Cahiers lasalliens

TEXTS

STUDIES - DOCUMENTS

THE *CONDUCT OF SCHOOLS*

Enfoque diacrónico
Evolución del texto de 1706 a 1916

67

BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS – 476, VIA AURELIA - ROMA

Brother Léon Lauraire, FSC

The Conduct of Schools

A diachronic approach
Development of the text from 1706 to 1916

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Preface

Brother Léon Lauraire offers us the fourth volume of his reflection on *The Conduct of the Christian Schools* from a diachronic approach. He shows us the key moments of the evolution of that text as a result of the historical events that influenced the schools run by the Brothers of the Christian Schools up to the beginning of the 20th century.

This study appears at a privileged time in the history of the Institute. We are beginning a new period of leadership as a result of the decisions made by the 45th General Chapter (2014). In a multicultural and pluri-religious world, we Brothers of the Christian Schools are reflecting on the need to assure the vitality of our educational mission, which cannot be understood unless it is seen as shared with the seventy thousand educators the world over. The conviction to work "together and by association" continues to gain new meaning. We Brothers and lay Lasallians feel committed to teach based on our membership in the Church, the People of God-Communion, and we are challenged by the new kinds of poverty of the 21st century. We are also aware of journeying alongside teachers from other religious creeds who have found in De La Salle a new source of identity and the conviction to carry out their educational mission in today's world through respectful interreligious dialogue between faith and culture.

To what extent does a study of the evolution of *The Conduct of the Christian Schools* increase our Lasallian memory? Undoubtedly, by narrating the educational experience of the Brothers over the course of centuries, Brother León Lauraire offers us some clues to understand and to celebrate the collective construction of a common identity, the ability as a social body to live education based on a vocation with transcendental meaning and the power we have as educators to transform the reality of poverty and the marginalization of children and young people into a full life in service of society. This is the function of memory.

Jacques Le Goff reminds us that: "Memory, from where history emerges which, in turn, is nourished by it, does not seek to save the past but to service the present and the future.[I] With this active recalling of the Institute's history, over the course of more than two centuries, we look to recover the living memory of the origins that has been handed down generation after generation, in a complex weaving of history, where the Brothers have been responding to the demands of secular work based on the deep conviction of being religious educators, inheritors of an original identity, faithful to a mission of the Church. It is this conviction that continues to encourage us, Brothers and Lasallians of the 21st century, to question ourselves about our reason for being and to provide education that is understood from an original perspective. Hence the proposition from the 45th General Chapter to draft a *Declaration on Lasallian Education*,[II] as an expression of a ministerial journey that is open to the future, through its ability to critique itself based on the demands of the Gospel.

The current needs of the poor and vulnerable children and young people of our society are asking us for bold, educational creativity. We understand that we need to go beyond personal, geographic, institutional borders and even borders of discouragement to embrace with hope God's saving plan.[III] We know that this requires rekindling our educational zeal by nourishing our looking at current educational reality with faith. This is the invitation that John Baptist de La Salle makes to us in his *Meditations for the time of Retreat*: "Admire the goodness of God in providing for all the needs of his creatures, taking the means to procure for all humanity the knowledge of the true good, that is, what concerns the salvation of their souls. Offer yourselves to God to help by assisting the children entrusted to you as much as he will require of you"[IV].

The life journeys of the Founder and the first Brothers opened the doors for the development of a community of associates that has questioned itself over the centuries about its identity and its mission. Today this reflection continues to be relevant along with all those with whom we share the work of education, from pre-school to university level.

[I] Jacques Le Goff. *Histoire et mémoire*. Paris. Gallimard. 1988, page 177.

[II] cf. Circular 469, Proposition 17.

[III] cf. Circular 469, section 3.26.

[IV] Meditation 197.1.

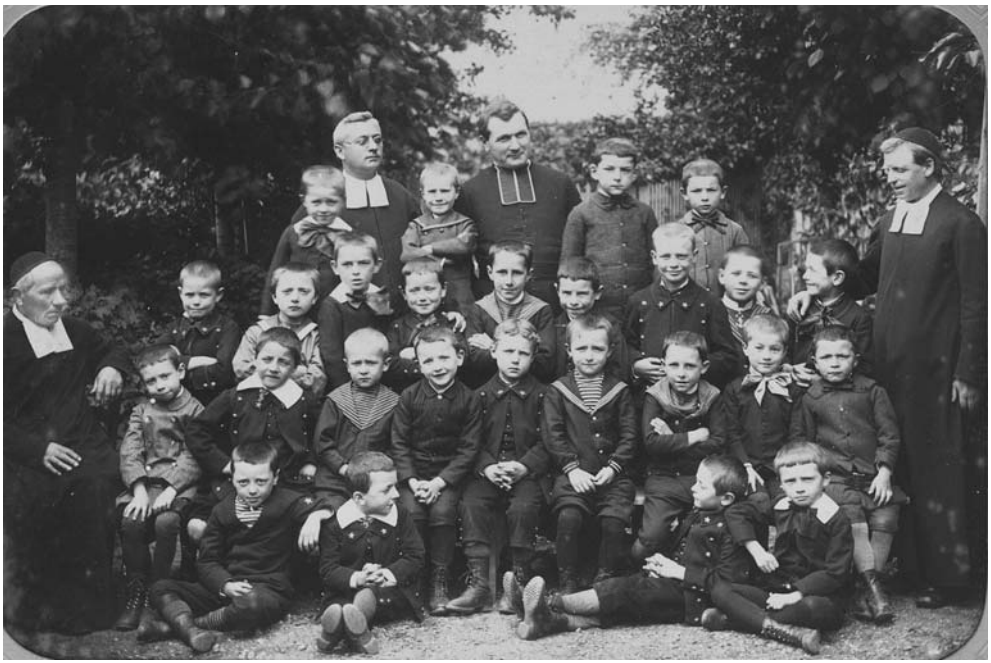
Recalling the evolution of *The Conduct of the Christian Schools* challenges us to:

- recreate our ability to summon others to work, side by side, while downplaying our own problems in order to focus our attention on providing a transforming education, attentive to defending the rights of the most vulnerable and to live as children of God;
- associate ourselves with educational communities inspired in the Gospel and, therefore, committed to: the proclamation of the Good News to all men and women without exception; and in reporting ideological manipulation and the use of power which are contrary to justice and peace;
- achieve together a new expression of our common vocation in the new Lasallian community that is emerging, where we Brothers and lay partners continue to learn to discover together the richness of our baptism in a complementarity of options and roles in service of society and the Church;
- proclaim publicly our reason for being as educators who are able to make a creative synthesis between faith and culture, while respecting the secular dimension of education and the transcendental dimension of our mission;
- be vocationally restless, with the passion and conviction of those who feel called to participate in God's saving plan.

We thank Brother Léon Lauraire for his commitment to help us contextualize and systematize the educational thinking of John Baptist de La Salle and the first Brothers. Also we are grateful to understand the life journeys of the Brothers from that first foundational moment and on down through the centuries. His contribution is essential in studies about Lasallian Education that will be carried out in this new stage of the Institute.

May this issue of Cahiers lasalliens 67 continue to nourish the Lasallian Corpus of our memory, and may that memory turn into decisive action for others.

Brother Diego A. Muñoz León
Service of Lasallian Research and Resources
Generalate, Rome



Pensionnat de St. Pierre - Ville de Dreux (France) 1888

… your zeal for the children who are under your guidance would be very imperfect if you exercised it only by instructing them; it will only become perfect if you practice yourselves what you are teaching them. Example makes a much great impression on the mind and hearts than words, especially for children…

John Baptist de La Salle
Meditations for the Time of Retreat 202.3

Introduction

The first three volumes on *La Conduite des Écoles chrétiennes*, – *Cahiers lasalliens* 61, 62 and 63 – are a commentary on the first text drawn up by St John Baptist de La Salle and a group of Brothers, which remained in manuscript form. This manuscript, No. 11.759, is kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris. But De La Salle and the first Brothers never thought of this text as being definitive, and it never was.

Conceived basically as a targeted response to the educational and pastoral needs of children and young people – needs which, by their very nature, were constantly changing – this *Conduct* could not remain immune to change. Schools had to take changing needs into account and constantly adapt their response.

That is why, in 1717, during the course of the second General Chapter of the Brothers' Institute – its supreme deliberative and governing body – it was decided to revise the text. John Baptist de La Salle, who was still alive at this time and took part in this General Chapter, was in full agreement with this decision to revise the text. In fact, he was the one asked by the Chapter delegates to draw up the new text which, in 1720, became the first printed edition of the *Conduct*. Twenty-one other editions would follow between then and 1916. We include a list of all these editions below, as it is difficult today to consult the complete series outside of the Generalate Archives (AMG) of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, in Rome.

Not all of these successive editions are significantly different from those that precede them. Sometimes they are identical or include only a few minor adjustments. A survey of all these various editions has led us to pick out the following which, in our opinion, constitute an important step forward: those of 1720, 1811, 1860, 1903/1916. These are the editions we shall concentrate on, attempting to explain successive changes, due either to causes internal to the Brothers' Institute, or to the impact of external factors such as education-

al changes in France, or legal restrictions affecting the French educational system. This will enable us to highlight a number of essential elements of Lasallian pedagogy regarding:

- the central place of the pupil in Lasallian schools;
- the emphasis on the training of teachers, and the provision of specific teaching materials for their use;
- the rejection of repressive pedagogy in favour of pedagogy based on motivation, relationship and encouragement;
- the constant ambition to offer pupils a holistic education, in which the secular and the spiritual dimension are deliberately combined;
- progressive search for opportunities to promote extracurricular activity and continuing education, from the beginning of the 19th century.

In addition to the five editions mentioned above, we shall devote a specific chapter to the end of the 18th century, because this was a stage that was particularly rich in research and works connected with the *Conduct of Schools*, in the Brothers' Institute, even if the French Revolution prevented any of this seeing the light of day in the form of a new edition of the text.

1706 - 1916, and even beyond, as we shall explain in our conclusion, represents a long educational tradition characterised by fidelity to innovation. We think we can say that only a religious Institute, structured and organised for the purpose of providing teaching and education, could ensure such longevity for a shared educational project. We shall try to explain how it worked, in the first chapter.

We think a few remarks would be useful before we begin this study to anticipate some questions and avoid some misunderstandings.

- The first text of the *Conduct of Schools* was inspired by the particular situation of France at the end of the 17th century. This is something we dealt with at some length in the three preceding volumes. Likewise, subsequent editions seem to refer basically or even solely – to this same French context and to its evolution. This is hardly surprising, given that until the second half of the 20th century, those governing the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools were all of French extraction.

- When the first translations of the text of the *Conduct* appeared – in Italian, Spanish and English – they were faithful copies of the original. This raises the question, of course, as to whether their contents were suited to the needs of local situations. To what extent could one reasonably hope that a single version could suit an international Institute, and respond to a diversity of cultures and educational systems?
- One other fact should also be remembered: up to and including the 1916 edition, the *Conduct* referred exclusively to primary schools. It did not envisage other types or levels of education, even though these had appeared in the course of the 18th and 19th century, including in the Brothers' Institute.
- All the same, the question of boarding schools – which had appeared at the beginning of the 18th century – often came up in discussions. The members of the General Chapters were clearly aware of this omission, and regularly called for a "Conduct of Boarding Schools" to be drawn up. We shall return to this point later.
- Up to the end of the 19th century, only a small number of copies was printed of the successive editions of the *Conduct*, as the potential clientele of users was limited, even if it rapidly became clear that it was not confined to the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. In fact there was a demand for it outside the Institute, in particular from the men's and women's teaching congregations founded at that time. Among these should be included congregations founded in non-French speaking countries. Moreover, a number of women's congregations produced their own edition of the *Conduct*, adapting where necessary the text to suit their female clientele. There were instances also where the *Conduct of Schools* was used in State schools, which was not unusual, since at the time of the 1st Empire, the Brothers' Institute became a part of the so-called Imperial University and, in this capacity, was responsible for numerous State schools up to 1880.

Obtaining access to all these editions of the *Conduct of Schools*, and to information relating to how the Institute undertook the updating of the text, is not easy. One is obliged to consult various Institute archives, in particular, those at Rome and Lyon. That is why we thought it would be useful to

include at the end of each chapter some **texts and documents** which could throw some light on the contents.

Texts and Documents

1. Boarding schools

As we recalled earlier, the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools did not run only primary schools, even if these Lasallian establishments were always in the majority. From the very beginning, certain establishments went beyond the primary level. This explains the parallel desire for a "Conduct of Boarding Schools" especially geared to their needs. John Baptist de La Salle himself accepted to take charge of a number of particular educational works: the Sunday School, the School for the Young Irish Noblemen, and especially the establishment at St. Yon. He even wrote a "Rule for Boarding School Masters". And this kind of school clientele continued to increase after his death.

From an historical point of view, we can see two areas of development:

- "Junior boarding schools", in the 18th century, which served sometimes also to provide additional income for the community running a school, to ensure their livelihood. This created some problems which led General Chapters to impose restrictions on these establishments or suppress them.
- In the 19th century, there appeared the "Senior Boarding Schools", in the modern sense of the term. They enabled the students to pursue their studies beyond the primary level. They were the origin of true modern secondary education in France, even technical education. The names of these boarding schools are landmarks in the history of the Institute: Maréville, Marseille, Carcassonne, Brest, Mirepox, Nantes, Angers, Toulouse...Each defined clearly its aims and its courses.

This kind of establishment began to come under consideration in the 18th century, in particular at the time of Brother Agathon, Superior General from 1777 to 1795. The break caused by the French Revolution meant work on this question had to start all over again in the 19th century. As one might expect, the request for a "Conduct for Boarding Schools" surfaced again. Brother Agathon had prepared something. Brother Philippe, Superior

General from 1838 to 1874, outlined the situation in a *Letter to Brother Directors*, dated July 21st 1873. It read as follows:

My Very Dear Brother Director,

Among the notes sent to the General Chapter, there were several which referred specifically to our Boarding Schools. We examined them with the attention and care they deserved, because these establishments, inspired by the Venerable John Baptist de La Salle, have constantly attracted the attention of our worthy predecessors, and in recent times, have enhanced the reputation of our Institute.

Several of our dear Brothers have expressed the wish that a "Short Conduct" be drawn up for boarding schools, day-boarding schools and other similar houses, which would be a kind of natural sequel to the Conduct of Schools and a complement, and which would serve to bring about the uniformity that is so desirable for these kinds of establishments. Despite the difficulties involved in undertaking this task – difficulties no one could deny – we believed it was worth trying; and even if our efforts were not completely successful, we like to think that they would not be totally wasted in a cause as precious as the education of youth.

It is with this in mind that we are sending you a copy of a plan we think could serve as a basis on which to work. We take this opportunity also to ask you to send us as soon as you can the notes and information requested at the end of this plan.

On the basis of these documents, we are quietly confident that the Editorial Committee responsible for this work, will be able to produce a serious and lasting work, and will earn the praise of the Church, of our dear Institute, and of the young people concerned who are entrusted to our care.

Yours affectionately in Jesus, Mary and Joseph,

I remain, My Very Dear Brother Director,

Your devoted servant,

Brother Philippe.

(Enclosed with this letter there was the following draft plan)

A draft Conduct for Boarding Schools

The book in question would begin with an introduction outlining the history of the kind of boarding schools founded by the Venerable De La Salle in 1700; of those which existed up to the Revolution; and finally of those which have been re-established for the last half a century. The book would explain the purpose of these schools, their usefulness and their importance even from all points of view. The book would be divided into three parts, as follows:

Part 1

The title of Part 1 could be: "General administration or organisation". It would include a series of chapters on the premises, staff and internal organisation. For example:

1. Plan of the boarding school
2. Facilities and furniture
3. Staff, including the chaplain, outside teachers, domestic servants and employees
4. Prospectus outlining the overall aim and specific aims
5. Classrooms according to their purpose
6. Playground and covered playground
7. Dormitories, washing facilities, lavatories
8. Chapel, linen room, infirmary, meeting room, in a word, all the rooms needed given the circumstances.

Part 2

Part 2 would be devoted entirely to teaching or instruction. It would naturally begin with a methodical Plan of Studies, broken down according to different subjects, in a way that they can be adapted to the needs of ordinary boarding schools as well as to those of establishments which do more advanced studies. In Part 2 there would be a careful exposition of the educational methods and procedures which have proved so successful in some of our establishments, at major international exhibitions, or at smaller-scale competitions in the capital or the provinces. Some chapters could be entitled as follows:

1. Overall programme of studies

2. Allocation of subjects to be studied year by year, or even term by term
3. Memory lessons, nature study lessons, oral lessons
4. Study of foreign languages
5. Art room and everything connected with the teaching of this subject.
6. Music room for lessons and practice.
7. Monthly examinations or others, competitions, exhibitions.
8. Pupils' library
9. Stock of materials for certain courses: geographical maps and globes, surveying instruments, physics and natural history laboratory, etc.

Part 3

Finally, Part 3, even more interesting than the other two, would have education as its subject, that is, the formation of young people. In order to meet the wishes of parents, nothing should be neglected that regards health, dress, instruction and well-being. However, our schools must do much more than this: they must concern themselves with the moral and religious education of the pupils. This book will go into the details of such a fine and noble undertaking. It will include, among others, the following chapters:

1. Daily regulations (schooldays, holidays, Sundays).
2. General discipline, good order, moving from place to place.
3. Constant supervision
4. Study and character formation.
5. Dress, cleanliness, personal cleanliness
6. Politeness, good taste, good spirit among pupils.
7. Piety, ordinary and special practices; Holy Mass, first communion, retreats, Month of Mary, etc.
8. Small pious associations, reading clubs and others.
9. Means of emulation: rewards, punishments, competitions.
10. After school-leaving, religious support associations, etc.

This is a plan which seems to satisfy best the desired aim; and if it could be

implemented in broad and nobly-inspired terms, it would respond to a real need. To help us as we try to draw up this plan, we would like you to send us the following:

1. Plans, drawings or pictures of already existing establishments
2. Published prospectuses, even old ones.
3. The history or information if it has been printed.
4. The programme or plan of studies followed in the establishment.
5. Regulations drawn up for the pupils , or for some particular religious association or society; printed copies of the exercises of piety.
6. Short speeches, honours lists or other prize-giving publications.
7. In a word, all the newsletters, notices and other documents printed or lithographed for the establishment.

We shall be very happy to receive all the notes, comments and remarks sent to us regarding the above plan. We would, however, ask our dear Brothers who answer our appeal to simplify our work by putting at the top of each note the name of the chapter to which the note refers, as for example, piety, supervision, recreations, dormitories, art, etc. It is on the basis of all these documents as a whole and their comparison with one another, that a complete and serious piece of work can be done.

2. Editions of the *Conduct of Schools*

1720: publisher: Joseph Charles Chastanier, Avignon (230 pages)

1742: name of publisher and where printed not indicated (276 pages)

1811: publisher: Br Mistral, Lyon (259 pages)

1819: publisher: Rusand, Lyon (359 pages)

1823: publisher: Rusand, Lyon (364 pages)

1828: publisher: Moronval, Paris (312 pages)

1837: publisher Moronval, Paris (232 pages)

1838: publisher: Moronval, Paris (232 pages)

1849: publisher: Moronval, Paris (232 pages)

1850: publisher: Moronval, Paris (232 pages)

1851: publisher: Moronval, Paris (189 pages)
1851: publisher: Moronval, Paris (118 pages)
1852: publisher: Moronval, Paris (232 pages)
1853: publisher: Moronval, Paris (232 pages)
1856: publisher: Moronval, Paris (232 pages)
1860: publisher: Beau Jeune, Versailles (208 pages)
1862: publisher: Beau Jeune, Versailles (188 pages)
1863: publisher: Beau Jeune, Versailles (188 pages)
1870: publisher: Beau Jeune, Versailles (188 pages)
1877: publisher: Beau Jeune, Versailles (192 pages)
1903: publishers: Procure Générale de l'Institut, Paris (252 pages)
1916: publishers: Procure Générale de l'Institut, Paris (355 pages)

NB:

1. We have highlighted the editions which introduced significant changes in the text.
2. Small differences in the number of pages in editions are due to minor changes in format or type font.

Chapter 1
Lasallian associative dynamism

The "Little Schools" of 17th century France were schools in the sense that a schoolmaster or schoolmistress would gather a group of boys or girls in a room provided for them, and then teach them individually. Where girls were concerned, a great number of women's congregations were founded during this period, and quite rapidly schools with several classes were established by them. From 1679 onwards, John Baptist de La Salle, clearly with the approval of Adrien Nyel – see *Cahier lasallien* 63 – founded similar schools for boys in Rheims. And several classes became the rule in the "Society of the Christian Schools" which came into existence at this time: Lasallian schools had a minimum of two classes, but where possible, three, and sometimes, four or five.

And so, at each school there was a small community of teachers, coordinated by an Inspector or a Director. De La Salle wanted and ensured that these small groups could function as educational communities. Although he did not use this term which has now become common usage, it described accurately what happened. After ten years or so of research and experimentation, the idea that became firmly established was that of "association", and this became the distinctive characteristic of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. This characteristic was enshrined in a solemn commitment, first on November 21st 1691, and then more widely on June 6th 1694, and it still remains in force today. These first two dates mark the first two commitments in the history of the Brothers' Institute, of which we know the circumstances and the formulas used.

Central position of association

If association is the heart of this consecration - and the formula used repeats the word to the point of redundancy - it is accompanied by two equally

essential characteristics: a vow of stability indicating the resolution or the firm intent of commitment to association; and a vow of obedience to the elected Superiors and to the "Body of the Society" underlining the desire for the cohesion of the members of this Society.

All this, of course, requires unity, solidarity, openness, mobility and availability. These are essential basic attitudes if associative work is to become a reality, and a solid and unified network of schools is to develop. On these attitudes also depend the vitality and growth of the network. And so, this work by association became almost immediately the driving force of the Brothers' Institute whose ultimate purpose was education through schools.

We should add, that the holistic education of young people has always been a major concern. We shall return to this later. Already years before, Amos Comenius (1592-1670) had written that it was necessary to educate "the whole man and all men". Although John Baptist de La Salle does not use these actual words in his writings, they are illustrated throughout his educational work.

"The Body of the Society"

For our purpose, it is important also to recall that from 1694 onwards, the governance of the Institute was, in the final instance, in the hands of the "Body" of the Society/Institute, which took the form of a "General Chapter", the frequency of whose meetings, its composition and the way it functioned, gradually became defined with time. From the very beginning, at each of its meetings, the General Chapter would evaluate the work done since the previous chapter: it would analyse the existing situation, identify the overall needs of the pupils, and decide on the guidelines for the period that followed. The *Conduite des Écoles*, which set out educational and pastoral guidelines, quite naturally came under scrutiny with a view to its revision and adaptation.

Consequently:

- Before the Chapter was held, Brothers were asked to make known their wishes and their suggestions for change by submitting individual or group notes.
- The Chapter set up commissions according to topics and asked them to analyse the notes submitted, formulate proposals based on them,

and submit them for consideration by a plenary session of the Chapter, which would then put them to the vote. A consultation of the "Successive Registers of the General Chapters" kept in the Institute Archives, reveals the interesting fact that from 1717, schools and the *Conduct of Schools* were regularly the object of this process of revision.

And so, far from the original version being set in stone – which would have been an educational aberration – the text of the *Conduct of Schools* underwent more or less substantial changes, depending on circumstances. These changes were not based on the whim of such or such an individual, but on a considered and concerted decision of a group representing all the associated members as a whole.

That, in broad outline, is how association worked as a permanent feature. But, quite apart from the structures and mechanism ensuring the function of association, it was the spirit of association which distinguished each of its members – Brothers and seculars – which ensured the vitality of Lasallian dynamism. Members felt involved; they wanted to exchange ideas and make suggestions in order to provide a better educational service for young people and children.

An unchanging educational aim

Child-centred education

John Baptist de La Salle, with courage and determination and helped by the first Brothers, also set up schools which were:

- Genuinely pupil-centred.
- Organised to provide each pupil with a holistic and integrated education.
- Anxious to attract a clientele and be accessible to young people who did not have the benefit of a good school education. Lasallian schools were free for all children; they refused to check the income of parents, as was the custom in those days; they invited even unemployed young people to attend.
- And more so than many of his contemporaries, De La Salle understood that the likelihood of the pupils' future employment depended on the quality of the teachers running these schools.

There are many passages in the writings of John Baptist de La Salle which testify to this constant concern for the pupils; and the first version of the *Conduite des Écoles chrétiennes* – the 1706 manuscript – is a good testimony to his intentions and achievements.

The six major aims of the *Conduct of Schools*

The school which is described in this first version of the *Conduct* is clearly thought out, organised and run for the benefit of the pupils, to help them solve their problems and to secure their future. This intention – we could say, this overall aim – is expressed in particular in the following six ways.

- The pursuit of the social and economic improvement of the pupils. This was seen – and is still seen – as particularly urgent for the poor living in precarious and sometimes desperate circumstances. But this aim was valid for everyone, especially where the working class was concerned and whose problems were well known. Schools, therefore, were concerned about the future of their pupils, and tried to adapt themselves to their needs, and to offer them some chance of success.
- Preparation for, and the living experience already at school, of a fraternal society, based on a rejection of all violence, on mutual respect, on constant mutual help, and on peaceful personal relations. The aim was to prepare – as far as possible – for a more just and more egalitarian society, while at the same time training the pupils for future employment.
- The building of a more evangelical, living and dynamic Church. This was possible if schools produced Christians who had received high quality religious instruction, were guided by values they had assimilated, were inspired by the Gospels, and participated actively in the life of the Church. As John Baptist de La Salle loved to write, the aim was, in a word, to form "true Christians".
- The formation of free and independent individuals who can find suitable employment in society and their place in the Church. To achieve this, schools must enable pupils to acquire interiority through reflection and judgment, reference values and a sense and practice of responsibility.

Thanks to this formation of the individual, the citizen, the believer and the professional – what we call holistic education – the young person had a chance of benefiting from some of the five components on which social hierarchy in 18th century French society was founded: dignity, social rank, wealth, service to the community and power. The four overall aims set out above supposed well-organised schools, intent on being efficient. The *Conduct of Schools* indicated how this could be achieved, emphasising, we believe, two ways in particular which would lead to success:

- A strong and high-quality teacher-pupil relationship. The accuracy of this intuition is quite amazing. Today, as in the 17th century, the education of a child or young person involves necessarily an interpersonal relationship. This explains John Baptist de La Salle's emphatic language and insistence regarding the teacher-pupil relationship: one must win-over hearts, love the pupils, set an example, know each one of them personally...This is an unchanging Lasallian tradition which endures to this day.
- A persistently concerted approach to teaching, based on team-work. Among Lasallians, the most usual way of describing this over the last three hundred years has been "working in association" with others.

Resulting in dynamism which is creative and lasting

The composition of the first text of the *Conduct of Schools* was possible because a process of research was set in motion, which served as a model for the following two centuries: 1706 - 1916. This process consisted of four elements:

- A fundamental shared aim: to create a pupil-centred school. This implied: observing the pupils, knowing them individually, and committing oneself resolutely and generously to the pursuit of their education, that is, to their growth as individuals and as believers.
- Looking for and experimenting with working methods, attitudes, relations, methods of assessment most suited to the circumstances, and most likely to help the pupils. This assessment was a fundamental phase of this experimentation. Nowadays, we might call it "research and development".

- Pooling or sharing, over an extended period of comparing results, with a view to increasing discernment during deliberation and analysis, in order to sift out what is best and most reliable. This is the associative phase of the work. This is the key factor of the process. Individual initiatives are analysed "by association", represented, in concrete terms, by elected delegates who most often had the most experience. In the history of the Brothers' Institute, this took place at meetings of the General Chapter.
- Arriving at a consensus, leading to the drafting of approved texts or new guidelines and decisions. Even though they did not meet at regular intervals, for three centuries, the General Chapters of the Brothers of the Christian Schools served as natural opportunities for putting into practice this process of discernment. It is perhaps worth noting that up to now there have been 44 General Chapters, but only twenty or so new editions of the *Conduct of Schools*, and not all of these coincided with a General Chapter. From the 18th century onwards, the Registers which recorded the work of Chapters, note constantly the submission of "Notes" to the capitulants, the setting up of a commission to study these Notes, and Chapter deliberations leading to proposals or decisions regarding schools.

Consequently, one can say that:

- The Brothers' Institute has had a specific educational and pastoral approach for the last 300 years, and that it has formulated it in particular in the *Conduct of Schools*. Even when the situation became progressively more diversified and complex, the overall guidelines of the Chapters tried to be valid for all.
- This approach has a motive force derived from an unchanging view of education on the part of its proponents: identifying and analysing the needs of young people and responding to them in a suitable way.
- This dual approach of observation and response can be effective and constant only if it is collective or associative.
- This explains the essential role of association, which allows for and guarantees numerous intuitions, greater diversity, a richer selection of proposed schemes, the continuity of undertakings despite the mobility

of the people involved, and even possibly the extension and generalisation of research.

Evolution and stages

While it is true that the text of the *Conduct* can serve as a thread linking the stages of this evolution; and that it concerns the majority of the Brothers of the Institute, it does not reflect all the responses made to the needs of pupils. Even during the lifetime of John Baptist de La Salle, there were other initiatives which addressed the needs of specific sections of society as it evolved. It is easy to pick out various examples in the course of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

- 18th century: "seminaries" for country schoolmasters, the school for young Irish nobles, Sunday school for young workers, the complex St Yon project, courses in hydrography, geometry, commerce, schools for young converts from Protestantism.
- 19th century: orphanages, teaching in prisons, schools for deaf and dumb pupils, courses for young apprentices and workers, teacher training colleges, religious support groups for school-leavers, the St Francis Xavier Society, youth clubs, agricultural courses, courses for illiterate soldiers, modern secondary education, the St Benedict Joseph Labre Association.
- 20th century: more extensive diversification: it would be difficult to list all the different examples in various countries and continents.

We can see that initially the responses were mainly school-based, even if the needs arose outside the school context. In the 19th century, they were more centred, generally speaking, on specific social groups, which led to the creation of extra-curricular or continuing education projects. In more recent times, attention is centred more on situations engendered by present-day civilisation. Hence the extreme diversity of responses.

The globalisation of the Institute and its consequences

In the mind of St John Baptist de La Salle, the Brothers' Institute was at the service of the universal Church, and not only of the Church in France, and even less so, of exclusively the diocese of Rheims, in which it was born. This

explains certain significant decisions he was led to take: his departure from Rheims for Paris in 1688; his positive response to requests to found schools from the north or south of France; the sending of two Brothers to Rome in 1702.

So it was quite natural for the Brothers' Institute to take on an international dimension, a process begun as early as the 18th century, but greatly increased in the 19th, and completed in the 20th, this final stage truly marking the globalisation of the Institute, especially following the enactment in 1904 of the anti-teaching congregation laws. Some 4,000 French Brothers left the country and founded new establishments on all the continents.

We can see that this expansion and diversification had a number of consequences: Lasallian educational establishments now found themselves in a great variety of social, educational religious or economic situations. It became impossible to maintain a single version of the *Conduct of Schools*, based essentially, up to that point, on the French educational system. As a consequence, there were no more new universally applicable editions. A particular kind of centralised uniformity could no longer exist. But the custom of sending Notes to General Chapters continued.

And so, imperceptibly, a single *Conduct of Schools* gave way to a variety of Lasallian educational mission statements. This diversity did not, however, destroy communion, because the commonly-shared fundamental inspiration remained intact. To find its source, one need only turn to the writings of St John Baptist de La Salle – encouraged explicitly to do so by the Second Vatican Council – and consequently also to the 1706 founding text, which is included in the most recent editions. Each country, each culture or continent interprets it in the light of its own specific present-day set of circumstances.

This evolution is characterised by another fundamental phenomenon which must be taken into account: the massive increase in the number of lay men and women teachers in Lasallian institutions. It is enough to look at what has happened since the middle of the 20th century. Despite this radical change in the way things used to be, it is remarkable to note the vitality of the Lasallian educational network in the world as a whole. We can probably say that the factors which explain this success are those which have been operating for the last three centuries:

- a great enthusiasm for children and their education, combined with an optimistic view regarding their abilities and educability.
- being in touch with the real situation in society and in the world at large
- associative work which increases the number of opportunities for every man and woman adult
- knowing about successful schemes elsewhere and the possibility of their being replicated by others. We should add that these schemes are the work of lay persons as well as of Brothers. This is the age of the shared Lasallian Educational Mission.

Texts and documents

1. The first Preface of the *Conduct of Schools*:

It has been necessary to draw up this guide for the Christian Schools so that everything may be uniform in all the schools and all the places where there are Brothers of this Institute, and so that what is practised in them may always be the same. People are so prone to becoming lax and to changing, that they need to have written rules to ensure they fulfil their obligations, and to prevent them from introducing innovations and destroying what has been wisely established.

This guide was drawn up as a set of rules only after a great number of conferences with the senior Brothers of this Institute who were the most capable teachers, and after many years' experience. Nothing has been included which was not agreed upon and well-tested, whose advantages and disadvantages were not weighed up, and whose blunders or bad consequences were not foreseen as far as possible.

This guide has not been composed in the form of a rule. This is because it includes a number of practices as an ideal to aim for, and which perhaps could not easily be carried out by those with little talent for teaching. Also some of these practices are accompanied and supported by reasons explaining them and outlining how to use them. The Brothers, however, should take great care they observe all these practices faithfully, being fully convinced they will have order in their class or school only to the extent that they are careful not to omit any of them, and considering this guide as being given to them by God, through the intermediary of their Superiors and of the senior Brothers of the Institute.

This guide is divided into three parts. The first part deals with school practices and with everything else which is done in school from the time the children arrive to their departure. The second part indicates the necessary and useful means the teachers should use to establish and maintain order in the school. The third part sets out: 1. The duties of the school Inspector; 2. The care and diligence the person training new teachers should take; 3. The qual-

ities teachers should have or acquire, and the way they should behave in order to carry out their duties well in the school; 4. Rules the children must observe. In general terms, that is what this book contains.

The Directors of the communities of this Institute, and the Inspectors of the schools will take great care to learn thoroughly what is in this book and to understand it. The will ensure that teachers neglect nothing and carry out exactly all the exercises prescribed. even the smallest ones, in order to bring about by this means great order in schools, well-regulated and uniform conduct on the part of the Brothers responsible for them, and very great benefit for the children taught in them.

Brothers who teach in schools will read and re-read often what concerns them in it, so as not to be ignorant of anything, to ensure they do not forget anything, and that they carry out what is prescribed faithfully.

The six paragraphs of this Preface summarise in essence the nature of the Lasallian associative dynamism presented in this chapter:

- The pursuit of a certain degree of necessary uniformity in the establishment and effective running of a school network.
- Concerted planning, the term "conferences" understood in this context in its etymological sense, as consultative meetings at which experiences were pooled.
- Sufficient flexibility to allow for individual innovation, subject to collective discernment to obviate uncontrollable fragmentation.
- The three parts mentioned in the fourth paragraph represent a basic outline. The third part, however, is not included in all editions, and its contents varies in the 19th century.
- From 1706, the *Conduct* became a reference tool for the organisation and running of Lasallian schools. The first to have to master its contents were those in charge. The benefits expected were threefold: the efficient running of the school, the high quality of the work of the teachers, and the advantages derived by the pupils.
- Of course, all the teachers had to master the text by studying it individually or together as a community which, as we see, was the practice until the 20th century.

2. The summary Table of Contents of the 1706 Manuscript of the *Conduct*

Anyone who has never had occasion to read the *Conduct of Schools* needs to have some idea of its contents. It is clear from the Table of contents that the text is concerned with the curriculum, organisation, discipline, aims, methodology and manner of teaching - a picture of how a particular kind of school functions. The division of the text into three parts was kept until 1916, and included additions and suppressions, depending on the edition.

1st Part

Activities which take place in the Christian Schools and the manner in which they should be carried out

Ch 1: Arrival at school and the beginning of the school day
Ch 2: Breakfast and the afternoon snack
Ch 3: Lessons. (NB. There are 9 different levels of learning to read)
Ch 4: Writing. (It would be more exact to say "calligraphy")
Ch 5: Arithmetic
Ch 6: Spelling
Ch 7: Prayers
Ch 8: Holy Mass
Ch 9: Catechism
Ch 10: Hymns (This chapter is empty: the hymns were printed separately)
Ch 11: Leaving school.

2nd Part

Means of establishing and maintaining order in school

Ch 1: The vigilance that needs to be maintained in school
Ch 2: Signals which are used in the Christian Schools
Ch 3: Registers
Ch 4: Rewards
Ch 5: Punishments
Ch 6: Absences

Ch 7: Holidays
Ch 8: Class monitors

3rd Part

The duties of the School Inspector
Ch 1: The vigilance of the School Inspector
Ch 2: Admission of pupils
Ch 3: Allocation of pupils to classes and assignation of subjects to study
Ch 4: Promotion of pupils from one "lesson" to another

Chapter 2
1720: Associative dynamism in practice

Copies of the 1706 Manuscript were made so that each community had at least one, and the text was implemented as soon as it appeared. Later it was realised that there was a danger that copyists could make mistakes, which would be quite usual. This was one of the reasons given for having the text printed.

1706-1717: these ten years of implementation were a sufficiently long time to test the suitability of the teaching or educational measures put into place by the *Conduct*. It was also a sufficiently long period to make an assessment and to make the necessary adjustments. This was a process of research and development.

