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**'A MOST UNENVIABLE REPUTATION'**  
**THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS AND SCHOOL DISCIPLINE**  
**OVER TWO CENTURIES**

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The Christian Brothers and  
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## THE BROTHERS REPUTATION

A delegate to the 1947 General Chapter<sup>1</sup> of the Christian Brothers Institute prefaced his remarks on the topic 'Discipline in the schools' by referring to the 'most unenviable reputation' which the Congregation had acquired in its use of corporal punishment. On the question of reputation he was correct. Every novel, memoir, autobiography or oral reflection which makes reference to the Brothers refers to their fearsome discipline in the classroom. 'Irish Christian Brothers' should be rephrased 'International Child Beaters' according to one humorist.

Certainly most Christian Brothers have used corporal punishment in their classrooms over the last two hundred years. However, the Brothers were hardly unique educators in this regard. Yet, the image of the Institute is that its members were quite unusually and exceptionally severe, more unrestrained than teachers in general, more uncontrolled than members of other Religious Institutes serving the Catholic people.

This paper will examine the issue to see where the truth lies in the images which surround the Brothers, and if their unique severity turns to be a myth, it will attempt to locate the source or origins of the myth.

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<sup>1</sup> The words 'Institute', 'Order' and 'Congregation' are used interchangeably when reference is made to the Christian Brothers as an organisation. The term "General Chapter" refers - from footnote 1 to the sexennial meeting of elected delegates from Brothers around the world to discuss the progress and policy of the Congregation and to make appointments.

## EDMUND RICE AND SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

When Edmund Rice, a retired businessman, founded the Institute, in Waterford, Ireland, in 1802, the Monitorial System of schooling was in vogue for educating the children of the poor. Throughout Europe, education at this time was neither compulsory, nor free, nor secular. With the Monitorial System, one trained teacher could organise the instruction of upwards of 150 pupils in one large room, with the assistance of senior pupils as teaching monitors. In effect, the master taught the monitors, 24 of them in an average room, and the monitors taught the classes of less advanced pupils. Each room was called a "school", the "class" was the five to ten younger pupils instructed by a monitor. The curriculum focussed on the "4 Rs" - with Religion given a prominent place. the objective was basic literacy and numeracy.<sup>2</sup>

In the first extant outline of his system of education, Rice emphasized a mild, compassionate approach to teaching and children. He wrote: 'Unless for some faults which rarely occur, whipping is never inflicted.'<sup>3</sup> Such an attitude placed him well in advance of contemporary school discipline standards. Indeed, Rice and the first generation of Brothers had given much attention to the twin problems of organisation and control of pupils. Considering the large numbers of pupils in each room, pupils from every class in society except the very rich combined with the complicated manoeuvrings of the Monitorial System, this emphasis on discipline is understandable.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The early part of this paper is informed by the following - from footnote 2 work which is not well known outside the Institute, viz. Gillespie, W.L. The Christian Brothers in England, 1825-1880, Burleigh Press, Bristol, 1975, pp. 30 ff

<sup>3</sup> Normoyle, M.C. A Companion to 'A Tree is Planted': the Correspondence of Edmund Rice and his Assistants, 1810-1842, Privately Printed, Rome, 1977, p.3

<sup>4</sup> Kent, J.E. "The Educational Ideas of Edmund Rice, Founder of the Presentation and Christian Brothers", Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis, University College, Cork, 1988, p.90.

The Manual of School Government <sup>5</sup> contains large sections on the various ways of correcting different kinds of pupils. Considerable use is made of prizes to encourage good behaviour and the general attitude to discipline, by the standards of Victorian England, is remarkably free of harshness. A Brother is expected to be a person who works for love and who evokes love:

*The more affection and kindness appear in his advices and remonstrances,  
the more they (the pupils) will profit by them.* <sup>6</sup>

The school room was to be a place of silence. The Brothers were trained to speak little and in a quiet voice. As far as possible they gave directions by signs rather than by words. At the same time the pupils were expected to learn most of their subjects by speaking rather than listening and the learning noise from the various classes was a matter of delicate control. The Monitorial System encouraged 'mechanical discipline' with military overtones. <sup>7</sup>

A good example of military-type discipline used in a Brothers' school of the mid-nineteenth century is provided by a newspaper account of Br. J. Maher in action, St. Patricks' School, Liverpool, 1843:

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<sup>5</sup> The Manual of School Government, Dublin, 1832, pp. 13-15; 178 - 179; 187-204. See also: Rules and Constitutions of the Society of Religious Brothers, Dublin, 1832, Chapter 7.

