dispensed from attending catechism lessons at the request of parents. In Turkey, from 1926 onwards, they had no choice in the matter, as they were forbidden to give their pupils any religious instruction at all. This did not prevent them doing so, however, in a more discreet way. They had to take similar precautions in Mexico, a Christian country, during the persecution there.

The Institute tradition was that the teaching of catechism was accompanied by Christian formation given throughout the course of the day. However, an observation made at the 1923 Chapter leads one to believe that it was becoming more difficult to ensure that pupils, even boarders, assisted at Mass every day. It said: "Numerous notes having expressed the wish that there should be daily Mass in our boarding schools...several capitulants observed that, while deploring this profoundly, circumstances sometimes made this practice which was so dear to the Institute impracticable" (GA ED 228-4-Reg. I, 199). In missionary countries, the Brothers continued to allow non-Catholic pupils to attend services "on condition they behaved appropriately" (GA NL 201-2/4). In these countries, the Christian atmosphere in schools led sometimes to conversions "above all among the Chinese" (GA NJ 201-1/4). The same report noted that the best Catholic teachers were converts.

### – Pious and apostolic associations for pupils

The concern of the Brothers to extend their work with pupils, especially in boarding schools, continued to be in evidence all over the world. We find an example of this in Egypt, a country where the Brothers had been established for a long time. In a report to the Propaganda of the Faith, dated November 1918, we read: “In nearly all the establishments, there are older pupils who, as members of the Eucharistic League, the Guard of Honour or of some Congregation, make it their pious duty to receive communion frequently or even daily” (GA NL 201-2/13). It was the same in countries where the Brothers had been for less time as, for example, in the district of Panama (NH 400-2/5). The same kind of associations could be found, for example, in Beirut (*Bulletin* 1922, p. 145), or in Southsea, England (*Bulletin* 1925, p. 132). Retreats were also organised for pupils, as in Belgium at Carlsbourg (*Bulletin* 1921, p. 281), at Khoronfish in Cairo (BEC 1907, p. 329), in Canada (*Bulletin* 1927, p. 337). Clubs of a Christian and cultural nature existed in various establishments such as St Catherine in Alexandria, and the *Istituto de Merode*, in Rome.

Other associations were more recent, such as the “Eucharistic Crusade” in Belgium mentioned in the *Bulletin* (1922, p. 395). In various schools in Spain, there was a “League of Kindness” (*Bulletin* 1927, p. 130). But the most typical association to spread during this period was that of the “Voluntary Catechists”. In schools, these were pupils who taught catechism to children in the parishes. In Turin, Brother Teodoreto (Giovanni Garberoglio) founded this association at St Pelagia, where he was Director from 1910 to 1920. It was established also at the *Istituto de La Salle*. The report concerning Egypt, already mentioned, speaks also of the association of voluntary catechists which functioned in the free school at Khoronfish. The *Bulletin* mentions several times an association in Rheims. In the Philippines, in Manilla, some pupils taught catechism during the holidays (*Bulletin* 1926, p. 87).

### – Perseverance or apostolic associations for young people and adults

This type of activity, which had developed towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was the subject of Circular 148 in 1907, entitled “*Perseverance associations in the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*”. Brothers continued to work with the pupils who had left their schools, in Catholic youth clubs or other youth associations. One of these was established in Puebla, Mexico, for example (*Bulletin* 1912, p. 309). In evening classes, Brothers concerned themselves also with the Christian formation of the young people or adults who frequented them. In an article about the evening classes at St Pelagia in Turin,

we read that, in addition to the reflection given by the Brother who took the first lesson, there was also a talk for the young people in the course of the week, given by a priest, who was normally a Jesuit. On Sundays, there was a Mass in the school chapel at six am for those who had to go to work. Those who belonged to a confraternity, received the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist after having followed the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius (GA ND 251-1/8).