John Baptist de La Salle was kept informed, of course, of the difficulties and of the easy aspects of this implementation. The Brothers were aware of what worked in practice and of what did not, or only with great difficulty. De La Salle visited the schools, met the Brothers and, from 1694, received a letter from each one of them once a month. In his answers - those still in our possession - we see him dealing with very specific educational and pedagogical questions. He was kept informed also by Brothers Joseph and Barthélemy whom he had been sending to visit the communities for a number of years.

The form taken by this revision

In fact, it was another factor which led to the holding of the 1717 General Chapter - the voice of the "Body of the Society of the Brothers of the Christian Schools" - to use the formula traditionally used by the Brothers since 1694. John Baptist de La Salle had not succeeded in obtaining the election of a successor at the head of the Institute, neither in 1686, nor in 1694, and not even in 1714, when "the principal Brothers" asked and even ordered him to take effective charge again of the government of the Institute, a role

from which he had distanced himself since 1712. "In 1716, the Venerable De La Salle was 65 years old. His protracted vigils, his fatiguing journeys and especially his great austerities had hastened the onset of serious infirmities. Foreseeing his approaching death, he wished to ensure the longevity and stability of his Institute, that a free election of a Superior General could provide", wrote Brother Lucard in his *Annales de l'Institut*, volume 1, page 346. At that time, a 65 year old person was considered to be an old man. In France, the average life expectancy was rarely more than 25 years. De La Salle felt his strength waning and consequently thought it was time to resign from his position as Superior of the Institute. And he thought it would be better for this to happen during his lifetime rather than after his death. It was for this reason that a General Chapter was necessary.

"On December 4th 1716, he brought together at St Yon the 6 most experienced and influential Brothers to inform them of his plan", writes Lucard. "He promised he would not abandon them, and that it was better to carry it our while he was still alive, otherwise it would be dangerous". In agreement with these advisors, he decided that this Chapter would be held in 1717. It would be the second in the history of the Institute, the first having been held in June 1694.

The decision having been made, practical steps were taken to call the Chapter. The Brothers attending this meeting drew up the following declaration: *We the undersigned, Brothers of the Christian Schools, having assembled at the house of St Yon to respond to the most pressing needs regarding the good of our Institute; and seeing that for the last year Monsieur De La Salle, our founder, has been unable to attend to it as he has been unwell all this time; have decided it is proper, and thought it necessary, that Brother Barthélemy, who has been at the head of the Institute for several years, should immediately go to visit all houses belonging to it, to ascertain all that happens in them and how their members behave, so that subsequently it will be possible, together with the principal Brothers of our Society, to see what means should be adopted in order to preserve and maintain union and uniformity in the Institute; to decide upon and finish the rules; and at the same time provide for the overall government of our Institute, at an assembly which he will announce, which will be held at the house of St Yon from the feast of the Ascension until Pentecost.*

Signed: Brother François, Brother Dosithée, Brother Charles, Brother Ambroise and Brother Étienne.

The Venerable De La Salle adds: *I concur with what the Brothers have decided above, the days, months and year as above, in the aforementioned house of St Yon.* Signed: De La Salle.

To add even more weight to this Declaration: *Abbé Blain, ecclesiastical superior, appointed by Mgr d'Aubigné, Archbishop of Rouen, wrote below: 'We the undersigned, superior of the Brothers of the Christian Schools of Rouen, appointed by His Excellency the Archbishop, permit Brother Barthélemy to absent himself for several months to do what Monsieur de La Salle and the Brothers have decided is necessary, believing also as they do that this is necessary'. Signed: Blain.* (Annales, vol. 1, pp. 349-350).

And so, Brother Barthélemy visited the 22 communities that existed at that time, explained to them the plan to hold a Chapter, announced the election of a Brother Superior General, obtained the agreement of all the Brothers, and recorded the name of the Chapter delegate of each community. As Lucard notes, the *Conduct* of the Christian Schools *was submitted, like the Rule, for examination by the 1717 general Chapter. In 1720, Brother Timothée obtained permission from the Brother Superior to have it printed.* The Rule and the *Conduct* were two fundamental texts for the Brothers. The first defined how they should live their lives as religious; and the second, how they should lead their professional lives, even if the two were inseparable. These two texts played a crucial role in their lives.

The 1706 text was submitted to the members of the General Chapter for a critical examination. The changes that were made were not therefore motivated by factors external to the Institute, but inspired by an internal analysis, in particular, of their experience over the preceding ten years. In practice, the general state of education in the country had not changed much in the course of this short period.

This 1706 text had been drawn up by John Baptist de La Salle himself following *numerous conferences* (meetings) held with a number of experienced Brothers. In 1717, De La Salle was still alive and took part in the 1717 General Chapter. Quite naturally, the other capitulants asked him to draw

up the new version, which leads one to suppose that he agreed with the proposed changes. Moreover, in the Letter presenting the 1720 edition we find the following passage: *The fact is, our venerable Founder never ceased to represent you during his lifetime...You are witnesses and God knows with what attention and charity he searched with the most experienced senior Brothers of the Institute for the means to maintain among you a holy uniformity in your manner of instructing youth. He set down in writing all that he considered conducive to that and gathered it together in a Conduct of Schools which he exhorted you to read and reread, in order to learn from it what would be of most use to you...However, as it contained a number of things which could not be used, the Brothers at the Assembly which was held to elect the first Brother Superior, pointed out to Monsieur de La Salle that it would be expedient to make some corrections in it. He agreed with their suggestions and in this way changes were made which made it better than it was*. In their deliberations, the Brothers were guided above all by two criteria: to remove from the text whatever they thought was of no use or had proved too difficult to use. Of course, it would be interesting to know in more detail what arguments they used to decide what to remove , add or change, but we do not have this information. We can only conjecture, as we shall, further on. On the other hand, it is easy to compare the two texts of 1706 and 1720, thanks to *Cahier* 24 which presents the two versions on facing pages.

The 1706 text, as we said earlier, had remained in manuscript form. What were the reasons for choosing a printed version in 1720? First of all, in response to a request from numerous Brothers; and also, as we read in the introductory Letter, because in manuscripts *an infinity of mistakes often creeps in, because of a lack of accuracy on the part of copyists who often introduce changes in them*. The small number of potential readers - just over a hundred - did not perhaps justify printing the text, but in this way it would enable each Brother to have a copy, which became standard practice.

If the total number of Brothers was limited, that of the Brother School Inspectors was even more so. This explains the absence of the third part of the *Conduct* in this edition, which was precisely the section dealing with the duties of the Inspectors. It was only in the 19th century that this third part appeared again.

The 1717 General Chapter is a good example of associative dynamism in practice, because:

- First of all, Brother Barthélemy is sent to all the communities to find out what each Brother thinks and wants. Only Gabriel Drolin, who is in Rome, is too far away to justify the journey. Later, when the Institute had increased in numbers and was more widespread, the process was simplified by holding local or regional elections.
- Capitulants therefore are delegates, representing their Brothers and their communities. In this way, the Brothers as a whole participate in the work and deliberations of the Chapter. Later, the practice will be introduced of Brothers, wishing to do so, sending Notes to the Chapter.
- The General Chapter works and legislates in its capacity as the "Body of the Society", that is, of all associates as a whole. The revision of the *Conduct of Schools* is not the work of one person, but work undertaken in association with others.
- We should remember also that on May 19th 1717, the General Chapter elected the governing body of the Institute: the Superior General, two Assistants, a Bursar and two Visitors. It was one of these, Brother Timothée, elected Visitor, who obtained permission from the Superior General in 1720 to have the text of the *Conduct* printed. The Letter he sent to the Brothers, and which served as a foreword to the text, contains some interesting information.

Deletion of certain passages

We will not indicate all the minor changes even if they are justified and have their importance. But we will concentrate on changes to the 1706 text which are more significant. These concern in particular the second part of the *Conduct*, that is, the chapters dealing with the means to establish and maintain order in schools, and more particularly, the chapters on Registers and Class Monitors.

Registers

One thing which can contribute greatly to the maintenance of order in school is well-kept registers. There should be six kinds of these. 1. Admissions registers; 2. Registers

of Promotions in Lessons; 3. Registers of Promotion in Lesson Orders; 4. Registers of the Good and Bad Qualities of Pupils; 5. Registers of the first Pupil on the Bench; 6. Register of the Visitor of Absent Pupils. The first two will be for the use of the School Inspector; teachers will use the second two; and the last two will be used by the pupils. The 1720 edition kept only the registers of promotion in lessons and in lesson orders, and added a third one called "a pocket register" for use by the teacher. These are significant changes and deserve some comment.

The Admissions Register was kept by the Director or the Inspector in charge of the school, and contained information regarding each new pupil at the time of his admission. In practice, this Register did not disappear, since schools always have an admissions register, in some form or other. But Lasallian schools changed the form it took and its use. The disappearance of some of the stipulations of the 1706 text is perhaps regrettable, because they made it possible to gather very useful information about new pupils and their home situation, or at least, provided enough details to enable them to be put into a group that suited them, and to adapt their learning programme to their plans for the future - or to the plans their parents had for them. In 1720, did some of this information seem to be of no use or too indiscreet to be kept?

The Register of the Good and Bad Qualities of Pupils. This was in fact a psychological and moral profile of each pupil, drawn up by the teachers at the end of the school year. It was a precise way of knowing pupils and could be helpful for providing personalised follow-up for them. The personalisation of the schooling of each pupil was a fundamental aspect of Lasallian schools. One has to say, that keeping such a register involved a great deal of work for the teachers, and probably especially for new teachers with little experience of teaching. We need to remember also that there were 60 or 70 pupils in each class. For a more detailed idea of the nature of this register, we include the section in the 1706 Manuscript which speaks of it, at the end of this chapter.

The Register of the Visitor of Absent Pupils. As we shall see later, the 1720 edition leaves out also the "Office" of the "Visitor of Absent Pupils". It is quite logical therefore that the relevant register should also disappear. This may seem regrettable, because this practice of visiting pupils absent without permission was based on a laudable concern for the state of health of these pupils, an attitude inspired by solidarity and compassion. It was probably also

a means of eradicating absenteeism which was so common at the time. On the other hand, perhaps absenteeism was in sharp decline in 1720. Parents were more accustomed to the requirements of the Brothers' schools especially where regular attendance and punctuality were concerned. Something must have improved to make the Brothers think it was no longer necessary to check on absences, especially when we remember the great importance De La Salle and the Brothers had given to the problem, as we see clearly if we read the interesting chapter 16 of the 1706 Manuscript. It is one the most detailed chapters. And they had every reason to believe that absenteeism was an important obstacle to progress in their studies. Doing away with this register did not mean any easing off of insistence on the importance of regular attendance.

The Register of the First Pupil on the Bench and the Register of the Distributors and Collectors of Books referred to simple practical tasks which perhaps no longer needed to exist in 1720, given that the social conditions of the pupils had certainly changed for the better.

Disappearance of certain "Offices"

Like other texts on education of the period (the *École Paroissiale* of Jacques de Batencour, or the *Règlements* of Chales Demia, for example), the 1706 *Conduct* established 14 kinds of "Offices" in Lasallian schools. Chapter 18, at the end of part two, was devoted to them. It began as follows: *There will be several officers in the school, who will perform a number of different functions which teachers cannot and ought not perform themselves. These officers will be: 1. The reciter of prayers; 2. The one who, at rehearsals for Holy Mass, says what the priest has to say, and called for this reason the Minister of the Holy Mass; 3. The Almoner; 4. The Holy Water Carrier; 5. The Rosary Carrier and his assistants; 6. The Bell Ringer; 7. The Inspector and the supervisors; 8. The First Pupils on the Bench; 9. The Visitors of Absent Pupils; 10. The Distributors and Collectors of Papers; 11. The Distributors and Collectors of Books; 12. The Sweepers; 13. The Doorkeeper; 14. The Key Keeper.*

All these officers will be appointed by the teacher in each class on the first day of school after the holidays. Each teacher will consult the Director or the School Inspector regarding this matter and, if subsequently the need arises to change them

or some of them, the appointment of another or others will be carried out in the same manner.

In the 1720 text, five of these offices disappear: the Minister of the Holy Mass, the Almoner, the First Pupils on the Bench, the Visitors of Absent Pupils, the Distributors and Collectors of books. One can well ask oneself why these offices were left out. In the case of the Minister of the Holy Mass, the First Pupils on the Bench and the Distributors and Collectors of books, most probably these offices were no longer required. On the other hand, the disappearance of the Almoners and Visitors of Absent Pupils is more surprising and some description of what they did is called for.

The Almoner. In the 1706 *Conduct*, he carried out his duties at the midday meal and the afternoon snack. It was his job to collect, in a basket provided for this purpose, the surplus bread and other food which better-off pupils gave to help their companions who had not been able to bring any or enough for their needs. We know that, at the time, poor families basically ate bread and sometimes only bread. Pupils who had too much for their own needs gave it "as alms" for their companions, and the person collecting these gifts was called, quite naturally, the "almoner". His task was therefore was apparently practical, but in fact, what he performed was an act of sharing and solidarity with his companions. The midday meal and the afternoon snack had in fact several aims, explicitly mentioned in this second chapter of the *Conduct*:

- to nourish oneself reasonably well at a time of famine;
- to learn how to eat with good manners and civility;
- to develop in the pupils the value of sharing.

It was therefore important from an educational point of view. So, why does the Almoner disappear in 1720? Perhaps, the living conditions of families had improved in society as a whole. We know that there was great economic growth throughout the 18th century. Or perhaps all the pupils had become accustomed to bringing enough food for their midday meal and afternoon snack. It is noticeable that in subsequent editions of the *Conduct*, especially in the 19th century, there is much less insistence on this question, even though it is still mentioned as a possibility. One has the impression that it it is more a habit than a strict obligation. We shall return to the question of education in civility but outside the context of the midday meal.

The Visitor of Absent Pupils. There was a variety of reasons for absenteeism in the 17th century. The 1706 *Conduct* devotes a long and interesting chapter to this problem. It offers an analysis of the causes and some remedies. At the same time, De La Salle and the Brothers considered absenteeism as something very regrettable as it prevented pupils from making the progress in their studies they could have achieved by attending school regularly. It is easy to understand why absenteeism was much more detrimental where simultaneous teaching was used. It was quite different where individual tuition was given and each pupil could take up his studies again at his own level. It is interesting to note also that this chapter of the *Conduct* begins with "authorised absences" because, in the context of the time, and given the socially deprived clientele of Lasallian schools, there existed a number of economic constraints which explained the need for being absent on certain occasions. So there was a certain degree of flexibility regarding regular attendance. But the Visitors of Absent Pupils went to see pupils who had stayed away from school without authorisation. Each of the Visitors had a register of absent pupils for whom he was responsible. So when the Office of Visitors disappeared, so did the Register they kept.

Perhaps absenteeism had significantly decreased by 1720, enough in any case to justify the abandonment of this Office. We should not forget that the running of schools as stipulated by the *Conduct* must have seemed strange initially for parents who, in most cases, had never attended school themselves, or who were used to the system of individual teaching, which did not attach the same importance to punctuality and regular attendance. Perhaps they had not been convinced from the outset of the need for punctuality and regular attendance demanded by the simultaneous type of teaching. Also school behaviour improves quite rapidly in all societies.

All the same, the disappearance of visitors of absent pupils is perhaps regrettable because it was an important form of solidarity in a classroom. We should add also that the practical measures put in place to take in hand and help absent pupils on their return enabled them to make up for the work they had missed while they were away.

Outsiders who attend catechism lessons on Sundays and feasts

Outsiders may be admitted to attend catechism lessons on Sundays and feast-days. By outsiders we mean those who do not attend the Christian schools on the days they function.

All the outsiders will be received and admitted in the same way as pupils who come to school are received. If they are young and under 15 years of age, they will be brought by their parents. If they are over 15 years of age, they can be received without being accompanied by their parents, but they will be received only after being thoroughly vetted. This passage from the chapter on catechism is explained by the situation at the time. It should be remembered that hardly 20% of the children attended school. So there was no lack of children who had never been able to attend catechism lessons. The threshold of 15 years of age is also very easy to explain: at the age of 14, boys, whether they had attended school or not, normally began their apprenticeship in a craft guild or working for an employer. This gave them a kind of autonomy. Unfortunately, this was not the case for the majority of boys.

It is also a well-known fact, and often mentioned by educational historians, that the fundamental purpose of schools was to catechise the children. The Council of Trent, in the 16th century, had made this clear, and practice in Christian countries had confirmed this. John Baptist de La Salle also considered the teaching of catechism to be an essential part of the curriculum in his schools. An entire chapter of the *Conduct*, chapter 9 in part 1, was devoted to it. There was a lesson every day, normally lasting half an hour, but lasting an hour on the eve of holidays, and an hour and a half on Sundays and feast-days.

But as the great majority of children did not attend school, they did not have the advantage of school catechism lessons. The idea of making schools accessible to outsiders on Sundays and feast-days was therefore for them an opportunity to learn about Christian doctrine. Apprentices normally did not work on those days; the subjects dealt with in Lasallian schools on those days were not part of the programme followed in school on school days; and the approach recommended to the teachers made catechism lessons on Sundays and feast-days more attractive.

The suppression of allowing outsiders to attend is therefore, on the face of it, surprising, especially if we recall the importance De La Salle attached to teaching children catechism. What were the reasons for it? Perhaps it was the difficulty of fitting in extra bodies in already full classrooms? And then, the lack of schooling of these young outsiders may have been a difficult problem to overcome. Or perhaps the inconvenience of their presence had proved to be excessive for the smooth running and the atmosphere of the lessons.

Additions

Leaving aside corrections of style or vocabulary, we note in particular three new sections in the 1720 edition:

- The foreword to chapter 15 on corrections
- An extra chapter at the end of part 2, entitled "The structure and uniformity of schools and the furniture suitable for them."
- The list of the "Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher".

It is not surprising that the work of revising the 1706 text led the capitulants to suggest certain additions should be made to round off the *Conduct of Schools*. In practice there were only three additions we consider important. The most important is no doubt the foreword to the chapter on Punishment, because it establishes a basis for the teacher-pupil relationship which is involved here. How can one educate without love? How could love really exist without the demands conveyed by punishments?

On the other hand, it was important also to focus attention on the material working-conditions of schools. These conditions had to be adapted to the simultaneous system of teaching which had been adopted. This concluding chapter of part 2 contains a collection of very practical and material measures which reveal real educational concern. Pupils were expected to produce high-quality work, and so the necessary conditions had to be provided. The provision of these conditions was dictated by concern for the pupils. None of this was necessary or existed where the individual system of teaching was used.

The list of the twelve qualities of a good teacher is a reminder that the teacher has a vital role to play in the education, the learning process and the psychological growth of the children, as well as in the smooth running of his

class. If the list is not exhaustive regarding all aspects of the teacher, the twelve qualities create a certain profile of him. Of course, we would have liked these qualities to be fleshed out to help us understand what they imply, but this would happen only sixty years later, thanks to the Superior General, Brother Agathon.

The foreword to the chapter on corrections

In the 1706 text we find some interesting passages regarding the meaning of corrections. For example, concerning reprimands: *Since one of the principal rules of the Brothers of the Christian Schools is to speak only rarely in their Christian schools, the use of reprimands must be very rare there. It seems even that it would be much better not to use them at all* (CE 15, 1.2); or more generally speaking: *If one wishes a school to be well run and orderly, punishments should be rare. A cane should be used only when it is necessary, and one should act in such a way that this necessity is rare* (CE 15, 2.1).

This foreword, to which we shall return at the end on this chapter in the "Texts & Documents" section, announces and introduces a big change: a positive approach to the whole question of punishments. It is an invitation to abandon repressive pedagogy. We shall return to this question later on in this work. It is a clear and explicit invitation to look for a fine balance in teacher-pupil relationships, the right balance between harshness and soft treatment. We find here real consistency between the proclaimed educational principles and school practice with regard to school discipline. It is a kind of "philosophy of punishment", a sign of reflection and openness at the beginning of the 18th century. Writers tracing the history of childhood have explained how the concept of childhood emerged in the second half of the 17th century, and how this led to a new way of envisaging and treating children, and to a reduction of severity towards them and of demands made on them, both at home and at school.

The philosophy of punishment - or of correction - was missing from the 1706 Manuscript. This explains perhaps the misinterpretation of this chapter by those who have not read the Manuscript, or have read it too superficially. This chapter in the 1706 text, the longest in the work, did actually contain a whole pedagogical and psychological approach to correction. In the foreword

to the 1720 edition, we find a concern for balance and moderation, but also a healthy realism. For John Baptist de La Salle, the ultimate aim of correction was the "conversion" of the pupil, a change in his behaviour. The foreword supplies the thinking behind this desire for moderation and its justification. For De La Salle, the teacher-pupil relationship is always characterised by moderation and kindness. If mistakes were made and there were excesses on the part of certain Brothers after 1706, the 1720 foreword tends to avoid and condemn them. This would be made official by an explicit decision of the 1777 General Chapter, to which we shall return later. But already in 1717, one feels that serious questions were being raised by certain capitulants regarding the validity, usefulness and efficacy of corporal punishment. This will be expressed explicitly in the 1811 edition of the *Conduct*.

What should be done so that firmness does not degenerate into harshness, and kindness into slackness and weakness?: These are the two questions in the foreword that the chapter attempts to answer. De La Salle tries therefore to explain that the fine balance needed is to be found in kindness. Kindness is referred to quite frequently in his writings, and he considers it to be the principal quality of a good teacher. So here, corporal punishment is implicitly called into question. We shall see that this rejection was made official policy in 1777, and was confirmed in successive editions of the *Conduct* throughout the 19th century. This rejection of corporal punishment is actually made clear later on in the chapter where it says that a school that is well run, is one in which there is no need for punishment. And *to avoid frequent punishment, which is a very great disorder in a school, it is necessary to see quite clearly that what creates good order in a school is the silence, vigilance and restraint of the teacher, and not harshness and blows* (CE 15, 2.6).

Structure and uniformity of schools

This is another new section to appear in the 1720 edition of the *Conduct*, and which was retained in all the successive editions. It became, therefore, a source of constant concern in the Institute, even if the contents of the texts changed, with the removal or addition of material, including plans and diagrams of school buildings and equipment. And so, in the 1720 edition, this addition constituted chapter 9 of part 2, as one of the conditions for establishing and maintaining good order in schools. Its ten or so pages were enti-

tled: *The structure and uniformity of schools and the furniture suitable for them.*

Today, all this may seem to us to be of secondary importance. In 1720, things were quite different. We need to remember the bad material conditions in which pupils worked, in schools using the individual system of teaching. We spoke about this in chapter 1 of *Cahier lasallien* 63. It is true that this kind of teaching did not require any particular kind of organisation or special classroom equipment, seeing that each pupil was seen and helped individually by the teacher. However, where the simultaneous method was used, in order to ensure that all the pupils as a whole could work, and so improve results, it was preferable to provide them with more suitable - it would be an exaggeration to say more comfortable ! - conditions. That is why this chapter of the *Conduct* proposes a minimum of dividing up pupils into groups, and a minimum of furniture and teaching materials. In all its simplicity, this concern for material conditions was well ahead of its time, as there is hardly any mention of it in the French educational system or in official texts before the middle of the 19th century. Educational historians bear this out.

From the text of the *Conduct* there emerges the idea that furniture in classrooms should be suitable, and in particular, take into account the age and the size of the children, but also the nature of their work. Where writing is concerned, for example, if the work is to be well done, the size of the desks needs to be appropriate, and their dimensions specified in detail. For simultaneous teaching to work well, certain requirements need to be met, regarding space, the grouping of pupils of the same standard, shared resources (desks, boards, slates...), as well as the simultaneous and prolonged presence of numerous pupils in the classroom, which itself calls for certain measures of hygiene. Likewise, in the youngest class, the whole learning process begins, and so each pupil needs more time and more individual help from the teacher. In the top class, pupils write and they need suitable desks, space, personal attention from the teacher, the correction of their work, as well as writing materials.

The *Conduct* therefore concentrates on and proposes what is functional: regarding space: the place itself, the siting of groups, desks, boards, maps, storage cupboards; regarding time: the alternating of homogeneous groups, a bell to structure the timetable; daily timetables, alternation of activities. All things which are very familiar today.

The *Twelve qualities of a good teacher*

Even if it is not accompanied by any commentary or explanations, we think this list is an important component of Lasallian thinking, and successive editions of the *Conduct* include it. We shall return to it in the next chapter.

The reason for it appearing in the 1720 edition is that it probably came up in the discussions at the 1717 General Chapter , or immediately after, and it was decided to include it in the book.

It draws up a profile of the Lasallian teacher, of his attitudes and of his behaviour as he carries out his work at school. If this division into twelve qualities or "virtues" does not suit us, it is certainly possible to rearrange them logically.

Later on, the list led to the publication of the *Explanation of 'The twelve qualities of a good teacher* by the Superior General Brother Agathon.

At the end of the 19th century, there were even added three other virtues or qualities. But could there ever be an exhaustive list?

We know also that the publication of the *Explanation* by Brother Agathon was shortly followed by a translation into Italian, and that the French version was widely used outside the Brothers' Institute and used in other schools. And in the 19th century, it inspired a parallel text published under the title of "Qualities of a schoolmistress".

Why twelve qualities, and not ten or fifteen? The use of a precise number can lead to omissions through forgetfulness, or run the risk of giving an erroneous picture of a standardised but complex person.

All the same, if we consider this list, we can conclude that the characteristics of a Lasallian teacher are as follows:

- as a person he is characterised by his interiority which enables him to be free to decide thanks to his **silence, humility, piety and gravity**.
- in his approach to his relationships derived from self-mastery, balance and discernment thanks to his **reserve, patience, prudence and wisdom**.
- in his professional commitment characterised by **kindness, vigilance, zeal and generosity**.

Conclusion

A careful reading of the *Conduct of Schools* enables us to calculate that a Brother spent about 40 hours a week with his pupils. That is a lot. The only day he could rest was Thursday, the weekly day off school, unless there was a feast-day during the week.

Before and after school, back in his community, there were still "exercises" he had to do: those to do with the school such as preparing lessons; and those of a spiritual nature to do with his community life. One could say he was always busy.

In the context of the classroom, he obviously had to check and verify the accuracy of the Registers kept by the First on the Bench and the Visitors of Absent Pupils. He had to make sure that all the "officers" fulfilled their duties properly. At the end of the school year, he had to fill in himself the "Register of the good and bad qualities [characteristics] of the pupils". All in all, the work-load was considerable, even for those days. It was probably even excessive. The suppression of the material we have mentioned, in the 1720 *Conduct*, lightened appreciably the burden of this multiplicity of tasks - a suppression which was dictated by the experience of the previous ten years. This material was never reconsidered for inclusion in the editions of the *Conduct* that followed.

Nor did the three new additions in 1720 add to the work-load in any way. They were rather things which would help:

- the teacher in his approach to his pupils regarding discipline, by the foreword to the chapter on correction;
- the material and educational set-up of the classroom, by practical instructions regarding the structure of the classrooms and the kind of furniture to be used;
- the aim to achieve regarding personal attitudes and behaviour when teaching.

The result was that the work of the teacher was simplified but not devalued. Even this aspect was never called into question in future editions. These were lasting changes.

Texts and documents

1. "Corrections in general: foreword"

The correction of pupils is one of the most important things that is done in schools, and great care should be taken to ensure it is opportune and beneficial both for those who receive it and for those who witness it.

That is why there are many things to take into account when administering the corrections which can be used in schools. These will be treated in the articles that follow, but after an explanation for the need there is to combine kindness and firmness when dealing with children.

Experience based on the constant teaching of the saints and on the example they have left us, is sufficient proof that in order to improve the children we are responsible for, we must treat them in a way that is kind and firm at the same time. Some people, however, have to admit - or at least they show it by the way they behave towards the children entrusted to their care - that they cannot easily see how, in practice, these two things can be combined.

What we find, is that if we exert all our authority and are domineering when we deal with children - which may be inspired by great zeal, but lacks wisdom, as St Paul says, because human weakness is so easily forgotten about - then it appears very difficult to see how this way of acting will not inevitably become too harsh and unbearable.

On the other hand, if we take human weakness too much into account and, on the pretext of being compassionate towards the children, allow them to do whatever they want, then we will find we have to deal with wayward, idle and unruly pupils.

So what should be done to prevent firmness from degenerating into harshness, and kindness into slackness and weakness?

To throw some light on this matter, which appears to be of no little importance, it seems opportune to show briefly some of the main ways in which teachers are severe and harsh in teaching and educating children; and then to indicate some ways which are, on the contrary, the source of all slackness and disorder.

The things that make a teacher's conduct harsh and unbearable for his pupils are as follows:

- First, when punishments are too severe and the yoke the teacher imposes on the pupils is too heavy, often because of the teacher's lack of discernment and judgment. It is often the case that pupils are not sufficiently physically and mentally strong to bear the burdens that often are imposed upon them.
- Second, when instructing, ordering or demanding the children to do something, he uses words which are too harsh, or he says them in an overbearing manner, especially when this is a result of not controlling his feelings of anger or impatience.
- Third, when he puts too much pressure on a child to do something he is not ready to do, and does not give the child the opportunity or the time to reflect.
- Fourth, when he uses the same forceful language when demanding important and less important things.
- Fifth, when he rejects out of hand reasons and excuses presented by the pupils, and refuses to listen to them.
- Sixth, finally, when, ignoring his own failings, he fails to show understanding for the failings of the children, grossly exaggerating their faults; and when he reprimands or punishes them, he appears to act as if he were dealing with some insensible object rather than with a creature capable of reasoning.

The things that, on the contrary, lead to the negligent and slack conduct of pupils are as follows:

- First, when the teacher concentrates only on the things which are important and cause disorder, and imperceptibly neglects less important ones.
- Second, when the teacher does not insist enough on the execution and observance of school practices and on the duties of the pupils.
- Third, when he easily allows children to neglect instructions they have been given.

- Fourth, when for the sake of staying on friendly terms with the children, he shows them too much affection and tenderness, giving special things to those he is most friendly with, or giving them too much freedom. This is not edifying for the others and causes disorder.
- Fifth, when through natural timidity, the teacher speaks or reprimands children so weakly or so impersonally that they pay no attention to what is said, or his words make no impression on them.
- Sixth, finally, when the teacher readily forgets his duties as a teacher regarding his external appearance, which consists principally in maintaining a serious demeanour which ensures the respect of the children, and in reserve, either by speaking to them too often or too familiarly, or by acting in an undignified way.

One can easily see from what has just been said, what is meant by excessive harshness and excessive gentleness, and what should be avoided in both of these extreme positions, so that one is neither too harsh nor too weak. Both of these extremes should be avoided if one is to be neither too harsh nor too weak, so that one can be firm in pursuing one's objective, and gentle in the way one does so, and show great charity accompanied by zeal.

A teacher needs to continue to persevere in his efforts, without allowing the children to expect impunity or to do whatever they want, because gentleness in such a case would be out of place. He needs to understand that gentleness consists in ensuring that in the reprimands he makes, there is no sign of harshness, anger or passion. He should demonstrate the gravity of a father, compassion full of tenderness, and a certain gentleness which is, however, vigorous and effective. The teacher who reprimands or punishes should make it apparent that he does so from necessity and zeal for the common good."

2. Regarding Offices: two examples

The Almoner. "In each class there will be a pupil responsible for collecting alms, that is, the pieces of bread which will be donated for the poor during the midday meal and the afternoon snack.

Towards the middle and end of these meals, after reporting to the teacher, the pupil will take the basket which is in the classroom for this purpose, and

will go first to one side of the class and hold out the basket, and then go to the other side, without saying a word and making sure he never asks anyone for anything.

As he walks around the classroom carrying out the duties of this office, he will do so very modestly and without noise, and will make sure he never stares at any pupil.

When the alms have been all or nearly all collected, he will report to the teacher and hand the basket to him for distribution.

Each teacher will make sure that whoever is responsible for this office is pious and has affection for the poor, and especially that he is not given to gluttony. He will not allow him to give any piece of bread or anything else to anyone at all, and even less, to take anything that is in the basket for himself. If he is seen to have done one or other of these things, he will be severely punished and immediately deprived of this office. This officer will be changed when the teacher considers it opportune or necessary on the instruction of the Director.

The Visitor of absent pupils. In each class there will be two or three pupils who will take responsibility for checking on the regular attendance of pupils from several streets in a particular district of the town assigned to them.

Each of these pupils will have a register of the pupils in the district he is responsible for, which contains the first names and surnames of the pupils and the name of the street in which they live. If in the youngest class there is no pupil, or not enough pupils, capable of assuming this responsibility, the teacher, on the advice of the Director or of the School Inspector, will take pupils from an older class to stand in for them.

At the end of morning school and during the afternoon snack, the visitors of the youngest classes who are chosen from an older class, will go to mark down the absentees in their register and, after reporting to the teacher, will go and knock on the doors of the homes of the absent pupils without saying a single word, and then immediately return to their class.

When the visitors have marked down the absentees in the district assigned to them, they will go in turn to show their register to the teacher who will

look at it and give it back to them. Each visitor will mark down each time in his register the absentees in his district when he knocks on their door, and will take care to visit all the pupils at the end of school without the teacher having to remind him.

Each Visitor will render an account to the teacher at the beginning of the following school day. He will report what he learned at the home of each absentee, the reason for his absence, whom he spoke to, and when he was told the absentee would return to school.

From time to time, when the teacher tells them, or even of their own free choice, the Visitors will visit the sick pupils in their district. They will console them and encourage them to bear their suffering with patience for the love of God. And then they will let the teacher know the state of their health and whether their illness is getting worse or better.

The Visitors will always speak to the father or the mother of the absent pupil, or to someone of a reasonable age, who they can be sure knows the reason for the absence of the pupil , and that what he or she says is true. They will always speak to people very politely and pass on to them the greetings of their teacher.

If a Visitor is told that one of the absentees in his district is ill, he will ensure he sees him, and he will insist he is allowed to do so, saying that this is the wish of the teacher who has sent him, and who wishes to know what illness the absentee has, and what is the state of his health.

Visitors will be careful not to allow themselves to be bribed, either by the pupils or by their parents, to bring back to the teacher false reasons for their absence, nor to accept under any pretext presents from the pupils in their district or their parents.

Each teacher will keep a close watch on everything that is done, and if he sees that a Visitor has allowed himself to be bribed, he will punish him severely in the place of the absentee, and will deprive him of his office unless he promises never to commit this fault again. If he commits it a second time, he will be permanently deprived of it.

When the teacher doubts the honesty of a Visitor; when he sees, for example

that a pupil is often absent, and the reasons for the absence are not very convincing, he will secretly send another pupil to the house of the absent pupil during class-time to ascertain whether the reasons brought back by him agree with those of the other.

Teachers should make sure that from time to time they reward the Visitors who have acquitted themselves well of the duties of their office, as an incentive to continue to do so. As a rule, they will do this once a month.

Visitors should be chosen from among pupils who are the keenest and most assiduous pupils at school. They should be bright, decent and well-behaved, not given to lying, and considered unlikely to allow themselves to be bribed; have great respect for the teacher, and have minds that are wholly submissive and docile.

As a sign of their fondness and zeal for the school, they will encourage wayward pupils who absent themselves easily and for little reason, to attend regularly; and even, when they come across children idly wandering around who do not attend school, they will encourage them to do so.

Teachers will not change these officers for a year unless, after consulting the Director, they believe it is necessary, and have discovered that someone is incapable of undertaking this task, or is doing it badly, or because there are other pupils who are more much more capable of doing this work.

3. Register of the good and bad qualities of pupils.

"At the end of each school year, during the last month the school is open before the holidays, all the teachers will each draw up a register of their pupils in which they will note their good and their bad qualities, based on their observation during the course of the year. They will write down the first name and surname of each pupil, how long they have been attending school, the lesson as well as the order in that lesson the pupil has reached, how intelligent he is, if he is pious in church and during prayers, if he has vices such as lying, swearing, stealing, impurity, gluttony...

If he has goodwill or if he is incorrigible; how one should behave towards him; if punishing him serves any purpose; if he has attended school regularly, or if he has been absent often or rarely, for a good reason or none, with or

without permission; if he has or has not been punctual arriving on time and before the teacher; if he works hard at school, if he does so on his own initiative, if he tends to chatter and joke during class, if he learns well, if as a rule he has been promoted at the usual time, or how much longer than the prescribed time for promotion has he has he remained in each lesson order; if this was his fault or because he has a dull mind; if he knows his catechism and his prayers well, or if he knows neither; if he is obedient at school, if he has a difficult character, is stubborn and liable to offer resistance to teachers; if he is loved excessively by his parents, if they object if he is punished, if they complain about this sometimes; if he has been an officer and in which office, and how he acquitted himself.

At the end of the school year, each teacher will hand over to the Director the register he has drawn up, and the Director will hand over this register on the first day of school after the holidays to the teacher who will be responsible for this class, if he is different from the one who was in charge the previous year. This teacher will use this register for the first three months in order to get to know the pupils and the way he should deal with them. If it is the same teacher as before, the Director will keep the register. After the first three months of the school year, the teacher who was handed the register on the first day will return it to the Director. The Director will keep all these registers and take care to compare those of the previous years with those of the following years; and those of one teacher with those of another teaching the same class and the same pupils, to see if they agree with one another or not, either completely or in part.

If for some reason some young teacher is unable to draw up this register, the Director or School Inspector will teach him how to do it , or if the need arises, he will do it in their place".

