

Chapter Six: The High Road and the Low Road: 1894-1904

When Br John Dullea left Australia in early 1893, he left behind a ‘system’ of ten Marist Brothers’ schools in Sydney and Parramatta, which were educating, perhaps, forty-five percent the Catholic boys of school age in the Sydney Archdiocese. Another twenty-five percent were catered for either by the Jesuits at St Aloysius’ and Riverview, or by the less numerous, and more recently arrived, Patrician and Irish Christian Brothers, in parochial schools, very similar in style and organization to those run by the Marists. Only twenty-five percent of Catholic parents, whom the Cardinal’s threat of penalties had not warned off, continued to send their children to Public Schools in the urban areas of the Archdiocese.¹ Yet despite Br John’s best efforts to form his novices in the Marist tradition and to administer these schools in that same tradition, there were, in fact, two different kinds of Marist Brothers’ school in Sydney: firstly, the collegiate or secondary type of school, as represented by St Joseph’s College, Hunter’s Hill and by the High School at St Mary’s, which were directly under the brothers’ control; and secondly, the parochial schools in Sydney and Parramatta which, although closer in style to the first schools established by Fr Champagnat and the early brothers, also stood more directly under the supervision of the Archdiocese.

Both these ‘styles’ of school claimed to be Marist, of course, but although the parochial schools were more numerous than the secondary schools, in Sydney, the collegiate model was to be more influential when new Marist openings were made in the other colonies and states. The collegiate model was also to influence the way in which the parochial schools themselves were run, as they began to develop into Intermediate High Schools after the Great War and into full Secondary Schools after World War II. Moreover, the Marist juniors, novices and young brothers, who trained mainly in the parochial schools, as pupil teachers, were sent to either kind, in their first formal posting, and were transferred between one and the other in subsequent appointments as their ability, experience, and educational qualifications indicated. Naturally, both these converging styles of school were to be further influenced by the ecclesiastical and educational contexts in which they found themselves. The impact of clerical and parental expectations on the one hand, and of Public Examinations, State Registration, State Aid and straightforward marketplace competition with State Schools, on the other, were to transform these Marist schools in ways which Br John could scarcely have foreseen. If we are to discern any signs of a Marist tradition in those

¹ Exact percentages for this period are difficult to come by. The estimates given here are derived from: Sr Naomi Turner, *Catholics in Australia*. (Melbourne, 1992), Vol. I p. 231. and the *Quarterly Review of Australian Education*: ‘Australian Catholic Schools into the Seventies’ J.E.Bourke. ACER. 1969. p. 13.

later manifestations, however, we must begin by looking more closely at the two types of school which Br John bequeathed to his interim successor, as Provincial, the French-born, Br Felix Garel.

The High Road

Since the publication, possibly of C.E.W. Bean's *And Here My Son*, and certainly of Professor Sherington's and his co-writers' *Learning to Lead*, it has become something of a commonplace, in Australian educational historiography, to claim that the collegiate schools founded by the teaching orders of brothers and even by the Jesuits, in Australia, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, were heavily influenced by, if not modeled upon the post-Arnoldian English Public Schools, as transplanted in Australia by the likes of A. B. Weigall at Sydney Grammar.² It is a view with which the present writer has, in the past, concurred;³ but for which he has been taken to task by younger Marist scholars.⁴ In a more recent, co-written essay, Professor Sherington's co-writer, Mark Conellan, even goes so far as to argue that, at St Joseph's College, Hunter's Hill, the extra-mural sport and the school magazine elements, at least, of the Public Schools model were claimed to be in direct conflict with the *Guide des Ecoles* and 'the Order's educational priorities in a foreign land.'⁵ Since St Joseph's is the 'flagship' of Marist schools in Australia and a major factor, in the present writer's opinion, in shaping the Marist teaching tradition in this country, we must take time to examine this argument in more detail.

In *Learning to Lead*, among the 'twenty or so items' of the 'machinery' of the Arnoldian Public Schools, which Sherington and his co-writers single out for emphasis are: sports facilities, team sports and extra-mural sports competitions; an annual magazine; a school uniform, tie, badge and motto; a prefect system 'to extend the hegemony of the headmaster'; a house system and, perhaps, a cadet unit.⁶ It is still my contention that many of these features were eventually incorporated into most Marist secondary schools in Australia, including St Joseph's. However, as Br Michael Green rightly points out, apart from the team sports, sports facilities and school magazine, around which Conellan's analysed controversy focused, the other elements of this 'machinery' were introduced at St Joseph's much later in the piece and some never were.⁷ Before pursuing this part of the issue, though, two further characteristics of the Arnoldian model and Wiegall's adaptation of it, should be considered. One is Arnold's stress on Classics as the core of a liberal education and the other is his emphasis on 'practical Christianity' and Chapel services as pillars of the moral values of the school,

² See, for instance: Alan Barcan, *A History of Australian Education* (Melbourne, 1980), p. 188; T. W. McNamarra, 'The Origins and Formative Years of St Patrick's College Strathfield.' MEd Thesis, Sydney University. 1988; and David Strong, *St Aloysius: The College by the Harbour* (Sydney, 1997), p. 102.

³ Br Valerian Braniff, 'The Evolution of Marist Pedagogy in Australia' in *Lavalla* Vol.1 No.3 1995.

⁴ Br Michael Green, 'The Charismatic Culture of Marist Secondary Schools' EdD Thesis. Sydney University, 2000. pp. 90-93.

⁵ Sherington & Conellan, 'Socialisation, imperialism and war: ideology and ethnicity in Australian corporate schools 1880-1918' in Mangan, (ed.) *Benefits Bestowed* (Manchester, 1988).

⁶ Sherington et al., *Learning to Lead* Sydney (1987), pp. 16-17.

⁷ Green, *op.cit.*, pp. 88-92.

both of which beliefs Wiegall, to a great extent shared.⁸ Now St Joseph's certainly offered Latin, as a subject, from its earliest days and the Brother Director demonstrably put a great deal more emphasis on the Chapel and Religious Instruction than was ever the case in Dr Wiegall's, non-denominational Sydney Grammar, or any of the Anglican or Protestant GPS schools, for that matter. However, as we shall see, the motives for including these features had little to do with imitating the Australian-Arnoldian model.

It is not part of this thesis' brief to enter the controversy as to what elements of the GPS 'machinery' are essential and/or actually attributable to Arnold or to Thring, nor to decide whether either of these men encouraged the 'cult of athleticism' in their respective schools.⁹ It is concerned, rather, with the assertion that this 'Arnoldian' model, however defined, was a major influence in shaping or actually distorting, the character of Marist secondary education in Australia. Similarly, it is not this thesis' business to defend the originality or authenticity of the Australian Jesuit or Christian Brothers' colleges as exemplars of Jesuit or Christian Brothers' 'education'. Nevertheless, it is, perhaps, worth pointing out, in passing, that in Hansen's analysis of the Jesuits' Xavier College in Melbourne, he notes a distinct difference between Xavier and its near neighbour, Scotch College, in the emphasis on prefects and leadership positions for senior students: a crucial element in the Arnoldian model.¹⁰ And, to take quite a different tack, when the Irish Christian Brothers were beginning their first Australian boarding college, at Nudgee in Brisbane, they sent one of their men down to Hunter's Hill in 1887, to see how the Marist Brothers were doing things at St Joseph's.¹¹ Their quest for models, therefore, was certainly not limited to Australian GPS schools, or even to Australia, as this extract from one of Br Felix's letters shows.