<sup>6</sup> Manual, p. 201

<sup>7</sup> Sullivan, J.J. 'The Education of the Irish Catholics, 1782-1831', Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Queen's University, Belfast, pp. 232-3.

*On entering the school...the boys were ordered to make a bow, an act which was done with great uniformity. Then, at a given signal, made a 'click' from a small instrument which the master held in his hand, the boys ranged themselves around the room. At another 'click' and with almost military precision they turned around to show that their clothes were clean also, and at another signal they were all in an instant upon the forms.*<sup>8</sup>

The Monitorial System demanded a military discipline for its efficient use but in the Brothers' case seems to have dispensed with the harsher corporal punishments. Rice and the first generation of Brothers, recruited from the small Catholic middle class, rejected to a large degree the floggings and general ill-treatment of minors which was the contemporary norm. In the earliest outline of his educational system which survives he had written:

*'Unless for some very serious fault, which rarely occurs, corporal punishment is not allowed.'*<sup>9</sup>

### THE FIRST GENERATION OF BROTHERS

By the 1820's the Irish Brothers were in touch with the headquarters of the French Brothers of the Christian Schools in Paris. It was from this source that they received two important disciplinary instruments - the wooden signal and the leather strap. This leather slapper - '13 inches long, 1.25 wide and .25 thick' - used only on the hand, was a mild instrument of discipline, in terms of contemporary schools in the British Isles.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Liverpool Journal, 28 January 1843, p.4.

<sup>9</sup> Rice to Archbishop of Cashel, 9 May 1810. Archives of the Christian Brothers, Via della Maglianella, 375, Roma 00166 Italy; hereafter cited as Generalate Archives.

<sup>10</sup> Minutes of General Chapters, 1841, No. 5, Generalate Archives.

In fact, use of the strap hardly qualified as corporal punishment at that time. Brother A. Dunphy wrote to the La Salle Brothers' Superior-General in 1826:

*The youth of this country are already deeply indebted to you. We have, from your example, banished all corporal punishment from our schools. Other masters are beginning to take the hint from us. I assure you, you have done no small good, even in the example you have given us in this.* <sup>11</sup>

In addition, the use of the strap was carefully regulated - it was not to be given on a boy's writing hand and was normally to be one slap only. The official attitude of the Brothers to its regular use was very unfavourable:

*Blows are a servile form of chastisement and degrade the soul. The ordinarily harden rather than correct, and blunt those fine feelings which render a rational creature sensible to shame. If a master be silent, vigilant, even and reserved in his manner and conduct, he need seldom have recourse to this sort of correction.* <sup>12</sup>

The early Christian Brothers, as an association, took a firm standard against severe corporal punishment. In the nineteenth century, British Royal Commissions on education praised them as good disciplinarians, but never faulted them for harshness. On the contrary, it was remarked, with some astonishment, that despite the size of the classes 'the children are kept in good order and the masters seldom have recourse to corporal punishment.'<sup>13</sup> That was in 1825.

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<sup>11</sup> Dunphy to Superior-General, La Salle Brothers, 28 July 1826, De La Salle Archives, Via Aurelia, 476, Rome, 00165.

<sup>12</sup> Manual, p. 193.

<sup>13</sup> First Report ..... Irish Education Enquiry, H.C. 18825 (400), xii, p. 85



In 1857 Br. B. Duggan was examined before the Endowed Schools Commission in Cork. He admitted that corporal punishment had not been abolished but claimed that it was used only sparingly : '.....my own opinion about it is that five or six boys receiving one slap on the hand in the day is quite sufficient to keep the school in order.' Duggan claimed categorically that boys were never flogged at the school. <sup>14</sup>

At the time of the 1881 Endowed Schools Commission, Mr. Keys Moore inspected seven Christian Brothers school, and made the following comments to the Commission:

*The relation between teacher and pupil seemed all that could be desired, as there was perfect and prompt obedience without any sign of fear.*

*The discipline was admirable, the Brothers being able to arrange the boys in any way desired almost without a word.* <sup>15</sup>

In fact, we will see that the discipline reality in a Brothers' school at this early period could deviate from the sublime as contained in the theory of the Manual and comments of Royal Commissioners, but not to the point where the Brothers were renowned as severe disciplinarians. This notoriety came somewhat later, and for a variety of reasons.