In France, the Association of St Labre continued its work of spiritual and apostolic formation. In a report on a general assembly, the *Bulletin* highlights the participation of French Christian trade union leaders in it (1926, p. 275). In Chile, the Brothers worked for the social advancement of adults. The formation given in free schools continued in evening classes, or in De La Salle Cooperators associations, which were apostolic and recreational in character and served as building societies, and whose purpose was the betterment of their members.

The Brothers continued their apostolic work also in former pupils' associations, including those of schools the Brothers had been obliged to leave in France. Side-by-side with what went on in schools, some former pupils formed groups of voluntary catechists. This is what happened in Turin, where Brother Teodoro, wishing to give a spirituality and mission to some of them, suggested they form a group which would teach catechism in the parishes. This was the beginning of what would become the "Union of Catechists of Jesus Crucified and Mary Immaculate". As the *Bulletin* records, similar groups were formed elsewhere, as for example in Canada, at Ottawa (*Bulletin* 1924, p. 90), Cuba (*Bulletin* 1926, p. 123), and Genoa (*Bulletin* 1926, p. 285). In another field, Brother Biagio (Stefano Sonaglia) worked first in Venice and then in Turin, to set up Catholic sports associations. Encouraged by Pope Pius X, he ended up by creating at a national level the *Centro Sportivo Italiano*, whose field of action was not restricted to the establishments of the Brothers (cf. GA ND 102/3).

## Conclusion

We have already asked ourselves whether, during the period we have just considered, there was a significant shift in the Institute from primary to secondary education, and a related shift from gratuitous to fee-paying schools. While it is not possible to prove this conclusively, it appears that such a shift in fact did occur, but that it was not a very big one.

Very often it was the circumstances in which the Brothers found themselves that dictated their choice. However, did not the evolution we have noted indicate a certain



change in the thinking of the Institute? Some contemporaries certainly thought so. Although the views expressed by Brother Reticus regarding gratuity date from an earlier period, it would be astonishing if, at the end of his life, he had changed his views on the subject. When Brother Louis de Poissy wrote to Brother Imier de Jesus denouncing the concessions made for too long "regarding Latin, gratuity, the penalties to impose, the secessionist tendencies of some countries" (GA EG 151-1), he did so no doubt because he feared a shift in opinion regarding these matters. Without more information, we shall never know how many Brothers shared his views.

Regarding the apostolate, it is clear that great importance was given to the teaching of catechism, and that many pious and apostolic associations were created. We could ask ourselves, however, whether many Brothers did not attribute to catechism an effectiveness that was too "automatic" and, as a result, did not see the point of extending their field of action, or attach more importance to what other Brothers were achieving in other aspects of the school properly so called.



**The Brother and the Child with a cup-and-ball**

Painting by F. Gueric, hanging in the entrance hall of Maison St. Joseph, at Lembecq les Hal.

## CONCLUSION

The period we have studied is full of events which left their mark on the Institute. These events affected, above all, France, where the Brothers were most numerous, but also other countries. In this conclusion, we should like to recall the major consequences of these events for the Brothers. Apart from the events in which they and their contemporaries were involved, what affected the Brothers was the fact, as always, that they belonged to a religious world which impinged upon society as a whole. While belonging to a Church institution, they fulfilled also a social function. This dual function will be the context for what we wish to say here.

### **The Brothers and society as a whole**

The Brothers belong to a religious congregation pursuing a mission of Christian education. They are no less a part of society because they run educational establishments. When the conditions under which they had worked, particularly in France, during the first three quarters of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were changed, their own situation was changed also. But what happened in France had an effect on the rest of the Institute, all the more so, as other countries also had experienced similar changes.

When the Revolution in France ended, the Brothers had worked alongside the public authorities to extend education. However, when the Republic was finally established, the Brothers were excluded from the official public authority school system, as the new authorities intended to maintain exclusive control of it. Initially, when they had been asked to help, the Brothers could reach all children without distinction, but now, in the private schools which were entrusted to them, they could reach only pupils belonging for the most part to Christian families wishing to provide their children with an education matching their own convictions.