Travelling also on *The Australian* were three Brothers of the Christian Schools of Ireland: Br Barrett, a delegate to the General Chapter; Br O'Hagan, Visitor; and Br Tracy (sic) Provincial of the District of Australia. They intend to visit the main colleges, orphanages, schools etc ... of France etc. They asked me to furnish them with some addresses of our principal houses, which I did gladly. You can therefore expect a visit from them at St Genis ... Their purpose in visiting the main schools in France, England etc. is to bring themselves up to date, so that their schools in our colonies may be even more successful. In this they are following the example of two Sisters of Charity who last year were sent from Sydney to Europe, for that same reason. This will let you know the importance that Religious Orders attach to the latest methods, and the sacrifices they are willing to make in order to be successful in their competition with the Godless schools of the Government.¹²

⁸ Burns & Turney 'A.B.Wiegall's Headmastership of Sydney Grammar School' in Turney (ed). *Pioneers of Australian Education* (Sydney, 1969) p. 118.

⁹ D. Leinster-McKay, *The Educational World of Edward Thring* (London, 1987), pp. 33-43. and 58-59.

¹⁰ I.V. Hansen, *Nor Free, Nor Secular* (Melbourne, 1971), p. 103.

¹¹ T.P. Boland, *Nudgee 1891-1991* (Brisbane, 1991), p. 4.

¹² *Lettres d'Océanie* 2.5.96.

Returning, then, to Mark Conellan's assertion - largely based, it should be noted, on Br Michael Naughtin's very frank discussion of the issue in his centenary history of St Joseph's - that the sports competitions were claimed, by the French brothers involved, to be contrary to the *Guide* and, in effect, to be non- or even anti-Marist: it cannot be denied that this was the Australian French brothers' contention.¹³ Nor can it be denied, that this opinion was upheld by the French Assistant General, Br Procope, and the equally French Superior General, Br Theophane, both in correspondence and in person, when the two Superiors visited St Joseph's in 1893-4. It even seems appropriate to add the little-acknowledged fact that Br Basil, the Irish-born, New Zealand-trained teacher who encouraged the boys in their literary efforts in the school magazine and in their sporting aspirations and who, eventually, as headmaster of St Joseph's, albeit for a very short time, led the school into the GPS sports competition, had received only a very minimal formation in Marist values and pedagogy.

This latter insight, into the case, is not really emphasised in Br Michael's history; but it does emerge in the *Letters from Oceania*, even those written by Br John Dullea, who must be regarded as Br Basil's supporter. In one letter, which included a report of his inspection of the St Joseph's classes, Br John remarks that Br Basil was thinking of leaving the Marists and joining the Irish Christian Brothers; in another, that Br Basil was less enthusiastic about his catechism classes than about those involving the secular subjects and, in another, that Br Basil was difficult in community and considered to be lacking in religious spirit.¹⁴ However Br John, who oversaw both the early and the final stages of this controversy, from his position as Provincial, yielded to no-one in his own loyalty to the Founder and the Marist tradition. For him, the heart of the St Joseph's controversy was national sensitivities and traditions, not Marist principles.¹⁵ And Mark Conellan's overall argument, it must also be remembered, was more about socialization into national and ethnic loyalties rather than about Marist pedagogical values as such.

If we are to disentangle this Gordian Knot of national, religious and educational values, we must begin by recalling that at the time of Fr Champagnat's death and, indeed, until the drafting of the first edition of the *Guide des Ecoles*, the Marist Brothers were overwhelmingly a congregation of elementary school teachers. The *Guide*, itself, was formulated mainly with the organization of a primary day school in mind. The Founder, nevertheless, had sanctioned the running of la Grange-Payre, near the Hermitage, and also Côte Saint André as *pensionnats*, or boarding schools, in his lifetime and these *pensionnats* were in active and not always friendly competition with their De la Salle models at the time of his death.¹⁶ Many more were started in the next half-century. In fact, the original sandstone building of St Joseph's was closely based on the design of a Marist Brothers' boarding school opened at Aubenas in the Ardeche, in 1878.¹⁷ However, there were only two models of secondary school or boarding college really congenial, or even available, to the still, predominantly, primary school French Marists. One model

¹³ Br Michael Naughtin, *A Century of Striving* (Sydney, 1981), Chapters 5-10.

¹⁴ *Lettres* 12.7.84, May '86 and May '89 respectively.

¹⁵ *ibid.* 18.4.91.

¹⁶ Br Balko, 'The Spiritual Testament of Fr Champagnat' in *Marist Notebooks*, No. 6. 1994 p. 63.

¹⁷ Naughtin, *op.cit.* p. 23.

was that of the *petits seminaires*, sponsored by the French Bishops, the Marist Fathers and other clerical religious orders, and which actually catered for a wider, middle-class enrolment than simply aspirants to the priesthood. The other, was the *pensionnats* of the De La Salle Brothers, which operated with a curriculum rather like junior technical-commercial colleges.¹⁸ We have seen, earlier, that Br François soon despaired of *pensionnats* and that Br Jean-Baptiste, judging at least by his unpublished essay, also referred to earlier, would probably have favoured the minor seminary model.¹⁹ Strictly speaking though, the latter was beyond the reach of the brothers in France, because it implied the teaching of Latin, which was forbidden both by Marist Brothers' official custom and by French Law. Thus, as we have also seen, Br Louis Marie and his successor, Br John Dullea's friend and mentor, Br Nestor, had pushed ahead using, basically, the *pensionnat* model.

Even the *pensionnat* model was not wholly appropriate in Australia, because one of the expectations of both the Catholic clergy and laity was that Latin would be offered as part of the curriculum. The clergy expected Latin because it was a requirement for local aspirants to the priesthood and some parents, at least, demanded it, because Latin was also a matriculation requirement for the colonial universities, to which their sons aspired. Latin, therefore, was taught at St Joseph's from the outset, at first by a Marist Father, from Villa Maria, and later by a succession of lay-teachers, so as to get around the Marists' customary veto of any brothers' ambitions, in this regard. Br Emilian Pontet, the French, founding Director, or Headmaster, of St Joseph's, evidently did not believe that, by offering Latin, he was offending against Marist traditions. Neither did Br John, his Provincial, nor the French Major Superiors, to whom Br John routinely reported this arrangement.²⁰ In fact, judging by the outline of the timetable provided by one of the early boarders, Br Emilian may well have been consciously working out of the French minor seminary model:

We rise every morning at 5.40 at the sound of a gong which is struck in the corridors leading to the dormitories. After dressing we go down to the Chapel for morning prayers. Holy Mass then follows ... After Mass we have morning study till breakfast time. Recreation follows breakfast and as nine o'clock draws near we get ready to appear in school and get our marks for cleanliness. Then, the ordinary school work goes on till 11.30 when religious instruction is given daily by the Brother in charge of the class and by the Brother Director once a week. At 12 o'clock Angelus and dinner, followed by recreation; then the Rosary is said, after which the usual routine of school work goes on till 4.15. We then take lunch and play till the bell rings for evening study. At 7 we take tea which is followed by a short recreation, then evening prayers are said in the chapel and we retire to our respective dormitories to enjoy our well-earned sleep.