(NB. In the *Conduct*, two model registers are given as an example)

4. Letter "To the Brothers of the Christian Schools" introducing the 1720 edition

(This text presents clearly the process followed in drawing up and revising the text of the *Conduct*.)

My Very Dear Brothers,

The ardent zeal you have demonstrated until now in the exercise of the Ministry with which God has honoured you, obliges me to exhort you to continue to perfect yourselves in the work which is yours, and which is so holy and useful to the Church. Nothing is greater than to devote oneself to giving children a Christian education, and to inspiring the love and fear of God in them. It is for this purpose that you are consecrated to his service - a happy consecration which will make you great in the Kingdom of Heaven, as Jesus Christ promised.

This is what our venerable Founder never ceased telling you when he was alive. What did he not do to to achieve this! What care and concern did he not have to provide you with the appropriate means to acquit yourselves of your work with as much prudence as charity? You are witnesses - and God knows - with what attention and charity he sought with the principal and most experienced Brothers of the Institute the means of maintaining among you a holy uniformity in the manner in which you instruct young people. He put down in writing all that he thought would bring this about and, with this material, produced a Conduct of Schools which he urged you to read and reread, and discover there whatever could be of most use for you. The way you responded to his wishes, and the care you still take to put into practice what he taught you, shows quite clearly what zeal and veneration you have for such a worthy Father.

This Conduct was rapidly brought into use in all the houses of the Institute, and all took great pride in conforming to it. However, as it contained several things which could not be put into practice, the Brothers at the Assembly held to elect the first Brother Superior, pointed out to Monsieur de La Salle that it would be expedient to make a few corrections. He approved their proposal and so changes were made so that the text was better than before.

You made it quite clear by your eagerness to ask for the corrected text to be sent to all your houses, how much you approved what the Brothers at this Assembly had done; and the repeated requests for it you are still making, bear witness also to the desire you have for uniformity. But lack of time has always prevented enough copies to be made to satisfy your legitimate eagerness, and in addition, innumerable mistakes often creep into texts because of a lack of accuracy on the part of copyists who often make changes in them. Finally, some of the most zealous Brothers, sharing the anxiety you have on seeing yourselves deprived of something so necessary, asked our Most

Honourable Brother Superior for permission to have it printed, a request he acceded to all the more willingly as he had himself desired for a long time to give you this satisfaction. He has reread it with great attention, and has had it carefully examined by others in order to remove from it anything that would serve no purpose.

Please accept the Book I offer you which you already know so well. Draw from it the Prudence and Wisdom which you need so much in order to establish the Kingdom of God in the souls confided to you; and rest assured that if you persevere in such a holy task, you will save yourselves and you will save many others at the same time. Amen.

Chapter 3
1792: The shattered dream

Introduction

After the publication of the 1720 *Conduct of Schools*, the Superior Generals of the Brothers' Institute succeeded one another: Brother Timothée (1720-1751) a long period in office of more than 30 years; Brother Claude (1751-1767) and Brother Florence (1767-1777). During the same period nine General Chapters were held and there was never any question of altering the text of the *Conduct*. The decision to produce the new edition of 1742 was taken outside of the context of a General Chapter. It was in fact a reprint of the 1720 edition with some necessary corrections of spelling and some stylistic improvements.

And yet, the General Chapters did also deal with some urgent school issues which needed immediate attention. This will become clear if we consider rapidly the work of these General Chapters. In 1725, the work of the Chapter was mostly centred on the reception of the Letters Patent and the Bull of Approbation, which gave the Institute a legal and ecclesiastical right to exist. There had to be, of course, a solemn reception of the documents the Brothers had longed for for many years. The Chapter therefore examined the conformity of the current Rule with the terms of the Bull of Approbation. This led to the publication of a new Rule in 1726. Because of these events, it is easy to understand that other possible questions took second place or were not even considered. There was no question either of changing the text of the *Conduct of Schools* given the fact that the 1720 edition was so recent.

The 1734 Chapter, on the other hand, considered some very concrete issues regarding the schools, especially the very small ones called "country schools", in order to determine practical measures to run them, and the help provided *for the poor children in the school*. This reminds us that school resources were

very limited and often proved insufficient to cope with the increase in the cost of living which occurred in the 18th century.

The following Chapter, in 1745, considered two topics which deserve our attention. First, the mention of two books for use in the Brothers' schools: *French Grammar*, for learning spelling, a subject still in its infancy, and the *Syllabary of Monsieur de La Salle*, whose special feature was that it was in French. A second topic also deserves some comment. It is *the prohibition to have boarders in school, because there are disadvantages*. It is expressly forbidden to accept such boarders, and if there are some already, they must be sent away. We should note that, quite naturally, these boarders paid fees, which represented a source of extra income for the community. But the usual premises of a school or a community were not designed to house boarders, which probably explains the reference to disadvantages in the Register of General Chapters. It seems that not all communities concerned complied with the decision of the Chapter, because this question came up again in subsequent Chapters. Of course, these schools were not the boarding schools properly so-called we shall be talking about later on in this chapter.

In 1751, Brother Timothée offered his resignation which was eventually accepted by the Chapter. This Chapter made several decisions concerning the schools. It decided that in future it would ask for 250 Livres per Brother because of the rise in the cost of living. But certain town councils were reluctant to comply because of the extra burden this would mean for the town budget. It is worth noting that, initially, John Baptist de La Salle asked for only 100 Livres.

- The Chapter asked for the removal of the teacher's desk. It was thought to be *very harmful* but it does not say why.
- It revoked the prohibition to have boarders in school, and pointed out that the prohibition had not been complied with everywhere since the previous Chapter.
- It forbade teaching children out of school hours and during the holidays. This meant no paid private tuition. This was probably another way of generating extra income.

The following two Chapters of 1761 and 1767 came up with nothing new

except the election of Brother Florence who was Superior General from 1767 to 1777. In 1777 the 10th General Chapter took place, and was marked, in particular, by the election of Brother Agathon as Superior General, and the decision to produce a new edition of the *Conduct of Schools*, making some significant changes in it. The fact was that the supply of the 1742 edition was exhausted, and the overall situation of schools had undergone important changes. Fortunately, the new Superior was well aware of this, and decided to revise the whole of the text. He set about this task very rapidly, as we shall see. He proved to be a dynamic, daring and effective Superior. His achievements were important, but the political situation thwarted his dynamic drive and destroyed some of his plans. This is what we would like to consider in this chapter, and especially what concerns the new edition of the *Conduct of Schools* that was envisaged. Careful to respect the fundamental principle of work by association, he expressly requested collaboration, in the form of suggestions and contributions, from the most qualified Brothers, and received in fact a certain number of contributions, as we shall show. But he himself took a very active part in this work, and the Archives of the Institute contain several of his own manuscripts.

A turbulent school context

A new concept of childhood, and a new approach to childhood

It is impossible to speak about pedagogy in 18th century France without taking into account the radical change that occurred at the end of the 17th century and was consolidated at the beginning of the 18th: a new way of perceiving childhood, children and school-children. In the home and at school, adults now considered children specifically as children and not as "miniature adults". This general statement needs some important qualifications depending on different social backgrounds and home life.

These changes affected a number of aspects of a child's life:

- First of all, the actual birth of the child. It was only in the 18th century that there appeared trained midwives capable of ensuring that births took place in better conditions. Numerous texts and collections of graphic illustrations describe the bad conditions in which births occurred previously.

- One of the immediate positive effects of these changes was the lowering of the mortality rate of new-born children at birth or in the days that followed. And that already is something tremendous.
- The lowering of the birth-rate throughout the 18th century was another consequence of this new way of perceiving children. Almost a century before the publication of the well-known work by Thomas Robert Malthus on "The principle of population", there was a growing conviction in all social circles that, in order to take better care of children - one's own children - it was necessary to limit their number in each family. Demographic studies of France reveal a significant lowering of the birth-rate throughout the 18th century. This lowering was slightly more pronounced among better-off people, who were better informed about the problem posed by the great number of children. If there were fewer children, they rightly thought, and if the births were more widely spaced out, one could look after them better, feed them better and educate them better.
- Of course, parents who treated their children with affection, who "mollycoddled" them, were no longer happy to see schoolmasters treating them too harshly. This is already mentioned in the 1706 *Conduct of Schools*, especially in the chapter on corrections.
- Before, life was hard both at home and at school for children from a poor or working-class background, because of their economic situation, because they were often forced to work from the age of seven; because they were weak, because existing medicines could not relieve their pain or cure their illnesses.
- The foreword to the chapter on corrections - quoted above - added to the 1720 edition of the *Conduct of Schools*, bears witness to the fact that the Brothers were clearly in favour in this development, this moderation in dealing with pupils. The 1777 Chapter marks another step in the same direction. We shall come back to this.
- As certain historians point out, one of the most widespread consequences was that, between 1700 and 1800, the size of the French population decreased as a proportion of the total population of western Europe: at the beginning of the 18th century, the population of France amounted to a quarter: at the beginning of the 19th, to a fifth.

Pedagogical influence of ROLLIN (1661-1741)

Although he is somewhat forgotten today, Rollin had a great influence on pedagogy in France during the course of the 18th century. His written work is considerable - 30 volumes in all. However, the work which interests us in particular is his "Treatise on Studies", published in the years 1726 to 1728, and divided into eight books.

In the history of the Institute of the Brothers, we note that some of them were inspired by the ideas of Rollin. We find traces of this in archive manuscripts dating from the period we are studying, one of which is the work of the Superior General, Brother Agathon. We can well understand why the Brothers were interested in the ideas of Rollin, when we read, for example, the following passage from the *Treatise on Studies*: *The primary concern of the teacher is to study carefully and seek to understand the spirit and character of the children, because on this he must base his conduct towards them. Some children grow slack and daydream if pressure is not applied; others cannot bear to be treated in a haughty or domineering manner. There are some who are restrained through fear; and others, on the contrary, who are demoralised and discouraged by it. There are others from whom, it is clear, one can get nothing except by hard work and application; others who work by fits and starts. Wanting to make them all equal, and to make them follow one and the same rule, would be to force nature. The prudence of a teacher consists in steering a middle course, avoiding equally both extremes, because here a fine line separates evil from good, and it is easy to mistake one for the other and to be mistaken. This is what makes teaching young people so difficult. Too much freedom leads to licentiousness; too much constraint deadens the mind. Praise stimulates and encourages, but it also inspires vanity and arrogance. One has therefore to have a right disposition, which counterbalances and obviates these two undesirable effects, and to imitate the conduct of Isocrates towards Ephoros and Theopompos, whose characters were quite different* (*Treatise on Studies* p.652). You would think that this text was a paraphrase of *Meditation* 33 and of the Foreword to Chapter 15 of the *Conduct*, of John Baptist de La Salle.

As Felix Cadet writes in his introduction to Rollin, *The masterpiece of the Treatise on Studies is Book VIII on 'The internal management of classes and of the Collège', containing all that Rollin says – basing himself on his own experience and on the authority of Fénélon and Locke – concerning the aims that teachers must set*

themselves as the target to attain; the advantages of education for the public at large, especially in conjunction with family life; the need to study the characters of children in order to form them properly; the means to take to have authority over them 'by being always even-tempered, firm and restrained, guided only by reason, never acting on a whim or through anger', inspiring them with both love and respectful fear; the supreme skill which consists in being able to combine, by a wise conciliatory spirit, strength which restrains the children without disheartening them, and a gentleness which wins them over without enervating them'; discretion in reprimands and punishments, praise and rewards, a way of making studies likeable, of accustoming the children to say the truth, to be polite, clean, punctual; the importance of good example, and of the obligation to devote oneself unrelentingly to study and to work so as to become increasingly able to give a solid instruction to young people. None of this excellent summary of the art of pedagogy has in any way become out of date, nor can it become so. We have nothing more authoritative or more useful to offer for the use of our teachers, whatever the level at which they teach. It is also surprising to note that all these educational aspects were already present beforehand in the writings of St John Baptist de La Salle.

The work of Rollin was widely disseminated during the course of the 18th century and its influence did not wane until the second half of the 19th. There were five editions of his work between the French Revolution and the middle of the 19th century. Nor is it astonishing that certain Brothers in the 1780s found his Treatise on Studies interesting and were inspired by it. We should note, however, that Rollin was referring to the *Collèges*, the context of his activities and his university career. He was not, therefore, interested in primary school or schools for the general public. Consequently, what was of interest for the Brothers in Rollin's work was not the subjects taught, because they did not figure in the curricula of the Little Schools, but rather what he said about the educational dimension of schools, teacher-pupil relations, including punishment and the organisation of schools. Regarding all this, the Brothers found in Rollin's work a concern for moderation and balance similar to that shown by De La Salle. It was not the ideas expressed about the subjects taught that were of interest to the Brothers in the work of Rollin, but rather the specifically educational ideas which constituted a kind of 18th century pedagogical encyclopaedia.

They identified more easily with certain educational principles stated in the work, such as:

- the teacher must love his pupils and his teaching,
- he must make himself loved and feared at the same time.
- Rollin prefers a positive and persuasive way of teaching to one which is repressive. He writes, for example, *The child should feel loved and supported by his teacher, who should resort to blame and chastisement less often than to praise and reward*.

We find here some of the fundamental aspects of the pedagogy of St John Baptist de La Salle: in, for example, Rollin's desire to form Christians and men of good taste, or his affirmation that discipline in schools is obtained by vigilance and assiduity which are the principal qualities of a good teacher. Such a teacher should also make work pleasant by the use of emulation and rewards.

Finally, article 5 of Book VIII, entitled *Punishment* (p. 656-660) is of particular interest for us at this point, as the 1777 General Chapter of the Brothers asked that it should no longer be used in Lasallian schools. It is difficult to summarise in a few lines all that Rollin has to say regarding this subject, but it is clear that he sought moderation and balance, which is what we said also when we spoke about the *Conduct of Schools*. Rollin does not believe in the efficacy of corporal punishment, because, generally speaking, it does not change the attitudes and behaviour of reprehensible pupils. *A soul driven by fear is always weakened by it* (p. 567). *Every man, therefore, who is given responsibility for others, must, in order to heal minds, first resort to gentle reprimands, choose the path of persuasion, communicate, if he can, a taste for decency and justice, and inspire hatred for vice and esteem for virtue. If this first attempt fails, he can turn to stronger words and sharper reprimands. Finally, if everything else fails, he will turn to punishment, but gradually, still leaving open the possibility of pardon, and reserving punishments for the most serious misdemeanours and not for hopeless cases* (p. 657). That is an intelligent scale of punishments. In the next chapter we shall see that the 1811 edition of the *Conduct of Schools* uses very similar language.

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

Although they were not contemporaries, Rollin (1661-1741) and Rousseau (1712-1778) - a difference in age of almost fifty years - they corresponded with each other: the complete works of the former contain a number of long letters he sent to Rousseau. Their opinions differed regarding a number of topics, but their exchange of views can be thought-provoking.

We should note also that Rousseau died during the period we are considering in this chapter. There is no indication that the Brothers read his books to any great extent. The more they identified with the pedagogical ideas of Rollin, the more the position adopted by Rousseau must have appeared strange to them.

But we cannot deny that the writings of Rousseau caused a great sensation during his lifetime and after he died - two well-known works of his were published posthumously: *Les Confessions* and the *Les rêveries d'un Promeneur solitaire*. It is clear that the influence of Rousseau's writings on French society regarding many subjects and, in particular, regarding education, was very great and long-lasting. Rousseau's original views regarding society, anthropology and pedagogy shook up naturally the whole educational scene in France in the 18th century.

Rousseau died a year after the 1777 General Chapter of the Brothers, and the election of Brother Agathon, who had a decisive influence on Lasallian pedagogy. Pure coincidence, of course, and only of interest because of the closeness of the two dates. But, in 1777, the educational ideas of Rousseau were well known. However, there is nothing to indicate that there is any connection between Rousseau's ideas and the contents of the *Conduct of Schools*, or even the manuscripts produced between 1777 and 1787. Consciously or not, Rousseau nevertheless benefited from the widespread change of attitude towards children we talked about at the beginning of this chapter.

It is difficult, however, to summarise or assess Rousseau's pedagogy. *Émile* is a complicated, contradictory and biased work, possibly due to the fact that Rousseau was self-taught. We can affirm all the same that his basic educational principles were far removed from those of John Baptist de La Salle, whether it is a question of the innate goodness of children, or the need to

begin by a nature-based and compartmentalised education. Those were not the views held by Christian teachers in the 17th century.

Louis René Caradeuc de La Chalotais (1701-1785)

On a level quite different from that of Rollin or Rousseau, La Chalotais published in 1763 an *Essai d'Éducation Nationale ou Plan d'études pour la jeunesse* which called into question the organisation of education in France. For practically the previous twelve centuries, education at all levels, had been the responsibility of the Church. In fact, at the end of the 5th century and the disintegration of the Roman Empire in western Europe, the educational system established by the Romans in Gaul had disappeared. At that time, only the Church was sufficiently organised to be able to offer an alternative. And that is what it did. In the course of the centuries that followed, a new educational system developed and continued to function up to the Revolution in 1789.

But in the 18th century, there was growing criticism of the system. That of La Chalotais was famous and an important landmark in this reappraisal. His work, however, is not simply a tract. It is also the proposal of a new educational system for which the State would be responsible.

We do not know if the Brothers had the opportunity to read the work of La Chalotais. It would, however, have been in their interest to do so, because the author implicated them directly and by name. Like a good number of the *philosophes* of the time, and some of the *bourgeoisie*, La Chalotais was opposed to the education of the working class. He wrote (p. 25): *The Brothers of the Christian Doctrine* - the mistaken title was common at the time - *who are called 'ignoramuses' have turned up to ruin everything: they are teaching people to read and write who should have learned simply to draw and use a plane and file, but who no longer want to do so. The good of society dictates that the learning of the common people does not extend further than their employment. Any man who sees beyond his menial job will never acquit himself of it with courage and patience. Among the common people, it is almost necessary to know how to read and write only for those earn their living from these arts or those whom these arts help to live...*

And so, it is more beneficial for the State if there are few Collèges, provided they are good and their course of studies is comprehensive, than if there are a great number of mediocre ones. It is better if there fewer students, provided that they are bet-

ter instructed; and they will be more easily instructed, if there are fewer of them (p. 25-27).

Also concerning the Brothers, and as an illustration of what he was saying, La Chalotais adds at the bottom of page 26 the following note: *Since they have come to Brest and Saint Malo, it has become difficult to find cabin boys, or those young boys who serve on ships and go on to be sailors. Thirty years from now, people will ask why there is a lack of sailors in these ports*. As the Attorney General of the King at the Parlement of Brittany, La Chalotais naturally took his examples from the ports close to his residence, such as Brest and Saint Malo.

The Brothers' schools as a rule catered precisely for the children of the working class and the poor, the so-called Third Estate or the common people, as they were called then. La Chalotais was not the only one in the 18th century opposed to providing schooling for the children of the common people. Voltaire, who had received a copy of La Chatolais' work and had read it with great enthusiasm, warmly congratulated the author. He writes: *I cannot thank you enough for giving me a foretaste of what you are offering to France...I think all your views are useful. I thank you for condemning studies for ploughmen. As one who cultivates the land, I request you to send me some labourers and not clerks. Send me especially some ignoramus brothers to pull my ploughs and to harness up* (Letter dated February 28th 1763). And later: *I think it is essential that there should be ignorant beggars. It is not the labourers that we should instruct, it is the bourgeois. When the rabble start to reason, all is lost* (Letter dated August 1st 1766).

A reappraisal of secondary education

In his *Essai d'Éducation Nationale*, La Chalotais violently calls into question the way Colleges functioned in the middle of the 18th century, and in particular those of the Jesuits. He goes on to propose a different type of College. And it so happens that the publication of his work coincides with the expulsion of the Jesuits from their numerous Colleges.

Jesuit Colleges

When we consider the French educational system in the 18th century, we need to mention the Colleges which, from the 16th century, had been provid-

ing secondary education for boys. Most of these Colleges were run by the Jesuits. They had founded the first one in 1548 at Messina in southern Italy, and it became for them the archetype of all the others they would found throughout western Europe. These establishments provided boys with a pedagogical structure for their education. Thanks to their good organisation, these Colleges proved to be very successful. In the course of the 17th century in France, they were even accused of imposing excessively strict discipline.

This criticism was based more on envy or on the rivalry between universities and the Jesuits than on reality. Often, also, it served as a cloak of secrecy for Gallican opposition to Roman influence. In practice, Jesuit Colleges served as a model for standard secondary education. They expanded rapidly throughout France, were very successful, and by the middle of the 17th century, two thirds of all Colleges were run by the Jesuits. They contributed to the education of the ruling classes of French society and to the unification of the system of Colleges, and served as a model for others.

Criticism often targeted two aspects: discipline which was considered to be excessive, especially given the evolution in the concept of childhood, of which we spoke earlier; and an insufficient openness of mind regarding cultural changes. Their curriculum remained excessively centred on the Arts and the Classics, and devoted little time to new sciences. This was La Chalotais' main grievance.

Finally, in 1763, for reasons that were complex and not necessarily honourable, the Jesuits were forbidden to teach and were expelled from their establishments and from the country. This was a major earthquake in the educational system. With the Jesuits expelled, they had to be replaced. But the new teachers who took over their Colleges lacked their high quality and training and did not have the same success. Without exaggeration, one can say that in the last decades of the 18th century secondary education deteriorated.

At the beginning of his *Histoire de l'Enseignement: 1789-1965*, Félix Ponteil describes the situation as follows: *The sons of the bourgeoisie attend the Colleges, most of which are in the hands of the Jesuits...Their teaching is sound; their discipline strict. They encourage emulation, teach good manners and conventional standards in dress and language. They provide for sports and artistic hobbies...They*

were not brought down because of deficiencies in the education they offered. Criticism was not levelled at teaching methods which had proved their worth, but at a religious body which was also an international force. Politics struck them down in 1762. The Jesuits were expelled. They were the victims of a movement of secularisation which in the course of the 18th century put an end to all Catholic states (p. 33-34 and 36).

Oratorian Colleges and others

From the beginning of the 17th century, Jesuit Colleges served as a model for the organisation of others which were established at that time by the Oratorians, the Doctrinarians and the Josephites of Lyon. Much less numerous than those of the Jesuits - only about thirty in number - the Oratorian Colleges nevertheless became very well known. Initially, in 1611, they were clearly inspired by those of the Jesuits, but they progressively became distinguishable by the greater flexibility of their organisation, greater openness to their social context and to change, and a desire to adapt to local situations; in a word, by greater diversity and a variety of pedagogical innovations. Among these, one can note: teaching Latin grammar in French; leaving the choice of Latin texts to the pupils themselves; adopting active methods for teaching geography; consulting pupils and developing a critical spirit; developing libraries and College revues; developing practical sciences, such as physics, optics, astronomy, architecture and mechanics.

In the work quoted above, Félix Ponteil, summarises their work as follows: *Education loses its frivolous character. Artistic hobbies disappear. The Oratorians implement the practices in force at Juilly (their most famous College). They study French authors, put into practice the methods of Locke and Condillac, give the maternal language pride of place , develop reasoning and judgment, and promote physics and natural sciences. Their philosophy is inspired by Descartes and even Plato. In history, teaching centres on the study of nations and the organisation of governments. Public debates are devoted to the customs of the French, the American Revolution, Anglo-French rivalry, geography and the politics of France* (p. 35).

All this was a foretaste of what, a century later, would constitute modern secondary school education. It did not set out to do so, but it did correspond to some of the proposals made by La Chalotais regarding the modernisation of

the Colleges. We should note also that these Oratorian Colleges served as a point of reference during the 1st Republic for the reconstruction of an educational system and especially for the creation of the Lycées.

The permanence of primary education

Despite the various changes in the situation we have mentioned, the educational system put in place during the course of the 17th century - universities, colleges, Little Schools - continued to function up to the Revolution of 1789.

The already well-established secondary schools and universities do not seem to have renewed themselves sufficiently to satisfy the expectations of the time. Society was changing and its educational needs were evolving. The educational system should have been adapting all the time.

On the other hand, primary education - that of working-class children and the poor - continued to organise itself and to develop. Little Schools, run by a variety of bodies, became more organised and diversified: there were parish schools, town district schools, schools run by the Tabourin Brothers, charity schools, schools run by the Brothers of the Christian Schools, and schools for girls, opened by a variety of women's congregations, or run by secular schoolmistresses. Overall, according to a survey by Maggiolo, there was a 17% increase in the number of literate children in France as a whole, but literacy rates varied from region to region and because of differences in social backgrounds. But all the same this was an overall literacy rate which had almost doubled by comparison with that of the end of the 17th century. It was, of course, far from being sufficient. The following century would witness an even greater increase, that of 35%, bringing the total percentage to 72%. These schools differed in quality, and provision for boys and girls also differed, as authors of educational histories of France generally point out.

Félix Ponteil believes that *men's congregations, although less numerous (understood:than women's) had their greatest success in the Brothers of the Christian Schools, founded by John Baptist de La Salle at the end of the 17th century. Their association provided free education for poor children* (p. 11). However, according to the same author, in various parts of the country, local authorities were somewhat hostile to the opening of such schools, which admitted, it was said, only *children of the dregs of the working class*; and he continues: *This can be seen*

from the way they behave towards the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Established in very poor premises outside the town of Angers, they cannot obtain rooms in the town itself. The town authorities base their opinions on 'the noise that these children of the lowest ranks of workmen', who alone frequent this school, will create in the neighbourhood. The authorities did them justice only in 1787. The bourgeoisie considered them dangerous and useless; but the children were given high-quality practical knowledge. In addition to spelling, the Brothers taught them the four mathematical operations, French, which replaced Latin, geography, the applications of arithmetic, the basics of commerce, drawing, bookkeeping (accountancy). *Their teaching prepared the children to engage in commerce and to go into industry. In the gap between the Little Schools and the Colleges, the teaching given by the Brothers was a kind of modern and vocational education. The Brothers did not prepare children for ecclesiastical functions ; they were very liberal. They wanted to instruct. They were as concerned with instruction as with religion* (p. 15-16).

The quality of this teaching was due above all to the training of the teachers, a constant concern of the Brothers from the time of John Baptist de La Salle. According to Ponteil: *The Brothers are by far the best trained: they have studied and have been trained in pedagogy. Other men's religious congregations also have appropriate training. The same cannot be said about women's congregations. Clerics and assistant priests are mostly concerned about religious instruction and catechism. In towns, secular teachers are often instructed persons, having studied in the Collège Royal. In rural areas, they have neither a vocation nor training* (op.cit. P.16).

A movement to reform education

Before the 1789 Revolution, the critics of the educational system came from different social backgrounds. They wanted it to be reorganised and modernised. But we must not generalise. There is another important factor to bear in mind. We have to distinguish between education for the working class and education for the bourgeosie. Many people think that the children of the working class should not study too much. For example, Diderot writes: *The grievance of the nobility may perhaps be expressed by saying that a peasant who can read is more difficult to oppress than one who cannot*. The multiplicity of schools is deplored. As Abbé Fleury says: *Leave studies for those who are rich*. Also there are the views already quoted of La Chalotais and Voltaire.

Even Jean Jacques Rousseau writes in his *Émile*: *Poor people have no need of education. They already have that of their condition. They can have no other*. The authorities are suspicious of schools, because *instructing means increasing the vanity of people without resources. A peasant who can read and write leaves agriculture to learn a craft or to become a handyman, which is very bad*. On the other hand, the Church supports schools, but it wants Christian schools which it can oversee. Its opponents, on the contrary, want schools controlled by the State. So already, certain aims had been identified: universal, compulsory and free primary education, which the Revolution would try to implement, but without success.

On the eve of 1789, it was generally thought that education was badly organised. A new plan was needed, new ways of educating citizens. Curricula and teachers were caught up in a tangle. Colleges were discredited, as were over pedantic headmasters stuck in a rut. That was the difficult, anarchic and incoherent situation which members of the Constituent Assembly would have to face. (op.cit. p.46-47).

Brother Agathon and the *Conduct of Schools*

It was in this turbulent educational context that Brother Agathon (Joseph Gonlieux) was elected Superior General by the 10th General Chapter in 1777. Born in 1731, he was 46 years old and had a great deal of experience as a teacher and administrator; and in particular, he had been Director of the boarding schools at St Yon and Angers.

We are not going to give a history here of his generalate. A number of works - listed in the bibliography - already exist and can be consulted with profit: the *Annales del'Institut* by Brother Lucard (1883); the biography of Brother Agathon by Brother Frédebert Marie (1958); the thesis by Brother André Prévot *L'enseignement technique chez les Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes: XVIIIe et XIXe siècles* (1964); and the second volume of the *Introduction to the History of the Institute* by Brother Henri Bedel (1997).

In difficult circumstances, Brother Agathon proved to be a great Superior: he was lucid, open-minded and competent; a man who could take decisions and govern. He did not hesitate to call into question certain Institute traditions. This is borne out by his letters, his announcements or circulars on religious life and pedagogy; his positive attitude towards boarding schools; his over-

haul of the *Conduct of Schools*. He was keen also on implementing the decisions of the 1777 and 1787 Chapters which affected him personally.

Some of the decisions of the 1777 Chapter

Regarding the topic that concerns us, this Chapter turned its attention to the ideal profile of a Brother exercising his profession, and discussed the qualities he should have. This naturally implied that discernment should take place before the admission of new members, and the type of initial formation that should be provided. These considerations led to some specific resolutions to facilitate more advanced studies for Brothers judged suitable. The Bursar General of the Institute was formally requested to allocate 300 Livres to each of these Brothers for their upkeep during the period of their studies. The subjects singled out for these studies were technical or linear drawing and mathematics. This choice of subjects reflected the kind of teaching that the institute wanted to develop in the growing number of boarding schools. At the same time, this concern for the training and competence of the Brothers was valuable in its own right. Brother Agathon was particularly interested in this. In these Chapter decisions we can already see emerging what will be the fundamental concerns of Brother Agathon over the next ten years.

What interests us more here are the deliberations of the Chapter regarding the *Conduct of Schools*. With the 1742 edition out of print, another edition was needed. It would not be simply a reprint of the previous edition. Even if it took some time - which it did - a thorough revision would take place. We shall speak about this later. But already the Chapter had voted in favour of an important decision. Decision No. 29 in the Register reads: *That regarding schools, with the Conduct out of print, and before having it reprinted, the section will be removed which deals with punishment with canes and whips. The Chapter feels it necessary to forbid their use by the Brothers, given the impropriety and disadvantages of this kind of punishment. It would be wrong to claim falsely or spitefully, in order to justify one's opposition to such a prohibition, that, in this case or any other, one should follow the rule, since there is no rule which commands us to make use of this punishment, but there are those which prohibit having canes in school and using them without permission* (Register B, p. 30). This prohibition will be taken very seriously and will be referred to throughout the 19th century, not only in the successive editions of the *Conduct*, but also in certain

Circulars of Superiors. It is the concrete expression of a perceptible but still implicit guideline dating back to 1720, which will become an unchanging line of conduct in the subsequent history of the Brothers' Institute. In the middle of the 19th century, a similar measure will be adopted by State authorities for the educational system as a whole, and the Superiors of the Brothers will occasionally rely on it to convince hesitant Brothers.

Several other decisions of the 1777 Chapter concern schools and centre on details: the prohibition to give private tuition, whether for payment or not; or *everything will be done that is reasonably possible to ensure classrooms are adjoining, and that no Brother is ever alone in a school, except when his companion is ill, in accordance with the Bull of Benedict XIII and article 6 , chapter 9, of the Common Rules*. This is a reminder of the established practice of the Institute to run schools with several classes.

Let us quote also decision No. 75: *That the Conduct for Formation Staff of Young Brothers in Schools be printed following that of Schools and that of free Boarding Schools* (Register B, p. 41). We have already noted that these two parts were missing from the 1720 and 1742 editions. What was wanted therefore was a four-part *Conduct of Schools*. This is what Brother Agathon strove to create, but because of the 1789 Revolution, he was not able to complete this project with which he appeared to be in full agreement.

The development of scholasticates

The 1777 Chapter recommended therefore that young Brothers should study, in particular to ensure that boarding schools were well run. Scholasticates - study centres - functioned within the context of boarding schools. Young Brothers in them benefited from the courses run by more qualified Brothers, while concentrating on the subjects for which they had most aptitude or interest. In 1777, only the St Yon boarding school, the oldest and the best organised at that time, housed a scholasticate. To improve even more the way it functioned, Brother Agathon authorised in the first year of his term in office, extensive building work to facilitate good order and improve hygiene. This took the form principally of adding and enlarging rooms.

Next, he turned his attention to creating provincial scholasticates. In 1782,

he sent several young Brothers to the Marseille boarding school. This scholasticate called itself an academy and offered its students advanced courses in arithmetic, writing, spelling, grammar and religious studies. To these were added courses in pedagogy, management and administration. A number of writers speak of the very well stocked library made available there to teachers and students.

Very rapidly, scholasticates at Maréville and Angers were added. These were organised along the same lines. However, Brother Agathon's most ambitious project was the Charlemagne boarding school near Carcassonne, but its implementation was made impossible by the 1789 Revolution.

Let us recall finally the establishment of the advanced scholasticate at Melun, on the premises of the new generalate of the Institute. Its aim was to train competent teachers for boarding schools.

The organisation and increase of boarding schools

It follows quite naturally that this promotion of scholasticates was matched by the great boost given to boarding schools. In the Brothers' Institute, the first of these boarding schools was established at St Yon in 1695, in the days of the Founder. So, clearly we are not speaking here of the little boarding departments created towards the middle of the 18th century, whose closure was insisted upon by various General Chapters. Boarding schools properly so-called were bigger establishments, functioning in premises which were more spacious and better adapted than those of schools, often including both an ordinary boarding section and a custodial one, and catering for larger numbers of pupils, sometimes as many as 200 or 300.

When Brother Agathon was elected there was already a number of these boarding schools. His own experience of them was quite extensive, both as a teacher and as a director. He understood their aims, how they functioned and what their needs were. That is why from the outset there was much emphasis on modernising them. Their aims seemed obvious at a time when there were great advances in science. Isaac Newton (1642-1727), considered to be the "father of modern science", had had numerous emulators and heirs. There was a need, therefore, to offer middle-class children who were not interested in the classical studies of the Colleges, a more extensive and a more practical kind of

knowledge. We have already mentioned that the changes introduced by Oratorian Colleges were along these lines. We can understand therefore why the Brothers' Institute established scholasticates in these boarding schools, with the intention of training future teachers for these establishments.

This new impetus was cut short by the Revolution, but we know that similar establishments, sometimes rechristened as Colleges after 1860, gave birth to modern secondary education and to technical education. In the course of the 18th century, twelve boarding schools were established and authorised in the Brothers' Institute: at Saint Yon, Marseille, Mirepoix, Die, Montpellier, Saint Omer, Montargis, Nantes, Angers, Maréville, Cahors and Charlemagne. Brother Agathon created only two, one at the Rossingnolerie, near Angers, and the other at Charlemagne; but he contributed to the reorganisation and prosperity of all of them. He introduced material improvements, but also revised study programmes which were generally identical for everyone, but allowed for flexibility and adaptation to local needs.

As in the case of the free schools, he wanted to create a *Conduct* also for boarding schools, and several manuscripts are deposited in the Institute archives which bear witness to the efforts made to produce one. As we have already explained, none of these documents was ever published. To put Brother Agathon's efforts into some kind of context, it would be useful to identify these manuscript documents:

- A 48-page text (Manuscript 42) which was intended to be a supplement to Manuscript 45 on the *Conduct of Schools*. It contains a preface and 22 articles of a "*Conduct* of Boarding Schools". This text had been approved by the 1777 Chapter, and Brother Agathon had made some stylistic alterations.
- In addition to this text, there was a 25-page manuscript which was intended to serve as part 4 of an edition of the *Conduct of Schools*.
- There was also the "Regulations of Saint Yon", approved by Brother Agathon during his visit there on April 9th 1782; the "Customary of the Boarding School of the Brothers of the Christian Schools at Marseille"; and Manuscript 105, entitled "Regulations for the Boarding Schools of the Brothers of the Christian Schools", based on the directives of Brother Agathon.

Gratuitous schools

While there were only 12 boarding schools, there were about 100 gratuitous schools before the outbreak of the Revolution. The educational work of the Brothers was therefore centred principally on these schools. Like his predecessors, Brother Agathon strongly defended the the principle of gratuity established by John Baptist de La Salle. This gratuity made his schools accessible to the very poor.

But he wanted also to improve the material conditions constantly threatened by the reluctance of local authorities opposed to increasing the annual payment of the Brothers despite the increase in the cost of living.

The 1777 Chapter decided to stop opening new schools -except where this could not be avoided - in order to help ensure that existing schools continued to function properly; and above all to improve the training of the Brothers and the quality of community life. In this area also, Brother Agathon's efforts bore fruit.