In order to continue their educational mission among children frequenting public authority schools, even if this could not be done entirely in the schools themselves, could the Brothers have continued teaching in this type of school by hiding any external sins of their religious commitment? It is doubtful and, what is more, who in the Institute could have thought this was possible? On the other hand, in 1904, when the Brothers found themselves totally excluded from education in France, some of them chose the option of apparent secularisation. As we know, this solution was not welcomed in the Institute. And yet, after the First World War, in a different set of circumstances, this solution was endorsed by it. It was even adopted elsewhere: in Germany, in order to allow Brothers to return in 1911; and for the same reason in Mexico in 1916.

For a long time, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Brothers' involvement in public authority education had helped them to focus, if not exclusively, at least principally on children from working class backgrounds even if, in the places where they usually were, they had little contact with those most affected by the consequences of industrialisation. The Brothers were all the more suited to the social background of these children as many of them originally came from it, and even if, despite the urban character of the Institute, they often came from rural areas. This contrast was particularly noticeable in Paris where, as a result of an arrangement with the District of Le Puy, a great many Brothers from this District were working in the capital. This raised some problems, but mostly the Brothers adapted well.

The possibility the Brothers had had to contribute to the development of popular education was reduced when they were excluded from public authority education in France. In the schools depending on the generosity of Catholics, where they now had to teach, the Brothers endeavoured to ensure that gratuity was maintained, and they sought to provide a follow-up to the teaching they gave in them, in the form of vocational formation. As far as France was concerned, the 1904 law made the situation worse: it became more difficult for the "secularised" Brothers to maintain the principle of gratuity. Then, after the war, in this country as in others, existing difficulties were compounded by problems resulting from the worsening of the economic situation.

In other countries, for similar reasons, the Brothers had to face situations comparable with those of their French fellow Brothers. Some were debarred from public authority schools or lost grants they had been receiving up till then. It sometimes happened that Brothers were expelled from a country in which they worked because of hostility towards them as religious. On the other hand, elsewhere, while some Brothers formed an integral part of the public authority education system or received grants from the public authorities, others had always, and continued to pursue their apostolate in establishments depending solely on private initiative. Whatever the situation of the Brothers, their work was appreciated everywhere by leading figures in society. As we read in the Bulletin, it even happened that official representatives of France - some of whom had personally contributed to the exclusion of the Brothers from education in that country - were eloquent in their praise of their work when they attended receptions in their establishments abroad.

Through concern for the education of working-class children, the Brothers continued to concentrate primarily on running primary schools in France as elsewhere. At this level, more or less everywhere, they increasingly encountered competition from the public education system. In France, the obligation to have the required certificate in order to

teach had resulted in the opening of scholasticates. The same thing happened in other countries. In certain cases, these scholasticates were real training colleges. Quite often, however, their main purpose was to prepare Brothers to pass the certificate examination, and their training as teachers continued to take place instead during their first few years in community. Initially, the result was that Brothers could be inferior to teachers who had passed through a training college. Subsequently, the experience gained by the Brothers often compensated for this inequality.

In response to the demands of parents, the Brothers often found it necessary to extend their school programmes to include further studies or technical courses which went beyond the primary school level. Sometimes, if only for financial reasons, the Brothers opened secondary rather than primary schools. The numerical ratio of these two types of school did not change much, but secondary schools, especially if they were boarding schools, required larger staffs than primary schools did. The transfer of Brothers teaching in primary schools to secondary schools, without any special training, led some of them to transpose primary-school teaching methods to secondary schools, not always successfully. Others on the other hand, by dint of personal study, became competent secondary teachers, whose work and reputation in some cases went far beyond the confines of their establishment.