The nineteenth century reality regarding corporal punishment in schools needs to be touched on, to place the Brothers' approach in context.

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<sup>14</sup> Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to Inquire into the Endowments, Funds and Actual Condition of all Schools for the Purpose of Education in Ireland, H.C. 1857-58. Evidence taken before the Commissioners, H.C. Vol. 1. 1857-58, (2336-II) xxii, Part 11. 1. p. 79.

<sup>15</sup> Report of the Commissioners...Schools Endowed for the purpose of Education in Ireland; H.C. 1881 Vol. 1 (Cd. 2831), p. 128.

## NINETEEN CENTURY SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

The ferocious discipline of the Great Public Schools educating upperclass youth, both before and after the reforms initiated by Thomas Arnold at Rugby in the 1840's, has been widely documented, and needs only to be touched on here. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, children were seen as defective adults, the fruits of original sin, whose evil propensities were to be beaten out of them. - 'Better whipped than damned' in the words of an American Puritan. In addition, flogging was common in the army and navy; not until 1866 did an Act of Parliament limit to 48, the number of lashes that could be given to a seaman for any one offence. Hanging, transportation and whipping were standard punishments throughout the penal system.

In schools savage and uncontrolled beating remained the chief method of disciplining boys. Indeed, the same month of the same year, May 1810, when Edmund Rice outlined his educational system, Dr. John Keate, Headmaster at Eton, flogged a hundred boys in the Lower fifth for disobeying a five o'clock holiday roll call. <sup>16</sup> Even in mid-century, sixty strokes of the birch laid on a boy's buttocks or back was still permitted, though when John Moss, Headmaster at Shrewsbury for 40 years, gave a boy 88 strokes of the cane in 1874 questions were asked in the House of Commons. <sup>17</sup> However, the social class from which Public School boys came was far removed from the world of the Christian Brothers in the nineteenth century.

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<sup>16</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, J. *The Public School Phenomenon 597-1977*, London, 1977, p.41. Monographs and histories of the British Public schools and their worldwide derivatives are legion, and include, Mangan, J.A. *The Games Ethic and Imperialism*, Ringwood, 1986; and Mangan, J.A. *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public school*, London, 1981.

<sup>17</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, p. 108.

On the other hand, boys in working class circles were expected to accept the hardships of life at a very tender age. Obedience was the prime virtue expected in the young, and was enforced by 'reprimand, supported by the occasional blow'. Children were hit with sticks, cat o'nine tails, belts and fists.<sup>18</sup> In the work place also, where child labour was common, work targets were maintained with severe corporal punishment. discipline of children was similar throughout the British Isles among the major religious affiliations. Severity towards children was non-sectarian; nor did attitudes differ between social classes.

By contrast, in the Brothers' schools a kindly discipline seems to have prevailed normally, as the chronicler of St. Wilfrid's Preston, recorded:

*The Brothers seem in a wonderful way to have won the affections of the boys under them and in very large measure to have dispensed with anything in the nature of corporal punishment, but on their leaving, the rod appears to have come into strong evidence again.*<sup>19</sup>

#### BROTHERS INCREASING SEVERITY

In fact, there had been a shift in the Brothers' attitudes to corporal punishment, both in theory, and to an extent in practice, since Rice's death in 1844. The normal discipline standards in contemporary British education were drawing the Institute away from ideals of its founder. In 1844 the Institute numbered some hundred men; it was soon to experience a rapid growth in post-Famine Ireland. Rice and his early followers had entered the Congregation as mature men, from secure middle class backgrounds,

<sup>18</sup> Benson, J. (ed.) *The Working Class in England, 1875-1914*, Sydney, 1985, p. 4. The following are simply two of the increasing literature of the history of childhood : Walvin, J. *A Child's World : a Social history of English Childhood 1800 - 1914*, Melbourne, 1982; Hewitt, M. and Pinchbeck, I. *Children in English Society*, London, 1973.