Explanation of the *Twelve virtues of a good teacher*

The Generalate archives (AMG) contain numerous personal documents written by Brother Agathon, some of which in outline form. Like other Superiors, he wrote a number of circulars and administrative letters to the Brothers, but also extracts from some of the writings of St John Baptist de La Salle which he wanted the Brothers as a whole to know better. Among these documents we find:

- Very serious mistakes to avoid in school;
- Advice from Monsieur de La Salle on training oneself well for working in school;
- Faults to avoid when teaching catechism;
- Virtues which should be practised;
- Advice on teaching catechism effectively;
- Collection of practices of the Brothers of the Christian Schools;
- Passages which must be often referred to by the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

These texts reveal Brother Agathon's great interest in the Founder and in the profession of educators. However, we should like to turn our attention more on the "Explanation of the twelve virtues of a good teacher". In the preceding chapter, we spoke of the origin if this list of qualities, at the end of the 1720 edition of the *Conduct of Schools*. In a short introduction, Brother Agathon gives his reasons for this publication and the sources he drew upon. *It would not be enough to know the obligations imposed upon us by our vows, if we did not know the means necessary for us in order to respond as we should to the aims of the Institute, that is, the instruction of children. It is for this reason that our intention here is to consider the subject of the qualities proper to a good teacher* (p. 7). It would therefore be normal to welcome this book. *The plan for it was given to us by Monsieur de La Salle, our venerable Founder; and we have composed it in accordance with his principles and sayings. What we have taken from other sources comes from most highly esteemed authors* (p. 8).

Two main sources: the writings of the Founder and good educationalists, including Rollin. The approach of the work is practical and concrete, so as to be really useful for the teachers who read it. *On reading it, the attentive and intelligent reader will see without any difficulty what he needs to do and what he must avoid in order to make the teaching he is assigned effective* (p. 9).

His plan for dealing with each quality is as follows: *Here is the order we shall follow. We shall examine the real nature of each quality, the characteristics which support it and those which are opposed to it. And so, we have a series of illustrations, with as many illustrations as there are qualities* (p. 9). Brother Agathon decided to keep the order of the 1720 list, but he explains that one could choose a more logical order by putting wisdom first, as the ultimate aim, and prudence second, as the means of achieving it. The rest would follow the same order as before and end with kindness which is *in fact the complement of the qualities of a good teacher because of the excellence bestowed upon it by charity, which is the queen and mistress of all virtues*. Indeed, kindness takes up almost a third of the text. The space given to the other qualities varies in length. When speaking of kindness, Brother Agathon seems to have a good understanding of the very heart of Lasallian pedagogy.

This small work was, especially in the 19th century, a great success. Translated into six languages, and first into Italian, it went through twenty or so edi-

tions, and was included in the editions of the *Conduct of Schools* in the second half of the 19th century. It attracted much praise and was even imitated, as in the case of the "Qualities of a Good Schoolmistress".

Preparations for a new edition of the *Conduct of Schools*

In all the various aspects of education and teaching we have referred to, Brother Agathon is more concerned by quality than by quantity:

- the quality of the Brothers' life in community, to the point of stepping in to ensure that "founders" of schools agreed to increase the annual stipend allotted to each Brother, given the increase in living costs;
- the quality of community life thanks to the increase in the number of Brothers, and the presence of a "supernumerary" Brother to lighten the burden of all the others.
- the quality of the school facilities thanks to the refurbishment or extension of the premises, and not only in boarding schools;
- the quality of the teaching, obtained by better training for the Brothers and the publication of textbooks on various subjects, to help them in their work.

To help to achieve this quality, the 1777 Chapter decided to stop opening new schools temporarily, even if requests continued to come in. This was driven by a concern to have the best run schools which would stand out by their quality. It is interest to note that a similar policy was adopted in the last quarter of the 19th century using the same approach.

But another important task faced Brother Agathon at the beginning of his generalate: the revision and publication of a new edition of the *Conduct of Schools*. It was an express wish of the General Chapter. Brother Agathon undertook this task with his habitual dynamism and contributed personally to the writing of several manuscripts kept in the Generalate archives. They are in fact in his writing. This work did not lead to a new edition: the decisions of the Revolutionary Assemblies made this impossible. But the most important parts of the work done were included in the 1811 edition and in subsequent ones.

It is his work in connection with the *Conduct of Schools* that is the area of

Brother Agathon's activity which is of most interest to us. The need for this new edition had been expressed by a number of Brothers. The text had undergone practically no changes since the 1720 edition. In this educationally turbulent period, that was a long time. Brother Agathon agreed entirely and made the question a priority. He set to work rapidly asking the Brothers who had suggestions to send them in. In the end, however, the resulting contributions did not match his expectations and he said so clearly, warning the Brothers that those who were disappointed by the results would have only themselves to blame.

The documents we are referring to are classified in the Generalate archives under the following numbers: 40, 41, 43, 44 and 45.

No. 40 is a 120-page manuscript divided into eleven chapters, its author unknown. It is not divided into two parts. It was written in the second half of the 18th century, but does not carry a precise date. Certain scientific neologisms make it possible to place it in this period. The style is clear and didactic. One text in particular stands out at the beginning: *What a Brother should think of his state*. This text reappears in the 19th century.

No. 41 is a text which also has eleven chapters, but is 268 pages long, and so clearly is more detailed. It was probably written in 1787 or a little earlier, as certain passages make clear. The author seems to have been greatly inspired by Rollin.

No. 43 is a much longer document, 353 pages long, divided into two parts, and also inspired by Rollin. The author uses as an example the upkeep of an 1806 Register, which would place the document in a later period than that of the previous texts. It does not follow in the footsteps of the *Conduct of Schools* of John Baptist de La Salle, nor of manuscripts 40 and 41. It does contain, however, many sound pedagogical observations, including 24 pages on the *training of new teachers*.

The most important documents for us are No. 44 and No. 45. In reality, No. 45 comes first. It is the draft of an edition of the *Conduct of Schools* in four parts. It is all in the handwriting of Brother Agathon who seems to have written it following the 1787 General Chapter. It is clearly a new edition. There are first of all two different prefaces, followed by a 200-page text,

divided into 226 articles. It includes also the *Conduct of Training Staff and Inspectors*, still never printed, but which it had become necessary to print because the expansion of the Institute made it impossible to produce enough manuscript copies. On the other hand, the 1777 General Chapter had decided (decision 25) that the next edition of the *Conduct* would include instructions regarding the person responsible for training new teachers. This draft was inspired, no doubt, in part by the manuscripts mentioned above, but Brother Agathon added his own notes. In the preface, he speaks of his disappointment at the small number of notes sent in to the Chapter: *The Brothers not having sent in the observations and opinions they had been asked to contribute to help with the composition of this document, can hardly complain if it is not entirely to their liking, since they did not consider it appropriate to make them known. With the exception of five or six Brothers, no one sent anything.*

Finally, manuscript No. 44 is the *Draft of an edition of the Conduct of the Christian Schools*, in four parts, including one on boarding schools. It is a clean copy of manuscript No. 44, 460 pages long, by Brother Agathon himself, and includes some stylistic changes.

The shattered dream

Manuscript No. 44 seems to have been drawn up by Brother Agathon after the 1787 General Chapter, which was held at Melun in the month of May. The capitulants had decided that *The Rule for training staff of young teachers will be printed immediately following the Conduct of Schools, as will also the Conduct of non-custodial boarding schools*. It was this *Conduct of Schools* in four parts that Brother Agathon tried to produce and was preparing to publish.

This was the final stone of an educational edifice that the Superior wanted to be dynamic and coherent, but already during the Chapter there was a premonition of impending danger. This explains why in Register B, after the signatures of the capitulants, there is a *Prospectus concerning the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, a sort of affirmation of its identity at an uncertain time, in the hope that it would be enough to justify its usefulness to society and to ward off danger.

But clearly it was not enough; neither was the personal intervention of Brother Agathon before all the members of the Constituent Assembly; nor

was that of Brother Philippe de Jésus, Bursar General and that of eighteen other Brothers, in the form of an "Appeal" to the same members; nor was another Appeal at the end of October 1790 by the Superior General, his Assistants and the Bursar General. The revolutionary Assemblies - the Constituent and then the Legislative Assembly - followed their plan inexorably, wanting the suppression of all lay religious congregations, having already decreed that of the great religious orders in February 1790, and having voted through the Civil Constitution of the Clergy on July 12th 1790.

The obligation to take the oath of fidelity to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy initially affected only the members of the clergy. It was extended subsequently to religious as a whole and to the Brothers on March 22nd 1791. Brother Agathon and the Brothers chose to refuse to take the oath of fidelity. As a consequence, nearly all the Brothers followed suite and refused. As a result, they were subject to the penalties meted out to non-jurors, in particular, to imprisonment.

The law passed on August 12th 1792 suppressed a whole set of lay religious congregation. The *Brothers of the Christian Schools* were eighteenth on the list. The ambitious dream of the Superior to put at the service of the common people a body of well-trained, competent, motivated and disinterested teacher-educators was immediately destroyed. The Brothers had to leave their establishments, hide or go abroad, in particular, to the Papal States, and often to manage as best they could to survive.

Brother Agathon was arrested and imprisoned in Paris in July 1793, accused of keeping in contact illegally with emigrants, because he received letters from the Brothers in Rome. He remained in prison for over a year, until September 22nd 1794. The bad conditions of his detainment and the poor quality of the food seriously affected his health. He was released from prison and advised to leave Paris. After a short stay at Melun to pick up a few personal belongings, and to check on the state of the Institute Generalate, he lived more or less in hiding, cared for by friendly families, first near Orléans for eighteen months, and then at Tours. As he was unable to function as a Superior, in 1795, Pope Pius VI appointed Brother Frumence Vicar General of the Institute. This was not the usual way the Superiors of the Institute were appointed, but circumstances made it necessary.

Brother Agathon's correspondence during this period - characterised by prudence, the use of allusions and false names, and trusted intermediaries - reveals his great solicitude for the Brothers and profound nostalgia for the community life he had had to abandon. At the same time, he encourages his correspondents to persevere bravely on the difficult road they had chosen. This reveals also his strong and engaging personality - that of an exceptional Superior. His writings had a permanent effect on the history of the Institute. He died at Tours on September 16th 1798. He was 67 years old.

Texts and Documents

1. The "virtue of zeal": it is the 9th on the list of 12 virtues. We single it out because, from the very beginning, it has been one of the components of the "spirit of the Institute".

Zeal is a virtue which makes us procure the glory of God with great enthusiasm. A zealous teacher teaches his pupils first of all by his good example; this is the first lesson he gives, imitating Jesus Christ who began by practising before teaching. He wishes, in fact, to achieve the aim he has set himself, but he will attain it only by the longest road, if he is content simply to talk: the shortest road is that of example. Children learn more by seeing than by hearing. As St Bernard says: *The clearest and most effective words are the example of good works. Nothing is more persuasive than what one says than an example which shows how easy it is to practise the counsels one gives*. A teacher is like a lamp on a candelabra, which casts a clear light, but which needs also to warm by its heat. And so, he procures the glory of God with great enthusiasm when he works in a very effective manner on his own sanctification.

He teaches also by solid instruction: that is the second lesson he gives to his pupils. It is a very important lesson, because he teaches them what they do not know and what they must know in order to know, love and serve God. This work is very honourable, no doubt, but as we have already said, how much difficulty, fatigue and work, how much disappointment a teacher has to bear with in order to do it! And so, he procures the glory of God with great affection when he works generously without any worldly motives for the salvation of his neighbour, leading him to do good.

Finally, he teaches also by wise and moderate correction - that is the third lesson, and a very essential one. How many things there are in children than need to be corrected! They have in them a bad leaven, an evil seed, which he must exterminate, but which he will exterminate only to the extent that he becomes their constant admonisher, that he opportunely gives them appropriate reprimands, and even goes so far as to punish them when necessary, but in a way that is charitable and kind. And so, he will procure the glory of God with great enthusiasm when he works for the salvation of his neighbour,

using untiring diligence, assiduous care, and unswerving courage to make him avoid evil.

Zeal, therefore is a very excellent virtue in a teacher, and why St John Chrysostom says that the person who mortifies his body by austerity has less merit than one who wins souls for God. And even, as St Gregory points out, there is no sacrifice more pleasing to him than zeal!

The nature of this virtue is to be very active: this is even its essential characteristic. With what haste, in fact; with what exactness, for example, will not a teacher fulfil the obligations of his state if he has true zeal?

1. His religious obligations. Since the first of all of these is his concern for his own perfection, in order to maintain his piety, preserve the spirit of his state, and not fall into the dissipation of his mind and the drying-up of his heart, only too common consequences of profane studies, he will consider as more necessary than ever the holy practices prescribed by the constitutions, especially the daily practice of meditation, spiritual reading, examination of conscience, fervent frequentation of the sacraments, annual retreats, etc.. Generally speaking, he will not fail to observe any point of Rule when he is called upon to observe one: he will always arrive before the beginning of an exercise rather than after, whether the case in point is less or more important, easy or difficult. It is enough for obedience to command or recommend it, and he will be completely ready; he will fly to wherever the rule calls him to go; he will be pleased to be there and to stay there as long as he has to.

2. His obligation to educate children. The education of children calls upon those responsible for it to exercise the most assiduous care, undertake most difficult work, and concern themselves with the most tedious details. How will a teacher support the weight of a ministry which would frighten the most courageous person, if he is not inspired with great zeal for the salvation of children? He will need to have some of the tenderness and concern of St Paul, who felt for the Galatians *the pains of child-bearing until Jesus Christ was formed in them*. And so, he will find all his satisfaction, all his joy, in instructing relentlessly, without distinction, without exception of person, all children, whoever they are: the ignorant, the incompetent, those lacking in natural gifts, the rich, the poor, the well or badly disposed, Catholics or Protestants, etc. Since he desires ardently the salvation of his pupils, he will seek to bring

it about as much as he can by his good works, by his prayers, by his communions. In a word, he will strive to save them all without exception, convinced that there is no soul which did not cost the blood of Jesus Christ, and he will teach them what they have to do to benefit from this very admirable redemption.

But true zeal is not only active: it must also be enlightened and prudent. A teacher truly zealous for the instruction of his pupils, makes himself all to all men, following the example of the Apostle, young with the young; that is, he adapts himself to the way they understand things and appreciate them; he "scales himself down", as we have said, to appreciate their weakness, their lack of reasoning and intelligence, adopting more grown-up language with those able to understand it; and he does all this in order to instruct them all more successfully.

He will not restrict himself to instruction that is prepared, formal and tied to a set method. He will skilfully make use of opportunities, which are not lacking, to introduce, as if by chance, a moral maxim, which, not being prepared, is accepted more easily and normally makes more of an impression than cleverly organised teaching, which pupils sometimes are wary of.

Finally, zeal must be charitable and courageous. It acts therefore with strength and sweetness.

With strength, because it is magnanimous and incapable of becoming discouraged when confronted with trouble and difficulties. With sweetness, because it is gentle, tender, compassionate, humble, in a word, it conforms with the spirit of Jesus Christ.

A teacher is lacking in zeal: 1. When he is indifferent, and does not do all he can to extend the Kingdom of God in all the ways we have mentioned, and especially by not setting a good example. As children naturally imitate what they see their guides doing, and unfortunately more the bad things than the good things, they remember the example of a single defect more than that of several virtues. 2. When he does not have a real desire to work for the salvation of his pupils, and neglects to provide them with the means to achieve this, as his profession obliges him to. 3. When he makes no effort to instruct them properly, and has no enthusiasm in pursuing his own perfection.

There is, moreover, a false kind of zeal which it is easy to recognise: 1. When it is based on passion; 2. When something displeasing, an insult, hatred, a disappointment, antipathy brings it into play; 3. When it is result of a whim, an inclination, aversion, self-love; 4. When one seeks to teach one class rather than another, or stay in a town where one's vanity, laziness and love of ease is better catered for; 5. When one prefers certain pupils rather than others because they are more pleasing; 6. When one seeks to let others know of one's successes and of the trouble one takes to make pupils make progress; 7. When one loves applause and praise; 8. When one is angry when others have greater success than oneself; 9. When one threatens or reprimands using insulting terms, sharp, bitter, angry, indiscreet language, without considering the fact that imprudent zeal often does more harm than discreet zeal does good; 10. When one is worried, biting, bitter, turbulent; 11. When one gives in to complaining, grumbling, sadness, discouragement, malicious interpretation; 12. When one seeks temporal goods rather than the glory of God and the spiritual benefit of one's neighbour; 13. When one is without indulgence, mercy, patience, humility, charity; 14. When in important or extraordinary circumstances, one does not ask for advice from those responsible for directing and leading.

I am perfectly willing to spend what I have, and to be expended, in the interests of your souls (2 Cor 12, 15).

Not that I do boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty which has been laid on me (1 Cor 9,16).

Let your zeal be inspired by charity, enlightened by learning, made strong by constancy. Let it be fervent, circumspect, invincible. Let it not be lukewarm, nor timid (St Bernard, Sermon 20).

2. A passage from Rollin (Book VIII of his *Treatise on Studies*). "The internal government of classes and of the College".

"As it is a general principle that love is bought only by love, the first thing Quintilian demands is that a teacher, before everything else and above all, should have the feelings of a father for his pupils, and that he should consider himself as taking the place of those who have entrusted them to him. As a consequence, he has to adopt the gentleness, patience and the deep-seated goodness and tenderness which are natural to them.

He should have no vice himself and he should not tolerate any in others. There should be nothing harsh about his austerity, nor anything soft about his placidity, for fear of making himself hated or despised.

He should not be angry or irascible; but also he must not overlook faults which deserve to be noticed.

When he teaches, he should be simple, patient, exact, and he should rely more on following a rule and his own assiduity than on excessive work on the part of his pupils. He should take pleasure in answering all the questions put to him; and he should take the initiative and ask them questions if they fail to ask any.

When the occasion arises, he should not fail to give praise when it is deserved, but he should not be too free with it, because the first causes discouragement, and the second gives false security.

When he is obliged to reprimand, he should not be bitter or offensive, because what gives many pupils an aversion for study, is the fact that when certain teachers reprimand them the look on their face is so dark that they give the impression they hate them.

He should often speak to them of virtue, and he should always speak of it in glowing terms; speaking of it always in terms of something beneficial and pleasant, and as being the most excellent of all goods, the most worthy of honour; an absolutely necessary quality for attracting the affection and esteem of everybody; and the only means of being truly happy. The more he points out their duties to them, the less he will need to punish them. Everyday, let him say something to them that they will take away with them and put to good use. Although reading can provide them with some quite good ideas, what is said out loud is much more powerful and has a greater effect, especially on the part of a teacher whom well-born children love and honour. It is difficult to believe how much more willingly we imitate persons to whom we are well disposed".

3. Another passage from Rollin, entitled "Making studies more likeable".

"As Quintilian says, the greatest secret for making children like studies, is for the teacher to know how to make himself loved by them. If he does so, they

listen to him willingly, they become docile, they try to please him, they find pleasure in accepting what he teaches, they accept his advice and corrections with good grace, they respond to his praise, they strive to deserve his friendship, and acquit themselves well of their duties.

There is in children, as in all men, a natural fund of curiosity, that is, a desire to know and learn of which one can take advantage to make studies likeable for them. As everything is new for them, they think of questions, they ask questions, they ask what everything they see is called and what its use is. One must answer them without showing any signs of annoyance or displeasure; one must praise their curiosity and satisfy it by means of clear and precise answers, never giving them false and illusory answers, for they will soon discover that they are so and will become disgusted."

Chapter 4
1811: Moving towards pedagogy based on motivation (The rebirth of the *Conduct of Schools*)

Introduction

By the law of April 6th 1792, the Legislative Assembly sought to suppress legally the Brothers' Institute in France, but as King Louis XVI refused to sign it, this law was not valid even though it had been published on April 29th in *Le Moniteur*, the official gazette at the time. This explains the new law of August 18th of the same year which we mentioned in the last chapter.

The dispersal

The Brothers could no longer run their schools, live in community, or wear their traditional habit, but they were supposed to take the oath of fidelity to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. Given this requirement, they dispersed. Those who were of an age to work looked for paid employment. The older ones sought to obtain the pension promised by the Assembly. The National Convention replaced the Legislative Assembly and lost no time in introducing harsher measures against the non-jurors. In 1793 and 1794 the Great Terror raged.

Confronted with this situation, some Brothers chose to go into exile. They joined the Brothers who had been working in Rome and the Papal States since the beginning of the 18th century, in Rome, Orvieto and Ferrara. Even there, they were not spared the harassment of the revolutionary armies which had invaded a part of Italy. But it was from among these Brothers that the Pope chose Brother Frumence and appointed him to be the Vicar General of the Institute, on August 7th 1795, when it became clear that Brother Agathon could no longer fulfil his duties. And so, continuity was ensured for the Institute as well the hope of its re-birth. It seems that the Brothers kept this hope alive until calmer times prevailed.

The restoration of the Institute in France

The coup d'etat of the "18th of *Brumaire*" (November 9th-10th 1799) put an end to the *Directoire* Assembly and ten years of revolution. Bonaparte took over more or less all the powers and set up the Consulate, a strong and centralised power, before having himself crowned Emperor in 1804.

It was during the Consulate, in 1802, that the Concordat between France and the Papacy was signed, and the first law on Public Instruction was promulgated. It was that year also that a number of Brothers came together in Lyon. There they could rely on the benevolent protection of the new archbishop, Cardinal Fesch, the uncle of Bonaparte. Some problems remained, however. Brother Vivien in Reims, Brother Bernardin in Toulouse and Brother Gerbaud in Paris, took the initiative of forming similar groups of former Brothers who had been scattered by the Revolution.

In November 1804, Brother Frumence and some others arrived in Lyon: it was the day before Pope Pius VI was due to arrive there on his way to crown Napoleon in Paris. The authority of the Brother Vicar General had still to be recognised by the Brothers as a whole. Making a fresh start is never easy. While the work of the Brothers in schools was appreciated, the Institute was still not legally recognised. Negotiations began to achieve this but were successfully concluded only in 1808.

So long as this recognition was missing, the Institute remained in a precarious situation. One can understand that a new edition of the *Conduct of Schools* was not initially a priority for the Superiors. But it was eagerly awaited.

A long-awaited new edition

The Letter which introduces the 1811 edition gives us a good idea of how impatiently the Brothers had waited for this event. Although it is not signed, its author is clearly the Superior General of the time, Brother Gerbaud, elected in 1810, following the death of Brother Frumence. This Letter is addressed "to the Brothers of the Christian Schools". It covers six small pages in the usual pocket format of the editions of the *Conduct*. The following are some of the points treated.

The Superior recognises that there is an urgent need for a new edition of the *Conduct of Schools* and of other works proper to the Institute, following the difficult period the Brothers have had to endure for twenty or so years. But, as the Superior adds, of the works required, the *Conduct* is *most urgently needed, and we shall begin by this precious book, which you have been waiting for for a long time and with holy impatience*. The absence of this book could have been detrimental to the good running of the new establishments of the Institute, because *you do not doubt that this Conduct is a compulsory rule just like all the others of the Society: the Common Rule refers to it and commands it to be observed*. In practice, for a century, the *Conduct* had clearly traced out the profile of a Lasallian school, as John Baptist de La Salle himself had wanted. The satisfaction of the Superior at seeing it published again is so great that he does not hesitate to wax lyrical. The reader can judge for himself: *So here it is, this sublime Conduct, an object of veneration for all discerning judges. We present it to you in all the simplicity of its origin: these thirty years of prayer, fasting and work by our very dear Father, joined to that of our senior Brothers who, inspired by the same spirit, have left us the fruit of their experience, are a sure guarantee of the goodness and the infallibility of the means they give us*.

It is this veneration for the Founder and for the tradition of the Institute which explains why the text was not greatly changed, for fear this might *weaken its power, its fervour, its wisdom and its noble simplicity*. We shall return to this question when we speak of the changes made in certain parts of the text. In fact, certain passages have been added, taken principally from some *old notebooks found in our archives*. This material was written in the days of Brother Agathon, but never published. The second source of the text, as the letter tells us, were the observations of the Superior's Counsellors. We shall speak a little later on, in a more detailed way, about the manuscript of Brother Bernardin, which is among the archive documents.

This supplementary material added to the text of the *Conduct* does not constitute, however, an increase in the amount of work for the Brothers. On the contrary, as the letter points out, its aim is to facilitate and identify more clearly the tasks of the teachers. And this really is the impression given by a reading of the whole text: there are so many practical suggestions. This is especially true regarding the very sensitive subject of punishments. We shall

return to this later. *Such will be the fruit of your fidelity to the precepts of the 'Conduct of the Christian and gratuitous Schools', corrected, extended, shown in a different light*. The Superior invites the Brothers to read this *Conduct* in a spirit of simplicity and a willingness to learn, and not in order to entertain themselves or to criticise. It will be for them a means of acquitting themselves well of their ministry. This publication is only the first of those planned. The letter gives a list of them: the *Collection*, the *Duties of a Christian*, the book on *Civility*, the *Book of Psalms*, the *Short Exercises of Piety*.

After a gap of twenty years, the edifice as a whole needed to be rebuilt. The first steps were small and hesitant. This shows also that, while being part of the Imperial University - the new organisation governing education in France - the Brothers were left free to keep and develop their own school organisation, their particular pedagogical methods, and their educational aims. It is opportune to recall also that in the French educational system, there co-existed - and this continued throughout the 19th century - two types of school: public and private. For several decades, the Brothers would work simultaneously in one or other type of school, depending on local situations.

We should note also, without dwelling on it, that the work then returns to the "Preface of the author" - that is, John Baptist de La Salle, which we referred to earlier at the beginning of the present work.

"old notebooks found in our archives"...

We know that the Brothers' Generalate in Melun suffered some damage during the revolutionary period. It was not possible to save all the archives, Some survived, however, in particular those from the days of Brother Agathon relating to the *Conduct of Schools*, which we mentioned earlier and which served as a source of inspiration.

Contribution of Brother Bernardin (Pierre Blanc: 1738-1808)

As in preceding periods, the Superiors of the Institute at the beginning of the 19th century asked for contributions from Brothers who had suggestions to make regarding the drawing up of a new edition of the *Conduct of Schools*. Brother Bernardin was one of those, and his case is sufficiently significant to

be worth examining. He represents a sort of transition between the work done before the Revolution and the 1811 edition of the *Conduct*.

Pierre Blanc, who became Brother Bernardin, was born in Marseille on October 20th 1738. He entered the novitiate in Avignon in 1754. After his initial formation, he taught at Aubagne, Apt and Grenoble. In his *Histoire des Frères de Toulouse: 1789-1850*, the author, Brother Lémandus, speaks of him in very glowing terms: *His talents as a teacher, a teaching career spanning 54 years crowned with success, the establishment of schools which he made prosper, the value of his teaching and of his methods, give him a place of honour among the teachers of children...* In 1774, at the age of 36, he was director at Castres, then a teacher at Carcassonne, in the famous Charlemagne boarding school. During the Revolution, without going into hiding, he restarted the school at Castres and established a boarding school there with his usual success. He was sent to Toulouse where he ended his life.

Known for the quality of his teaching and his entrepreneurial spirit, Brother Bernardin was one of those consulted by Brother Agathon when he undertook the revision of the *Conduct of Schools*. Brother Bernardin responded positively and drew up his own plan and sent it to the Superior in 1788, as he himself tells us. He kept a copy himself which can be consulted at the Generalate archives. Towards the end of his life, having learned that Brother Frumence was asking for suggestions for a new edition of the work, he sent him his manuscript in 1807, adding an extra page to explain why he was doing so.

This is a good example of what was done in the Institute and of the interest certain Brothers showed in the *Conduct*. Brother Bernardin died at Toulouse the following year. He was so esteemed and venerated that the Brothers of his community wanted to have a portrait of him, and they contacted a local artist. Brother Lémandus gives the following description of Brother Bernardin: *He was of average stature, with a broad forehead, a large mouth, thin lips, sunken cheeks, lively and piercing eyes. His anchorite features revealed a penetrating intelligence and a powerful will that commanded respect. To these gifts was added a rare ability to teach children, and the art of instilling knowledge and making his authority accepted and liked. It could be said that the numerous Brothers and pupils he had taught worshipped him* (p. 125). Such a tough and

somewhat original character would quite naturally take liberties with a previous edition of the *Conduct*, and a quick glance at his manuscript is enough to confirm this. But he had had also a long and varied experience of teaching, and this put him in a position to make some interesting suggestions. This is made clear from the start in a foreword, entitled: *What is to be understood by the Conduct of the Christian Schools. The reasons which make it commendable and usable by all Brothers of the Christian Schools*. It is of course a eulogy of the *Conduct*, but based on experience and common sense. It is difficult to identify any borrowing from Brother Bernardin's text in the 1811 edition of the *Conduct*.

Continuity and change

Before examining the changes and novelty of the 1811 edition, let us point out briefly certain similarities between the 1811 edition and the two previous ones of 1742 and 1720, which we said earlier were practically speaking identical.

Continuity

The quasi similarity of the **first part** justifies certain things said in the Letter to the Brothers at the beginning of the 1811 edition. The pedagogical measures adopted by St John Baptist de La Salle and the first Brothers seemed excellent and they had proved to be so. As a consequence, there was no wish to *weaken their power, their fervour, their wisdom and their noble simplicity*.

It is interesting to point out that in the chapter on reading, a new section is added on *the emulation that should be introduced into reading* (p. 63-64). The chapter on writing, which is already quite detailed and practical, is extended to include a new section devoted to a very detailed description of how the pupil should hold the pen and write. This is evidently based on careful observation, and illustrates the importance attached by the Brothers to calligraphy from the very start. It was not essential, however, for learning the current way of writing. We can see here yet another example of the concern for exactness and the desire to be practical in the *Conduct*.

The chapter on catechism is the one which differs most from that in preceding editions: six new paragraphs are added on *the excellence and the necessity to study* the catechism. Of all school activities, it is the one that needs to be pre-

pared with the greatest care. The same concern is expressed in a new section entitled: *The way to make catechism learned and recited before class* (p. 140-143). It describes a number of practical ways thought to help even less-gifted pupils, because memorising material held a very important place in the pedagogy of the 19th century, and in particular in the subsequent editions of the *Conduct*.

Separated by almost a century, the 1720 and 1811 editions are very similar where the first part is concerned, which deals with *The exercises which are performed in schools and the way in which they should be performed*. It is concerned with learning. In several articles, the text is the same, word for word. In any case, what reason would there be to change a way of teaching that had been so successful in the 18th century?

The second part: *The means to maintain order in schools*. For the most part, the 1811 edition repeats what is said in the 1720 one. However, it contains two kinds of changes:

- Changes regarding specific points, such as, in the chapter on Signals, an exact description is given of the Signal in use since the beginning of Lasallian schools. It is made to produce *a sound that is heard, a sound that is all the more loud as the pressure is stronger and more forceful*. The purpose of the signal is recalled also: *The first and principal use of the signal is to draw simultaneously the attention of all the pupils to the teacher, and to make them attentive to what he wants them to know*. Consequently, all the pupils are supposed to avert to the signal while waiting for the teacher to single out the pupil he wishes to answer: *A good pupil, every time he hears the signal sound once, will imagine he hears the voice of the teacher, or rather the voice of God himself, calling him by his name* (p. 159). This reminder is not simply anecdotal: in practice, the signal was a very convenient and simple way to make it easier to run a class, and there was nothing inhuman about it, as some critics have maintained, evidently not having ever used one.
- More extensive changes in the chapters on **rewards and punishments**. In the 1706 and 1720 editions, the chapter in the *Conduct* on rewards was short, especially by comparison with the chapter that followed it on punishments. In the 1811 edition, these chapters are substantially

modified and deserve some explanation. We have already given, on several occasions, the reasons for these changes. They represented the practical implementation of the decision to replace repression in schools by emulation and encouragement. Regarding emulation, the text says: *Teachers will give rewards from time to time to those of their pupils who carry out their duties exactly, in order to induce them to do so with enthusiasm, and to stimulate others by the possibility of a reward* (p. 174).

- **Chapter 5: "Correction in general - Foreword"**: The 1811 edition does not reproduce the 1720 foreword in full. It stops after the six things *which make the behaviour of a teacher harsh and unbearable for those he is responsible for*. What follows has been left out, namely *What, on the contrary makes the children's behaviour negligent and slack*... In 1720, the six things which had this effect were mentioned also, and the foreword ended with two very interesting paragraphs which explained how to achieve a balance between harshness and softness. In the 1811 edition we find therefore several pages entitled *Rules regarding punishments*. They concerned the implementation of the "Letter to the Brothers" we mentioned earlier. Regarding punishments, it outlined a new approach. *With a view to adapting our education to the mildness of present-day lifestyle, we have left out or altered whatever spoke of punishments inflicting pain, and have replaced them to great advantage, on the one hand, by extra marks, praise and rewards; and on the other, by marks off, deprivation and lines. We dare to be confident that our Dear Brothers, by means of these helpful means, which are as effective as they are pleasing to a generous heart, will be able to abandon all forms of corporal punishment which up to now have been a cross and the only source of displeasure for the most virtuous of us* (p. 7). *As a consequence, we are replacing the big cane, with all its disadvantages we have all experienced, by a simple leather strip, about one foot long, an inch wide, and split at one end into two equal lengths*...The text adds that it is hoped that the Brothers *will make use of it only when it is absolutely indispensable, and only to give one stroke on the hand. It will never be permitted to use it in any other way* (p. 8). The text goes on to explain briefly that recourse to corporal punishment is incompatible with the Brothers' state of life. It expresses this as fol-

lows: *How could the hand of a Brother of the Christian Schools become an instrument of pain? Does not the very name "Brother" imply deep-seated gentleness, humility, tenderness and mercy? Why did Monsieur de La Salle, our very dear father, our illustrious and holy Founder, why did he want us to use the name "Brother" , and why did he not ever allow us to use any other? It was because he wanted us to have its tenderness* (p. 8). The text continues in the next paragraph in the same exclamatory vein. The text then goes on to express in more moderate terms what we have to admit is a central feature of the Lasallian teacher-pupil relationship. *What in fact is more gentle as a name than 'brother'? Dignified names inspire and command respect, but 'brother' radiates only simplicity, kindness and charity. So, has your heart nothing to say in return to this child who implores your clemency when he says 'brother' to you?* (p. 8-9).

- So, how should we understand punishment? It is not a question of weakness and letting things go, but rather of finding the right balance. One can also find oneself obliged to deal with some very difficult particular cases. So, *let us conclude and say that, if anyone of us is obliged by principles of zeal and duty to have recourse to the small cane (because the big cane has been done away with) to subdue the mutiny and insubordination of a rebellious child who refuses to bend his will to the yoke of rules; and after having exhausted all the resources of paternal kindness, he will remember never to stray, as he punishes, from the conditions our holy Founder imposes on us. Let correction be pure, charitable, just, appropriate, moderate, calm and prudent. In this way, your hand, as it punishes, will be beyond all just reproach, and will inspire subsequently gratitude and respect* (p. 9).

However, it would be utopian to think of a school without any sanctions. That is why chapter VI first of all devotes a number of pages to the "Rules regarding punishments". These rules are as follows:

- do not punish too often
- try to prevent faults
- do not threaten without thinking
- use punishment less than threats
- make sure you carry out your threats
- punish only for real reasons

- maintain self-control when punishing
- use fear with caution
- faults which should be forgiven
- faults which should be punished
- what is understood by the words "punishments" and "chastisements".

The eleventh rule is different from the others because of its focus. It consists of three pages of considerations demonstrating the superiority of punishments over corporal chastisement. The latter ought to be used only as the last resort when other means have failed. The less there is of it in a class, the better. This explains why these considerations end with the text of the 1720 Foreword and the search for the right balance between gentleness and firmness. One could say that these "Rules regarding punishments" constitute a kind of second foreword to the chapter on corrections. In fact, the text goes on to borrow from the 1720 text in a number of the areas it considers. Differences make their appearance in the introductory paragraph onwards, relating to the different kinds of correction.

And so, the paragraphs regarding punishment using the birch or the whip have been left out of the 1811 text. The text however retains the cane, as we have seen. These changes concerning punishment are necessary in order to justify the title of the chapter: the 1811 edition wants to show how to move on from repressive pedagogy to pedagogy based on emulation. This change is demonstrated, in particular, by the adoption of the use of "lines".

"Lines"

This is something new in the text of the *Conduct of Schools*. For the readers of this work - the Brothers - it is necessary to explain what they are. In section III of this chapter, the subject is *Means one can use to punish pupils without using the cane*. This represents progress in the treatment of pupils, even though it is recognised that the need to chastise pupils may sometimes prove necessary. This is pedagogical realism. It is a question of encouraging pupils to work. *To do this, of all the punishments there are, lines are the most decent for a teacher, most beneficial for the pupils and the most pleasing to parents* (p. 193). The text goes on to comment on these three benefits. For us, the first is probably the most interesting: lines are the punishment *most decorous for a*

teacher, since they enable him to avoid any kind of harshness, anything that savours of corporal punishment, something which is as humiliating for the one who inflicts as it is for the one who suffers it; for to strike a child for minor faults, is to harden oneself against human feelings which consider such punishments repugnant (p. 193).

"**How to give lines**": This involves copying texts. The *Conduct* devotes three pages to explaining what to do. There is a special notebook in which the lines given are registered. The pupils involved here are evidently those who already can write. A monitor is appointed to collect lines at the school entrance and to take them to the teacher. Pupils who have not done the lines have the number of lines doubled or tripled, or receive a more serious punishment. Those who have not done them properly (spelling, writing...) have to do them again. However, lines should not be given too frequently because that would devalue them and they would lose their deterrent power. The teacher should always keep calm to ensure he acts fairly, otherwise the pupils will not be able to do them, and that will lead to undeserved punishments.

It is interesting also to note the conclusion of the chapter on punishments. Under the heading "**Answers to some objections**", the text explains: *It is pointless to object that only corporal punishment can have any effect on children; and that it is the quickest of all means and the most effective to get children to do what they have to do.*

Only men with hard and violent characters could think like that, because such means would be cruel for virtuous souls and tender hearts, who consider corporal punishment as the most humiliating and the very last means one can use to punish children. Those who are reduced to the sad necessity of striking them often, prove that they have only punished them too much, since they have deadened in them all impulses that would make them feel shame, and leaving only those sensitive to blows.