¹⁸ R.D. Anderson, *Education in France* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 114-116.

¹⁹ Ch. 3 p. 56.

²⁰ It might be noted that this adjustment to the Australian Church's needs was not unique to the Marist Brothers. When the De La Salle Brothers, from whom the Marists had inherited the anti-Latin rule, took charge of the college at Armidale, they got around the problem by using a cottage outside the school's boundaries, where a lay teacher gave Latin lessons to students aspiring to the priesthood or university. Carmody, Br Aloysius, *The De La Salle Brothers in Australia 1906-1956* (Sydney, 1956), pp. 47-55.

On Saturday afternoons we usually have a nice walk, visit some orchard, or repair to Jackson's Green to enjoy the game of the season. On Sunday evenings, we have a quiet walk.²¹

When we recall that there was silence in the dormitories, in the studies and in the refectory, except for reading aloud from some improving book, we can appreciate the remark by an English commentator on French nineteenth century education: 'Catholic teachers were perhaps over-influenced by their experience in educating priests which they transferred to the education of ordinary children.'²² Perhaps, indeed.

To counter-balance this *petit seminaire* model and indicate that the debate about what was an authentic 'Marist' education was not confined to Australia, it is perhaps worth comparing the evolution of the *pensionnat* of Our Lady of Bellegarde, at Neuville, seventeen kilometres north of Lyon, with that of St Joseph's at Hunter's Hill. It comes from Br Andre Lanfrey's most recent book and is very much based on the *Annales* of Br Avit, to which reference has already been made. The original elementary school was founded in 1826, but struggled along with meager resources until it began taking boarders in 1832. Even then, it had its ups and downs, enduring bouts of criticism from the parents and the Parish Priest and the death of its major benefactor and landlord, M. Tripier, in 1846. After his death, the school moved, in 1856, to a renovated property at Bellegarde and became a boarding school only, accepting no day students. Br Andre continues:

It was in the Directorship of Br Nicet (1862-1880) that the *pensionnat* achieved a stable organization. An autodidact (he had taught himself both English and German), a 'happy character' with a 'good heart', but too fatherly, he benefited from the assistance of an energetic Sub-Director. In addition, he had the support of the Superior General, Br Louis Marie, who had a systematic policy of developing big boarding schools, and who always provided him 'with a well chosen staff'. Neuville became a sort of showcase for the order and a training ground for future leaders: many of his deputies soon became Directors in other (Marist) schools. Br Nicet, himself, became Assistant General for the St Paul Trois Chateaux Province and had to leave his beloved *pensionnat*. During this long period of good administration, the number of boarders rose from 130 to 280; the classes grew from six to ten; and special subjects, taught by visiting lay teachers from Lyon, filled out the academic curriculum, provided by the brothers.

Under Br Jules (1880-86), the former Director of the (Marist) *pensionnat* in Paris, the level of studies was raised again: thirty baccalaureates were obtained ... As regards the 'plan religieux', the school had two chaplains. The pupils had a Retreat when they returned to school each year. First Communion, preceded by a Retreat, was a very Solemn Feast. From 1862, until Br Jules arrived, the pupils attended Mass every morning, practised the devotions for the Month of May (in honour of Our Lady) and the Month of March (St Joseph) and went to Confession

²¹ Description written by a primary boarder, John McManus, in 1891 and quoted in Naughtin, *op.cit.* pp. 47-48.

²² Anderson, *op.cit.* p. 120.

once a month ... Br Jules stopped the Month of March devotions and reduced attendance at Mass to Tuesdays and Saturdays, but his successor re-established the older practice.

... Br Avit, however, when he mentions the religious outcomes, expresses his own personal conviction rather than objective certainties:

‘Better instructed in their religion, well trained in various practices, well supervised and assisted in the correction of their emerging defects either by the chaplains or by the brothers, quite accustomed to obedience, politeness, propriety and good habits, the students must obviously retain something of this good education when they leave school and conduct themselves accordingly.’

Besides the formula’s summing up the educational ideals of the Marist Brothers, this careful judgement is justified by the fact that Neuville produced only a few clerical or religious vocations: three priests and four brothers ... In contrast to the orders of Religious Priests, who took pains in their boarding schools to facilitate massive recruitment, the Marist Brothers, despite achieving quite undeniable professional success, did not find many disciples among their middle-class clientele. This had been one of the great hopes of Br Louis Marie ... when he launched the bold policy of founding boarding schools. But Br Jules, probably the most capable of the Directors, seems to have perceived, in his reducing of the religious practices, that the model needed some adaptation.

On the other hand, the creation of ‘secondary modern’ *pensionnats*, such as that of Bellgarde, did permit the Marist Brothers to raise significantly their intellectual level and to establish a body of Directors, teachers and administrators, self-taught at first, then better qualified, thanks to higher studies and further experience.²³

It seems worth pointing out that this French ‘debate’ about the character and purpose of Marist education was being conducted, in the outskirts of Lyon, only a few years before it was being debated at Hunter’s Hill. The French brothers at St Joseph’s had all left France before the French discussion had fully developed.

During his term as Director, therefore, Br Emilian rejected his senior students’ pleas to be allowed to engage in extra-mural sports; but he did permit them to produce a school magazine, a feature of the Arnoldian ‘machinery’ which was equally foreign to French ideas on secondary education, secular and Catholic alike.²⁴ Yet, when the magazine, *Golden Days*, was continued, in the first two years of the Australian-born, Br Stanislaus’s Directorship, it was made part of the grounds of the French brothers’

²³ Br André Lanfrey, *Marcellin Champagnat & Les Frères Maristes*, (Paris, 1999), pp. 275-281. This extended quotation is an edited translation (by the writer) of Br André’s French version. The phrases and paragraph in inverted commas, are direct quotes from Br Avit’s *Annales*. And in a footnote to the account, Br André reminds us that the secondary modern curriculum of the *pensionnat*, did not include Latin and therefore made priestly vocations a less likely outcome.