The Brothers continued to provide study or vocational courses for adults. When they were debarred from teaching in public authority schools in France or in other countries, the creation of private establishments made it possible for them to transfer these activities there. It was the same for youth or perseverance associations. When the Brothers were debarred from teaching in public authority schools, particularly in France, did these associations enable them to continue to work with at least some of the pupils who had frequented these schools? If this was the case, there is no indication that it happened frequently. Could more use have been made of these associations? This question has been raised before. It was thought that, if the Superiors were to encourage the multiplication of these associations, the Brothers would raise the objection, especially in General Chapters, that these associations could harm regular life. An increase in the number of these associations would have probably meant that, solely or predominantly, more Brothers would have had to be assigned to them.

## **The Brothers as part of the Church**

If the Brothers worked as educators, concentrating mainly on teaching in schools, they did so as members of a religious congregation, that is, as members of a Church institu-

tion. We have seen how much hostility they had to endure because of this connection. It was because they were members of a religious congregation, that the Brothers in France were debarred from public authority schools in 1886, and from any form of education in 1904. The victims of this discrimination, visited upon them despite the service they knew they were rendering, could not avoid feeling they were being unjustly persecuted. These are still the feelings aroused by the memory of the measures taken against the Institute.

The lay status of the Brothers does not seem to have been the source of any difficulties for them in the Church, except when members of the clergy, invoking the privileges of rank, wanted to impose on them. Generally speaking, the way the Brothers pursued their mission of Christian education and, in particular, their zeal in promoting vocations to the priesthood, won for them the appreciation of the clergy. The *Bulletin of the Christian Schools* never failed to mention this, especially when high dignitaries of the Church were involved. The danger was, however, that the Brothers were valued more for the service they rendered than for their status as religious. The result was that, while they were grateful to them for what they did, priests or bishops did not appreciate the fact that the Brothers, because they belonged to a religious congregation, were not under their direct control. An example of this is the ease with which certain bishops thought they could dispense from their vows Brothers who wished to become "secularised" without, however, wishing to renounce their religious commitments.

The Brothers, like other men and women religious, shared the views prevalent in the Church regarding religious life. During the period under consideration here, these views laid heavy stress on flight from the world, renunciation and personal effort. This explains, for example, why, when the Brothers were under threat, or prey to hostile measures, the Superiors urged them to intensify their religious life in these three areas. The 1880s, a period when a succession of education laws was passed in France, were the years when the Superiors made great efforts to promote the "Great Exercises", and when the Second Novitiate was created. During these same years, but even more so when the 1904 law was being drawn up and then applied, the Brothers were invited to see in the events which concerned them a reason for intensifying their spiritual life, and for fulfilling their religious duties with greater fidelity. Paradoxically, this insistence on the part of the Superiors was of a nature to reinforce the fairly "monastic" character of the Brothers' lifestyle, at a time when the enemies of the Church used precisely this as a pretext to challenge their ability to educate young people.

The stress laid on the aspects of religious life which we mentioned earlier were inevitably reflected in the formation given to candidates entering the Institute. We did not consider this aspect earlier, because it would have called for, as a first step, a careful examination of texts reflecting what formation staff said to the young people in their charge. Rather, it is from what the Brothers who received this formation have said, that we can see the stress that was laid on the ascetic aspects of religious life; on a rather legalistic fidelity to the Rule; or even on the obligations of the vows - in particular those connected with chastity - defined, above all, in terms of all the possible ways of failing to observe them.

The tendency in the Church to give a kind of precedence to religious life properly so called over the mission, brought with it the risk, for members of apostolic congregations - and a risk which the Brothers did not always avoid - of separating what concerned their religious commitment from what concerned their apostolate. Given that the Superiors of the Institute subscribed to this view to some degree, we can understand their preference for "expatriation" and their distrust of "secularisation", when the 1904 law came into force. As for the Brothers, in the same circumstances, this could have influenced them when they had to make a choice. The fact of giving priority to religious life led Brothers quite naturally to prefer expatriation, without perhaps their taking sufficiently into account the apostolic needs of the country they wished to leave. They were reproached sometimes with this by "secularised" Brothers. When the apostolate was given preference, Brothers opted for apparent secularisation without perhaps measuring the risks they ran regarding fidelity to religious obligations. For some, it meant eventually leaving the Institute and continuing their educational apostolate as Christian lay teachers.