One cannot repeat this enough: a teacher will avoid punishing if he is silent, vigilant, equable, always pious, always reserved when speaking to the children, never addressing them with the familiar form 'tu', which would demonstrate too much familiarity and would inspire less respect: all these wise precautions combine to maintain order, stimulate application to work, and in this way, make the use of punishment more rare (p. 229)

After the section on punishments, there comes an entirely new section on **"Privileges"**. These are supposed to replace punishments. The term is a new one in the vocabulary of the *Conduct*, and that is why the 1811 edition makes a point of explaining it in detail by treating successively:

- Privileges
- Value of privileges
- Use of privileges
- Privileges as a currency
- Benefits of privileges

These few pages (reproduced in full in the Texts and Documents section at the end of this chapter) constitute a turning point in the overall pedagogical focus of the *Conduct*. The question is raised how to avoid or eliminate punishments. This change, moreover, is more consistent with the unchanging educational thinking of St John Baptist de La Salle, based on trusting and cordial teacher-pupil relations. Also, we think that the system described under the heading "Privileges as a currency" is quite astute: pupils can, if they want, exchange some of their privileges for not having to do some of the lines they have received.

New contents in the 1811 edition

The Brothers who drew up the 1811 edition knew of Brother Agathon's plan to produce a *Conduct of Schools* in four parts, which we spoke about in the preceding chapter. They had access also to the manuscripts in the archives referred to in the Letter of Introduction. However, they did not use the fourth part dealing with the "Conduct of Boarding Schools", probably for the simple reason that, at that time, there were not any yet, and so there was no reason for having this fourth part. The topic would come up later, with some insistence, during the course of the 19th century.

On the other hand, the 1811 text does introduce two elements included in Brother Agathon's plan:

- "What a Brother should think of his state" (p. 15-22).
- "The person responsible for training new teachers, and the School Inspector" (p. 293-356).

As the short Preface to this third part reminds us, *The Conduct for the persons responsible for training teachers and School Inspectors included here is not a new work: it is as old as the Society of the Brothers of the Christian Schools; it is a collection of precepts and practices which have been constantly taught and followed...* (p. 289). As Brother Agathon had already written, these texts had not been published because the small number of readers did not make it worthwhile. However, by their inclusion in the volume of the *Conduct*, their potential readership was greatly increased. The Preface explains: *We thought that since the teacher-training staff and the School Inspectors are all fully committed to fulfilling their duties with zeal and justice, it would give them great pleasure to see this detailed material in the hands of all the Brothers, and especially the young Brothers, who will be able to find in it the instructions they need* (p. 289-290).

And the text continues precisely to explain that closer collaboration and mutual knowledge among all concerned cannot but be beneficial for the smooth running of the school. It is beneficial for the pupils, the parents, the teachers, the inspectors and the teacher-training staff. The text ends with the following sentence: *Brother Directors, most of whom at the same time are Inspectors and train new teachers, should find articles in this Conduct which concern them under these two headings, and that is why they have all been included* (p. 291).

What a Brother should think of his state

The contents of these few pages at the beginning of the *Conduct* are of some interest from a psycho-pedagogical point of view - even if this science did not exist in 1811. The nine points presented are still relevant and demonstrate great pedagogical common sense. They are largely inspired by the ideas of Brother Agathon.

The text is not a theoretical presentation of what a teacher should do, to be assimilated by everyone, but rather a collection of specific attitudes and ways of behaving which should enable a young teacher to do his work successfully. It is not so much methodology or didactics that are of concern here, since both these aspects have been amply treated in the first and second part of the *Conduct*, but rather the teacher's general attitude and his attitude towards the pupils. These are precisely the factors which ensure that his teaching has an influence on the pupils.

We should note that this list is different from that of the *Twelve virtues of a Good Teacher*, of which we have spoken; but it would be natural to look for similarities between the two, just as it would be normal to compare this text with that of the *Conduct* for the persons responsible for training new teachers, which can be found at the end of the book, and which is divided into two parts:

- *Maxims which the Formation Master should instil into the minds of the young teachers.*
- *Basic faults which the Formation Master should correct in his students.*

By making these various comparisons, we have highlighted the overall coherence of the *Conduct of Schools*, and have seen a broad outline of the educational thinking of St John Baptist de La Salle. We should note, in passing, that in 1696, that is, ten years before the manuscript of the *Conduct of Schools*, De La Salle had written a *Rule for the Formation Master of new teachers*, which even then put forward the same ideas but couched in different terms. The 1811 text proposes nine means to be a successful teacher:

- Prayer. There is nothing very special about this first means, but it is not surprising to find it at the beginning of a text intended for Christian teachers, for the Brothers. And naturally, since this was the beginning of the 19th century, devotions are given a high priority.
- Consistent behaviour. Here, the ideas are developed more fully and based on psycho-pedagogy. Consistent behaviour guarantees authority and success, and a calm atmosphere in class. This is confirmed by the constant experience of teachers. That is why the text says: *This consistency is absolutely necessary, if a teacher is to achieve a certain ascendancy over young people and make himself respected by them; for there is nothing more respectable than a man who is always seen to be in the same frame of mind and consistently in the same mood.*
- Silence. The *Conduct of Schools* has always included a chapter on silence, and this subject is taken up in the commentary on the "Twelve virtues". The silence of the teacher encourages the children also to keep silent. Silence draws attention, calms the group and restores order. And so, the teacher should speak only rarely, only for serious reasons, and when he judges the moment is opportune. If silence is not

observed, there is no order, no attention, no application to work, and what the teacher says is not listened to. We can add that this is the constant experience of all teachers who work in a class divided into several groups, or even more so, in a school with only one class.

- Good example. *The teacher must preach by his own example. Nothing has a more powerful effect on the minds of children* (p. 18). Consequently, the teacher must exercise great control over his body and his behaviour. *Imperceptibly, the virtue, the gentleness, the serenity of a teacher is communicated to the soul of the pupils; but for this to happen, the teacher must always demonstrate the appropriate decorum in their regard. One cannot be too circumspect with regard to children: they see and they hear everything, and often much more than one thinks* (p. 18). A final paragraph put the teachers on his guard against excessive affection and familiarity, and advises restraint and moderation in his affability and language.
- Vigilance regarding oneself and the pupils. Regarding oneself, so as not to let anything appear that does not inspire esteem. Vigilance also regarding the pupils. Vigilance is both preventive and dissuasive . *When one is attentive to all that goes on in a classroom, everything is done with attention* (p. 19). This should not undermine the serenity of the teacher, otherwise vigilance will not be effective.
- No special favours. *Since a teacher devotes himself entirely to those he is responsible for, they must all be equally dear to him. And so, he will not become attached to any by preference, giving only superficial attention to the others. Quite apart from being truly unjust, this would arouse envy, and would give rise to quite justified murmuring. All pupils have a recognised right to the attention of the teacher, and so he must devote his time and efforts to all of them* (p. 19-20). The accuracy of these words is easy to see. It is a question of finding the right balance.
- Gratuity. Because of the vow itself. Do not accept anything from the pupils, as the St John Baptist de La Salle says in his writings. Do not accept anything from the parents. *To do so would be to be unfaithful to one's promises; and to create an obligation to be grateful, thus restricting one's authority, would be to demean our ministry* (p. 20). There is therefore a risk of allowing oneself to be bribed. One needs to be firm in

order to stay free. One must not compromise one's reputation for integrity. Once again, an accurate if brief assessment.

- Conformity in teaching. The heading is perhaps surprising because it does not indicate clearly the contents of the paragraph. This conformity was habitual from the very beginning, and precisely one of the reasons for everyone having a *Conduct*. It may be a source of worry because of risks and limitations: it could produce mind-numbing uniformity. But the advantages of this were evident in the context of a network of schools and of the mobility of its members. They could be replaced without any harm; they were interchangeable. This was important in the context of the network. Finally, it was beneficial for the pupils also. *(The teacher) continued teaching the lessons with an ease that matched the success of the pupils, who did not notice the change of their previous teacher because the normal succession of lessons was not interrupted by any innovation. Everything was done at the prescribed time and in the prescribed manner. By regulating the behaviour of the teacher, these meticulous instructions determined his each and every action and were the reason for his peace of mind* (p. 20-21). The last paragraph spells out this uniformity unequivocally: *As for the manner of teaching, there must be identical uniformity everywhere, without any derogation at all from prescribed practices: that is, the same signals during lessons; the same methods for reading, writing and arithmetic; the same way of teaching catechism, of saying prayers and making them recited; and the same way of assembling and dismissing pupils. The Conduct must be the invariable rule for everybody. In his faithful observance of it, a teacher will find his hope of success* (p. 21).
- Regular attendance at school. No absenteeism on the part of the teacher. Regular attendance is very important for good order in school and in class, so that the work gets done. The teacher should not allow himself to be distracted from his work in class by untimely visits, by enjoying himself with his neighbours, reading or writing himself, by not foreseeing the smallest needs. *A zealous teacher will always prefer his work to everything else. Moreover, one cannot waste or neglect time at school without being guilty of injustice towards the pupils to whom he owes all his time, and without having to answer to God for the punishments caused by these absences* (p. 21-22).

Maxims which the Formation Master should instil into the minds of the young teachers

Under this heading, the *Conduct* proposes ten views or convictions the new teacher must assimilate, or attitudes and ways of behaving he must adopt in his work in school. The aim is always to ensure that lessons run smoothly. The hope is that with all this - that is, acquiring what is necessary and getting rid of defects - everything will run smoothly in a school, and it will be possible to avoid punishments. The training of new teachers has, therefore, a preventive role. As the *Conduct* said at the beginning, in the chapter on punishments, a well-run school is one where there is no need to have recourse to punishment, except very rarely.

Basic faults the Formation Master must correct in his young teachers

There are thirteen "faults" mentioned which a young teacher should avoid. As a matter of curiosity, here is the list: chattering, exuberance, fickleness, haste or swift reactions, harshness or severity, impatience or spite, rebuffing certain pupils and showing favouritism to others, slowness or negligence, softness or pusillanimity, despondency or dejection, familiarity or jesting, inconsistency or unpredictability, a giddy appearance and lacking in depth.

It is obvious immediately that all of these "faults" are to do with the right balance needed by a teacher, who should be noted for his self-control. Many of these faults are shortcomings in the behaviour of *un honnête homme*- a decent and respectable person, regarding what was called *la modestie* in the 17th century. And we find once again the "twelve virtues of a good teacher". To become a good teacher, a person needs to be of a high standard, an example and model for the children. John Baptist de La Salle always spoke of teachers as having a very noble profession. That is why he was always very demanding in their regard.

School Inspectors

This is the last feature in the 1811 edition. There are fewer novelties in this chapter, although there are many changes in the way things are formulated by comparison with the 1706 manuscript edition. The novelty lies rather in the fact that this text is included in the *Conduct of Schools*, because it was not before. Brother Agathon had intended to include it, but his plans came to nothing.

From the beginning, Lasallian schools were run or coordinated by an Inspector, who was often also the Director of the Community. Where there were several schools in a town, the Director was helped by one or more Inspectors, or possibly by the "Senior Teacher".

In the 1811 text, we note first of all a concern for precision. Article 2, for example, concerning *the supervision of the teachers by the Inspector* lists forty points the Inspector has to check on and be vigilant about. The list brings together at this point all the advice one can find in the writings of St Baptist de La Salle. This advice concerns all the practical tasks the Founder thought a good teacher should perform. There is a similar list in article 3 regarding *the supervision of the pupils by the Inspector*, as well as seventeen things the inspector should be concerned about. The Inspector is responsible also for promoting pupils to more advanced "Lessons" or "Orders of Lessons". This supposes that he knows sufficiently well the level each pupil has reached in his studies, and that he assesses the pupils regularly. We should remember that all these instructions were read also by all the teachers and could prove useful to them too.

Conclusion

With the return of the Brothers dispersed by the Revolution and the arrival of new candidates, the Institute increased in number quite rapidly between 1800 and 1830. During this period, three Superior Generals were in office: Brother Frumence (1795-1810), Brother Gerbaud (1810-1822) and Brother Guillaume de Jésus (1822–1830). According to the statistics published in 1861, in 1810 there were 160 Brothers, and in 1830, 1,420. This is one of the factors that explains the need for new editions of the *Conduct* in 1819, 1823 and 1828.

Of course, every time a new edition was envisaged, the text was revised, needed correction were made and new terminology introduced, but without changing radically the text as a whole. The normal procedure we described in the first chapter continued to be followed. Brother Guillaume de Jésus wrote, for example, that the 1822 General Chapter had received *a great number of notes...regarding the need to correct the Conduct*. These observations *caught his attention and led him to appoint three of his members to deal with this impor-*

tant matter. This could not be done immediately, *but the persistent representations regarding this subject having persuaded us that the wishes of the Institute were unanimous in this regard, and that everyone would be glad to see the Conduct revised, corrected, and all the repetitions and contradictions that had slipped in gradually, removed; we finally brought together the three Brothers appointed by the Chapter so that working with us they could more easily fulfil the task entrusted to them*. The same Superior insisted on the dual purpose of their work: to make the changes considered necessary while remaining faithful to the thinking of John Baptist de La Salle. This concern for fidelity was expressed in a somewhat questionable manner on the first page of the book: *Conduct of the Christian Schools: by M. De La Salle, Priest, Doctor of Theology, and Founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*. The mention of De La Salle's name disappeared only with the 1860 edition, but it could have - and still can - mislead certain less well-informed readers. The 1828 text was clearly quite different from the one drawn up by John Baptist de La Salle.

Among the changes introduced we find a new way of maintaining emulation: *To encourage the children to study, and to stimulate their emulation, the teacher will decide on a certain number of bonus points to give to pupils who recite their lessons without any mistakes...* A little further on, in connection with learning how to read, we find a new article entitled *Emulation which should be used in teaching reading*.

The 1828 edition also expands the chapter on "Rewards". After a general explanation, there follow four articles devoted successively to Crosses of Honour, Privileges, Bonus Points, Tests. And so we find here new kinds of emulation and incentives in line with the trend set in motion in 1811. Privileges are not new. Crosses of Honour are presented as follows ; *Something that encourages pupils a lot and particularly flatters parents, is the well-regulated use of Crosses of Honour; but one must be careful to award them only on the basis of merit, and not allow them normally to be worn by the same pupil for more than a week*. Bonus Points *will be given to pupils who have come first in the test which should be given for each lesson in the class at the end of the month*. Finally, Tests: *As only emulation can produce any noticeable progress in a class, and since this emulation is created especially by tests, all teachers will ensure they give one every day on some part of what they have taught*. The subject can

vary from day to day. A more important test should be given at the end of each month, the results determining promotion to a higher level.

In summary, we have here a confirmation that the pedagogy of encouragement and emulation is being increasingly promoted, and that it is considered to be superior to a pedagogy based on repression. At the same time, it increases the number of occasions when pupils are compared with one another, giving rise to the danger of rivalry, competition and envy. These are limitations on good relations between pupils in class. This recalls also the following passage in the 1823 and 1828 edition concerning punishments: *In fact, one resorts to physical punishment only on a whim or because of incompetence; because physical violence is a servile punishment which demeans the soul even as it corrects; and even if it corrects, it usually results in hardening it*.

Texts and Documents

1. Privileges

"Nothing is more able to stimulate emulation than the intelligent use of privileges which, while rewarding merit, also serve to obviate the use of punishments. There are three kinds of privileges: for good behaviour, for application and finally for regular attendance. To obtain a reward for good behaviour, a pupil must have behaved for a whole week in such a way that he was not reprimanded for any shortcoming, such as coming late for school, not being recollected during prayers or in church, or some other infraction. To obtain a reward for application, a pupil must have followed all his lessons attentively all week, have completed diligently all the pages prescribed for the morning and afternoon, and have learned and recited the catechism prescribed for the lesson. To obtain a reward for regular attendance, a pupil must have, over the same period, arrived exactly on time when the school opened, as well as for the catechism lesson on Sunday, and have applied himself silently to his work during the first half-hour.

The value of privileges. The privilege for good behaviour is worth ten bonus points; for application, eight; and for regular attendance, four. The teacher can increase or decrease the number of conditions required for each privilege, as he sees fit. However, the teacher should be seen as being very reluctant to award privileges, so that pupils consider them very important and so value them more.

The use of privileges. Privileges can be used by pupils to exempt themselves from punishments imposed upon them, and normally this is why they consider them precious. For example, a pupil who has been given four or six catechism questions to copy out, can avoid this punishment by surrendering a certain number of the bonus points he has been awarded. The teacher will indicate how many bonus points each question is worth: for example, two questions could be worth three bonus points. Another pupil deserves a beating, but as he does not know how to write, the teacher will decide, according to the gravity of the misdemeanour, that he has to surrender six or eight

bonus points to avoid punishment. As for infractions involving quite clearly an element of ill will, the teacher will not accept the surrender of bonus points, and will insist on the penalty being paid, either by doing the lines or learning something off by heart. There are some pupils who are so keen on having bonus points that they prefer doing all the lines given rather than lose a single one. In such a case, the teacher should confiscate a certain number of bonus points without giving the pupil any extra work to do, because this keenness is a forerunner of avarice which has to be eradicated. There are others, although not many, who are so well-behaved that there is almost nothing to reproach them with, and so it is only just the teacher should allocate a certain number of bonus points they can obtain and exchange for some reward, such as a small book or a picture. In the case of poor children, it would be good to give them the school texts they need, since these are more necessary for them than other rewards. Care should be taken that pupils do not sell their bonus points - this would indicate a base and self-interested mentality. On the other hand, one should not prevent them helping one another sometimes by lending bonus points, which is a sign of kind-heartedness.

Privilege vouchers. These are exemption or privilege vouchers each indicating a certain number of bonus points. The teacher will have a stock of vouchers with a value of one, two, three, four bonus points respectively, to give as change when necessary. For example, a pupil has some lines to do and he can redeem himself by surrendering six bonus points. He has a voucher worth ten bonus points. He presents this voucher to the teacher who gives him change in the form of a voucher worth four bonus points. And so on. Vouchers for six or ten bonus points are worth privileges of commensurate value. Care should be taken to ensure bonus points and privileges are indicated on vouchers in a way that they cannot be counterfeited.

The benefits of privileges. If one can make the use of privileges interesting, long experience tells us that we can be sure they will prove very successful in stimulating emulation. How much punishment will be avoided in this way! How many children who normally behave well, infringe, in a moment of forgetfulness, some general prohibition. The rule which requires a particular punishment is not devalued when these pupils, whom one would reluctantly punish, have a certain number of these bonus points to hand, with which

they can pay for their infringement. And this is true of similar cases. The distribution of these bonus points should take place on the vigil of a school holiday or on a Sunday at the end of the catechism lesson. Care should be taken to invest this distribution with all the solemnity and attention one would normally reserve for an important occasion. One can use a register containing the names of all the pupils. Against each name, on one line, the bonus points awarded to the pupil are noted; on the line below it are noted the bonus points the pupil has surrendered because of infringements. The same method can be used to note down the different reasons for the award of privileges. This approach will obviate any uncertainty on the part of the teacher when awarding privileges; it will counter any possible abuse of the system by pupils, such as selling bonus points, stealing money from their parents to have the means to buy them, or stealing the bonus points themselves." (p.230-234).

2. Two new kinds of class monitors

"**Rehearsers**": In each class, there will be rehearsers responsible for making six or eight pupils, allocated to them by the teacher, recite their lesson. This will take place before class begins in the morning and in the afternoon, unless this causes disruption in the classroom. These monitors must attend school regularly, come to school early, not show favouritism to any pupil, not overlook any mistakes pupils make in their recitation, ensuring pupils recite their lesson seriously and very distinctly. Teachers themselves will make their pupils recite their lessons every day, as is indicated in the daily Regulations, to ascertain both if the pupils know their lesson, and if the rehearsers are doing their work properly. If the latter are seen to have been negligent, they should be punished or relieved of their duties. These rehearsers will recite their lesson to the teacher or to a pupil chosen by the teacher" (p. 234)

"**Verifiers of arithmetic and spelling exercise books**". "In the writing class, some of the more gifted pupils will have the task of checking either the arithmetic or the spelling exercise books of other pupils during the half-hour meeting on days chosen by the teacher. These verifiers will each be allocated a certain number of pupils to check on. They will check if the homeworks given have been done as required. They will correct the sums that have been done incorrectly and spelling mistakes. They will put a sign, by agreement

with the teacher, on exercise books that are very neat; and a different sign on those that are not, or where the homework is missing, so that on Wednesday, when the teacher examines these exercise books, he can see immediately which pupils have applied themselves, and which have been negligent. If these checks were difficult to carry out during the meeting, the spelling lesson on Wednesday could be used for this purpose. While the verifiers checked the exercise books of the pupils allocated to them, the teacher checked those of the verifiers" (p. 235).

Chapter 5
1838: The challenge of mutual education

Introduction

In the first third of the 19th century, a number of events had a bearing on the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and on the 1838 edition of the *Conduct of Schools*. We recall them here briefly.

- **1800-1801**: After ten years of Revolution and the failure of successive national education plans, the Consulate realised that the educational system had to be reconstituted. Consultation with the administrative councils of the *départements* in 1800-1801 revealed that the population was not happy with the current situation. Most of the people consulted had known the situation before the Revolution, they knew the schools that had existed then, and they wanted things to return to the way they were before. Several responses asked expressly for the return of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The administrative council of the Aude proposed in no uncertain terms *to reinstate the brothers of the christian schools under the name of the Brothers of public instruction, and to entrust primary education to them*. Other quotations along the same lines can be found in volume 3 of *L'enseignement et l'Éducation en France*, page 60. This was flattering for the Brothers, but at the beginning of the 19th century, there were no longer any in France - at least, officially. There is reason to think, however, that this nostalgia facilitated their return and the welcome they were given in certain places the following year.
- **1802**: Under the Consulate - Bonaparte was the First Consul - the Brothers returned to Lyon after ten years of dispersion and exile in the Papal States. This return was made easier by the friendly attitude of the civil authorities and by the archbishop, Bonaparte's uncle, Cardinal Fesch.

- 1808: A decree dated March 17th, created the Imperial University, responsible from then on for education. But primary schools were the responsibility of local authorities or dependent on private initiative. It was at this level that the Brothers were more particularly involved. As the Institute was integrated into the University, it had to respect its conditions:
- – wear a particular approved uniform. The Brothers returned to the one they had before the Revolution,
  - be subject to inspection by the civil authorities,
  - have the *Brevet* which qualified them to teach,
  - accept being called up for military service.
  - In practice, arrangements and exemptions were obtained for the Brothers.

1816: After a change in the political regime - the abdication of Napoleon and the return of the monarchy - educational matters were often the subject of decrees. The organisation of the University was maintained, but the support of the authorities for Mutual Education and its diffusion caused a great many problems for the Superiors of the Institute.

1833: The law dated June 28th, called the Guizot Law, regarding primary education, affected the Brothers as they were part of the University. They bore this in mind, as we shall see later.

- During this period, the number of Brothers in the Institute continued to increase steadily, despite the difficulties encountered, stemming from successive political changes: the Empire, the first Restoration, the Hundred Days and the brief return of Napoleon, the second Restoration, and the July 1830 Revolution. Even though the Institute did not involve itself in politics, it could not avoid the repercussions of administrative changes. Some ministers of education were favourable to the Institute, others much less so. This caused uncertainty, worry and inevitably, a need to adapt.

One of the main sources of administrative harassment was the appearance, in 1815, of Mutual Education which was pitted in a facile and oversimplified manner against the "method of the Brothers". We shall return to this. This

difficult and, at times, contentious development culminated in the drafting and publication of the 1838 edition of the *Conduct of Schools*.

The pressure of Mutual Education

Its appearance and expansion in France

During their stay in England, certain French exiles came across a different way of organising teaching in schools, called "Mutual Education" or the "Lancastrian Method". In fact, the method was not new, but it was practically unknown in France. Some of these emigrants became convinced that this method was exactly what France needed, given that there was an enormous need in France for teaching literacy, and a lack of resources to do so. When they returned, after the First Empire, they set about imposing it, exerting their influence in the corridors of power. Even Lazare Carnot, a former revolutionary, who was briefly Minister of Education during the Hundred Days, strongly supported Mutual Education. Others followed until 1830. These ministers wanted the Brothers, as members of the University, to adopt this method, and they repeatedly put pressure on the Superiors of the Institute to do so. They, however, refused stubbornly to accede to their demands.

This was particularly the case in 1815 in their dealings with Minister Lainé, a convinced supporter of Mutual Education. The Superior General, Brother Gerbaud, categorically refused to comply giving as his reason the vote of the 1817 General Chapter. But the minister had ways of exerting pressure by insisting on certain points. Without going into too much detail, we list a number of them:

- the need to have the *Brevet de Capacité* [Teacher's Certificate] in order to obtain authorisation to teach.
- exemption from being called up for military service at the normal age for conscription.
- the obligation to take the oath of loyalty, or the commitment to teach for ten years as a member of the University.
- the obligation to obtain an express authorisation from the authorities to open new schools.

– and the specific case of the transfer of the Brothers' Generalate from Lyon to Paris.

Despite everything, the Superior General held his ground and we shall see why. Fortunately, the successor of Lainé proved to be more accommodating, and a compromise was reached on all the points we mentioned. Brother Guillaume de Jésus replaced Brother Gerbaud and encountered fewer problems. He died a few months before the July 1830 Revolution, which brought with it new difficulties because the revolutionaries were not in favour of the activities of the Church and of its hold over education. It was Brother Anaclet, Superior General from 1830 to 1838, who had to deal with this situation.

Characteristics of Mutual Education

In 1815, Mutual Education was not something completely new. There were traces of it much earlier, even in France, but the method had become more widespread in England, especially because of the influence of Lancaster after whom, to some extent, it was named.

But before speaking about the mutual method, it would be good to sketch briefly the overall situation of education in France, after 25 years of Revolution and Empire.

- The needs were considerable. The literacy level was not brilliant in 1789. The fits and starts of the following twenty-five years hardly improved the situation.
- The economic resources allocated to education in 1815 and in the years that followed were inadequate to meet these needs. The country was emerging from a long period of ruinously expensive wars
- Any educational system which made it possible to provide schooling more cheaply for many children would be welcome. And that was one of the characteristics of Mutual Education: to bring together large groups of children, under the supervision of young unpaid monitors, and reduce necessary teaching materials to a minimum.
- With this method, one could envisage having groups of between 100 and 150 pupils in one large space. The group would be divided up into smaller homogeneous groups of 15 or so pupils, each under the direc-

tion of a young monitor, briefly instructed on what to do by the teacher at the beginning of the school day.

The *Society for primary education* wanted to extend this method of teaching, even generalise it, and their aims were supported by the Government. *This was a solution to remedy the lack of teachers and the insufficiency of funds; and moreover, by a sort of pedagogical miracle, this method promised to be infinitely more effective than the disastrous individual method. One can understand that it aroused great enthusiasm* (Antoine Prost, op. cit., p. 17).

In any case, the rivalry it provoked and the questions it raised, created emulation which was beneficial for the overall progress of education. It was credited also for proposing the simultaneous teaching of basic subjects. Its proponents pitted this against the teaching methods of the Brothers, who first taught the children to read, then successively, introduced writing and arithmetic. By teaching these subjects simultaneously, a lot of time could be saved. But to say this about the Brothers' methods would be to misrepresent what was said in the *Conduct of Schools* - as we explained in *Cahier lasallien* 62, *Pedagogical Approach* (See the Tables on pages 49 and 50). If we take the nine stages of learning to read as a point of reference, one can see that pupils were not expected to complete all these stages before starting to learn writing and arithmetic. So there was simultaneity. And the division of the pupils in each of the three classes (Juniors, Intermediates, Seniors) into homogeneous groups for all subjects, was a forerunner of what Mutual Education also wanted to accomplish.

The basic difference between Mutual Education and Simultaneous Education has to do with the role of the teacher. By the very way it was organised - groups of pupils entrusted to Pupil Monitors - Mutual Education separated the teacher from the pupils. This was something that John Baptist de La Salle and the Brothers never accepted. On the contrary, they were convinced that the very essence of the educational process was to be found in the presence, in the proximity of the teacher to his pupils, and in his profound personal knowledge of each one of them. The large numbers - between 60 and 70 pupils per class, as we learn from the *Conduct of Schools* - could not be an excuse for anonymity.

The fact that, at the beginning of the 19th century, not all those responsible for education were aware of the importance of personalised teacher-pupil relations, is understandable. A little later, educational sciences (psychology, pedagogy, psycho-analysis...) proved the Brothers right. Their opposition to the Mutual Method did not stem from an irrational stubbornness, but from a well-founded understanding of the growth-process of individuals.

As Françoise Mayeur wrote in the third volume of her *Histoire Générale de l'Enseignement et de l'Éducation en France*: *The systematic use of the mutual method in primary education was one of the great novelties of the Restoration. It was systematic but not exclusive or predominant. The Lasallian Brothers and their emulators in the new teaching congregations continued to demonstrate their attachment to the simultaneous method which had proved successful before the Revolution, while the majority of schoolmasters were ignorant of current innovative trends* (p. 374).

Analysing the different current methods of teaching, the Preface of the 1838 *Conduct* justifies its own choice as follows: *The advantages of the Simultaneous Method are undeniable, especially in a school large enough to require several assistant teachers; because in this context, each teacher having few small groups, can give the children composing them, longer lessons and greater attention to their needs. But what above all makes this method valuable, is that by putting the teacher into constant contact with the pupils, it gives him the means to develop their intellectual faculties, to study their characters and inclinations, and in this way to turn their hearts to virtue.*

Developed in an atmosphere of fierce debate, the opposition between the Mutual Method and the Simultaneous Method was not perhaps as radical as it seemed. There were points of convergence. What is more, this climate of competition was no doubt beneficial by promoting progress all round. There were of course the underlying political concerns which were fairly obvious, especially in the case of the proponents of the Mutual Method. As Françoise Mayeur writes: *Vividly coloured by the politically liberal views of its proponents, the saga of the mutual schools, which ran its course basically during the period of the Restoration and the early years of the July Monarchy, left a discernible mark for much longer and influenced practice. State schools adopted new methods which were, however, also similar to those of the simultaneous method of the Brothers.*

The century benefited in this way from contributions from various sources, and the contents were expanded in two ways: the number of compulsory subjects was limited, and middle school education was introduced as a continuation of basic primary school education (op. cit. p. 372).

After emphasising the advantages of the Simultaneous Method, the Preface of the 1838 *Conduct of Schools* continues in the same conciliatory tone, to propose a *Mutual Simultaneous Method: The teacher, following the Simultaneous Method, divides up his class into groups and gives his lesson in turn to all the groups; but the teacher following the Mutual or Mixed Simultaneous Method, instead of leaving the other groups to study, chooses monitors to give them lessons*. And the text adds: *The Mutual Simultaneous Method, combining the advantages of the purely simultaneous method with that of occupying the pupils more surely and usefully, can produce very good results.* ***This is the method recommended by this edition of the Conduct for all the lessons in which it can be applied***. This is not therefore the abandonment of the Simultaneous Method used for 150 years, but an improvement by consolidating what was practised before. The use of monitors had existed from the very beginning in Lasallian schools, but the way the system worked could be improved.

Resistance against the pressure from the authorities

The skirmishes between the Brothers and education authorities - referred to above - began at the beginning of the Second Restoration with the decree dated February 29th 1816. The Minister of Education wanted the Brothers to adopt the Mutual Teaching Method. With the backing of the General Chapter, Brother Gerbaud refused. In 1817, there arose the problem of the Brevet, the qualification necessary for teaching. The Superior General was not opposed to it. But the Minister wanted this qualification to be individual. The Superior General saw this as a threat to the unity of the Institute, accustomed to function from its very beginning "by association": *to oblige individual Brothers to obtain this particular diploma would separate the members from their head, and destroy in France the Congregation of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, replied the Superior.

To avoid the various measures exerting pressure, Brother Gerbaud appealed directly to the royal family, to certain bishops considered to be more

favourably inclined, and finally to the King himself. But it was the change of the minister in 1819 that defused the situation. Conciliation appeared to be possible and Brother Gerbaud wrote: *Individual Brevets, for which we had the greatest and most justifiable aversion, because of themselves and without any modification, they could bring about the ruin of the Institute, will no longer be a source of fear for us. Sent by the Rectors to the Superior General simply on sight of the Obedience of the teaching Brother, without his sitting an examination, these diplomas will be valid as longer as their holders fulfil their duties faithfully* (AMG EF 305). Similarly, in 1820, conditions were agreed on to allow young Brothers to be exempt from military service. Although it was opposed by certain diehard Catholics, the University was not abolished. But in 1824, a new decree put primary education under the control of the Church. The new King, Charles X, reinforced the bonds between the Monarchy and the Church. The dispute between Mutual Education and Simultaneous Education lost its virulence.

The Law on Primary Education (the Guizot Law) dated June 28th 1833

The second important element we find in the 1838 edition of the *Conduct of Schools* is the result of the 1833 Law, known as the Guizot Law, after the Minister of Education who had it adopted. As a member of the University, the Institute was affected by this law which was - and continues to be historically - a basic text for the organisation of primary education in France. A few words of explanation will help us to understand more fully the impact of this law.

The text begins by stipulating that primary education can be elementary or advanced, private or public. The difference between elementary and advanced primary education lies in the kinds of subjects taught:

- Elementary primary education subjects:
  1. Moral and religious instruction
  2. Reading
  3. Writing
  4. The basics of the French language and of arithmetic
  5. The official system of weights and measures (introduced by the Revolution)

- In the advanced primary, the following subjects are added:
  6. The basics of geometry and its common applications, especially line drawing and surveying.
  7. The basics of physics and natural history, applicable to everyday life.
  8. Singing.
  9. The basics of the history and geography of France.

The 1834 General Committee

The contents of this law affected the Brothers directly and they needed to adopt a position. The Superior General, Brother Anaclet, addressed the Institute in a letter dated August 7th 1834, which began as follows: *As the stock of the last edition of the Conduct of Schools (that of 1828) had run out, we informed you in our Circular dated December 17th that, before sending the new edition to the printers, we intended to make some changes which we thought were made necessary by the current situation. We even appealed to your zeal and insights, and some of you responded, sending us your thoughts and opinions for the improvement of this important work. We took advantage as far as was possible of their advice, and our work has finally been completed. But, before sending it to the printers, we thought it was our duty to consult the Institute in a more formal way, and consequently to submit it to the scrutiny of the Brothers who were most capable of evaluating it, and of judging the appropriateness or otherwise of the changes, corrections, additions or deductions we considered it necessary to make in the text.*

With this in view, we have decided to form a ***Committee****, composed as was stipulated by decision 60 of the 1787 General Chapter, which will represent the Body of the Institute and have as its mission to give a provisional ruling on all that concerns the Glory of God , the greater good of the Institute, and the spiritual and temporal benefit of all its Members, guided by the wise and holy Rules left to us by the Servant of God, Monsieur de La Salle...* Decision 60 of the 1787 General Chapter reads as follows: *Provincial Chapters (of little use and subject to disturbance) are suspended unanimously. In their place, every three years, there will be a Committee. Its decisions will be submitted to the General Chapter.*

For historical reasons we know, this decision could not be implemented during the years of Revolution. But Brother Anaclet and his Assistants set the

stipulated process in motion. After going ahead with the election of delegates, and checking the results of the elections, the General Committee met in Paris on October 25th 1834. Its proceedings and work are recorded in the Register of General Chapters (B), pages 70-74. In his opening statement, Brother Anaclet recalls that the Committee is called upon to deliberate on the question of *whether, as has been the practice for several years, line drawing and the basics of geography and history should continue to be taught in the schools of the Institute*. If the response were positive - it was unanimously so - it would be mentioned in the new *Conduct of Schools*. The Register adds that *some quite major changes* could be made. That is why this Assembly *devoted 32 sessions to the drafting of this work, decided that it should be printed in the form the Assembly had adopted it, and that in addition a copy of it should be kept in the archives of the Institute after it had been initialled by three members of the Committee and signed by everyone* (Register B, p. 138). The Committee made other decisions which do not concern us here, but some which are important, such as those relative to the stages of initial formation of the Brothers, or the expansion of the Institute beyond the frontiers of France, which had already begun. All these decisions had to be examined by the General Chapter, the supreme canonical authority in the government of the Institute. This took place at the 16th General Chapter held in Paris in 1837. The Chapter examined and approved the decisions of the Committee regarding the teaching of line drawing, history and geography. Then it studied the whole of the draft copy of the *Conduct of Schools*. In editions that followed this one, there was always a reference to the approval given by the 1837 Chapter.

Other Chapter decisions concern school matters. Let us look simply at article 3 which deals with two sensitive questions: the qualifications of teachers and music. *The Chapter, convinced that, given the present circumstances, it is impossible to run a school without having a Brevet de Capacité; and having been warned by Brother Superior General that it could happen that Inspection Commissions will in future require teachers to have not only a good knowledge of history, geography and line drawing, but also a basic knowledge of music; it is of the opinion that in these circumstances, the Regime could decide in what place, and which Brothers would be allowed to study this last subject on the curriculum, limiting themselves to what is strictly necessary* (Register B, p. 147).