²⁴ R.D. Anderson, ‘French Views of the English Public Schools’ *History of Education*, II (1973), p. 162.

complaint against him, that he was un-Marist and anti-French.²⁵ Land for better sports' facilities was also acquired during Br Stanislaus' tenure and 'frenzied', (*plus de fureur*) promiscuous sport again reared its ugly head, much to the horror of the French-born Provincial, Br Felix.²⁶ Yet the reclusive, poet, painter and pianist, Br Stanislaus, was the last one who could be accused of the 'cult of athleticism' and the charge that he was un- or anti-Marist would be equally difficult to sustain. Although born in Australia and educated at St Stanislaus College, Bathurst, he had been a postulant and novice under Br Ludovic and was so well-regarded by the latter, and by Br John Dullea, that he had been in charge of the Juniors continuously for the fourteen years prior to his appointment at St Joseph's. He also went on to become the first Australian-born Provincial of Oceania and then Master of Novices from 1906 -1912. As Br Michael Naughtin remarks, it is ironic that it was during the 'gentle' Br Stanislaus's directorship that a Cadet Corps was established at the College, but while this was another item of the GPS 'machinery', Br Felix makes it clear that it was done at the behest of the Cardinal and his auxiliary, Dr Higgins.²⁷ Imitation of the Public Schools was not on the Marist agenda, though it may well have been on Cardinal Moran's.²⁸

Br Michael Green's most telling critique of the alleged Arnoldian influence on Marist education, as exemplified by St Joseph's, however, is his highlighting of the refusal to institute Prefects or a House system, two of the four 'pre-eminent ... hallmarks of Arnoldianism.'²⁹ There were prefects (called *surveillants* in French) at St Joseph's from the outset; but these were brothers with reduced or negligible teaching loads, whose job was to supervise the boys outside class time. They were not the junior leaders or cadet under officers of the Arnoldian model. The *Teacher's Guide*, even in the truncated 1877 English edition in use in Australia at this time, was very strong on the brother's duty to be a 'guardian angel', providing constant but benevolent supervision of his charges. And these charges were grouped, not in vertically integrated houses of the Public School kind, under a House Master, but in horizontally stratified groups called 'divisions' with the oldest boys in the First Division and the youngest in the Fourth Division. These divisions took their recreation in separate playgrounds, their meals in separate refectories and their lessons, of course, in separate classrooms. 'Fagging' or the notion of senior boys supervising, much less punishing, junior boys was repugnant to both Marist and French educational sensibilities.³⁰

The nearest thing the Marist schools had, to the junior leadership opportunities provided by the Arnoldian prefect system, was the Sodality of the Children of Mary and the parallel is far from being a close one. The sodality had been founded at St Patrick's, Harrington Street by Br Ludovic and was transplanted to St Joseph's by Br Emilian where, after a false start in 1882, it flourished from 1883 until post-Vatican II 1972. Piety and exemplary conduct, rather than seniority in age, were the requirements for admission

²⁵ Naughtin, *op.cit.* pp. 85-86.

²⁶ *Lettres*. 21.5.94.

²⁷ Naughtin, *op.cit.* p. 88.

²⁸ O'Farrell. *op.cit.* pp. 235,237,253,265.

²⁹ Sherington *et al.*, *op.cit.* p. 16.

³⁰ Anderson, 'FrenchViews'. pp. 167-168.

to the Sodality. Its members met in the chapel on Thursdays to recite the Little Office of the Immaculate Conception. They received Holy Communion, as a body, on the major feast days of Our Lady, wearing a distinctive light blue sash, and they elected an executive of senior students who met with the Brother Director once a month, to discuss sodality matters. Alumni of the sodality were more likely to turn out as bishops, priests or Marist Brothers than as the subalterns, junior magistrates and Indian Civil Servants of the Arnoldian prefect system, though some of the latter may well have emerged from among the college's cadet under officers and sports captains. Br Stanislaus, who inherited supervision of the sodality from Br Emilian, was much more in his element there, than on the cadet parade ground. He introduced the sodality at Bendigo, when he was sent there, and also at St Ildephonsus' College, New Norcia, of which he was the founding Director, in 1913. It also took root in many other Marist schools, but more commonly in the boarding colleges, than in the day schools.

Before Br Stanislaus went on to become Provincial, Master of Novices or founding Director of St Ildephonsus', however, he underwent the humiliation of, in effect, being dismissed as Director of St Joseph's. His alleged insensitivity to French susceptibilities was one thing. His failure to allay Br Felix's fears about the sporting sub-culture was another. But when enrolments fell and the 1894 exam results were below standard, Br Felix felt he had to act:

It is absolutely necessary to do something to restore the reputation of the College after such a defeat ... First of all, another man is necessary at the head: one who is alert, who pushes ... who gives a lead to Brothers and boys.³¹

Br Felix toyed with the idea of appointing one of the Frenchmen, Br Loetus Cerf, or of bringing the fourth Australian postulant, Br Joseph Murphy, back from New Zealand, to replace Br Stanislaus.³² Yielding to a suggestion from the Assistant-General, however, he finally appointed Br Basil Kelly, who had left St Joseph's in 1891, due to ill-health, and had subsequently been appointed as founding Director of Bendigo, the second Marist foundation in Victoria. Br Basil and Br Stanislaus exchanged places in December 1894. Br Felix could appreciate the argument for appointing Br Basil, but he made the decision with some misgivings:

This choice is not without dangers and perhaps will scarcely lessen our difficulties, but what is to be done? There is need of a man of reputation for the moment; so as to inspire public confidence ... His nomination has been well enough received by the Brothers and the public.³³

³¹ Quoted, from the *Lettres* 27.11.94 in Naughtin, *op.cit.* p. 92. This discussion of the evolution of Marist secondary education at St Joseph's, from 1880 to 1910 is indebted to the early chapters of Br Michael's centenary history, *A Century of Striving*. As with Chapters Four and Five, though, much of the primary material comes from the *Lettres d'Océanie* and the present writer has re-read these. By this time, 1893-97, most of the *Lettres*, were being written by Br Felix Garel.

³² *Lettres* 21.5.94.

³³ *ibid.* 17.2.95.

Br Felix's misgivings were to be fully justified from at least the French, if not the Marist, point of view.

In his first appointment at St Joseph's, from the foundation of the college until 1891, Br Basil was a successful teacher, very popular with the boys, but something of a cross for his confreres, especially, though not exclusively, those of French nationality. He clashed with his Director, Br Emilian, sometimes over the latter's refusal to acquire more science equipment, sometimes over his refusal to delegate responsibility to his colleagues.³⁴ After a year as nominal Sub-director, in 1887, Br Basil even asked the Provincial to be relieved of the title, saying it was a farce. In their infrequent meetings as an executive, Br Emilian and the bursar, Br Vales, insisted on speaking French, leaving Br Basil out of the discussion entirely.³⁵ As well as enthusing the senior boys for their studies, Br Basil had also assisted them in the production of the school magazine, *Golden Days*, and in 1890, when a deputation of senior boys petitioned the Brother Director, unsuccessfully, for a weekly half holiday on which to play extra-mural sports, Br Basil strongly supported the petitioners. In spite of this, Br Emilian, like Br John, recognized Br Basil's importance to the good reputation of the college and, if Br John was somewhat disappointed with the latter's lack of zeal for teaching religion, as was mentioned earlier, he nevertheless discerned in him a dedication to his students which Br John would have regarded as characteristically Marist. One of the most frequently cited positive comments in Br John's classroom reports is *devoué*, 'devoted'.