In practice, whatever the kind of formation they received, whatever the risks of "dichotomy" they were exposed to, many Brothers lived to the best of their ability as convinced religious, and gave proof of being competent teachers and zealous apostles. There were Brothers like this throughout this period and in all the countries where the Institute was present. But, especially in the countries affected by the 1904 law, there were many "secularised" Brothers like this, who held fast until the day when they could return without hindrance to a regular life, and take their full and rightful place in the Institute, an Institute, moreover, they had enabled to survive in France. There were many Brothers like this among those who, by expatriation, brought to the countries that received them, the witness of their attachment to their vocation and of their fidelity to their commitments, together with the benefit of their professional competence and their apostolic zeal.

It was all these Brothers who, despite the obstacles they encountered, the trials they underwent and the changes that occurred, made it possible for the Institute, by safeguarding its identity, to live through the half a century under consideration here. It is also they, by deserving the trust of their pupils and of the parents, who enabled the Institute to continue its work and bear fruit. And also, by inspiring young people to join them, these Brothers enabled the Institute, after a time of trial, to find a new lease of life and have a more pronounced international character; for in numerous parts of the Institute, great creativity had been shown in inspiring and fostering local vocations.

\* \* \*

The year 1928 is quite a convenient date because, as far as the Institute was concerned, the effects of the 1904 law, while still not eradicated, had ceased to exert a negative influence. However, it was only at the General Chapter in 1946 that the number of French Districts, which had not been adjusted since 1904, was finally reduced, and the Regime of the Institute became truly international. But equally, we would probably be right in thinking that, by wishing to restore the Institute to what it was at the time of the 1904 law, the Chapter sought in some way to have its revenge on this law.

The initial intention was to go as far as 1946 in this volume, if only to see whether this view was justified. But as there was easily enough material to make this volume comparable in size with previous ones, we restricted ourselves to the years for which 1904 was a turning point. However, when the intention was to go as far as 1946, it was not envisaged to pursue this study beyond that date. Those who have lived and worked in a particular period are not the ideal persons to write its history!



## GLOSSARY

**Administration of Domains:** administrative department responsible for overseeing property.

**Apostolic delegate:** Papal representative in countries without diplomatic relations with the Holy See.

**Application decrees:** texts indicating the manner in which laws are to be implemented.

**Capitulations:** agreements regulating the rights of Christians in Muslim countries and, in particular, in the Ottoman Empire.

**Cortes:** legislative assembly in Spain.

**Council of State:** in France, following the Revolution, a body of lawyers responsible for giving their opinion when laws were drawn up, and judging whether measures chosen to implement them are in keeping with the laws.

**Dominion:** British possession which has been given the right to govern itself, but which continues to recognise the sovereignty of the British Crown.

**Employed Brothers:** category of Brothers, usually called “employed novices”, composed of Brothers living in community without having made vows. (See LS 9, p. 137).

**Great Exercises:** name given to retreats based on the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola.

**Mandate:** in the context, the right to administer territory entrusted to a State by the Society of Nations, with a view to the accession to independence of the territory.

**Protectionism:** customs policy intended to protect the economy of a country against foreign competition.

**Realschule:** in Germany and Austria, school providing a more practical type of education.

**Testimonial letters:** document attesting that a candidate for the religious life has been baptised and confirmed, and has made his first communion. The document also contains information from the dioceses in which the candidate has lived about his behaviour since the age of 14.

**Vicar apostolic:** bishop depending directly on the Holy See, in charge of an area which has not yet been made a diocese.

## ILLUSTRATIONS AND DOCUMENTS: CAPTIONS AND PROVENANCE

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*Source:* Institute Bulletin 1923, p. 366.

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Supplemento al n. 1 del 2008 della **Rivista lasalliana**  
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(conv. in L. 27-02-2004 n. 46) art. 1 comma 2 - CNS/AC ROMA