<sup>19</sup> Wright, J.H. *Notes on the History of St. Wilfrid's School, Fox St., Preston, 1814 - 1914*, Preston, 1915, p. 48

and with some education. In the explosion of vocations to the Religious Orders after 1850, the normal recruit to the Institute became a young teenager. The demands from Bishops, priests and people for more and more school openings were insatiable. In time, training suffered; the elan and status of a small elite Institute became blurred with the advent of a Congregation of a thousand members by 1900. In addition, the Famine may have had its deleterious effect on manner and behaviour.

After Rice's death there was a shift in emphasis in the reprinted Rules and Constitutions and in the Manual of School Government regarding corporal punishment. In the original seventh chapter of the Rules and Constitutions (1832) there appears 'The Brothers shall be ever watchful that they but rarely correct the Scholars by corporal punishments; and that in whatever punishment they inflict, they be never prompted by an emotion of passion or impatience.' The words underlined, were missing from the 1851 edition of the book.

Moreover, the regulations about corporal punishment in the revised Manual, which came into force in 1851, contain no exhortation that punishment should be rare. On the contrary, the Manual lists offences that should be severely punished (my emphasis): lying, using obscene words, irreverent conduct in church or during prayers at school. Those who fight in school should be punished very severely (my emphasis). Lighter punishment, 'Slaps on the hands may be inflicted for many causes: as, for not being attentive at the lessons, at the prayers, or at catechism; for being idle in school; for not obeying the signal immediately; for having been too late and for many and other similar causes.' Theory had changed.<sup>20</sup>

During the first eighty years of the Institute's existence there was a single case where a Brother's severity towards a pupil led to his being charged with assault. The events

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<sup>20</sup> O'Hanlon, W.A. 'Brother T.J. Wiseman and his Contemporaries', Christian Brothers Educational Record, Rome, 1980, p. 147.

are outlined in some detail in the Annals of the O'Connell Schools. The case occurred in 1842 and the contemporary account bears a thorough citation:

*The boys being disobedient and obstinate, the Brother took a wooden pointer just at hand and gave him some blows which left ugly marks on his flesh. The boy acquainted his mother when he went home with what had occurred, and she, seeing the state he was in, took him immediately to Jervis St. Hospital. The doctor who happened to be in attendance was not a Catholic and, having seen the boy's condition, expressed his horror, and advised the woman to summon the master who had been guilty of such barbarity before a magistrate and have him punished for his cruelty. She did so, and the young man had to appear at the Police Court, at that time situated in Henry Street.*

*Two magistrates presided in this court - Dr. Kelly, formerly Secretary to the National Board of Education, a Protestant, and a Mr. Duffy, a Catholic. The Brother Director took the precaution to fee counsel in order to make the best defence he could under the circumstances. But were it not for the high character of the schools, the general esteem in which the Brothers were held throughout the city, and especially the high personal regard which one of the magistrates (Dr. Kelly) had for Mr. Rice, the founder of the Schools, and which regard has expressed in open court from the bench, the culprit would, in all probability, have got six months imprisonment with hard labour.*

*As it was, he had to stand in the dock while receiving a severe reprimand from the Catholic Magistrate (Duffy) who, in conclusion, warned him that if ever again he was found guilty of the like offence he might expect the full penalty of the law. It may be added that during the writer's long experience*

*In the Institute the above is the only case of its kind that had come under his notice in any of the schools.*

The young Brother who was the defendant in the celebrated case continued to teach in the O'Connell Schools for another year but was then dismissed from the Institute, the curt comment 'Sent away; bad tempered' being added to his file. <sup>21</sup> This remained a unique case for a long while.