As was also mentioned earlier, Br Basil had very little grounding in a specifically Marist pedagogy. Born and educated in Ireland, he took an assisted passage to New Zealand in 1874 and in the next five years he worked at first as a tutor, then as a teacher, in State and Catholic schools, acquiring his teaching certificate, presumably by part-time study and/or correspondence. He sailed to Sydney and began his mature-age postulancy at Hunter's Hill in June 1879. By early 1981, he was on the staff of the boarding school at St Patrick's, Harrington Street and moved, with the boarders, to Hunter's Hill in July of that year, where he took charge of the First Class or Senior students. On his return to St Joseph's, as Director, in 1895 he restored the exam results success, and up-graded the science equipment in the laboratories. He seconded the students' renewed and successful petition, to the Provincial, to be allowed to play GPS Rugby and started the leveling of the playing fields, which had been acquired during Br Stanislaus's time. He also abolished silence and reading in the refectories, despite directions from the Provincial, to the contrary. Obviously, he believed that the French minor seminary model was quite inappropriate for Australia. But there were also complaints about his brusqueness and taking sides with the boys against the brothers, his lack of piety and religious spirit and, half way through 1897, his Directorship was terminated and he was sent to France to undertake the exercises of the second novitiate.³⁶ As its name suggests, this course was aimed at reviving and extending a brother's appreciation of the Marist spirit and the principles of Religious Life.

³⁴ *Lettres*. 26.3.86.

³⁵ *ibid.* 4.7.88.

³⁶ *ibid.* 27.3.97.

All was not lost, however. On this trip to Europe, Br Basil was accompanied by another Australian, Br Clement Murray, who was likewise to undertake the second novitiate, and also by Br Felix, himself, who had been recalled to the General House. Br Felix was replaced by Br John Dullea, who resumed his role as Provincial of Oceania and continued, thus, until he was elected as Assistant General for Britain, South Africa, and Oceania, in 1900. During Br John's second term as Provincial and in his time as Assistant General, the internal controversy about the running of St Joseph's ceased. The school magazine was restored, but reading in the refectory was not and the college developed into one of the most prominent and regular participants in the GPS sports competition. In short, the French minor seminary model of Br Emilian and Br Felix was abandoned and the *pensionnat* model of Br Louis Marie, Br Nestor, Br Jules and Br John, was broadened, and extended, to take its place. Despite Br Basil's energy and apparent iconoclasm, therefore, it was really Br John Dullea who, in effect, defined the character of Marist secondary education in Australia. And this definition was adhered to, both by Br Stanislaus, the first Australian born Provincial, and by the same Br Clement who had completed the second novitiate with Br Basil and who went on to become Director of St Joseph's, then Provincial of Australia and, eventually, Assistant General.

This nomination of Br John as the one who most defined the character of Marist secondary education in Australia is, perhaps, worth rehearsing before we move on to examine the parochial school model. In an earlier chapter, we saw that, from the start of his period as Provincial, Br John had been unhappy with the professional and academic qualifications of the European brothers in Australia and besought the Major Superiors to send him some better qualified re-inforcements.³⁷ Apart from Br Emilian, Br Felix and, perhaps, Br Claudius Goutagny, whom he placed as Director of the school at Parramatta, these better-qualified re-inforcements did not eventuate, and Br John was compelled to make the most of the local vocations, available to him. Thus, the qualified Br Basil was put in charge of a senior class as soon as he finished his novitiate and Br Mark Lenehan, an Irish-born ex-seminarian, and former NSW Mounted Policeman, who had done his teacher training as a mature-age student at Fort Street Model School, was made senior teacher at St Francis' school in the Haymarket, also straight out of the novitiate.³⁸ Br John tried to improve the training of the juniors and young brothers who were pupil-teachers and imported English translations of both the *Teacher's Guide* and the *Life of Fr Champagnat* to make sure that this training was grounded in the Marist tradition. Young Australian recruits of promise, like Br Stanislaus and Br Clement, were given rapid promotion, and promising secondary teachers like Br Wilbred Staunton, Br Denis Reilly and Br Frederick Smith were given encouragement and official permission to audit lectures in Physics and Chemistry at Sydney University, although permission was withdrawn by the Major Superiors in 1892, much to Br John's annoyance.³⁹

In the early years at Hunter's Hill, Br John had defended both the publishing of *Golden Days* and the students' participation in extra-mural sport, against the French Brothers' criticisms, which had been sent direct to the Major Superiors, saying that these

³⁷ See above Ch. 5. p. 90.

³⁸ Br Owen Kavanagh, *Marist Brothers* (Sydney, 1986), p. 181.

³⁹ Naughtin, *op.cit.* pp. 34 -35.

practices were culturally appropriate in Australia. He also defended Br Stanislaus and Br Basil against the French Brothers' charges of their being anti-French and lacking in Religious Spirit. All of these criticisms received a better hearing from Br Felix, during his term as Provincial, and were, if anything, magnified before being passed on to the Major Superiors in France. But when Br John returned as Provincial in 1897, Br Basil's dismantling of the minor seminary model was allowed to stand, under the new Australian Director, Br Denis Reilly. And when Br Clement Murray succeeded Br Denis in 1902, the new Director broadened the curriculum to include some of the original, De La Salle *pensionnat* elements such as Woodwork, Mechanical Drawing and Typing. In April 1903, Br Stanislaus, as Provincial, attended the General Chapter which was held at St Genis Laval, on the very eve of the expulsion of the Religious Orders from France. While there, he visited a number of the French Marist schools, which were in the process of being disbanded and he purchased laboratory equipment from some, and statues and religious relics from others. Br Clement Murray, during his term as Director, installed one of these statues, of Our Lady, on top of the tower at St Joseph's, and another one, of Fr Champagnat, in the vestibule of the college. This was surely a declaration that the St Joseph's model was as 'Marist,' and as loyal to the Founder's memory, as anything that Br Emilian or Br Felix could have contemplated.