In the documents of the period, we find a certain distrust on the part of the Brothers for teaching the arts. They had been teaching line drawing since the 18th century, but they feared abuse. That is why the Chapter forbade "figure drawing except in schools for adults and boarding schools". (article 12). Likewise, the Brothers' pupils would sing pious hymns everyday at the end of the school day, but the Brothers were afraid that the teaching of music might turn to popular and bawdy songs. Satirical and anticlerical songs were very popular at the time. This explains why Brother Anaclet wrote the following in *Circular* 91, dated May 8th 1837: *Although the subjects taught in school are already so numerous that one can hardly find the time to give a lesson every day on each special subject, there are some Brothers who seem to be prepared to increase this number by adding a lesson on music or plain-chant. We feel we must state here that this increase is completely against our wishes and that it is quite unnecessary ; and that consequently you must reject any approach made to you regarding this matter, unless such lessons are given after the end of the school day, outside the school premises, by an outsider and without the least involvement of the Brothers.*

Brother Anaclet died in September 1838, and another General Chapter was held in November to elect his successor. Brother Philippe was elected and began his long generalate which lasted 36 years. None of this affected the *Conduct of Schools* as it had been approved the previous year, in the following terms: *The Chapter approves the decisions taken by the Committee in its sessions held in October 1834, regarding the introduction into our schools of Line Drawing, History and Geography, as well as the new edition of the Conduct. It has introduced some changes in the Conduct's daily timetable, as well as in the Committee's article two; and it has respectfully included article twelve as drawn up by the Holy See.* (Article 2 concerned certain religious feasts, article 12, Chapter delegates).

Novel elements in the 1838 *Conduct*

Drafted by the 1834 Committee, approved by the 1837 General Chapter, the 1838 edition seeks to respond at the same time to the challenges of Mutual Education and to the directives of the Guizot Law, while including traditional chapters which linked it to previous editions.

Traditional chapters

As one might expect, the 1838 edition repeats the chapters regarding the subjects taught: reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, as well as Mass and catechism. It includes also certain aspects of organisation and order serving to ensure the smooth running of the school.

- In the first part: the manner of entering the school, the beginning of lessons, the posture of the teacher and of the pupils during lessons, rewards, prayers, leaving school.
- In the second part: the vigilance of teachers, signals used, registers, means of discipline, absences, days off and holidays, the structure of schools and appropriate furniture.
- The third part is entitled "Conduct for Formation Masters of Teachers", as before, and includes the three chapters we already know: The School Inspector, The Maxims the Formation Masters must instill into the minds of young teachers, Basic faults the Formation Master must eradicate in his young teachers. But the chapter regarding the School Inspector is very brief and does not include the material found in previous editions.

Novel elements

Some new chapters are included in this edition. We should mention first of all the first four pages devoted to the "Daily Timetable" for schools with three classes and more. It outlines how the time of a school day should be allocated to various activities. We can dwell a little longer on the following aspects. This might seem to be of secondary importance, but we have to remember that the addition of new subjects required such precision to help teachers and headmasters of schools. Other changes attract more attention.

- Chapter 5 devoted to "Lessons for Memorisation". As the number of school subjects increased, so emulation among pupils needed to be stimulated. Among the means suggested, we find: the division of lessons, the classification of pupils, which had not been done so far; the explanation of lessons, the order of recitation, regular tests, monthly changes and rewards. Born of long pedagogical experience, the introductory paragraph to the first article explains quite rightly that *to give*

a child a task too difficult and beyond his ability, serves to discourage him and give him a dislike for studying. On the other hand, to divide up his work into monthly parts, to sub-divide them into daily lessons, to check his progress when he moves on from one stage to another, and reward him with bonus points he can show his parents as a proof of his success, that is the way to obtain great results without difficulty and in a short time (p. 17). We find here, very clearly expressed, the basic concern of Lasallian schools from their very beginning, to give each pupil work he is capable of doing. Failing achieves nothing. A process must be created that breeds success. Modern theories about the learning process have confirmed this. *It is essential that pupils in every class should be divided up into several groups, however many classes there are in the school, so that each pupil can be given lessons commensurate with his abilities, otherwise some pupils would have too much work, while others would waste their time* (p. 19). At the end of the 20th century this was called Subject Ability Groups, as an appropriate response to mixed ability classes.

- This insistence on lessons for memorisation might raise fears of excessive mechanical memorisation to the detriment of the stimulation of the intellect. To avoid this disadvantage, the text adds: *Most children have a good memory. A good teacher should make them exercise it by the daily study of various subjects on the curriculum. But, since simply literal memorisation would be more or less useless for children little used to reflection, it would be useful if the teacher, when giving out the monthly lesson for memorisation, gave them some explanations about it, while waiting to be able to go into greater detail in the course of daily work in class* (p. 23). A good precaution to ensure the education of the mind. There follows a series of paragraphs devoted to the explanation of various subjects. To this we could add the two articles that follow (p. 27-32) in which the *Conduct* suggests various practical ways of making studying lessons easier. This is very consistent with practical and effective pedagogy.
- Chapter 7: *The neatness of exercise books and how to obtain it* contains a series of practical indications to achieve this result, because *the neatness of exercise books and their cleanliness contribute remarkably to the progress of children and to the reputation of the schools* (p. 54-55).

- Two new chapters (11 and 12) are obviously included in this new edition of the *Conduct*. They concern the recitation of geography and line drawing. These chapters dealing with new subjects are quite short. This is due probably in part to the novel nature of these subjects which are still being researched. In the case of geography, the explanations given on pages 62 and 63 are very brief. Although the reason is not immediately obvious, line drawing is associated with geography, because both subjects are visual and graphic. The *Conduct* has this to say: *The figures for drawing should be drawn beforehand on the blackboard, either for explanation or for recitation; and pupils will be made to follow exactly with a pointer the letters identifying the figures* (p. 64). What is involved here are kinds of outline maps, and so obviously what is required in this exercise is the acquisition of drawing skills to reproduce the models proposed - *plans and other figures for drawing*- as the text says.
- The recitation of history is not included in this part of the *Conduct*. It was mentioned briefly in article 1 ("Division of History") and article 4 ("Explanation of History"). The study programme is still quite rudimentary: *The history studied in the Christian Schools includes some notions about Sacred History, a summary of the History of France, and some notes on ancient and new peoples* (p. 25) This was in line with the directives of the 1833 Law: *Basic facts about the history and geography of France*.

Emulation

In the preceding chapter we emphasised the wish to make the transition from repression to emulation in Lasallian schools. It is consistent with this to find a dozen or so pages devoted to emulation. The basic idea is summarised in the introduction to this chapter: *Emulation is at the heart of progress. Without it, everything is sluggish in a class, and the best arrangements come to nothing. It alone makes progress discernible, and makes up for the little time available to make the children learn what is necessary* (p. 65). This is followed by two articles: the first deals with "tests" for the different subjects; and the second with the monthly "lesson changes". This chapter leads quite naturally to one on "Rewards", which speaks of Privileges, various Rewards, Satisfaction Notes, Bonus Points, Honour Crosses, all of which had been mentioned earlier.

Gradually, new ways were emerging of maintaining emulation and of encouraging a good atmosphere in class. We shall return to this later.

Decorum and Civility

"The care teachers should take to teach Decorum and Civility to the children". This is the title of chapter 18. In the first text of the *Conduct of Schools* - the 1706 Manuscript - there was no chapter specifically devoted to decorum and civility. And yet, this kind of behaviour was very much ingrained in 17th century society and in St John Baptist de La Salle's approach to education. But when we read the 1706 text, we realise that all behaviour, attitudes and posture, and all the language of the pupils were determined by the rules of civility. Also, the 9th level of reading consisted in the reading of the *Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility* - where all that was explained - in order to learn the special "type of printed characters used in books on civility" at that time. In 1838, the situation was different. This justifies the inclusion of this chapter which, however, is quite short. The chapter brings together various types of behaviour to be respected; but when one looks more closely, one sees that all these different elements were to be found scattered in the 1706 text. Let us note, however, what the chapter says about the excellence of decorum and civility: *It is one of the duties of the Brothers of the Christian Schools to educate their pupils in decorum and politeness. It would seem even that after Religion, there is nothing more important. Civility, at its best, is, as it were, nothing else than charity put into practice: a young man who learns early on to behave with decorum and decency, will respect at least certain boundaries, and will not indulge in lapses of behaviour which would demean him in the eyes of his companions* (p. 104-105). We note that the word "politeness" is beginning to be used as a synonym for "civility" and, in practice, it will replace it later in everyday language, losing possibly some of its depth of meaning.

The Preface of the 1838 edition

The most interesting and most surprising part of this edition is the Preface (p. I-IV). Its contents can be explained and justified by the context of the dispute over Mutual Education we referred to earlier. Its aim is evidently to set out clearly and justify the methodological choice of the Institute. We can get some idea of this by reading the text itself at the end of this chapter. The

Preface is both a reminder of the choice made by St John Baptist de La Salle and of the constant practice of the Brothers for 150 years, as well as a plea in favour of the Simultaneous Method. The explanatory Note inserted in the text leaves no room for ambiguity regarding this matter.

We may find the last paragraph of this Note somewhat surprising where it states that *The Simultaneous Mutual Method ...is the method prescribed by the Conduct for all lessons in which it can be used.* But we need to remember that, from the very beginning, Lasallian schools used class monitors for various kinds of coaching of less-advanced groups of pupils. However, the way this help was organised was different from that used by Mutual Education.

This Preface must have suited the Brothers because it was included - and especially the contents of the Note stating, for example, the specificity of Lasallian schools - in successive editions up to the beginning of the 20th century. Faced with a difficult situation, or called into question, the Brothers' Institute feels it necessary to explain clearly its educational and pedagogical approach. This was the case in the 1830s.

Conclusion

Brother Anaclet, Superior General since 1830, died on September 6th 1838. The General Chapter, called for November 21st of the same year, elected as his successor Brother Philippe who would remain for 36 years in this post. His generalate was marked by a great increase in the number of Brothers. This is one of the reasons for the short intervals between successive editions of the *Conduct of Schools* in the 20 years that followed his election. With this increase in the number of Brothers, there was also the diffusion of the *Conduct* outside the Institute: it was adopted by new Congregations of Teaching Brothers, certain Congregations of Sisters (some adapted the text to their own situation); and even by State schools. These editions (1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853 and 1856) made no important changes to the 1838 edition, and the endpaper always carried the statement: *New Edition, revised, corrected and approved by the General Chapter of 1837*. This statement disappeared with the 1860 edition which we shall be considering in the next chapter.

Texts and Documents

1. An interesting Preface: to the 1838 edition

"The virtuous Master John Baptist de La Salle, Canon of Rheims Cathedral, seeing the incalculable evils which inevitably resulted from the state of ignorance in which most working-class children were left, believed that providing instruction and education for them would render an immense service to Society and Religion. Instruction, by embellishing their mind, would lead them to fulfill honourably the duties of the profession they would embrace. Education, by inspiring their hearts to be virtuous and to practise Religion, would make good citizens and good Christians of them.

Imbued with these sentiments, and profoundly convinced that God wished him to carry out such a noble design, the pious Canon's only thought was to comply with the wishes of Providence in his regard. Among the means which came to mind, and the one which appeared to him to be most effective, was the creation of a Congregation of men entirely devoted to primary education. And so he began to bring some young men together in order to teach them the art of bringing up young people well. But, convinced that the most perfect dedication and the most absolute disinterestedness alone could make his enterprise effective, he wished to give his disciples his personal example of both. He, therefore, himself undertook the work of a teacher of young people, divested himself of his canonry, and distributed all his goods to the poor.

The Individual Method of teaching, the only one used at that time in primary schools, was not thought suitable by this great man to attain the aims he had in mind. Constant reflection and the power of his genius led him to invent the Simultaneous Method, which will be for all time one of the most useful discoveries of the human mind[1].

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[1] "There are at present four methods in use in Primary Education: the Individual method, the Simultaneous method, the Mutual method and the Simultaneous Mutual method.

* The teacher who instructs his pupils by teaching each one individually each of the subjects on the curriculum, follows the Individual method.

* The teacher who divides up his pupils into equal ability groups, and teaches each group in turn while the others study, follows the Simultaneous method.

The generous Canon understood also that, in order to make his teaching stable and permanent, it was necessary to make it uniform in all his schools, and so he stipulated by writing the form it should take and the way it should be carried out. This was the origin of the *Conduct of the Christian Schools*.

The disciples of M. De La Salle, imbued with his spirit and inspired by true zeal for the education of young people, neglected nothing in their efforts to improve their method of teaching. Forming a united body and all inspired by a single aim, they made sure they shared with one another the discoveries they made, which their work as teachers made possible. These discoveries, subjected to further tests, were then included in subsequent editions of the *Conduct*, which ended up containing the most complete system of Simultaneous primary education.

The new method was recommended by the 1816 Decree which created, as it were, primary education in France, and a great number of teachers introduced it into their schools.

However, some of the additions made to the *Conduct* were not sufficiently coordinated with the original text. Certain measures were inserted which were already present but differently expressed, or which contradicted others.

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* The teacher who divides up his pupils into a number of groups, and gets other more advanced pupils called Monitors to give them lessons, while he restricts himself to maintaining overall order, follows the Mutual method.

* The teacher who, having divided up the pupils into groups as described in the Simultaneous method, gives his lesson in turn to each group, but instead of leaving the other groups to study on their own, gets Monitors to give them lessons, follows the Simultaneous Mutual or the Mixed method.

* The Individual method can be used only for private lessons. It has been banned in State schools because of the time it wastes.

* The advantages of the Simultaneous method are undeniable, especially in a school large enough to require several assistant teachers; because in this context, each teacher having few small groups, can give the children composing them, longer lessons and greater attention to their needs. But what above all makes this method valuable, is that by putting the teacher into constant contact with the pupils, it gives him the means to develop their intellectual faculties, to study their characters and inclinations, and in this way to turn their hearts to virtue.

* The Mutual method makes it possible to gather a large number of pupils, with one teacher in charge, without the intermediary of assistant teachers, but it is to the detriment of a more personal contact between the teacher and his pupils.

* The Mutual Simultaneous Method, combining the advantages of the purely simultaneous method with that of occupying the pupils more surely and usefully, can produce very good results. This is the method recommended by this edition of the *Conduct* for all the lessons in which it can be applied."

The result was that in several chapters there were repetitions and even a kind of incoherence.

The aim of the 1827 edition was to remedy these shortcomings. As part of the progress made by primary education in France was the introduction of new subjects into the curriculum of primary schools, the senior Brothers of the Institute were called to form a general Committee in August 1834 for consultation regarding whether or not the Institute should introduce the teaching of these subjects.

The Committee decided that the teaching of these new subjects should be introduced into schools, and that the manner of teaching them would be included in the new edition of the *Conduct* which the Regime submitted for its examination. The Chapter held in 1837 approved the decisions of the Committee, and adopted the Regime's text with some minor modifications.

It is this new edition, revised, corrected and approved by the Chapter, that we are publishing today. The Brothers of the Institute should receive this precious book as being given to them by God through the intermediary of their Superiors, and convinced that they will fulfil the goal set by their vocation worthily only to the extent that they follow what is prescribed for them in the *Conduct*. They should read it often so as to assimilate what their duties are, and learn from it how best to carry them out.

This editions, like previous ones, is divided into three parts. The first part deals with all the school activities and the way to give each lesson. The second part speaks of the way to establish and maintain good order in school. The third part sets out the duties of the School Inspector and of the Formation Master of new teachers"

2. A concession to the Mutual method

In a circular dated June 1st 1831, Brother Anaclet, made the following suggestion. Realising that certain children remained too long in the early stages of learning to read, he thought that "to remedy this shortcoming and to speed up progress in the Junior classes, it would be good to place around the class three or four small boards. On one there would be letters and some easy- to- read syllables; on another, syllables more difficult to read; on a

third, words divided into syllables; and on the fourth, separate words and even whole sentences. After the teacher has made the children read from the Alphabet Chart and the Syllable Chart, he makes them stand in front of the boards, and an Inspector, appointed for the day and week concerned for each Order, makes the pupils read for the rest of the time. Pupils using the second book, remain in their place reading in a low voice, supervised by another Inspector, while the teacher gets on with the following Lesson.

It would be good to follow a similar procedure for explaining arithmetic problems. To do this, there would have to be in each Senior class as many blackboards as there are Arithmetic Orders. Pupils would be seated in rows according to the Lesson they were studying. With the Question Paper in front of them, they would practise, under the supervision of an Inspector, solving on their board the problem they were set. Then each pupil would solve the problem in his exercise book. Meanwhile, the Inspector would demonstrate solving the problem to the less intelligent pupils of the Order, noting those who did best. When the first problem was solved, he would give them another, which would be solved in the same way. The teacher would busy himself with overall supervision, giving lessons and explanations in turn to all the Orders, and ensure that all made progress.

The Punctuation and the Numeration Charts being of little use, since the first can be found in the Grammar, and the second in the Treatise on Arithmetic, they could profitably be replaced by the blackboards mentioned earlier.

Used by zealous and vigilant teachers, such procedures will result in rapid progress in Reading and Arithmetic, as many Brothers who have been using them for a long time now have found. We can therefore say with confidence that we have taken from the Mutual Method all that is really useful and applicable to our own way of teaching".

(In this text, the word "Inspector" refers to a pupil).

3. The *"Brevet de Capacité"*

In the circular dated June 1st 1831, the Superior General, Brother Anaclet, recalled that "The obligation to have the Brevet will in future be restricted

solely to the Brothers teaching in the Senior classes, and it will be issued without any other formality apart from a request made by us for those who had not obtained it earlier. Rectors will be informed without delay about this arrangement. Consequently, all Directors are requested to send us a list as soon as possible of all the Brothers in their communities, whether they have the *Brevet* or not" (AMG).

Here is an example of a *Brevet* issued by the Academy of Grenoble: "*Brevet de Capacite for Primary Education - Second Degree*. We, the Rector of the Academy of Grenoble, on the presentation made to us by Mr Quantain Jean, born in Bordeaux, Department of the Gironde, on September 6th 1787, of Letters of Obedience issued to him by the Superior General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, dated September 10th 1821, according to which the aforementioned Mr Quantin (Brother Arnould) was admitted into this Institute in order to devote himself to primary education; considering that, according to the instructions sent to us by the Commission of Public Instruction, these Letters are to take the place of examinations and certificates prescribed for other Primary School teachers, We have granted Mr Quantin the present Brevet, which will be sent to the Superior General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, and which will be valid for all the time during which the recipient will remain a member of the Institute.

Issued at Grenoble. September 21st 1821.

Signature of the Teacher

Inspector responsible for
Academic Administration

Chapter 6
1860: The choice of a practical approach to teaching

Introduction

On opening the 1860 edition of the *Conduct of Schools*, one is struck immediately by certain special features. First of all, the title: *An experimental Conduct for the use of the Christian Schools*. It is surprising to apply the term "experimental" to the 16th edition of the work. And yet, in the mind of Brother Philippe, the Superior General at the time, it really was experimental; it could be called a complete revision of a text all actively engaged Brothers knew well, and the previous edition of which had appeared as recently as in 1856. Brother Philippe, however, despite his modesty, was fully convinced of the accuracy of this title. On January 26th 1861, when the text would already have been well known, he wrote in a circular: *Our dear Brother Directors and Senior Masters are asked to send to dear Brother Visitor any observations they may have made concerning the Experimental Conduct of Schools. Our dear Brother Visitors are asked to collect them and then send them in a particular order, adding their own observations*. It was therefore an experimental text that could be modified and improved, and not simply a reprint of the previous edition. Two months later, in a circular dated March 21st 1861, Brother Philippe returned to the same subject: *Several of our dear Brothers have sent us their observations regarding the Experimental Conduct of Schools. We were delighted to see their haste to respond to our invitation. Also, while thanking them, let us follow their lead, those of you who, because of your experience and studies, are capable of evaluating this work and of indicating what is incomplete or wrong about it.*

We ask you to write down your observations, adding in the margin the number of the page they refer to, and then to send them to the Brother Visitor, or if that could not be done without some difficulty, to send them directly to us when you next

write. We have once again a process involving as wide a participation as possible, as the basis for work done by association.

Another obvious change is that the name and titles of John Baptist de La Salle no longer feature on the cover or the endpaper of this new edition. This is simply honesty: the text in its revised form is no longer that of the Founder and so cannot be attributed to him, as had been the case in previous editions. As we have already said, this could have led to a certain amount of confusion.

One can also consider as denoting a change of era, the fact of doing away with the "Author's Preface" - that of John Baptist de La Salle, dating from 1706 - which had been always included as a sign of veneration, and through a wish to preserve the original guidelines. It was quite a normal practice for Brother Philippe to rework the writings of the Founder.

None of this probably has anything to do with the fact that a new publisher was chosen for this Experimental edition, a certain Beau jeune, Publisher, Versailles.

Why these important changes?

In 1860, Brother Philippe had been Superior General for 22 years. During this period, the *Conduct* had gone through seven editions, replicating the text approved in 1837. The eighth edition was clearly different and marked a change. To understand the reason for this, we need to return to the dispute between Mutual Education and Simultaneous Education, which we dealt with in the previous chapter.

The confrontation between the two teaching methods was not simply a fruitless argument: it led also to serious thought about pedagogy in general, and in particular, about pedagogy in primary schools. It focused on all aspects of how schools were run. A number of issues had to be faced: a growing need for schooling, the provision of the most economic means for teaching pupils and organising schools, and the promotion of the most effective methods. One can see that all the various works and publications of the time concentrate at the same time on school structures, the internal organisation of schools and on methodology. This may seem somewhat basic to us now, but we need to see this in its historical context, and remember that right up to

the time of the French Revolution, there had been no Ministry of Education in the country, with all that this implied regarding legislation, organisation, curriculum, examinations and tests, staff and funding. We can also add to this the lack of professional training for teachers. It needed time for all this to be put into place. The last ten years of the 18th century had been particularly chaotic: the creation of the Imperial University was an important attempt at centralised organisation; the Public Instruction Ministers of the Restoration found it very difficult to impose their authority; the Guizot Law of 1833 represented an important step forward and inaugurated a period of stability for primary education.

All these efforts led to the development and the focus of subsequent pedagogical thinking. From it there came the awareness of the need to improve and adapt school premises; the comparison of the respective advantages and the disadvantages of the Individual, Simultaneous and Mutual methods; an examination of methods and didactic practice in order to make the pupils' work more attractive, more varied and more effective.

- The material context of the school. As we have already said, it was only towards the middle of the 19th century that civil authorities and school administrators showed any real interest in the working conditions of pupils. The miserable situation of many Little Schools under the *Ancien Régime* is well known. It lasted in many places well into the first half of the 19th century. That is why we drew attention earlier (see chapter 2) to the chapter of the *Conduct* concerning the structure of Lasallian schools, and the furniture that was appropriate for them, a chapter introduced in 1720 and included in all the subsequent editions. We emphasised how innovative this concern was. The problem still existed in 1830, and genuine solutions appeared only 30 years later. Regarding teaching materials, school textbooks were an essential element to ensure effective work. There were few of these in existence, and so they had to be written and published. Pierre Giolitto, in his *Histoire de l'École*, devotes two chapters to this concrete step forward in education: *A house for the school* and *The tools of the pupil*. And Antoine Prost (op. cit. p. 115), rightly observes: *Only the schools of the brothers had managed to impose the use of the school texts of their Congregation. But,*

this was not an unimportant detail: in practice, the teaching method as a whole depends on these material elements.

- Pedagogical organisation. In the first phase, there was the difference between the Individual Method and the Simultaneous Method. One might be tempted to think that the Simultaneous Method had amply proved its superiority throughout the 18th century. However, in the 19th century, many rural primary school teachers continued to use the Individual Method, whose disadvantages were well known: the waste of time, pupils with no work to do, lack of discipline and inevitable recourse to punishments. This was the context in which the Mutual Method had appeared and had tried to take root. At the same time, it drew attention to a variety of school problems and so contributed to overall progress. The rivalry between the three methods led to the search for the most satisfactory organisation of pedagogy.
- Methodology and didactic practice. New ideas were most evident in connection with reading, where the use of movable letters and various charts sought to introduce some variety into work. But the idea spread that there existed a number of different teaching techniques to make school learning more pleasant and more varied. There appeared the *Primary School Manual*, followed by other textbooks. From the Restoration onwards, the Brothers published their own textbooks, and this practice became increasingly widespread and systematic during the rest of the 19th century.
- The training of teachers. Pedagogical research highlighted also the scarcity of trained teachers. Differences between schools no doubt reflected this scarcity. Minister Guizot undertook the establishment of Teacher Training Colleges to provide this initial formation. In this area, the Brothers had the benefit of long experience. We spoke of this in the chapter on Brother Agathon; and we can see from the history of the Institute that also both Brother Anaclet and Philippe showed great interest in teacher training. It was moreover because of the quality of the training given to the Brothers, they had obtained under the Restoration, permission to replace the examination leading to the *Brevet de Capacité*, by the Letter of Obedience from the Superior.

The Brothers and their Superiors were sensitive and attentive to current pedagogical developments, all the more so, as a number of them worked in State schools, directly organised and controlled by local and educational authorities. This slow process of development led to the 1860 edition of the *Conduct of Schools*. It was an "experimental" edition, as the title modestly announces, but an experimental text that had to be translated into current practice, as is borne out by Brother Philippe's appeal for any useful observations and suggestions.

The intentions of Brother Philippe

The foreword to this edition is signed by Brother Philippe. In simple and straightforward language he explains what the text aims to achieve.

- He briefly recalls the two principal aims of the *Conduct of the Christian Schools:* to help teachers to do their work, and to establish uniformity among all the schools of the Institute, because this helps pupils to follow the programme of studies even when their teachers are changed.
- He continues by recalling the historical origin of the *Conduct*. De La Salle chose the Simultaneous Method *infinitely superior because of its emulation and saving of time*, *he trained the teachers*... He then drafted the *Conduct which the Brothers expanded gradually as they improved their method, and which now contains a complete system of primary education*.
- But it was not meant to be a definitive version. The following paragraph summarises well the nature of such a work and its provisional and progressive character. *One can understand that a book such as this cannot be given a definitive form: fresh experience, advances in methodology, legal requirements, new needs, etc. make it necessary from time to time to introduce various changes*. At the present time, considerable change appeared to be indispensable: for example, the disappearance of corporal punishment made it necessary to suggest forms of emulation and to choose those which could be effective.
- As there are some quite major changes, the *Conduct* will be *only experimental*, while waiting for Brothers to send in their observations. *We call on our dear Brothers to accept this way of thinking, because, in the Institute, we must share with one another the means at our disposal, and enable others to benefit from our own experience*.

- For the *Conduct* calls on everybody to send in their observations: *in this way they will take part in drafting the Conduct itself which, for our Institute, is a work of the greatest importance and over which we cannot take too much care*.

Here we have, explained in a few paragraphs, how the Institute works by association.

The contents of this experimental text

1st Part: "The subjects which are taught in school and the manner in which this is done"

With variations in the way they were divided up, the first part of the *Conduct* had always been devoted to the subjects taught in Lasallian schools. What catches our attention in this 1860 experimental text, are the following aspects:

- First of all, the number of chapters: 19. This can be explained in part by the introduction of new subjects since 1833, but not entirely.
- The style is much more direct and consequently easier to understand. The concern for readability is evident.
- The introduction of certain elements which recall previous difficulties, such as, for example, the rivalry with Mutual Education.
- Clear evidence of the pedagogical research undertaken in the preceding thirty years, and which we referred to above, to arrive at more concrete ways forward in methodology.

The first chapter: **"Division of the school and admission of pupils"** (p. 1-2). The very first sentence of the text recalls that Lasallian schools always have several classes - from 2 to 5 - and why this is so: *as a result pupils of widely differing maturity and ability are never together in the same class, nor under the direction of the same teacher, which is a great advantage from all points of view* (p. 1). This is a necessary condition for the use of the Simultaneous Method. There is no mention here of "Orders" - which were sub-divisions of lessons - but of the division of classes *into several sections so that they can function simultaneously*. On admission, new pupils are *allocated according to their age and ability*. What progress this is by comparison with what was the normal

practice in 17th century schools. The text gives a summary of admission procedures, which were described in much greater detail in previous editions. Given the present situation in classrooms, it is difficult to forgo the pleasure of quoting the following paragraph: *It is not appropriate to admit too many pupils into our schools: sixty or so in the senior classes, and between a hundred and hundred and twenty in the junior classes, would seem to be enough. To have more would be harmful to teaching and to the health of the teachers...!*

The following three chapters: "Daily timetable"; "Entering the school"; "Behaviour of teachers and pupils during lessons" add nothing new to what was said in previous editions. On the other hand, chapter 5: "Teaching and the method used" is clearly longer and new. It brings together a whole series of elements which perhaps are not entirely new, but which it seems logical to bring together here. Dealing with "the subjects taught and in general the method used", the text lists the various subjects, first those relating to religion, and then secular subjects, stressing the importance of the latter *so that the Christian Schools are in no way inferior to other schools; and so that parents who prefer them for reason of their morality and religion, have no reason to regret their choice because they do not find in them all the advantages they might desire for the education of their children* (p. 9). *However many of these various special subjects there may be, the way a Christian School is organised facilitates their teaching, and a zealous teacher can obtain appropriate success if he is methodical and persistent* (p. 9-10). There follows a list of nineteen points describing how to be methodical. This is the first example of the many lists which characterise this edition of the *Conduct*. At this point, the Experimental Text presents the Four Methods of teaching we spoke about in the previous chapter. It became, in some way, the rallying cry/text of the Brothers. Article 3, which follows, is devoted to "Teaching by Question and Answer" (pp. 13-15), an approach sometimes called the "Socratic method", already used by the Brothers, particularly when teaching catechism. It is worth reading carefully the 19 points in this article concerning the nature and quality of the questions one could ask.

Chapter 6: "Memorisation Lessons" tries to strike a balance between training the memory and the intelligence. *Although the essential role of education is to form the judgment of pupils, it is necessary to give appropriate importance to memorisation exercises, and to use them as much as possible* (p. 16). The following

chapters are devoted to the four traditional subjects taught, listed in the *Conduct* from the very beginning: Reading, Writing, Grammar and Spelling, Arithmetic. This final chapter, in particular, has been greatly expanded since 1706, and the areas of study have become more specific and varied. There is an awareness of the importance of arithmetic in the education of children, and regret is expressed for the lack of time that can be devoted to it. It is interesting to note how an attempt is made to maintain a balance between the mechanics of calculation which need to be mastered, and sums which call upon the intelligence for the solving of problems. History, geography and line drawing, recent additions, are also included in the curriculum. Geometry is added to line drawing, and the link between the two is quickly perceived. Mastery of line drawing enables a pupil also to draw geometric figures well. We should add that the Brothers were well acquainted with these two subjects as they had had a prominent place in the curriculum of boarding schools since the 18th century. The text mentions a number of interesting points: *To train pupils to make sketches freehand of the main objects they have in front of them , such as tables, chairs, windows, doors...is a really useful exercise for workers* (p. 67). *Pupils attending ordinary schools will not be allowed to study academic drawing: success in this subject requires much more time than is generally available for pupils. And as for pupils studying line drawing, they should not be set difficult or complex objects to draw* (p. 68). *As decorative illustration is very useful for workers in general, pupils can be given training in it, using a method similar to the one we mentioned in the chapter on writing, and which we called the 'system of model exercise books'* (p. 68). And this chapter ends with the following words: *Geometry is studied at the same time as drawing ; however, when teaching this special subject, too much time should not be given to demonstration, but the pupils should be given plenty of practice doing numerical or graphic exercises* (p. 68). We see here, therefore, concern for training the mind and providing education that is practical and specifically focused.

Some observations about this first part:

- It clearly devotes four chapters to religious activities: catechism, Mass, prayers. And the chapter on education in civility has not been forgotten, even if the word used now is "politeness".
- Basically, this first part, devoted to subjects taught in primary schools, has not changed much. That is to be expected, since it is the aim of all

schools. It is also prescribed by the 1833 Law, and so it has become legally obligatory. This aspect of schools was already well-organised because it was the result of long, diversified, shared and analysed practice over more than a century.

- While one can make a distinction between secular and religious subjects, it should be remembered that the latter also were included in the Guizot Law, and even headed the curriculum.
- As for its form, one can note that the style of the Experimental Text is more clear and precise. Teachers, no doubt, found it easier to understand.
- It even expresses regret that there was not enough time to devote to all the subjects! In fact, we have here a cumulative educational system: new subjects are being added, but available time for school is not elastic. We need to take into account, of course, that generally speaking, schools did not have electricity, and were restricted to daylight hours. Excessive restriction of time could have repercussions on the quality and solidity of the learning process.

2nd Part: Specific means to ensure pupils were orderly and worked

To begin with, we should note that the title of this second part speaks not only about order, but also about work, and this gives an idea of the motivation of pupils.

That is perhaps why the first chapter of the second part has the title *Emulation*. This is quite a long chapter, 25 pages long, and the fact it is the first pedagogical means mentioned is both interesting and significant. After the first article, entitled "General Considerations and a list of the principal means of emulation used in our schools" - which we reproduce in an appendix - this chapter proposes the following means:

- seating promotion in class
- tests
- exams
- promotion
- transfer from one group of pupils to another
- the formation of rival sides
- conferences (sorts of debates or discussions)

- privileges and bonus points
- weekly notes
- honour notes
- the right to ask forgiveness
- seats of honour and class responsibilities
- honour crosses
- honour boards

By way of symmetry, the following chapter is entitled *Punishments*. It also is long and goes into detail, but it is quite clear that the practice of corporal punishment is absolutely forbidden. The Superior General is adamant on this point, and from time to time expresses his point of view in strong terms, as we can see from the following extracts from some of his *Circular*s: *We think also it is good to draw the attention of our dear Brothers to the prohibition of any kind of corporal punishment. We should be aware that there is no excuse for it even if it is the result of a fit of impatience; and in this connection, we should take care not to punish pupils to satisfy the demands of parents: let us not stray from the wise prescriptions of the Conduct which forbid us to do so* (*Circular* dated February 20th 1864). Further on, he writes: *According to the laws of the State, all crimes should be punished according to their seriousness, accompanying circumstances, and the effects they can have on society. Therefore, according to the laws of the State, all corporal punishment, all blows delivered to a child, whether a slap, a kick, a blow with a ruler or a stroke with a cane..., are considered to be a crime, and can lead the person guilty of it to appear in court, and be banned, fined or put in prison...* Brother Philippe goes on for a few pages commenting on this prohibition of all corporal punishment. We note only the following sentence: *It is then clearly understood that the use of the cane is very definitely forbidden; and that to use it on the pretext that it used to be allowed before, would be, I repeat, a real crime, a violation of the law, and consequently, subject to judicial condemnation*. The chapter on punishments is nevertheless long and detailed. If offers an arsenal of dissuasive measures: *Repressive measures in use in the Christian Schools*:

- *reprimands*
- *confiscation of bonus points*
- *loss of place of honour*
- *being put in the corner or detention*

- *isolation*
- *doing lines*
- *loss of the Cross of Honour, removal from jobs*
- *being put on the "Board of Shame"*
- *being sent to the headmaster with a note indicating the misdemeanour*
- *demotion from one section or class to another (reserved punishment)*
- *temporary exclusion from the school (reserved punishment)*
- *presentation of excuses, asking forgiveness (reserved punishment)*
- *being publicly shamed (reserved punishment).*

Instead of this imposing list, one could recall other passages from this chapter which concentrate more on educational considerations, such as the *General considerations* regarding punishments which lead to eleven basic principles governing punishments.

The third chapter in the second part could be called the central panel of the triptych: after emulation and punishment, it goes on to speak of *Good Order and some means to obtain and maintain it*. It sounds very much like a repetition of the title of the second part as a whole. Although it is very short, this chapter proves to be very interesting. In the course of only three pages, it offers 23 means, based on common-sense and self-control, thought to promote good order in school. It would take too long to quote them in full. It is an illustration of the vigilance a teacher should have in class.

These first three chapters are the newest and most interesting ones. Those that follow seem more traditional and deal with points already treated in previous editions, such as Signals, Registers, Regular Attendance, Free Days, Holidays, Class Monitors and finally "The Structure of Schools and the furniture appropriate for them".

3rd Part: The Virtues and the Qualities of a Teacher

In this 1860 edition, the third part no longer includes the rule of the School Inspector, or the rule of the Formation Master of New Teachers. But they were available in a separate publication, as was the practice in the 18th century. These texts had lost none of their value in the eyes of the Institute. In 1860, there was simply a new "experimental" text.

On the other hand, this third part consists solely of the 36 pages devoted to "the virtues and the qualities of the teacher". To remove any possible misunderstanding, we need to point out that neither De La Salle, in 1720, nor Brother Agathon, in 1785 in his commentary (see chapter 3 above), used the word "virtue" in a purely religious sense, but also in its etymological sense of "virile strength". Given this meaning, it is interesting to note that the 1860 text associates the words "virtues" and "qualities", which is more in line with the present meaning.

The first surprise, of course, is to discover that there are 14 virtues and not 12, as before. And why not? We are in an area in which the list can be shortened or lengthened according to preference or circumstances. To throw some light on the matter, we can compare briefly the two lists. In fact, the original 12 virtues have been kept, but a single commentary deals with prudence and reserve. The virtues of constancy, firmness and good example have been added, but these are not really new as they were included in previous editions of the *Conduct*. And one can quite legitimately consider them to be qualities needed by a teacher.