The enthusiastic regard for the Brothers schools which Royal Commissioners showed in 1857-58; 1870 and 1881 suggests that discipline practice did not radically change from that established in the pre-Famine period, at least beyond community tolerance. However, change there was. In Manchester, Br. D. Phelan occasionally flogged boys in the accepted British tradition; <sup>22</sup> in Sunderland a mother, in a celebrated incident, became very angry about the slapping of his lad; <sup>23</sup> and the Visitation report on the Christian Brothers school in Leeds, 1849, indicated that, 'slapping is used freely.' <sup>24</sup>

The memoirs of Edward O'Flynn, a Cork builder, who attended the North Monastery school in the late 1840's - early 1850's gives a graphic and sympathetic portrait of his teachers, especially Br. J. Wiseman, a vigorous Irish nationalist and author of a number of the Institute's first range of textbooks. However, O'Flynn makes it plain that Wiseman's discipline practices approximated to the contemporary British standard, and were a good distance from the standards of the 1832 Rules or their 1851 amendment. O'Flynn recalls that Wiseman 'made great use of the cane', flogging boys especially for lying or smoking. <sup>25</sup>

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- 21 The account, written by Brother J.A. Grace, is in the House Annals of the O'Connell Schools, Richmond Street, Dublin. See also: Blake, D. 'John Austin Grace (1800 - 1986) Educator' Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Hull, 1986, p. 186 ff.
- 22 Notes on Visitations, i, Manchester, 1849. Generalate Archives.
- 23 Gillespie, Christian Brothers in England, p. 66.
- 24 Notes on Visitations, i, Leeds, 1849. Generalate Archives.
- 25 O'Hanlon, 'Br. T.J. Wiseman' p. 149.

Another insight into the difficulty of applying the principle of 'no corporal punishment' may be gleaned from the following extract concerning CD5 New Ross in the 1850's, soon after the school was established and after the famine:

*"....Punishment in the home was then more frequent and more severe than it is today. School chastisement, naturally, had to keep in line with it. Boys were much tougher. All of them did not then, as now, accept going to school as an inevitable fate. Not a few of them considered that it was up to the parents and Brothers to succeed in making them go. Legal compulsory attendance had not yet come. The expectation to go to school as a moral duty was cynically dismissed by not a few schoolboys, as a very doubtful counsel of perfection. 'Mytching' (playing truant) was continuous among a certain set. Being contagious, its treatment demanded a certain ruthlessness in which Parent and Brother collaborated frequently. The average age in a particular class was then much higher....."*<sup>26</sup>

In all this we are still a long way from the extraordinary notoriety of the Christian Brothers in the matter of corporal punishment, referred to by L.B. Angus in his doctoral ethnography of Christian Brothers, Newburyport in 1988. Angus wrote: *'The firm, sometimes repressive or even brutal discipline which has historically been associated with the Brothers schools in Australia is legendary.'*<sup>27</sup> The Brothers were deemed severe in their ordinary day schools and more severe in their orphanages and boarding schools. On their reputation, the evidence of novels and autobiographies abounds.

<sup>26</sup> Donovan, J. The History of Christian Brothers School, New Ross, Co. Wexford, 1849-1949, Freedom Press, Wexford, 1959, cited in Blake, D.S. 'The Christian Brothers and Education in Nineteenth Century Ireland', Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis, University College, Cork, 1977, p. 167. See also: Crosbie, P. Your Dinner's Poured Out, O'Brien Press, Dublin, 1981. Crosbie recalls that at the opening of C.B.S. North Brunswick St., Dublin, 1869: '...practically all the boys were barefooted. They were an unruly lot, as none had ever been to school before.'

<sup>27</sup> Angus, L.B. Continuity and Change in Catholic Schooling, Falmer Press, London, 1988, p. 21.

BROTHERS DISCIPLINE : LITERATURE

A sympathetic portrait of a Brothers' school in which discipline hardly warrants a mention is rare, the only two cases which come readily to mind being the recollections of C.B.S. Cahirciveen in the 1890's in Joseph O'Connor's Hostage to Fortune;<sup>28</sup> and Thomas Keneally's National Times article of 1977 in which he recalls his teenage years at St. Patrick's College, Strathfield, New South Wales.<sup>29</sup>

On the other hand, M. Farrell in his novel Thy Tears Might Cease, pictures his hero, Martin Reilly, in terror of the Brother's harshness and in contempt at their ignorance.<sup>30</sup> In The Hard Life, popular Irish novelist Flann O'Brien paints a grim picture of education at C.B.S. Synge Street, Dublin - the school a jail; the Brothers warders; the atmosphere sinister and the discipline fearsome.<sup>31</sup> The tone of James Plunkett's Farewell Companions is light and humorous, but Uncle Charles description of Christian Brothers teaching is scarcely flattering: 'Coax it into them or beat it into them, but they do the bloody job - that's the motto of the Brothers.'<sup>32</sup> Uncle Charles's tone is approving!