Two final features of Marist secondary education, as exemplified by St Joseph's, and which a later Australian Provincial attributed to Br Emilian, rather than Br John or Br Clement, were its affordability and its self-conscious commitment to rural and remote students. Full board and tuition at St Joseph's cost 30 guineas per annum at a time when St Stanislaus', Bathurst was charging 40 guineas and Riverview, 60 guineas; and fees stayed at this level from 1881 until 1912, with a rise of 3 guineas per annum for senior students only, introduced in 1896.⁴⁰ This affordability was made possible by the fact that most of the teaching, all of the boarder supervision, even much of the cooking was done by the brothers; and also by the old, French Marist, quasi-monastic tradition of partial domestic self-sufficiency. St Joseph's had its own dairy, piggery, fowl-yard and orchards and received additional fruit, in season, from the farm property at Parramatta. These garden and domestic activities were looked after by the brothers, in their out-of-school hours, and by some brothers who never qualified as teachers. The practice died out at St Joseph's as the suburbanization of Hunter's Hill gathered pace; but many of the later country Marist boarding schools in places like Campbelltown and Forbes in NSW; Sale, Kilmore and Wangaratta in Victoria; and Mt Gambier, in South Australia had attached dairy farms until the end of the 1950s. All of these boarding schools had a majority of country boys among their enrolment and in this way, too, the historical preference of the Founder was honoured and maintained.

The Low Road

After the Select School was transferred to the St Mary's Cathedral site, in August 1887, St Patrick's, Harrington Street, reverted to its original role as a parochial school and became one of the eight Marist-run schools in the growing network of Religious Order staffed primary schools supervised by the Sydney Archdiocese. Until 1890,

⁴⁰ Naughtin, *op.cit.* pp. 64-65.

the Marist schools followed the ‘Standards of Efficiency’ drawn up by Br John Dullea in 1884, although from that year they were also subject to an annual visit by a diocesan inspector as well as by Br John.⁴¹ After 1891, a committee of Australian bishops, including Cardinal Moran’s Auxiliary, Bishop Higgins, drew up a new set of Standards of Proficiency and Programmes of Work which they sought to establish throughout Australia and New Zealand, together with a uniform set of approved text-books. The bishops’ aim in all this was to instill confidence among Catholic parents in the efficiency of the Catholic schools, as compared with their state counterparts; but, in the process, they actually overshot the mark.⁴² Br John was not alone in thinking the new standards ‘rather high’. Br Vales, the Belgian Master of Novices and erstwhile critic of Br Basil at Hunter’s Hill, thought it was a ‘curriculum for Superior Schools and Colleges.’ While Br Mark Lenehan, the Fort Street-trained senior teacher at Haymarket, by this time Director of the Marist school in Wellington, thought that the Australian bishops’ standard was at least one year above the New Zealand government’s requirements.⁴³

The Sydney Diocesan Synod of 1891 made the new Standards compulsory for parochial schools, nevertheless, and the Marist city schools thereafter participated diligently and usually successfully in the machinery set up to enforce them.⁴⁴ This involved: annual visits by the diocesan inspector to each school; annual exams for each year from Third Class to Sixth Class, with the exam papers being set and marked externally; the results being published in the Catholic Press, with medals and other prizes awarded to the most successful students. The diocesan inspectors could not comment on the teachers’ competence, only on the students’ performance, the organization of the school and the state of the facilities and St Patrick’s was criticized, in the 1896 report, for having unsuitable premises.⁴⁵ Given the facts that the building was seventy years old and located on a pocket-handkerchief site in the congested streets close to Circular Quay, the verdict is hardly surprising. However, since there was no question of money for improvements coming from either the Archdiocese or the parish, there was not a great deal anyone could do about it. Perhaps the plea of poverty also explains the survival of the Marist Brothers’ set of reading books, in place of the diocesan-approved, American-published Benziger texts. Br John had established a stock of the Marist Reading Books, published by the British Isles Province in the mid-eighties, and diocesan inspectors were still expressing the hope that this stock would soon be exhausted, by as late as 1906.⁴⁶

In addition to this authorized, if partly ineffectual, intervention of the diocesan inspectors, the Marists also had to put up with the unpredictable and arbitrary interference of local Parish Priests calling for an unscheduled catechism competition between the girls’ and boys’ classes here, complaining about the transfer of a popular or unpopular teacher there, and about failure to participate in a fund-raiser somewhere else. Most of these incidents blew over quite quickly, but a series of clashes with Dean O’Haran

⁴¹ *Lettres* 12.7.84.

⁴² Fogarty, *op.cit.* pp. 356-57.

⁴³ Doyle, *op.cit.* p. 344.

⁴⁴ Fogarty, *op.cit.* p. 357.

⁴⁵ Doyle, *op.cit.* p. 346.

⁴⁶ *ibid.* p. 348.

in the Cathedral parish, in 1910-1911, found its way into the secular press, involved the Cardinal and led to the Marist Brothers withdrawing from the parochial school at St Mary's and being replaced by the Christian Brothers, both of the teaching orders being threatened with an interdict in the process.⁴⁷ There was also a continuing sense of injustice among the brothers at the refusal of the Parish Priests to make good the fees deficits for the brothers' stipends at the Cathedral parochial school, Sacred Heart, Darlinghurst, St Francis', Haymarket and St Patrick's, Harrington Street.⁴⁸

Even where the Parish Priest was consistently supportive, as at Parramatta, the burden of providing the full Diocesan Curriculum as far as Sixth Class and of meeting parental expectations of concomitant success in the Civil Service, Junior and Senior Public Exams, put some strain on the Marist character of the school. The high pitch of the Bishops' Standards of Proficiency was discreetly and gradually wound back to parity with the State standards, during the 1890s, but the schools were still expected to offer Algebra, Geometry and Physics in Fifth Class plus Latin and French, in Sixth. And although the majority of students in the city schools sought paid employment at the end of Fourth Class,⁴⁹ the zealous French Director of Parramatta, Br Claudius, went out of his way to attract public exam candidates to his school, offering them extended school hours from 4.30 -7.30 in the afternoon and sometimes coaching sessions until 10 p.m. His efforts were rewarded. His exam results in the mid-nineties were second, among the Catholic schools, only to St Joseph's, Hunter's Hill and the fees from the increased enrolments meant that the school's facilities were among the best in the diocese. But although Br Claudius, himself, was fervently religious, Br John Dullea expressed some concern about the religious character of the senior classes, at least. Not all of the exam candidate students that the school attracted were Catholic. Some of those who were Catholic, were irregular church-goers. And, although the daily fifteen decades of the Rosary were recited in class-time, as prescribed by the *Common Rules*, the exam classes had the time required for this exercise pared down to a bare seven minutes.⁵⁰

In the light of these formal and informal interventions by the diocese or clergy and of the pressure from parental expectations as regards results in both diocesan and public examinations, it might well be asked whether the 'systemic' Marist schools could, in fact, remain identifiably Marist in character? Whether the parochial schools, like St Patrick's, Harrington Street, would have been regarded as authentically Marist, by Fr Champagnat or even by Br Ludovic? There is little direct evidence, other than the brief notes in Br Felix's provincial visitation reports, for St Patrick's, itself. Br Felix had been Director at Harrington Street from the time of the Select School's transfer to St Mary's, and he had continued to use it, as his home base, for at least the first twelve months of his term as Provincial. The reports from his visits in 1893, '94 and '96 are extant and are fairly routine in character, although the exam results, of just one success from one candidature, for the Junior, and two out of two, for the Civil Service, in 1894, would seem to indicate that either the boys or the staff at St Patrick's were not as

⁴⁷ *ibid.* pp. 445-452.