Prudence and reserve are tied-in with a concern which surfaces in certain of Brother Philippe's *Circulars* concerning teacher-pupil relations. Already in a *Circular* dated January 15th 1849, after recalling the importance of silence as a means of ensuring order and authority, the Superior reminded the Brothers of the importance of setting a good example by all their behaviour without falling into weakness or familiarity: *no familiarity, no contact, no intimacy, no act, no word, no sign which could not be reported to a father or a mother without compromising you or even exposing you to the slightest embarrassment, or the least worry*. In another *Circular* dated July 5th 1853, he returns to the same subject in the following terms: *In order to be sanctifying for us and edifying for the pupils, our relations with them must be accompanied by the most minute precautions. We must love them all, but love them in God and for God. We must be attracted to the soul which cost Jesus Christ so much, and not to external appearance, charm or dress. We must give everyone the help they have a right to expect from us; but it would be dangerous to pay particular attention to any individual and show special concern for him*. Strangely, the chapter on Prudence and Reserve is the longest one in this third part, even though it is only 7 pages long, and it contains several lists of practical means:

- Rules regarding prudence when teaching physical education: 6 specific points.
- Rules regarding prudence when teaching intellectual subjects: 5 points.
- Rules regarding prudence when giving moral and religious instruction: 26 points.
- Regarding favouritism to a pupil: 7 points.

"Good example" is treated last. The chapter begins by general considerations regarding the need and importance of giving good example to pupils. The chapter rightly insists on this point, and even begins with the following statement: *There is one obligation of such importance that all virtues unite in prescribing it for teachers: it is that of constantly setting a good example for their pupils, and for this reason, being truly virtuous themselves. In fact, example is the first, the most widespread and the most powerful of all the ways of teaching: for the education of the heart, it is almost all that is required, and there is nothing that can replace it*. (p. 200). One can understand why this "virtue" has been treated last, to serve as a natural conclusion. It is true that all the virtues and qualities serve together to offer a good example, and that without it the whole educational process would not work.

In a general way, even if implicitly, the reference to the 1720 list and Brother Agathon's text is real. However, the authors of the 1860 edition are not in any way prisoners of these two earlier texts: the order of the list is not exactly the same, and Brother Agathon's commentary is not reflected in the new formulation, neither in the form nor in its contents. The desire to suggest practical ways of implementation to the Brothers is evident in the 1860 edition.

Conclusion

As we said before, in 1861, Brother Philippe asked the Brothers for their reactions to the *Experimental text of the Conduct of Schools*. In the *Circular* dated March 21st 1861, he acknowledged the fact that observations and suggestions had been submitted. We can suppose that they were concerned with specific points, since the editions of 1862, 1863 and 1870 reproduce the 1860 text in its entirety.

And so, during the long generalate of Brother Philippe there were eleven editions of the *Conduct*. The first seven reproduced the 1838 text, and the following four, that of 1860. The 1877 edition appeared during the generalate of Brother Irlide. There were insistent requests for a new edition of the *Conduct*, but for various reasons, it was only a quarter of a century later that a new edition appeared. It was a period marked by great political and educational changes in France. We shall speak of them at the beginning of the next chapter.

Texts and Documents

1. To perceive clearly the change of tone that marked this "Experimental Text", we would need to read a large part of this work. It contains lists of ways or means to implement what is recommended by the text. Our first example is chapter 5, entitled "Teaching and Method". To be methodical, one needs:

1. Ensure the children understand what you are saying.
2. Go from what is simple to what is complex, from what is easy to what is difficult.
3. Do not miss out anything that it is essential the children should know, or even anything that would make it easier for them to study subsequent lessons.
4. Put a lot of emphasis on the basics of each subject, and move on only when the children understand well what they have studied so far. Go over frequently the most important or most difficult points; programme frequent revision or recapitulation.
5. Ensure the children understand the words they are using.
6. Explain lessons and make sure they are understood before getting the children to learn them off by heart.
7. Use well the time allotted to each subject.
8. Check every written homework and make sure it is corrected, and, in the same way, correct specifically every mistake children make when reading or answering a question.
9. Do not give too many rules at the same time. Explain each one carefully, and especially, give the children lots of exercises to apply them.
10. Use visual aids a lot when teaching, and to the extent that order in the classroom permits, use the blackboard to explain lessons and to give examples...
11. Prepare every lesson carefully.
12. Never write anything incorrect for the pupils to see: always tell them

what is correct. Also, speak to them in good French, as well as distinctly and precisely.

13. Always give them exact definitions and clear distinctions.
14. Rely much more on rules being followed and persistent work, than on an effort made at any specific moment.
15. Pursue only results which are of real benefit for the pupils.
16. When children do an exercise, make sure the exercise helps them to progress not only in the subject being taught at the time, but also in other subjects too. For example, when the pupils are doing their French homework, insist they take care over their handwriting; or when they are copying their handwriting model, ensure they make no spelling mistakes; and the same when they copy down problems...
17. Make sure, as far as the subject will allow, to make the children think, to make them notice things, and to exercise all their intellectual faculties.
18. Never say anything that is not absolutely certain, especially where facts, definitions or principles are concerned.
19. Often use the question and answer technique, following the rules which are set out in article III below.

2. "Emulation". This is the first chapter of the second part which deals with the means to make sure children are orderly and work. Here are two passages from this chapter, the first from the beginning, and the second from the end:

"**General Considerations**": "The purpose of emulation is above all to stimulate in the pupils feelings which will induce them to fulfil their duties. Its main advantage is that it achieves a great deal in a short time and without too much effort; and that it reduces the amount of punishment to a minimum, and makes pupils like school and the teacher.

To assess a form of emulation, one needs to work out whether the feelings it arouses are noble and proper; whether it is really effective in producing order and work; and whether it makes necessary or leads to too much fatigue or disturbance.

However good a form of emulation may be, it does not produce the same results indefinitely: in the long run, the children become used to it and end up by not being stimulated by it hardly at all. It is important, therefore, to have a number of forms of emulation available, and to use them, beginning with the weakest forms and moving on to the more powerful ones; and also to be very sparing in the use of the most effective ones, and not abandon any without having made the most out of them.

Although sometimes it is necessary to stimulate the enthusiasm of the pupils on a particular occasion, it is better to encourage a more sustained kind of effort. The form of emulation used to obtain this sustained effort is therefore preferable to one which arouses a burst of energy at a particular moment, and then leaves the pupils tired and weary" (p. 89-90).

"General remarks about forms of emulation": Regarding the forms of emulation we have mentioned above, we should like to point out that there is no need to use them all at the same time. It is up to Brother Director to choose which ones to use, reserving, however, the more vigorous forms for the most difficult time of the year, as well as for the highest classes.

Pupils do not value any reward unless a teacher attaches a great importance to it. One must avoid giving both too many or too few rewards, because, in the first instance, the pupils stop appreciating them; and in the second, many become discouraged, seeing their efforts unrewarded.

As for pupils who are habitually restless and distracted, it is a good idea to look for, or one could say, lie in wait for, circumstances or an opportunity when they are less so than usual, and take advantage to give them some reward. This could be a way of inducing temperaments which are impervious to punishments to concentrate once more on their work.

Rewards should be given much more for merit and effort than for success, and never as a favour.

One should not try out a form of emulation if one does not feel one has the necessary determination to take advantage of it to the full.

One should not easily abandon a form of emulation, while at the same time it is prudent not to make use too frequently of those which are most effective" (p. 110).

3. "Firmness" (This is the 9th quality of a teacher)

"Firmness is basically simply the strength and constancy used to counter evil and prevent and repress disorder. This quality is indispensable for a teacher, because, as children are naturally attracted to evil, one must inspire them to have a respectful fear which restrains them without repelling them, and which is a useful resource when forms of emulation fail to make them behave themselves as they should. However, it is important not to misunderstand what firmness is: it is not harshness, not severity, nor inflexibility, but a strength of heart led by reason to keep children good.

It follows that firmness is not justifiable when it is used for reasons of vanity, self-esteem, or because of some disordered passion. The teacher should have recourse to it only when all the positive means he has used to obtain order and work have failed. As its principal aim is only to make the children stop misbehaving through fear, it can be really beneficial to them only to the extent it is accompanied by kindness, which alone induces them to desire what is good through love.

Firmness requires the teacher:

1. To demand order and work.
2. To keep promises he has made, as well as not allow what he has refused for a good reason, when the circumstances have not changed.
3. To ensure that once what he has justifiably ordered to be done is carried out, unless he has very good reasons for changing his instructions.
4. To be brief when giving instructions, but saying enough to ensure the children understand what he wants them to do.
5. To instil into the children a respectful fear, and to maintain it.
6. Not to lose his temper, because losing one's temper is a sign of weakness and leads the children to despise their teacher.
7. To use his authority as a teacher only after reflection and only for worthwhile reasons.
8. Not to allow a single misdemeanour to occur without giving a warning, a reprimand or a punishment, when the pupil knows that the teacher is aware of it. This does not prevent the teacher waiting for a convenient moment to impose the punishment.

9. When speaking, to adopt a sufficiently firm tone of voice so that the children understand he really wants them to work.
10. Not to give in inopportunely to the wishes of the children through condescension or reprehensible shyness.
11. Take care not to look ashamed, upset, embarrassed, and, if he feels some reluctance, he should try not to give any sign of it to the children.
12. To preserve his equanimity, that is, not allow himself to be upset by anything that happens; to train himself to do so, to acquire it; to see things as they are; to moderate his wishes and his fears; let nothing astonish him, and be prepared for anything that can happen.
13. Be faithful to the directives of the *Conduct* regarding punishments, which are treated in greater detail in the second part.

The teacher will make sure he does not instil excessive fear into his pupils, because it brutalises the mind and makes study and reflection impossible. It does this by debasing the heart and banishing the more noble feelings that characterise true Christians. It also inspires loathing for instruction and school. By putting the pupils under constraint, it provokes a reaction on their part, and in this way constantly threatens, and eventually, destroys his authority.

And so, a good teacher is distinguished not only by his firmness, but also and above all by his kindness".

Chapter 7
1903/1916: The *Conduct of Schools* in its most advanced form

Introduction

1860-1903: Waiting for more than forty years for the publication of a *Conduct* clearly different from the 1860 edition, seems really long ! And in fact, the impatience of the Brothers during this long wait was expressed a number of times especially at General Chapters.

Research and preparatory work preceded the publication of the 1903 text. It is true the Superiors of the Institute had a great number of major concerns, and of a different kind, during the last quarter of the 19th century. We shall outline them briefly at the beginning of this chapter. But also, the Superiors of the Institute wished to take advantage of the contributions of the rapidly developing human sciences, and include some of them in the text of the *Conduct*.

This period is marked also by the emergence of a concerted effort to give the Lasallian network of schools a coherence and solidity, a dynamism and quality which would the basis of success in the educational and pastoral service of youth. But the network in question was complex and multi-faceted, and the *Conduct of Schools* was only one element of it, although playing a central role as it had done for 200 years. We can say that, in the course of the last twenty-five years of the 19th century, an autonomous Lasallian educational system was set up.

To understand fully what this statement means, we need to recall the overall situation of education in France. Following its creation at the beginning of the century, under Napoleon, the "Imperial University" presided over all State educational establishments at all levels. The Brothers' Institute also was

part of this system, and ran a certain number of schools which conformed to the established norms. At the same time, however, male and female religious congregations - including the Brothers of the Christian Schools - set up and ran private schools for which they were completely responsible. But, at that time, there was no national ecclesiastical body - as there is today - responsible for forming a single organisation for all these school networks run by religious congregations. And this continued after 1875, when successive laws excluded religious from State schools. The private school networks survived, mostly going their separate ways, although there were some instances of solidarity when the threat to suppress teaching congregations became clearer in the last years of the 19th century, culminating in the law of 1904.

1875-1904: A difficult context

Because of the exceptional length of his generalate (36 years) from 1838 to 1874, Brother Philippe's term in office coincided with several French political regimes:

- The July Monarchy (1838-1848)
- The 1848 Revolution and the Second Republic (1848-1852)
- The Second Empire (1852-1870)
- The beginnings of the Third Republic.

There were some particularly complex situations, such as the 1848 Revolution and the Paris Commune (1871), and we know that the Institute was particularly affected by these two events. But Brother Philippe died before Republic really adopted its more radical form.

These various political changes created difficulties especially where schools were concerned, as governments and ministers of education succeeded one another. Because of the great number of schools it had, and because of its influence in the world of education, the Brothers' Institute had become a natural point of contact for successive ministers of education . This is borne out by various documents kept in the Institute archives in Rome. Because of certain conflicts of interest between the educational traditions of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and the decisions of the government, such as, for example, the imposition of school fees, Brother Philippe had not always been an easy person to deal with. When needed, he invoked the

approval of the General Chapter, or even the decisions of Rome, to impose his point of view.

His successor, Brother Jean Olympe (1874-1875), was in office for only one year and hardly had an opportunity to intervene in the problems that concern us here. It was the four following Superior Generals who had to face the political changes of the Third Republic: Brother Irlide (1875-1884), Brother Joseph (1884-1897), Brother Gabriel Marie (1897-1913) and Brother Imier de Jésus (1913-1923).

It was in 1876 that the left-wing Republicans in the National Assembly and in the Senate, having secured a majority in both houses, adopted a educational policy detrimental to the teaching congregations. Their aims were the same as those contemplated by the revolutionaries at the end of the 18th century, but which the political situation had not allowed them to fulfil: secular State education, compulsory education for all up to a determined age, free education.

Teaching congregations would not have opposed the last two measures - compulsory and free education - but they had no means of having their say in the matter because of the various measures regarding secularisation: exclusion of teaching religious from State schools, removal of all religious symbols from school buildings, prohibition to use these same buildings to give religious instruction. A little later, there was added the suppression of the dispensation of schoolmasters and seminarists from military service. In the space of ten years (1878-1889) the Brothers found themselves excluded from teaching in State schools and forced to retreat to private establishments. They, who had fought for fifty years against school fees and the maintenance of gratuity, now had to charge fees in order to enable their schools to survive, while those of the State became free.

We should add that exclusion measures did not stop there. Other laws passed at the beginning of the 20th century culminating with that of July 7th 1904, led finally to the suppression of teaching congregations and the dispersal of their members. It is easy to imagine that these successive decisions created numerous and complicated practical problems for the Brothers who were still working in State schools, and for head teachers at all levels. Instead of simply giving up, the latter tried to consolidate the activities of the Brothers as a

whole, to improve their quality as a way of asserting the identity of the Institute in a period in which it was under attack. We shall return to this point. This led finally to the establishment of a sort of Lasallian educational system, functioning independently, and deeply aware it was serving the people of France.

In 1882, for example, the 26th General Chapter gave much thought to the situation of the Institute, and in particular to the difficulties created in schools by the recent legislation: the process of secularising schools promoted by the Prefects of Departments, in line with instructions received from the minister; the insistence on all teachers having the required qualifications and diplomas. Faced with this situation, the Institute made a great effort to increase the number of qualified Brothers, especially among those who had taught only on the basis of a letter of obedience. Since young Brothers could no longer be exempted from military service, they received preparation for this period spent outside the Institute, as well as personal accompaniment during it. The Chapter wondered how the Institute should react to the prohibition of giving religious instruction in State schools; how it could maintain the gratuity of private schools; what it should do regarding the obligation to remove religious symbols from State schools. At the same time, the Brother capitulants did not want to leave the State schools because they made gratuity possible, while in private schools it would be an illusion. Pope Leo XIII, in a rescript dated August 9th 1881, encouraged the Brothers to stay in the State schools.

The members of the Chapter were so disturbed and concerned that they envisaged - even at that point - the possibility that the Brother Superior and his Assistants - the government of the Institute - would have to leave France. Two possible destinations were chosen: Rome or England. The move was made more than twenty years later - to Belgium.

Laws governing State education:

1. 1881: June 16th, law making all State education free.
2. 1881: Law making the *Brevet de Capacité* obligatory for all primary school teachers.

3. 1882: March 29th, law making education compulsory from 7 to 13 years of age. Secularisation of all State education, which is declared to be neutral. Religious ministers no longer allowed to use school premises.
4. 1884: Municipal law making it obligatory to remove all religious symbols from State schools.
5. 1886: October 30th, State schools and teaching made the exclusive preserve of secular staff.
6. 1889: Military law rescinding the grant of exemption from military service to schoolteachers and seminarians.
7. 1904: July 7th, law suppressing authorised congregations including the Brothers of the Christian Schools. They are obliged to withdraw from all their educational establishments within ten years.

1875 - 1903: Setting up a Lasallian school network

As we said in chapter 3, at the end of the 18th century, the French Revolution had suppressed all religious congregations. During the First Empire, some of them had been recognised and approved. One of these was that of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Subsequently, in the course of the 19th century, a very large number of new male and especially female religious congregations were founded, many of them devoted to education. All of them were gradually affected by the education laws of the Third Republic. Without any premonition that these would eventually lead to the legal suppression of their Institute, the eight General Chapters held during this period (1874-1905) felt it incumbent upon themselves to make some important decisions to ensure the continuation of its educational activities and even the survival of the Institute in France.

It is this process we should like to recall in the paragraphs that follow, highlighting aspects which can be considered factors conducive to the setting up of a Lasallian school network. The urgent need to resolve the problems arising from the passing of new laws was one, but not the only reason for the delay in drafting and publishing a new version of the *Conduct of Schools*. In the meantime, the impatience of the Brothers regarding this subject continued to grow.

The school network that was organised was still basically in the hands of the Brothers. If lay teachers were sometimes called upon to help, it was often only on a provisional basis. The 1897 General Chapter thought that their presence was a real problem. They were tolerated but not welcome. The Chapter believed that the best employees were *the young people taught in our classes*. This view reflected a strong desire for homogeneity in attitudes and teaching practice.

This view was reflected also in the effort that would be made by the Institute to train the Brothers and ensure they became qualified; to ensure high standards in schools and boarding schools; to provide accompaniment for individuals; to make available school textbooks written specifically for the network, as well as instructive and administrative circulars; to organise teachers' meetings in all communities; to publish educational reference works; and finally, to publish a new version of the *Conduct of Schools*.

Studies and the training of the Brothers

When we consider the history of education in France, we realise that the Brothers of the Christian Schools were always pioneers when it came to the training of teachers, beginning with the time of St John Baptist de La Salle and continuing up to the beginning of the 20th century. This concern for training is manifested most clearly in times of difficulty: the beginning of the Institute, the time of Brother Agathon, the appearance of Mutual Education, and at the end of the 19th century.

This concern was frequently expressed in this last period which we are considering here. For example, during the 25th General Chapter held in 1875, a report was submitted on the "Instruction and Education of the Brothers", which called for, among other things, the drafting of a manual on education in politeness targeting at the same time pupils, boarders , novices and Brothers. As John Baptist de La Salle's work *Rules of Christian Decorum and Politeness* was thought too difficult to read, something more accessible needed to be thought up.

In 1882, the 26th General Chapter in its turn devoted an important session to the studies of the Brothers, and concluded that the Institute was making great efforts in this area. The urgent need for this was all the more clear as

the first educational laws were already known. This concern was addressed again at greater length in the *Circular* dated January 3rd 1883, which reported on the work of the Chapter. Five pages were devoted to pedagogical training. They contained the following passages. Under the heading *Training of good teachers for schools* we read: *This has always doubtlessly been very important for our Institute, but one can say that at the present time it has become a matter of capital importance* (p. 17). Continuing formation *lasting all life long* is mentioned next. It begins in schools, which are the breeding ground of vocations, where pupils see, for example, the teaching methods used by the Brothers. It continues in junior novitiates, because *The Simultaneous-Mutual method which is that of our Institute is ideal for training junior novices in the art of teaching, and for giving them the self-confidence and serious demeanour which it is important for young teachers to have when they face their pupils. Pupils, generally speaking, are all the more scatterbrained, noisy and inattentive, the more their teachers appear timid or embarrassed.*

Making second and third year junior novices give some lessons or private coaching to first-form pupils, will teach them to use intelligently and successfully the best teaching methods for all the various subjects which are included in the curriculum of primary schools.

Towards the end of the third year, junior novices should even be put in charge of teaching in the lower classes. They would do this for several weeks under the control of the Brothers in charge of these classes.

While a number of these junior novices, following this training and practice as teachers, could perhaps obtain the Brevet de Capacité, all would be capable of being in charge of a lower class on completion of the senior novitiate, even though they devote this year completely to studies and practices centred entirely on their spiritual formation.

Interrupted for a year by the novitiate, pedagogical training must resume immediately afterwards, either in the scholasticate, or in community. This will serve as the second year of probation. As scholasticates already have special regulations regarding studies, the General Chapter could only acknowledge and praise the good results these establishments had had up to now, and which promised to be even better in the future" (p. 20-21). In line with its thinking, the same Chapter took a number of decisions so that *all communities would be true teacher training col-*

leges for the Brothers. The aim was to instruct Brothers who did not have the *Brevet* and to prepare for the *Certificat d'Aptitude Pédagogique*. To achieve this, it was decided to set up a Higher Scholasticate, which became a reality a few years later.

Two years later, in 1884, the 27th General Chapter was held. A successor to Brother Irlide had to be found, but the Chapter did not restrict itself to holding an election: it continued its deliberations on a number of matters, including the training of the Brothers. In session 17, for example, *a capitulant asked for the minutes to include the following notes:*

1. *The Brothers will increasingly assimilate through the regular study of the Conduct of the Christian Schools , the Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher, and of pedagogical works, the importance of the duties imposed by the profession of a teacher of young people.*
2. *Our pedagogical and methodological studies must keep pace with present-day circumstances and needs , especially in the scholasticates. Courses must be both theoretical and practical.*
3. *Brother Directors must take advantage of educational conferences to arrange for Brothers to have practical lessons on various subjects* (Register C, p. 223).

During session 24, *Brother Superior General took the opportunity to recall what had been said regarding preparation for the Brevet Supérieur: baccalaureate and degree diplomas will be needed only to a limited degree, given that we continue to be faithful to the humble mission for which our beloved Father principally founded the Institute; while the Brevet Supérieur may become a requirement in France for headmasters of schools with at least three classes* (Register C, p. 303). Some capitulants regretted that not enough advantage had been taken of the provisions provided for organising lessons and educational conferences in all communities, for the training and improvement of the teachers.

Brother Joseph's circular dated November 21st 1894, reports on the 28th General Chapter and returns to the subject of pedagogical training: *In our days, pedagogy has become a true science. Would it be rash to suggest that this science, at least as far as primary education is concerned, owes Blessed de La Salle* (NB. He was beatified in 1888) *much of the progress it has made; and that his*

Conduct of the Christian Schools laid down all its major principles, and even regarding some points, provided some very precise details... Be that as it may, it is certain that a teaching Institute must take to heart the development of pedagogical science. We are religious teachers, Brothers of the Christian Schools. We owe it to the honour of our Congregation, to the honour of the Church whose emissaries we are to children, to take all the means in our power to ensure that, in their own modest way, our schools remain first-rate.

The Institute has always paid great attention to the pedagogical training of its members. A perusal of past Chapter documents reveals that, after the maintenance of the Rule and the spiritual life of the Brothers, there was nothing that General Chapters had more at heart than ensuring that they had effective means to become good and excellent teachers. (p. 23)

A little further on in the same circular, Brother Joseph returns to the subject of the usefulness of pedagogical conferences and exercises in community: *These exercises have been highly recommended in several circulars. They are a professional duty for us. Prepared properly and on well-chosen topics, they can provide useful nourishment for the intellectual activity of the Brothers, and serve also as a means of maintaining healthy emulation among them, to fulfil worthily their mission as Christian educators. We invite our Brother Directors therefore to give their Brothers from time to time a practical lesson in pedagogy, outlining and explaining the principles of Christian education, or applying the best teaching methods to one or other of the subjects on the curriculum of our schools. It would be very beneficial also if, at least once a month, one of the members of the community gave a model lesson along the same lines. These kinds of conferences and exercises will be the best means of giving our Brothers a practical understanding of the Conduct of Schools* (p. 25).

After Brothers Irlide and Joseph, his predecessors as Superior General, Brother Gabriel Marie, who occupied the post from 1897 to 1913, returned often and at length to the subject of the training of the Brothers. The 1897 General Chapter, which elected him, approved a number of advisory statements and recommendations on the subject of *intellectual and pedagogical formation*. The following passages are extracts from the reports of deliberations: *This knowledge, as well as making it possible for them to obtain the diplomas they must have, also enables them to maintain our schools in a place of honour in the*

fight sustained by Christian education (p. 31). There follows a pressing recommendation to make young Brothers study: *The Chapter Assembly considered actively the pedagogical formation of our Brothers, and at various points in the proceedings discussed seriously matters relating to the Pedagogical Manual being prepared, as well as to the Conduct of Schools intended specifically for the training of our young teachers* (p. 33). But this obligation to pursue one's own formation does concern only the young Brothers: the means provided are for the use of everyone: *As has been rightly pointed out, our Brothers always have at their disposal the Conduct of Schools, the Twelve Qualities of a Good Teacher, the subjects of the Meditations on teaching in schools. These means of formation have lost none of their efficacy. Our young teachers will do well not to neglect them* (p. 33).

Another General Chapter was held in 1901 and a circular dated December 25th of the same year carried a report on it. It dealt with questions regarding schools and boarding schools, and then with *intellectual and pedagogical formation in community*. Rather than repeat what we have already said, we draw attention simply to an interesting proposal regarding the formation of the Brothers. Given the increasingly international dimension of the Institute, *the Chapter welcomed eagerly and backed up by its vote the proposal to introduce the teaching of a modern language in our juniorates and scholasticates. In France, depending on the region, the language studied should be one of the major languages spoken in Europe; in other countries, the language studied should be French. Studying this subject will complete the intellectual formation of our young candidates, and could help them to obtain various diplomas, and enable them to render greater service to the Institute, in whatever country obedience sends them* (p. 80).

But Brother Gabriel Marie's most important text on the formation of the Brothers is the long circular dated December 3rd 1903, in which he devotes parts I, III and IV to Brothers' studies. We include some passages from this circular in the Texts and Documents section at the end of this chapter.

We end this presentation on the professional formation of the Brothers with a rapid reference to the 1905 General Chapter. The law of July 7th 1904 was approved: the government of the Institute was forced to move abroad to Lembecq in Belgium; the overall situation was very different. The capitulants, however, worked on the training of the Brothers, in three areas in particular:

- Religious studies, in line with the long circular dated September 22nd 1901 on "Catechetical Methodology".
- Pedagogical formation, because the Institute had not given up, despite the French laws levelled against it: *Because of the need of our teachers to keep up to date with advances in pedagogy, the Commission expresses its desire that more space be given in the Bulletin de l'Éducation Chrétienne (an Institute publication), already very highly regarded, to new teaching methods. Brother Superior tells us that renewed efforts will be made by the editors of the Bulletin to ensure this, but the difficult circumstances in which we now find ourselves will need to be taken into account* (p. 36).
- The study of modern languages. We have just mentioned this. In 1905, this was a burning issue. It was a matter of great urgency for the almost 4,000 French Brothers who chose to leave the country as a result of the 1904 law, and establish schools in other countries.

Production of school textbooks

Even before the 1789 Revolution, during the generalate of Brother Agathon, for example, the Brothers had already published various school textbooks for use in their schools. As we mentioned in the last chapter, Brother Philippe strongly encouraged the Brothers who were capable of doing so, to draw up textbooks and teaching materials for Institute schools. In various domains, study groups had been set up, and these met from time to time to produce joint publications. The authorship of these publications unattributed initially, was eventually acknowledged as being a joint effort *Par une réunion de Professeurs* - a phrase which became later the official trademark of numerous Institute textbooks.

The work begun during the generalate of Brother Philippe continued during the short term in office of Brother Jean Olympe. There are references to it in several of this Superior's circulars. For example:

- On May 25th 1874, in a letter to the Brother Directors, he speaks of the Working Parties (Commissions) requested by the General Chapter with a view to composing textbooks. He refers in particular to the working parties on mathematics, French, history and geography.
- On August 29th 1874, in a Note to Brother Directors, he informs them

of a considerable addition to the Syllabary, the publication of *Common Reading Passages*, the Biography of Brother Philippe by Monsieur Poujoulat. He also says that some mathematics textbooks are being published.

- On October 28th 1874, a Note from the *Procure Générale* announced the publication of a collection of ten wall maps, and the translation of Institute texts into English.
- On December 4th 1874, a circular spoke of improvements that could be made in a second edition of *Basic Geometry*.
- On January 25th 1875, a letter announced that the Geography Working Party would meet during the Easter holidays.
- Finally, on February 6th 1875, a Note from the Procure Générale to Brother Directors spoke of the printing of Solutions for geometry and arithmetic problems, for the use of boarding schools, and of Instructions for the presentation of picture books.

This short list shows clearly a well-organised process in place, one which would continue for over a century, based on team-work - Lasallian work by association - which did not seek any personal acclaim but only the good of all. Some names hidden behind this overall anonymity are known, however. For example:

- Brother Gabriel Marie, the future Superior General, who was head of the working party on classic texts when he was elected Assistant. We know that he was the author of voluminous works on very high level mathematics, which have recently been republished. We shall see that he published also later a pedagogical manual for use in all Catholic schools.
- Brother Justinus (1842-1922), known in the Institute as a great Secretary General, and who was editor-in-chief from 1891 to 1910 of *L'Éducation Chrétienne*, a weekly pedagogical review. He was also responsible for organising the Institute's participation in the Paris World Fair in 1900.
- Brother Alexis, of Belgian origin, famous for his remarkable works on geography, which were highly acclaimed even outside the Institute.

- Brother Paul Joseph, responsible for drawing up the work entitled *Élements de Pédagogie Pratique* - to which we shall return - and for revising the *Conduct of Schools*, preparing in this way for its 1903 edition.

Following on from Brother Jean Olympe as Superior General, Brother Irlide was not to be outdone where school textbooks were concerned. In a circular dated August 1st 1875, in which he reported on the work of the General Chapter, he recalled that its first request was concerned with the revision of our classic texts, and the composition of manuals which were still lacking. The working parties responsible for this work were to use the holiday period for this purpose. A particular example reveals this general interest for classic texts: the 1875 Chapter discussed a plan to produce a "Manual on Civility for the use of teachers" which would serve as a commentary on the *Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility,* and which would then form the first part of the Manuscript, as the General Chapter had requested.

A few years later, in a circular dated June 26th 1880, Brother Irlide returned at greater length to the subject of school textbooks. The overall situation of private schools had deteriorated. It was felt there was an increasing rivalry between state and private education. Each of the two types of education already had its own distinct *Brevet de Capacité*. The Ministry of Public Instruction ordered every canton to organise "pedagogical conferences for men and women primary school teachers" with obligatory attendance by all teachers and, if possible, by assistant teachers.

Measures taken by the Ministry concerned also *books judged suitable to be used in schools*. Although this affected only state or local authority schools, there still remained a number of Brothers working in these schools. One could prefer books not on the prescribed list, but the choice had to be justified. Brother Irlide's circular includes therefore some advice relating to this choice, and suggests a list of classic works used in the Christian Schools. The arguments put forward for their use was as follows: they form a complete primary education course; they are clear, methodical and practical - this is proved by the awards they won in 1873 and 1878; they have been approved by the Superior Council for Public Instruction and have been generally adopted by Brothers' schools; they making teaching easier; they are updated by frequent new editions; and their selling price is very reasonable. This circular does not

restrict itself to general considerations, but goes on to list books for the various subjects taught: moral and religious instruction, sacred history, reading, writing, the French language (spelling, French composition, analysis), arithmetic, geometry, history, geography. As one can see, all the subjects currently taught in primary schools are mentioned.

That is why the 1882 General Chapter expressed the following wish: *Having heard the report on the classic texts recently published by our Institute, the General Chapter expresses a vote of gratitude to the authors of these works, to the members of the working parties who examined them and, in general, to all the Brothers who contributed to their drafting and correction. The Most Honourable Brother Superior General has been asked to make public this expression of great satisfaction, so that it may serve as an encouragement for the Brothers responsible for either the composition, or the revision of the works which are still scheduled to be published.* (*Circular* dated January 3rd 1883, p.49).

A dozen years later, the Superior General, Brother Joseph, expressed similar satisfaction: *Over the course of a number of years, at the active and intelligent instigation of our venerable predecessors, an instigation which we have sought to encourage with all the power at our disposal, many books, which have been approved by highly competent judges, have been published for use in our courses in mathematics, the French language, physical and natural sciences, history and geography, and finally and especially, in religious education. Measures will be taken to ensure this process continues and develops, so that we may soon have a complete series of books, suited to our teaching at all levels* (*Circular* dated November 21st 1894, p. 24-25).

Brother Gabriel Marie, elected Superior General by the 1897 Chapter, referred to a number of points relating to our subject in his report on the deliberations of this assembly. The rate at which school textbooks were published and revised worried some teachers who thought it complicated their work, while others wanted more changes and progress. There were others who offered suggestions for improvements. The Superior believed the various points of view were valid, and thought a right balance should be struck in the light of the aim proposed, on which he commented as follows: *It is necessary to keep abreast constantly of all the progress going on around us, and not allow ourselves to be left behind by our competitors or emulators; as also to meet the*

demands, as far as this is possible, of the various categories of pupils and classes we have (*Circular* dated April 26th 1897, p. 63). As before, the production of these works is entrusted to the administration of the Institute. The Chapter wished *to express the gratitude of all concerned to the devoted religious who dedicate months and years to work that is unseen, long-drawn-out, often unrewarding, which sometimes draws down upon them, from no doubt well-intentioned persons, more critical remarks than words of encouragement* (id. p. 63-64).

With this question of school textbooks, the capitulants associated also that of community libraries, another useful means of personal formation. The circular already quoted recalls their importance: *Our community libraries must be, for our dear Brother Directors, the object of their particular concern, ensuring they are stocked with the books the Brothers need or find useful, but also that prohibited or dangerous books are absolutely excluded* (p. 64). The aim therefore is to stock these libraries with spiritual works, mind-improving works, and above all with the best pedagogical works. That is why: *The Chapter requested the Procure Générale to publish for use by the Institute a catalogue which was as complete as possible, in which every book that is listed is accompanied by a short but substantial description. Successive supplements would list all new publications which could be stocked by our libraries* (p. 65).

Letters and *Circulars* of the Superiors

Given their increasing numbers and their geographical dispersion, Brothers could no longer be personally known and mentored by Superiors. In 1875, they numbered 11,000; in 1901, more than 15,000. For some time, personal relationships had been replaced by collective communication. To simplify things, we can say that at the end of the 19th century, mentoring and advice regularly took the form of reports of General Chapters, Instructive and Administrative Circulars, successive Revisions, and of course, the *Conduct of Schools*. During the period that concerns us here, we can note for example:

- A long *Circular* from Brother Irlide, dated June 2nd 1882, summoning the 26th General Chapter. As the custom was, he invites the Brothers to send Notes to the Chapter, and the first area he mentions is that of *the training of teachers, curricula, books and methods for our schools, that is to say, everything that concerns the external aim of our Institute, or the exercise of charity towards our neighbour*. Religious life and government

come only in the second and third place. But it is interesting to note that this *Circular* has a very long second part which consists of "Instructions regarding General Chapters", whose central role in the associative government of the Institute we mentioned at the beginning of this work. After this Chapter was held, Brother Irlide gave an account of its deliberations in a *Circular* dated January 3rd 1883. The "pedagogical training" of the Brothers occupies five pages.

- In the 1894 Chapter, we note that of the eight Chapter Commissions, five worked on school or educational questions: the religious formation of the Brothers, pedagogical and intellectual formation, schools and boarding schools, youth organisations, and classic texts. The Superior General, Brother Joseph, speaks of this in the circular dated November 21st 1894. After dealing with pedagogical formation, the protracted delay in the publication of the new edition of the *Conduct of Schools*, school curricula and pedagogical conferences, he turned to a question we have not mentioned so far: a *Pedagogical Journal*: *For a long time now, a need has been felt in the Institute for a Pedagogical Journal which would offer our Brothers guidance in their work as teachers. This journal was started a few years ago under the title of "Christian Education", and we are happy to say that it is one of the best of its kind. The Chapter had great pleasure in expressing its satisfaction with the good it had already achieved in such areas as the pedagogical formation of our Brothers, and the oversight of our teaching at all levels. Through the competitions it has carried in its columns, it has created what can be called a focal point for emulation and intellectual activity for our principal schools; and by the supplements which it sends out regularly, it provides those of our teachers who teach special subjects with all the material they need to prepare pupils competently for their various examinations. In response to the wishes of the Chapter, nothing will be neglected in ensuring that the Journal of Christian Education continues to keep up to date with all genuine progress, and to give our Brothers as far as possible all the guidelines, all the documents and all the advice they need, to maintain at a very commendable standard, and if possible, in the first rank, the education given in Christian schools* (p. 25-26).

Many of the circulars deal with various aspects of the religious life of the Brothers and are less directly connected with the subject that concerns us.

However, they constitute nonetheless a form of information, reflection and mentoring. This is borne out by the list of circulars published by the Superior Generals Gabriel Marie (19897-1913) and Imier de Jésus (1913-1923). In the space of ten years, the latter published a dozen circulars, half of which ran to about a hundred pages. We would like to draw special attention to the following three circulars:

- Brother Gabriel Marie's *Circular* dated September 22nd 1901, regarding the "Methodology of teaching religion".
- The same author's circular dated December 3rd 1903, on the occasion of the publication of the new *Conduct of Schools* and devoted basically to the studies of the Brothers.
- The draft of Brother Imier's circular which should have borne the date of August 15th 1914. The printers' proof copy is in the Rome Institute Archives. It also would have concentrated mostly on the studies of the Brothers. Because of the 1914-1918 War, which had just broken out, this text was never published. It was also during the generalate of Brother Imier, in 1916, that a new edition of the *Conduct of Schools* was published. This was to be the last edition of this text for the whole Institute.