In his bitter memoirs, Irish statesman Noel Browne, recalled his Brothers' schooling in the West of Ireland before World War II - 'the cruelly unbridled beatings which constituted discipline', though he admits that he was never punished himself.<sup>33</sup> Though his tone is somewhat lighter, Gay Byrne, has similar memories of schooling at Synge St., Dublin, C.B.S.<sup>34</sup> during the 1950's.

There is a strong sense in these books that the Brothers were exceptionally severe, especially from the 1920's to the 1950's, although it may be that the Brothers only

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28 O'Connor, J. Hostage to Fortune Dublin, 1983.

29 Keneally, T. 'Memories of a Catholic Boyhood', National Times, October 3-8, 1977, pp. 18 ff.

30 Farrell, M. Thy Tears Might Cease, London, 1963, pp. 93-98

31 O'Brien, F. The Hard Life: an Exegesis of Squalor, London, 1961, p. 25

32 Plunkett, J. Farewell Companions, Melbourne, 1977, p. 30.

33 Browne, N. Against the Tide, Dublin, 1987, p. 31

34 Byrne, G. The Time of My Life, Dublin, 1989, p. 10



seemed more severe since discipline practices were being modified in other schools. Many intellectuals recalling their education with other masters tend however to have similar comments. James Joyce's portrait of the Jesuits at Clongowes Wood scarcely requires mention; and Sean O'Faolain wrote of his schooling at Presentation Brothers College, Cork, that 'punishment was the sole spur (to achievement) within the school.'<sup>35</sup>

Herbert Moran in his provocative pre-World War II books, Viewless Winds mentioned his father's education in a rural National School where 'the master flogged in Latin verbs with a blackthorn stick.'<sup>36</sup> Frank O'Connor in his autobiography, An Only Child, had a similar vision of his own National School education:

*Tom Downey, the headmaster, combined the sanctimoniousness of a reformed pirate with the brutality of a half-witted drill sergeant. With him the cane was never a mere weapon; it was a real extension of his personality.*<sup>37</sup>

Patrick Shea, in his memoirs recalled the first phase of his education at Deerpark National School where the Principal 'taught by terror', the Junior teacher's yellow cane 'strung half my body into throbbing agony' and the other assistant 'used his cane with chilled accuracy.' Plainly, in pre-war Ireland, the Christian Brothers had no monopoly of the use of corporal punishment in education.<sup>38</sup> Its wide and apparently accepted use in schools suggests wide acceptance, and extensive use in the home. This is the Brothers' image in Ireland and similar memories permeate past students recollections in other parts of the world. The Brothers' image for severity permeates the memoirs of Australian Old Boys - as L.B. Angus recalled. Barry Oakley, one of Australia's significant dramatists of the postwar years, remembers his years at a Melbourne Brothers' school in the 1940s in an article for The Secondary Teacher. There was Brother Conroy who delivered regular 'leather fusillades' with his strap

<sup>35</sup> O'Faolain, S. Vive Moll: An Autobiography, London, 1965, p. 96.

<sup>36</sup> Moran, H. Viewless Winds, London, 1939, p. 167.