⁴⁸ Doyle, *op.cit.* p. 448.

⁴⁹ *ibid.* p. 348.

⁵⁰ Ian McDonald, *A School of their Own* (Sydney, 2000), pp. 119-145.

ambitious as those at Parramatta. And he recommends that the Assistant General, at least, praise the boys' singing in the parish church, next time he writes to the community.⁵¹

By happy chance, though, Sr Naomi Turner discovered this memoir of the period under discussion at St Patrick's near, Marist neighbour, St Francis' school, which, being located in a similar heavy-traffic area, had also had its premises declared unsuitable.

In the year 1893, I toddled down Devonshire Street, hand in hand with my elder brother to start my chequered school days in old St Francis', Haymarket ... The most instant image that rises in my mind is that of a boy getting soundly whacked for climbing on a table, and with a perfect mimicry, giving us a rendition of the priest's '*Dominus Vobiscum*'. Unfortunately, the Brother in charge happened in at the very moment that the mimic pivoted back ... and great was the fall of the mimic. I can recall the incident all the more readily because it seemed to my childish mind, that injustice had been done on a display of cleverness in which no irreverence whatever occurred to the boys. But, I dare say the retribution was just, and but a step in the moulding of character ... Brother Berchmans was the Brother in charge in my time – a kindly, gentle soul, but a stickler for the proper. He was the mover in a gigantic May altar which was erected in the front room – with moss, real plushy moss – at its foot, and a fountain playing into a wide deep-sunken tank. We thought this the vestibule of heaven, and, indeed, it must have been a most ingenious contrivance, for I can still hear the splash of the fountain, and see the shining water globules dropping through the air ...

The Marist Brothers deserve more than we can ever give them, for they trained us well in the way we should go; if we have not gone that way, the fault is ours.⁵²

Neither Fr Champagnat, nor Br Ludovic would have approved of the mimic getting soundly whacked, but all the rest: the spectacular May altar; the kindly, gentle Br Berchmans, a stickler for the proper; the moulding of character; and the training 'in the way we should go', would surely have seemed, to both of them, entirely appropriate and authentic.

The moral purpose, the kindly manner and the devotional practices, were not the only reasons why the parochial schools could be regarded as still thoroughly Marist. With the exception of a few visiting teachers for Latin, or some other subjects which the brothers could not teach themselves, all these schools were entirely staffed by brothers and by Juniors, teenage boys who aspired to become Marist Brothers. These boys lived in a separate boarding school, first at St Patrick's, then next to St Mary's Cathedral, and they were assigned to one or other of the Marist city schools where they worked each day as class monitors and pupil-teachers. Br Andrew Power, who went on to become

⁵¹ *Letters* 23.1.93, 21.5.94, 27.11.94 and 20.10.96.

⁵² Turner, *Catholics in Australia* pp. 250-51. The quotation is an extract from an article in the Sydney *Catholic Press*, dated May 10 1923. It was written by someone who signed himself as an old boy and although it is an extract, the present writer has re-read the complete article. Sr Naomi has included all the relevant parts of the original for our present purposes.

Provincial and in this capacity was instrumental in reforming Marist teacher training in the 1930s, became a Junior at St Mary's in 1899, when the old training regime was still in force and he has left us an account of its operation.⁵³ It is a lively, candid account, more like Br Avit's *Annales* than Br Jean-Baptiste's *Vie*, and includes an incident when the young Master Power was sent home to St Mary's early, by the Brother Director of St Francis, 'because he had lost his temper and cuffed one of his troublesome students about the ears. It also gives us a glimpse into the street-life of late 1890s Sydney. The Marist Juniors wore a distinctive walking-out dress which included a straw boater, a white, heart-shaped collar and a tie-stock. Only the oldest and tallest of the Juniors were, therefore, assigned to St Benedict's in Broadway, because this was the furthest of the city schools from St Mary's and the one, on the way to which, they were most exposed to verbal and even physical abuse from the local louts and street urchins. Echoes of Br Ludovic's 'larrikins.'

Br Andrew's account also gives a clear idea of the character, the quality and the limitations of the Juniors' teacher training at that time. They rose early each morning and attended Mass with the brothers from the school community in St Mary's Cathedral. They then had breakfast in their own dining room, next to the brothers' refectory, before setting off, on foot, three or four to each school. In school, they assisted the brother to whose class they were assigned and sometimes took parts of the lesson under the eye of the class teacher, the Brother Director, or the Master of Juniors, who came around to the schools from time to time, to see them in action. When they returned to St Mary's at 4.15 they had dinner followed by recreation until 6.30 and then supervised study till 7.30. This was followed by a light supper and then another hour's study until nine at which time they said night prayers in community, under the supervision of the Master of Juniors, and went to bed. Their main training was the example of the teacher to whose class they were assigned and the model lessons of the Brother Director or Master of Juniors, plus their own practical efforts at hearing reading or spelling or tables in their classes. They also regularly studied *The Teacher's Guide*, but it must be remembered that the edition available to them at that time was less than a third of the original French edition and devoted most of its content to general principles on the role and qualities of the Christian educator, rather than to classroom management or curriculum issues.

The last two chapters of the 1877 English edition of *The Guide*, were headed:

- VIII. How Young Brothers Should Act When in Charge of a Class.
- IX. How the Brother Director Should Train the Young Brothers.

And this was the real nub of the matter. When Br Andrew and his peers moved on to the Novitiate at Hunter's Hill, they did two and a half hours of secular study each day, plus more work on *The Teacher's Guide*, and the *Life of Fr Champagnat* – which, itself, included several chapters on education - but they did not do any practice-teaching at St Joseph's College and very few of them sat for the Junior or Senior public exams

⁵³ Br Andrew's own notes plus interviews with his contemporaries and other primary sources have been edited into a biography of Br Andrew called *Not Shaken by the Wind*, by Br Frederick McMahon, (Sydney, 1998). The remainder of this chapter is much indebted to Br Frederick's work.

before they left the novitiate and were sent to their first school. As in the days of Fr Champagnat, the one most responsible for the teacher-training of the young brothers was the Brother Director of their first community, just as he was responsible for their continuing training in living Religious Life. In almost every case, of course, the Director of the community was also the Head Teacher of the school.