During the 1907 General Chapter, at a dramatic moment in the history of the Institute, Brother Gabriel Marie reminded the capitulants of recent Institute publications, testifying to the vitality of educational thinking. He spoke in turn of:

- recently published circulars
- the Bulletin of the Christian Schools
- works proper to the Institute
- school textbooks.

Despite serious problems, the Chapter went on to discuss "the instruction of the Brothers" and the proposals of the "Commission on Schools and Boarding Schools". A way of not letting discouragement take hold.

Doctrinal foundations of educational work

The recourse to human sciences. At the 1894 General Chapter, a Commission was set up on schools and books. The assembly discussed the

studies of the Brothers, in particular, preparation for the Baccalaureate and the degree. It was regretted that the isolated location of boarding schools was not conducive to these studies. And, as we have just said, there was talk of starting up a Pedagogical Journal. But above all, a Commission on intellectual and pedagogical formation was charged with drafting a "**Treatise on Christian Pedagogy**", based on the pedagogical principles of the Founder. It would also see to the publication of a new edition of the *Conduct of Schools*. General Chapter Register C describes the work as follows: *Work on this text has already begun. It will be divided into five parts: education, the child; the educator; teaching; the school. This plan covers all the points responding to present-day needs. Each chapter will include an exposition, a summary and a synoptic table. The text will preserve in its entirety the spirit inspiring the methods which have ensured for more than two centuries the prosperity of the Christian Schools. When the work is completed, it will be easy to extract from it for our young Brothers a "small practical handbook" limited to the most basic notions* (Register C, p. 291-292). This same plenary session of the Chapter was an opportunity to raise several other related topics: the periodical examinations established by the 1882 Chapter, the creation of an advanced scholasticate, the creation of a study centre during the holidays, and the Journal of Christian Education."

A few days later, on Saturday October 27th 1894, *after distributing to each capitulant a copy of "Notes on Christian Pedagogy", the Brother Secretary General read out the Preface and the four chapters of this important work. During and after reading the text, he gave explanations and made comments to make clear its plan, aim and value. He was interrupted several times by expressions of the evident satisfaction felt by all the members of the assembly. This satisfaction will be shared by all the Brothers when they learn with what great intelligence the Institute has filled a gap regarding Christian pedagogy from which they had been suffering* (Register C, p. 302).

The work was published in 1897 at the *Procure Générale* of the Brothers: it followed the plan involving five parts referred to above. These Notes on Christian Pedagogy aimed explicitly *to serve as a preparation for a new edition of the Conduct of Schools...* The Foreword makes a clear reference to this: *There is today a unanimous demand for a new edition of the Conduct of Schools. It is with a view to satisfying this demand that we have brought together some 'Notes*

on Christian Pedagogy'. This publication would make it possible to repeat the associative process adopted to draw up the first copy of the *Conduct* at the beginning of the 18th century, but *in line with the legitimate demands of the present time*. The general thrust of the text is briefly stated in the first three paragraphs of the Introduction: *Pedagogy, etymologically speaking, consists in leading children. Pedagogy is both a science and an art. As a science, it is a critical knowledge of the fundamental principles of education; as an art, it is the way of implementing them. Whether art or science, pedagogy must lead to education, in the active sense of the word, that is, to bring up the whole child, to direct his faculties towards good, towards God* (p. XIII). It is really Christian pedagogy.

We should add also that the second part, devoted to the child, develops six aspects of his education: physical, intellectual, moral, aesthetic, religious and social. The intention is to give a holistic education, even if the affective aspect seems to have been neglected. In fact, it is included under the heading of aesthetic education.

As we mentioned earlier in chapter 5, part 4, on teaching, devotes a fair amount of space to a consideration of the "four kinds of teaching", and tries to highlight the benefits and disadvantages of each. Moreover, all of part 4 of the work, entitled "Education" concentrates on methodology and teaching approach, the latter relative to eighteen different subjects on the curriculum. In line with what we pointed out with reference to the 1720 edition of the *Conduct*, part 5 sets out the organisation of the school under four headings: material, didactic and disciplinary organisation, and emulation.

So the compilers of the next edition of the *Conduct of Schools* had a lot of good material to work with. However, another basic text was also being prepared: *The Basics of Practical Pedagogy*, which was due to be published in 1901. During the 1897 General Chapter, *the working party concerned with the Pedagogical Textbook is happy to learn that work on its composition is proceeding smoothly, and that this text will give full satisfaction to all our Brothers* (Register C, p. 349). A comparison of its table of contents with that of the "Notes on Christian Pedagogy" shows clearly that the contents overlap to some extent. The two volumes of *The Basics of Practical Pedagogy*, published respectively in 1901 and 1902 at the *Procure Générale* in Paris, contain material that is greater in scope.

Emulation, Evaluation: the World Fairs

One can be mistaken about the quality of what has been achieved when one is both judge and jury. The view of an outsider can help to arrive at a better assessment, and the promise of prestigious honours can stimulate effort and improve quality. This can explain the favourable attitude of the Brothers' Institute towards World Fairs which proliferated in the second half of the 19th century, in Europe and America.

There is no need to draw up a complete list of all the Fairs the Brothers' establishments took part in. One could say that, in addition to an internal system of evaluation (Inspectors, Directors, Visitors...) which was in place, the Brothers wanted to pit themselves against others, to lay themselves open to the judgment of impartial critics, in order to obtain tokens of sound evaluation. Even if only a limited selection of work was displayed at the Fairs, it had the value of a test.

In a circular dated January 25th 1879, Brother Irlide spoke at some length about participation in the World Fair. He quoted some glowing reports about material produced by the Institute, but he invited the Brothers themselves to examine it critically so as not to neglect the plans and ambitions of the Institute. It was particularly important in those difficult times when things were being called into question to achieve a high degree of quality.

Fifteen years later, Brother Joseph spoke of participation on the Chicago World Fair, and the brilliant success of the work submitted. It was not, of course, only the pupils of France who were involved: exhibits came also from England, Spain, Italy, the Far East, and North and South America. These entries reflected the international dimension of the Institute.

In a circular dated October 2nd 1900, Brother Gabriel Marie expressed his great joy at the "Results of the Paris World Fair of 1900". Sixteen pages and some appendices were devoted to this topic. He lists the "Awards made by the international juries to the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools". An extract from the Official Gazette dated August 18th of the same year announces the following prizes: 3 Grands Prix, 13 Gold Medals, 21 Silver Medals, 14 Bronze Medals - a total of 48 awards. It was a source of great encouragement for the work done by the schools.

The Conduct of Schools: 1903 and 1916

Such would constitute the essential elements of a Lasallian educational system at the dawn of the 20th century. Central to everything and its motive force would be the new edition of the *Conduct of Schools* - an edition, as we have stressed a number of times, that was desired, called for and awaited with such impatience. It was a sort of merry-go-round that had lasted a quarter of a century! The 1882 General Chapter spoke of it on several occasions even though a new edition had appeared only five years earlier. *A new edition of the Conduct of Schools would be useful as a replacement for the Experimental Text which is currently used by the Brothers* (A reference to the 1860 text which was amended several times). *The compilers of this edition should not lose sight of the fact, Brother Superior said, that in the Conduct there has to be a part that is permanent, invariable, formed of the fundamental principles we should consider as the pedagogical heritage bequeathed to the Brothers by the Venerable de La Salle, and which we cannot abandon* (Report of the working party on Schools). On the same day, November 6th 1882, the Chapter returned to the subject of Lasallian pedagogical traditions and formulated the following proposition: *Brother Superior will be asked to assign one or several Brothers to prepare a draft Conduct of Schools, and to appoint a working party to examine, discuss and ultimately adopt this work*. But this did not hasten the completion of the work. No significant progress was made, because the working party on Intellectual and Pedagogical Formation *requests the Superior General to hasten the publication of the Conduct of Schools and of the pedagogical works for use by the Institute which the 1894 circular had announced as being imminent!*. In a subsequent session, on March 23rd 1897, a compromise solution was sought: *The publication of the new Conduct, already demanded several times in a number of sessions, and with great insistence, could be delayed further. But, it is pointed out, our young teachers are not so lacking in guidance that they cannot learn the difficult art of teaching well. And, as one of our venerated capitulants has pointed out, they always have at their disposal the Conduct of Schools, the Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher, and the Meditation subjects on teaching. These means of formation which have been sufficient until now, will, it is to be hoped, continue to be so, and will make it possible to wait for the publication of the new Conduct* (Register C, p. 353).

The subject is discussed again on March 29th. It is even proposed to reprint the most recent text of the *Conduct* with *the most indispensable modifications* only. But the 1897 General Chapter is fully occupied with the publication of the *Notes on Christian Pedagogy* and the drafting of the *Basics of Practical Pedagogy*, intended as a preparation for the new *Conduct of Schools*. Despite the impatience of certain Brothers, no one wished to hinder the successful completion of this work. The new version of the *Conduct* was to be a kind of coherent emanation of these two treatises. But these arguments failed to convince everybody since *several members of the Chapter pointed out that many of our communities no longer had a copy of the Conduct of Schools, supplies of which had run out; that this book, despite its shortcomings, could still be of great use to our young Brothers who had an urgent need of it and could not wait until its scheduled publication; and that for these reasons believed it would be very useful to reprint the existing Conduct, making the most indispensable corrections in it* (Register C, p. 375-376).

Finally, *as this very practical plan seemed to have the approval of the Chapter, Brother Superior asked for a vote to be taken on the following motion: Is there a need to reprint, with the appropriate modifications, the Conduct of Schools, abridged to what is essentially useful, for our young Brothers*. (The Chapter adopted this motion with 74 votes in favour and 20 against). (Register C, p. 376).

The 1903 *Conduct of Schools*

The 30th General Chapter was held at the house of Athis Mons, near Paris, from October 15th to November 8th 1901. Its task, in the first place, was to prepare a new edition of the Common Rules and of the Rule of Government. But other issues were raised, including several to do with schools, boarding schools and pedagogy. Even though there was still no sign of a new edition - and this would be the case for another two years - there are no discussions recorded regarding the *Conduct of Schools*.

It appeared finally in 1903, announced and welcomed by an important circular from Brother Gabriel Marie. Dated December 3rd of that year, it was entitled: *New Edition of the Conduct of Schools - The Studies of a Religious Educator*. Incidentally, it is recalled that it is also *the centenary of the approbation by the First Consul (Bonaparte) of the Portalis Report on the official reinstatement of the Institute of the Brothers in France*.

The circular is a very important document if we are to understand the pedagogical work and publications during the short period of 1897 to 1903 as a whole. In a fairly long introduction, the Superior encourages the Brothers to study, in particular, pedagogy. This is the reason for the publication of *Basics of Practical Pedagogy* and the *Pedagogical Handbook*. The new edition of the *Conduct* has been carefully modernised, and its overall plan is announced.

The first part of the circular is devoted to this edition of the *Conduct*. The particular difficulties arising from the political context are referred to. The revision of the *Conduct* is characterised by two tendencies: first, a profound respect for tradition where education and teaching are concerned; and a love for real progress in order to avoid routine. The Superior illustrates both these concerns by specific examples drawn from the new text. He comments also on the modifications introduced in the new version of the *Conduct*. The following three parts of the circular are devoted to the studies of religious educators. After an exhortation on the need to study, he turns his attention to the three principal areas concerned: religious, secular and pedagogical studies. Basing himself on personal experience, he concludes by suggesting ways of making study profitable.

The revised text of the *Conduct* had been long awaited, but the result was well worth it. Like previous editions, it was a small book - it needed to be easy to handle - published by the *Procure Générale* of the Brothers. It was divided into four parts:

- Education (7 chapters)
- School activities (18 chapters)
- School organisation (8 chapters)
- The Virtues and Qualities of the Teacher (14 short chapters)

While these headings reflect the overall structure of previous editions - with the exception of the first part - the contents are noticeably different. All the considerations regarding education are clearly inspired by educational sciences which, as we have already said, were of particular interest to the Brothers. The Foreword (pages 1-7) sets out clearly the aim of the work: *The Conduct of the Christian Schools goes back to St John Baptist de La Salle. Its aim is to determine and to describe precisely the methods used in the schools run by the Brothers; to indicate to teachers pedagogical procedures tested by experience, which*

they can use to great advantage; and finally, to ensure uniformity of teaching among them (p. 1). This reminder is followed by a brief historical survey of the principal editions of the *Conduct* (which is not entirely accurate), and concludes with a reaffirmation of a concern for creative fidelity. *Today, new experiences, advances in methodology and legislation, have led us to modify the 1877 text...As we undertook this revision, we left unchanged the overall thrust of the traditional Conduct, the principles and customs of our Institute regarding Christian education, and the truly judicious counsels the experience of our predecessors have bequeathed to us...We believed it would be useful to set out in the first part some general considerations regarding education* (Foreword, p. 6-7).

The first part is really new and includes data from educational sciences which had already made great progress at the time. But it is worth pointing out new subjects which have been added to more usual ones. In the second part, we find nature study, drawing, singing and gymnastics.

In the School Organisation section - the third part - material present in previous editions reappears, organised more coherently, and aims to ensure the smooth running of the school. The eight chapters have the following headings: material organisation, teaching in general, ways and methods, tests, procedures, authority of the teacher, emulation and punishments.

The overall conclusion - hardly more than a page long - has an encouraging heading: *The reward of a religious educator*. It recalls some of the ideas of St John Baptist de La Salle and quotes from his works. Even if the prospects of reward are not immediate, they can stimulate courage and optimism. When De La Salle wrote of the reward of the teacher, he envisaged more the hereafter than the present life.

The 1916 Conduct

About a year after the publication of the 1903 *Conduct*, the law of July 7th 1904 was passed in France, which called into question the very existence of the Brothers' schools in this country. The government of the Institute had to leave the house on rue Oudinot in Paris and move to Lembecq les Hal in Belgium. One can imagine the worries and the upheaval this caused for the Brothers and their daily work. Could the *Conduct of Schools* still be a matter of concern? All this has been treated in other works. Here we note simply

that at the 1913 General Chapter Brother Gabriel Marie resigned and was replaced by Brother Imier de Jésus. Throughout his generalate, Brother Imier sent the Brothers a series of circulars which were particularly long and rich in content. Almost all of them were concerned with various aspects of religious life.

One of them, however, never saw the light of day. It was entitled *Pedagogical Bulletin and Pedagogical Studies*. Its publication date would have been August 15th 1914. The outbreak of the First World War prevented its publication. Fortunately, the Generalate Archives in Rome have the printers' proofs of this text. It does have two parts: the first outlines the plan for a new "Pedagogical Bulletin" intended to replace the periodical *Christian Education* for the whole of the Institute. The second deals with *Pedagogical Studies*, and sets out the need for them, their benefit and their many possible applications. Its approach is quite different from that of Brother Gabriel Marie, of which we have already spoken. It is a pity that neither this text nor the planned Bulletin ever saw the light of day.

Despite everything, Brother Imier's interest in pedagogical matters led him to have a new edition of the *Conduct of Schools* drawn up: that of 1916. It was to be the last to appear in this form and to be intended for the whole Institute. This was the end of a tradition lasting 210 years, from 1706 to 1916.

We are treating the 1903 and 1916 editions together although they are not identical. As we read at the end of the Foreword of the 1916 edition: *The changes made in the 1903 text are quite numerous. They consist of a number of additions, especially in the chapters on education, French composition, arithmetic, geography and art, and in the introduction to chapters on the basic teaching of shorthand and typing. However, the order and character of the work has been preserved* (p. 11-12). A comparison between the two editions reveals that in 1916 the intention was above all to complete and clarify the 1903 text, in particular by adding two new subjects. The number of pages increased from 252 to 356.

In the first years of the 20th century, each Brother, individually and as part of a community, had at his disposal the following works to help him in his teaching: the *Basics of Christian Pedagogy*, the *Notes on Practical Pedagogy* (2 volumes), and the *Conduct of Schools* (the 1903 and 1916 editions).

The Directoire Pédagogique (Pedagogical Handbook) 1903

And for the first time, a *Pedagogical Handbook* was added for use in the Christian Schools. It was the same size as the *Conduct* and was published also by the *Procure Générale*. It ran to 256 pages, and its 23 chapters were divided up into five parts under the following headings:

- The Christian school and its internal regulations
- The initiation of the child into Christian life
- Pedagogical organisation and general principles of education
- The teaching of various subjects in the primary school curriculum
- Discipline.

A comparison with the 1903 and 1916 editions of the *Conduct* is easy. Cross-checks are logical. But this does not stem from a spirit of rivalry. This *Handbook* was published shortly before the 1903 *Conduct*. The Foreword, speaking of this new *Conduct*, says: *We even think that this new Conduct can be drafted only after several trials, serious discussions, and the collaboration of the most experienced teachers. The present pedagogical Handbook is one of these trials*. A little further on, it adds that this *new work is a sort of class vade mecum. Our wish is to achieve the two aims we had when we published this handbook: to help young religious beginning their teaching career, and to stimulate competent teachers to send in notes which can be of use when the next edition of the Conduct of Schools is drafted*.

The Foreword of the *Conduct* is dated December 1st 1903, that is, exactly two months later. One can suppose therefore that the production of this *Conduct* was already at a very advanced stage when the *Handbook* appeared. But it did come first, all the same. The *Basics of Practical Pedagogy*, which is referred to, was dated 1901 and 1902, and the *Notes on Christian Pedagogy*, 1897. At the end of 1903, the Brothers could refer to these two works on basic educational concepts; to the *Conduct of Schools* on the pedagogical approach they should take; and to the *Handbook* for its practical implementation.

The Pedagogical Manual

As an appendix and to complete the picture, we can add that in 1909, under the pseudonym of "Edmond Gabriel", Brother Superior General Gabriel Marie published in his turn a *Pedagogical Manual*. The work was 348 pages

long, the same size as the *Handbook* we have just been talking about. According to the title, it is no longer for the use of only the Christian Schools (those of the Brothers), but of Catholic schools - a much wider and more diverse public.

In a short preface, the author lauds the mission of Christian teachers. It was to encourage and help them in their work that Brother Gabriel Marie wanted to offer them this Manual. *To the Schoolmasters and Schoolmistresses who teach in Catholic primary schools, we wish to offer some guidance and especially some encouragement. Their mission is arduous and difficult.*

The plan of the book follows for much of the time that of the *Conduct of Schools* and the 1903 *Handbook*. The first part deals with education, and the second with teaching. Although it is not explicitly in the same series as the *Conduct of Schools*, this Manuel deserves a mention, as probably many Brothers acquired it and used it in their work as teachers.

Brother Gabriel Marie was a high-caliber mathematician and an intellectual. He left to posterity a treatise on descriptive geometry 428 pages long, accompanied by a second volume of exercises running to 1,162 pages; a treatise on trigonometry, 838 pages long; and a volume of geometry exercises 1,302 pages long. In the ten-year period following 1990, the publisher Jacques Gaby issued reprints of these works. As Superior General of the Brothers for sixteen years, he showed much concern for studies and formation in the Institute, because he attached great importance to professional competence. The Institute publications associated with the *Conduct of Schools* we have mentioned owe a great deal to him, as also do, no doubt, other works dating from the period when he headed the working party responsible for classic Institute works. We have mentioned also his two circulars on "catechetical methodology" and on the "Brothers' studies". It is not surprising that he wanted to share some of his ideas by publishing this *Pedagogical Manual*.

Conclusion

In the 18th century - up to the French Revolution - the Institute found itself in a situation in which the Church was responsible for education. Given the absence of standard national norms, dioceses, parishes and teaching congregations had to establish their own approach to teaching and education. The

approaches they devised were numerous and varied. At the end of the 17th century, John Baptist de La Salle and the Brothers devised their own approach also, which was initially formulated in the 1706 Manuscript copy of the *Conduct of the Christian Schools*.

From the Revolution onwards, responsibility for education passed to the State. Between 1789 and 1799, five major plans for the reorganisation of the school system were successively drafted, but none was adopted permanently. Under the First Empire, the "University" was established and proved to be more enduring, surviving the fall of the imperial regime. The Brothers' Institute became a part of the University very early on, and for almost 80 years it lived a double life - working in state schools and running private schools.

The laws passed in the 1880s, which we mentioned in the present chapter, progressively ousted members of teaching congregations from state establishments. The process was finally completed by the law of July 7th 1904. Faced with this inescapable situation for more or less a quarter of a century, the Brothers' Institute had to organise itself so that it could continue to provide its educational service for boys, for the most part from the working classes. Its task was:

- to ensure the initial and continuing formation of the Brothers,
- to enable them to obtain qualifications and the necessary skills to offer high-quality education,
- to master and put into practice in their teaching the interesting contributions of the human sciences which were increasingly coming to the fore,
- to give their teaching an intellectual and scientific basis,
- to ensure schools were well run and to furnish them with high-quality teaching materials: textbooks, teaching equipment, internal organisation, lay-out of rooms, means of evaluation...
- to harmonise the teaching approach of all the Brothers, so as to make it consistent throughout the network of schools. The *Conduct of Schools* and the *Handbook* were to contribute to this process.

It is not therefore absurd to speak of a Lasallian educational system and, consequently, of the peak - the most advanced form - of the *Conduct of Schools*.

Texts and Documents

1. To give a better idea of the change in thinking and language since the beginning of the 20th century, here is a passage from the 1903 *Conduct*, entitled "General educational guidelines":

"Here are some of the principles which should inspire all educators:

1. Man is a perfectible being. Through the influence of education, he develops his physical aptitudes, the faculties of his mind, and increases his knowledge. If he takes the means, he can add indefinitely to his moral perfection.
2. It is a mistake to believe that a child is born good: there are in him some fortunate tendencies, but also inclinations which lead him to evil by their deviancy and disordered nature.
3. The educator must adapt his approach to the order followed by nature in the development of a child's faculties. He must therefore know what this order is and, moreover, study the temperament, aptitudes and character of each of his pupils, to take them into account in his dealings with them.
4. Multiple influences must combine in the education of a child: that of the family, the good example of his fellow pupils, the teaching and prayers of the teacher, and the work of the priest.
5. Religion is at the same time the basis and the crown of moral education. One must speak of God to the children, and bring them into contact with him through prayer and the reception of the sacraments. Any education is incomplete and radically deficient if it does not take into account the supernatural destiny of the child and the means to fulfil it.
6. The true educator strives to guide his pupils in their physical, intellectual and voluntary activity. At the same time as he seeks to make them freely want what is good, he makes them practise performing actions which they ought to make habitual.
7. The child must learn to control his thoughts and feelings in order to govern his words and actions as he is duty bound.

8. The educator stands before his pupils as a model to be imitated: his conduct therefore must be for them a constant incentive to do good."

2. Presenting the new edition of the *Conduct of Schools* in the circular dated December 3rd 1903, the Superior General, Brother Gabriel Marie, had the following to say:

"Study is a duty for the members of an Institute dedicated to education, and we are greatly consoled to note the extent to which you follow dutifully the instigation of our dear Brother Visitors regarding this matter. For our part, we have always considered it as one of our duties to make it easier for you, by the publication of works considered to be useful, to acquire knowledge which can make your apostolate among young people more fruitful. The *Religious Instruction Course* today has six volumes; a few weeks ago you welcomed the publication of part two of "Apologetics", and the last part is due shortly. Recently, several science manuals have appeared: top critics praise the excellence of the method, rigour, precision and clarity of the presentation of the material.

At the same time, and in accordance with the wishes expressed by several General Chapters, and in particular by those of 1897 and 1901, we made great efforts to improve the pedagogical formation of our young Brothers. Between 1900 and 1902, the first two volumes appeared of the *Basics of Practical Pedagogy* which we see as a work to be studied and consulted by all teachers. Since then, we have been asked to have a manual produced which summarised the ideas presented in the *Basics* and, above all, gave practical guidance for teaching. It is in response to this request that the *Pedagogical Handbook* was published and sent to all communities in the course of last September. The evident welcome this vade mecum received, the explicit expressions of complete satisfaction we received from most of the Districts of the Institute, proved to us how interested you are in these professional studies which, after the truths of religion, are the most important for us. Moreover, the *Handbook* deserves your esteem: with perfect wisdom, it takes its inspiration at the same time from the most respectable traditions handed down the ages by our Brothers, and from the best innovations of contemporary pedagogy. And so, we are most grateful to those of our dear Brothers who were good enough to undertake this work.

Established among you as the guardian and defender of the traditions of our religious family, we cannot overlook the new edition of the *Conduct* for the use of the Christian Schools. For over two centuries, this manual has undergone successive modifications which, while respecting the overall spirit of the work, have prudently adapted it to the needs of the times in which our Brothers have lived. The transformation of curricula, experience, and advances in methodology, have made another revision necessary of our pedagogical code of practice.

This new edition of the *Conduct* was to have been drawn up through the collaboration of a number of experienced teachers in working parties set up in each District. The results of their work, pooled at the Generalate, were to have been discussed by a special working party, and then handed over to an editor of our choosing. That was our intention, announced to our dear Brother capitulants of 1901. You also were able to find this information in the Preface of the *Pedagogical Handbook*, in which we wrote: "The aim that we have set ourselves is to stimulate competent teachers to send in notes which will be of benefit to the future publishers of the *Conduct of Schools*". Present circumstances have forced us to abandon the idea of a joint approach to drafting, although this remains our preferred method. On the other hand, we did not want to put off to some indeterminate date the publication of a work called for for over twenty years; and so we had to proceed with our work on the basis of a more restricted amount of information, convinced that by avoiding further delay we were responding to your desires and your needs.

The *Conduct* drawn up in this manner has just reached you: by reading this volume diligently, may you find in it a stimulus to devote yourself with an increasing ardour to the work of your apostolate, as well as an encouragement to study, within the limits and for the reasons demanded by your vocation".

3. In the circular which should have appeared on August 15th 1914, the Superior General, Brother Imier, returned vigorously to the need of religious educators for study and formation.

"Whether he is just starting his career, or has been teaching for many years, a teacher must keep his taste and his desire to become thoroughly knowledgeable about pedagogical questions. Moreover, a little bit of common sense is enough to make him realise his stock of knowledge is inadequate in this

connection. All around him, "professionals" in such areas as theology, law or medicine, maintain, renew and increase their knowledge through constant study. A mathematician or a chemist does not think he has studied enough after having successfully passed examinations, even at a very high level. They all know that every day new discoveries enrich their own favourite subject, and they intend to remain fully informed. Similar considerations lead you to make pedagogical studies one of your special concerns.

Like all branches of human knowledge, pedagogy is progressive. It has a part which does not change: this consists of the fundamental data of psychology, logic and moral principles which direct human activity. But the applications of psychology, and the methods and techniques of teaching are perfectible. And these successive improvements are worth knowing about.

All the same, ill-considered enthusiasm would not be a good frame of mind to bring to studies. On the one hand, it would not be correct to say that the history of pedagogy is solely one of advances made by this science: there were also setbacks, wrong directions taken, and mistakes made from which youth people suffered greatly. On the other hand, it would be unjust to underestimate the improvements brought about. Some of these were the result of a series of imperceptible changes; others were the work of geniuses whose perceptiveness and determination opened new ways forward which many teachers subsequently followed.

In a very special way, a Brother of the Christian Schools experiences great joy at finding his Founder and Father among the originators responsible for the most fruitful impetus to primary education. And it is not enough to know this in general terms: he wishes to study in detail how the firm conviction joined to tenacious energy of St John Baptist de La Salle, broke with age-old customs and routines which dominated and immobilised the schools for the common people of his day. These schools stubbornly insisted on providing mostly individual tuition in small classes. But De La Salle advocated, established and maintained simultaneous teaching for all pupils in the same group. It was thought that pupils should begin by learning to read in Latin on the pretext that it played a role as the mother-tongue and origin of the French language. De La Salle showed and maintained that reading should be learned from books in French, the only language the children used and understood.

There were other innovations: silence, the use of signals, the infrequency of punishment in class, frequent and regular examinations governing promotion of students to higher classes. The training of lay teachers in Catholic teacher training colleges, the provision for adolescents of what we would call nowadays "continuing education", the attempts to organise vocational training, are all so many other works which caught the attention and fired up the zeal of the brilliant Founder. And the work of our Saint brought about such reform and improvements that he is considered to be one of the educators who has left his mark most strongly on the pedagogy of a particular period".

Conclusion

It is easy to understand how fortunate it was for the Brothers to have at their disposal a Teacher's Guidebook - the *Conduct of Schools* - in which they could find: the purpose and the educational and pastoral aims of their school, clear guidelines regarding methods and teaching practices, and basic instructions relating to the organisation of their class and school. The possible risks of sclerosis were avoided by the pooling of various experiences and periodical revisions of the text. A reading of the successive editions reveals that the educational approach becomes more refined, thanks in part to general advances in pedagogy or human sciences. This reading makes it possible also to identify some constant elements which constitute the line of force of the Lasallian pedagogy we should now like to consider briefly.

- A teacher-pupil relationship that is strong, profound and based on a kindly attitude and a belief in the ability of the child to develop; on a fraternal attitude that encourages mutual trust, the basis for an approach to teaching which has an impact on organisation and methodology. Despite the pressure put on them by the authorities, the Brothers could not accept the system of Mutual Education which was contrary to a fundamental belief they had: that it is in a direct personal relationship between teacher and pupil that the process of the child's growth as a person takes place.
- Teachers and support staff work by association and form a genuine community of educators. A constant feature of the history of the Institute is the refusal to send a single Brother alone to teach in a small school. It was most important that there should always be a community of at least three Brothers or more, if possible. It is this strength based on association which prevented the Institute from disappearing at the most tragic moments of its history: 1792 and 1904. It is the natural dynamism of association which gave it and continues to give it its creative and innovative force.

- The determined transition from pedagogy based on repression to one based on emulation and motivation: stimulating pupils to be personally interested without resorting to the use of excessive competition. From 1777 onwards, Brothers are warned repeatedly not to have recourse to corporal punishment or inflicting suffering. These warnings were repeated in the 1811 edition of the *Conduct* and in various circulars of successive Superior Generals. Parallel to these, numerous practical ways were suggested of motivating pupils and not having to clamp down in class any longer. John Baptist de La Salle had already made gentleness the overriding quality of an educator, an idea on which Brother Agathon commented on at length in his *Explication des douze vertus d'un bon Maître*. Some writers on the history of education have misinterpreted the thinking of the Founder on this subject and have arrived at some astonishingly erroneous conclusions.
- Lasallian schools can be seen as having always sought to be efficacious as a matter of justice towards the poor children who see their school as their only way forward to social betterment. A pedagogical approach had to be developed which was well-adapted to the abilities and aspirations of individual pupils. From 1860 onwards, the *Conduct of Schools* adopted a resolutely concrete and detailed style and wording, so that those using it found there the practical advice they needed to teach effectively. This style continued to be used until the final edition of 1916.
- Order in the classroom and in the school is considered to be an essential prerequisite for this efficacy. Disorder and noise disturb the work of other pupils, do not allow them to work effectively and waste a lot of time. And so the *Conduct of Schools* always has a section devoted to the means "of establishing and maintaining order in school". This order is based naturally on such factors as regular attendance, punctuality, enforced silence, constant vigilance on the part of the teacher... all means which are more effective than repression.
- For more than two centuries, the uninterrupted use of pupils as class monitors. In various ways, the Brothers sought to involve as many pupils as possible - or at least, a significant number of them - in the running of the class. Even if the lists of monitors varied from edition

to edition, as did their titles (officers, rehearsers, controllers, monitors, employees...) these pupils always performed tasks for the benefit of the group. It was a form of social life in the school.

- Concern for the material conditions of the classrooms in which the pupils worked was remarkable also. As early as the 1720 edition of the *Conduct* - a time when such concern was not widespread - the Brothers thought it necessary to define the material conditions necessary to make the work of pupils in school easier. Works on the history of education have described in some detail the miserable conditions prevalent in the Little Schools under the *Ancien Régime*, so one can well understand the efforts required of the Brothers' schools during this same period.
- Primary schools were where basic education was given. As this involved secular subjects, Lasallian schools tried to include in their curricula anything that could be useful for the pupils, including teaching them to be good citizens and Christians. They also included new subjects when these appeared in the last part of the 19th century. They proceeded with prudence and discernment and consulted experts, but they did not want to penalise their pupils.
- This expansion of the curriculum was accompanied by a progressive recourse to the contributions of the human sciences, when these were published in the last part of the 19th century. Up to this time, people relied a great deal on practical experience, on educational insight. It is true that, from the very start, in 1706, one can see the influence of the study of character types, which was very much in vogue in the second half of the 17th century. Its effects can still be seen in the editions of the beginning of the 19th century. But the 1903 and 1916 editions take pride in the fact they have had recourse to the findings of the educational sciences, without, however, giving many details.
- One of the main characteristics of the network of Lasallian schools has always been to have the benefit of high-quality teachers. And so, much attention is given to their training - the text of John Baptist de La Salle on the training staff of new teachers even appeared a dozen or so years before the first manuscript copy of the *Conduct of Schools* - and the

training of teachers is a recurring topic in successive editions of the *Conduct*. In 1720, the *Conduct* included also the list of the *Twelve Qualities of a Good Teacher*. With some modifications and an updated commentary, this list is included in following editions. A system is put into place of constant monitoring of teachers. While new teachers were of particular concern, this monitoring applied also to all the others. A watch is kept on their behaviour in class, and on their relations with their pupils, and among themselves. They are helped in their work - with much insistence - with a whole range of teaching aids, special textbooks, treatises on pedagogy, circulars, etc.

- Schools also seek to be open to their environment: to that of the Church, with a view to integrating their pupils by repeated practical contact into the local Church; to their social environment, by educating them to be good citizens, or by organising extra-curricular activities or continuing education; to the cultural environment, by, for example, participating regularly in World Fairs in Europe and America; and to the professional environment: this had always been a major concern of the Brothers as they sought to improve the social conditions of the poor.
- Finally, the network of Lasallian schools has always sought to offer an integral and integrated education to its pupils. The term "integral" has often been used in connection with the Lasallian approach to education, and rightly so. But it would be more correct to speak of "integrated" education, meaning that, in a Lasallian school, the spiritual and religious education of the pupil is never dissociated from his secular education. The intention is to avoid creating a dichotomy in the mind of the pupil. Everything is equally taken into account in the educational process. And this unity is reflected also in the importance attached to personal, assimilated and shared values. It is easy to identify these values in the text of the *Conduct*. Today still, we can draw up a list of priority values: peace, fraternity, respect for the dignity of individuals, solidarity, justice, interiority, liberty, autonomy and responsibility.

However, the system of publishing one *Conduct of Schools* to suit all the needs of an entire globalised Institute had its limitations. There came a time - from

1904 onwards - when, because of the internationalisation of the Institute, it was no longer possible to have a single reference text, and diversification had to be envisaged. In education, one has to take into account local differences in culture and education, while at the same time maintaining common aims and educational values.

This may explain, at least in part, why there were no more universally applicable editions of the *Conduct of Schools* after 1916. There were certainly other factors in play also. The 1916 text continued to be read or studied after the First World War. One can, however, speak of a period of stagnation between 1916 and 1950. The law passed in France on July 7th 1904 had caused a great upheaval in the Institute. It was difficult to recover from it even though there occurred an extraordinary surge of expansion all over the world.

Two events served to reawaken interest in the *Conduct of Schools*. First of all, in 1950, there was the proclamation by Pope Pius XII of St John Baptist de La Salle as "Patron of Christian Teachers". In 1951, there occurred the tricentenary of the birth of the Holy founder. As one of the ways to mark this occasion, it was decided to publish for the first time the manuscript text of the 1706 *Conduct* (Ms. 11.759, Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris). The decision was made by an International Commission of Brothers, summoned by the Superior General Brother Athanase Émile, and composed of French, Italian, Spanish and Belgian Brothers. Georges Rigault, Institute historian, was also a member. The key role in this scheme was played by Brother Anselme d'Haese of Malonne, who had been envisaging the publication of this text for a number of years. He had no difficulty in convincing the members of the Commission. A letter, dated December 29th 1949, from Brother Armel Félix, Bursar General and a member of the Commission, informed the Superior General of the decision of the Commission (see AMG). And so, in 1951, the *Procure Générale de Paris* published a work entitled *Conduite des Écoles Chrétiennes*, with a Preface 50 pages long by Brother Anselme.

This choice would be endorsed a few years later, following the creation in 1956 of the department of "Lasallian Studies" in the Generalate, and the launch of of the *Cahiers lasalliens* series. No 24 in this series displayed the 1706 and the 1720 text on facing pages. This return to the roots anticipated

by some years the call made by the second Vatican Council to all religious institutes to study their founding texts.

In 1993, when it was planned to publish the Complete Works of St John Baptist de La Salle, Brother Michel Sauvage, the instigator of the project, undertook a rapid consultation by post to determine which version of the *Conduct of Schools* should be chosen. It was agreed that the 1706 Manuscript should be the text used, on condition that it was accompanied by the Foreword to chapter 15 of the 1720 edition on "Corrections".

And so in this way, the 1706 Manuscript has become the usual benchmark text in Lasallian circles when the *Conduct of Schools* is referred to. And rightly so, because it is there that we find the original thinking of the Founder and of the first Brothers regarding pedagogy. Adapted to suit circumstances today, many aspects of this thinking still contain a powerful message to inspire the education of young people.

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