<sup>37</sup> O'Connor, F. An Only Child, London, 1961, p. 139

<sup>38</sup> Shea, P. Voices and the Sound of Drums, Belfast, 1981, p. 14

'carried gunmanhandy in the hip pocket of his shabby black habit.' Conroy is said to have enjoyed handball after school, and this game 'along with six of the best' was his favourite sport.<sup>39</sup>

Laurie Clancy, a prominent university academic in Melbourne, appeared to have few fond memories of his secondary schooling at the Brothers' college in East St. Kilda, Victoria. The Brothers in general were 'well-meaning dullards', highly neurotic and bigoted men'. When moved to his not-infrequent anger, the form Master waved his arms 'like some mad, blackwinged beast.' The strap is described:

*It was a vicious looking thing, about 12 inches long and consisting of six or eight black and brown thin strips of dried leather stitched amateurishly together. It was the stitching that was alleged to make it so painful.*<sup>40</sup>

Novelist, Desmond O'Grady, a former pupil of another Melbourne Catholic college relived his schooldays through his semi-fictional hero Kevin, in Deschooling Kevin Carew. 'Kevin felt fear and loathing when the Brothers adopted roughhouse methods', he says.<sup>41</sup> The instrument which excited this fear and loathing in Laurie Clancy and Desmond O'Grady was the same slapper which the Irish Brothers acquired from the La Salle Institute in the 1820s, when it was considered such a mild instrument of discipline as its use did not qualify for the term 'corporal punishment' at all. Christopher Koch recalled its use by 'a bare-knuckle, old, working class, Irish-Australian Brother' at St. Virgil's College, Hobart, in the 1950s in his novel The Doubleman:

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<sup>39</sup> Oakley, B. 'Years of Sawdust, the crack of the whip'. The Secondary Teacher, February 1967, p. 13.  
<sup>40</sup> Clancy, L. A Collapsible Man, Melbourne, 1975, p. 55  
<sup>41</sup> O'Grady, D. Deschooling Kevin Carew, Melbourne, 1974, p. 15

*The strapping that follows is agreed to be the worst anyone has seen: a sixer, the maximum. The Navvy (Brother Kinsella) says its for insolence. His black form seems to rise from the floor as he brings the strap down: the reports are like gunshots. Gathering his strength for each cut, wet lower lip agape, his expression is that of a man on the verge of weeping. Grady's arm begins to shudder; and as he comes back down the aisle, bent over, his crossed hands in his armpits, his face is blanched.*<sup>42</sup>

However, in Australia from the 1930's to the 1950's, from which the above memoirs are culled, physical punishment was not confined to a Christian Brothers' school. The social historian, Helen Townsend, and the novelist, T.A. G. Hungerford are the two commentators who stress the near universality of strict, often physically-enforced, discipline in the home and in the school. Townsend writes:

*Modern psychology had made little impression on the average Australian parent of the postwar era.....To many parents, it was clear that if children did the wrong thing, they should be punished, often physically, (Moreover) Twenty years ago, the cane.....was commonly used.....In public schools.*<sup>43</sup>

Virtually all the commentators to whom reference has been made are sensitive, middle class intellectuals, although many had humble working class origins - hence their schooling at the Christian Brothers, an Institute founded for the special purpose of educating the poor and only exceptionally reaching out to the middle class. Creative Writers, almost by definition, tend to be more intelligent and more sensitive than the average citizen, with an acute perception for accurate social commentary. However, their sensibility may not mirror that of the ordinary users of the Brothers schools. Moreover, the writers seem to show little rounded knowledge of

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<sup>42</sup> Koch, C. The Doubleman, London, 1955, p. 38

<sup>43</sup> Townsend, H. Baby Boomers: Growing up in Australia in the 1940's, 50's and 60's, Brookvale, N.S.W., 1988, p. 81.

contemporary working class social life, with its hard edge before the Western world experienced the broad-base affluence of the 1960's and the last quarter century. The Brothers' school was a working class institution; its values reflected a working class ethos. The Brothers disciplined children as the working class disciplined its young. It may be that the criticism of the Institute comes from a different class with different sensibilities.

On the other hand, during the 1980's the Brothers have had their 'unenviable reputation' reinforced from an unusual and unexpected source. Self-conscious working class Old Boys of the Congregation's residential institutions - Boys Homes, borstals and orphanages - have circulated stories, often ghost-written by secular journalists, of mind-chilling severity at these Homes during the inter-war years and until the 1960's when child care was re-organised throughout the Western world.