It must also be remembered that the structure of community life and the daily timetable, while quasi-monastic, was also geared towards teaching as an apostolic activity. The brothers in a typical school community rose at 5.25 each morning to the sound of a hand bell. They gathered, in silence, in the community chapel at 5.50 for morning prayers, recited aloud, followed by half an hour's silent meditation on a subject proposed each evening by the Brother Director. Mass in the parish church followed and when they returned home, they went back to the chapel to recite the Little Hours of the Office of Our Lady. Breakfast came next, still in silence, but with reading aloud of the life of the saint of the day and, possibly, a few words from the Brother Director about any alterations in the daily school routine. The brothers then went to school and to their own classroom and the normal round of lessons followed, punctuated by a single bell every hour, on the hour, at which time a short prayer was said, aloud, with the students. At midday, the Angelus was recited and the catechism or religious education lesson was given, the brothers being expected to give one religion lesson each week on Our Lady. As well as practicing and teaching devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the brothers were exhorted to take her as a model in their teaching, treating their students in the way they imagined Mary would have tended the child Jesus.

After lunch, the Rosary was recited in class with the students and then afternoon lessons continued until four o'clock. After school, some brothers coached sports teams or school bands or exam classes, while others took their own recreation or did private study. At 5.15, they gathered again in the community chapel for the Evening Hours of the Office and fifteen minutes of spiritual reading, aloud, from a book chosen by the Brother Director. The evening meal was a more relaxed affair, with the Brother Director at the head of the table and the other community members, in order of seniority, down either side. The dinner conversation was then carried on in the community study until 7.30, when silence resumed, under the supervision of the Brother Director, for an hour of religious study, including the preparation of the next day's catechism class. After cocoa and biscuits at 8.30 another hour of silent secular study was devoted to lesson preparation for the next day, correcting books, setting tests and preparing teaching aids. At 9.30, the community returned to the chapel for night prayers, examination of conscience and reading of the subject for meditation next day. Then to bed, in a dormitory, and in the 'Great Silence.'

Weekends and school holidays were similarly programmed, although more time for recreation, domestic chores and personal study was allowed. The favoured recreational activities, in holiday times, were community excursions and picnics. At weekends, it was gardening, or walking, at least in pairs, and, for after school, handball or some other seasonal ball game. Inside the monastery, or community residence, the brothers always wore the long black soutane and white *rabat* of the prescribed habit and

observed silence, except during recreation and the evening meal. Any visitors to the community were shown only to the front parlour, the rest of the house being considered part of the monastic enclosure. When they went out, even on recreational walks, the brothers wore a black suit with clerical collar and a black full-brimmed hat. Individual tutoring or social visits to private homes and going out alone, or without the Brother Director's permission, whether for recreational walks, to do some business, or even visit the doctor, was forbidden by *Rule*. Even Brother Directors, like Br Emilian in his days at St Patrick's, who frequently went alone into the city, or seemed to spend too long in the front parlour at home, entertaining visitors, quickly became the subject of comment by their confreres and of concern for their Provincials.⁵⁴ The directives of the Founder about mutual supervision and fraternal correction, emphasized in Chapter XIX of the *Life of Fr Champagnat* were frequently invoked.⁵⁵

Although this highly supervised regime inhibited natural maturation and allowed only narrow scope for spontaneity and individual initiative, its potential, under a competent and conscientious Brother Director, for forming pious and well-prepared classroom teachers is apparent and goes a long way towards explaining the success and rapid growth of the Marist Brothers during those first thirty years in Sydney. Even when carefully administered, however, the system was never foolproof or water-tight. Some young brothers, including, as we have seen, two of the four pioneers of the Australian mission chafed under the enclosure, went out socializing, formed attachments with young women of the parish and either left or were dismissed from the Order. Other, older brothers and even some Brother Directors, like Br Augustine,⁵⁶ the fourth member of the pioneer group, fought an episodic but prolonged battle against alcohol abuse, under the concerned supervision of the Brother Provincial.

In the light of the contemporary concern about child abuse by Catholic clergy and members of Religious Orders, in Australia and elsewhere, it also seems necessary to point out that this problem is not simply a modern phenomenon. In the *Letters from Oceania*, during the terms of both Br John and Br Felix, there are occasional references to matters of this kind. Two of the Juniors at St Mary's were sent home after 'acts of immodesty';⁵⁷ the very conscientious Brother Director of St Mary's, Br Paul of the Cross, was criticized, after the event, for not noticing earlier the behaviour of a Br Alexander, later dismissed for undue familiarity with some students;⁵⁸ a Br Adrian at St Patrick's was reported to the Provincial for hugging some students '*en cachette*';⁵⁹ and even Br Stanislaus wrote to Br Felix, from his exile in Bendigo, to pass on a complaint from one of his former Juniors that the latter was 'deprived of his innocence' in the novitiate.⁶⁰ Also, in the light of modern concerns about the failure, of some Bishops and Provincial Superiors, to exercise effective discipline in this area, there are two examples in the *Letters* which reveal just such intervention in the 1890s. In the

⁵⁴ *Lettres* 31.8.1879.

⁵⁵ Furet, Br Jean-Baptiste. *op.cit.* pp. 484-485.

⁵⁶ *Annales* p. 222 *Lettres* 3.8.79, 9.10.81, 6.7.82 and 16.2.92.

⁵⁷ *Lettres* 4.7.88.

⁵⁸ *ibid.* 1.3.92.

⁵⁹ *ibid.* 20.10.96.

⁶⁰ *ibid.* 11.12.96.

earlier instance, Cardinal Moran queried Br John about an offending brother whom the Cardinal believed had simply been transferred to another school. Br John was able to assure him that the offender had, in fact, been dismissed.⁶¹ And when Br Felix, during his term, tried to simply transfer a Prefect of Studies at St Joseph's, who was rightly accused of indecent dealings with a boy in his dormitory, he was directed by the Assistant General to dismiss the brother outright.⁶²

Conclusion

Thus, by the end of the nineteenth century, the Marist Brothers had established a two-tier system of schools in Sydney which seemed largely to meet the religious and educational requirements of the diocesan authorities and the expectations of their parent and student clientele. Since the Public Education Act of 1880 did not recognize the existence of Catholic schools, they were under no obligation to meet any government standards; but the Catholic Bishops' expectations of parity, in this regard, and the students' and parents' expectations of success in the Public and Civil Service exams meant, in effect, that they had to match or improve upon, the Public Schools' performance. Yet this two-tier system and the training program which provided the manpower for it, aimed to be, and was believed to be, distinctively and authentically Marist in character. The second generation of French brothers at St Joseph's, Hunter's Hill may have had some doubts about this authenticity, but by the turn of the century, they had lost this argument and departed the scene. The Irish-Australians who succeeded them had re-defined the shape that Marist secondary education would take and had made sure, as far as they could, that the Juniors, novices and young brothers were being trained in the tradition of Fr Champagnat, the *Teacher's Guide* and the *Common Rules* of the Institute. From 1900 till 1914, Br John Dullea oversaw, from afar, the running of the Australian Marist system in his role as Assistant General; and from 1903 onwards, Br Stanislaus Healey and a succession of Australian-born Provincials administered the local scene. The Australian Marist tradition was therefore well placed to face the waves of reform which swept over the Australian education scene in the first decade of the new century.

⁶¹ *Lettres*. 2.8.91.

⁶² *ibid.* 23.6.94.