#### DISCIPLINE : INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS AND ORPHANAGES

When the British Government subsidised the establishment of industrial schools and reformatories, for illegitimate, abandoned, poverty-stricken and delinquent youth after the 1860's, Religious Institutes, among them the Christian Brothers, were quick to respond. Their response was immediate because the needs of these abandoned youth of the lowest levels of the working class corresponded with their charisma and vision to relieve the needs of the poor. However, the Brothers' inherited experience was with the regular instruction in day schools of working class and lower middle class Catholic youth, often poor but principally from regular family backgrounds. The boys who were placed in, or abandoned to, the Irish and later Australian and Canadian institutions came from the lowest level of the working class a sub culture with which the Brothers had had little experience.<sup>44</sup> The Institute's recruitment was heavily rural in Ireland, and from the respectable working class worldwide.

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<sup>44</sup> At this time, primary education was not compulsory in Ireland and such children frequently went to no school at all.

institutional youth had regularly suffered acute deprivation before their admittance, a deprivation at which the Brothers could only guess because courses in child care were very much a thing of the future - the 1960's not the 1880's. The Brothers were normally trained as primary teachers, not as child care professionals. In institutions Brothers and boys had one another's company around the clock. The work was especially tiring and stressful; recreation away from the institution was rare; holidays few, and the boys moods and reactions differed from those with a stable family background. Bedwetting among the younger inmates, the result of basic insecurity and poor toilet training, was a pervasive problem, and no solution appeared to offer except primitive aversion therapy. It was likely that stress would lead to violence.

In Nothing to Say, Mannix Flynn painted a picture of grim severity at the Brothers' borstal at Letterfrack, Co. Galway - an institution for young urban delinquents on the remote and windswept Atlantic coast.<sup>45</sup> Flynn spent some years there during the 1960's where he claims 'the weather was as hard and cold-blooded as the Brothers'. In the late 1980's accusations surfaced in Newfoundland (Canada) of a brutal regime in the Brothers' Mt. Cashel orphanage near St. John's fifteen years before Roberts Connors charged that his brother had been kicked and slapped at the age of four or five for not making his bed properly<sup>46</sup> and Shane Earle that he was 'brutally beaten' at the institution.<sup>47</sup> The Gazette (Montreal) summarised some of the accusation in an editorial:

*Christian Brothers spanked bear buttocks and punched boys in the head to keep discipline at the Mount Cashel orphanage. William Earle has testified that he was beaten regularly on his bare buttocks for breaking minor rules.*<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Flynn, M. Nothing to Say, Dublin, 1983, p. 676. See also: Touher, P. Fear of the Collar, O'Brien Press, Dublin, 1991

<sup>46</sup> The Globe and Mail (Toronto), 17 November 1989, p. A. 10.

<sup>47</sup> The Globe and Mail, 22 November 1989, p. A 5.

<sup>48</sup> The Gazette, (Montreal), 23 September, 1989, p. B 4.

In Australia, Brothers institutions in Western Australia received similar accusations from ex-British child migrants, brought in under the Child Migration scheme in the late 1940's. Apart from regular discipline with the strap, Brothers are alleged to have flogged boys beyond the bounds of the legal punishment, hit them with any instrument which came to hand - walking stick, truck fan belt, sheep stomach, open hand or fist - and imposed a rough - and ready farmyard regime. Some of the stories are possibly fabricated or exaggerated, but others are undoubtedly true. <sup>49</sup>

The pupils were cheeky and uncontrolled, the times were hard, the staff untrained and government subsidies inadequate. However, discipline procedures diverged by a wide margin from the standards set by General and Provincial Chapters as we shall see, and by an equal distance from the principles set for his Congregation by its founder, Edmund Rice. When did these changes begin to occur and when did the Brothers' image for severity begin to be acquired?

#### IRISH INTERMEDIATE EXAMINATION SYSTEM

The 1880's were the critical period, and the introduction of organised secondary education into Ireland was the critical factor, involving as it did 'payment by results'. In 1878 the British parliament passed the Intermediate Education (Ireland) Bill which allotted funds for the establishment of a Board that would conduct examinations at four secondary levels and award prizes for scholarships to successful candidates as well as results fees to schools from which the qualifying students came. <sup>50</sup>

At that time the schools of the Christian Brothers were considered primary schools, though in fact for many years, work normally deemed 'secondary' was being taught to a significant minority of the pupils. Primary schools were not intended to send pupils for the Intermediate examinations and the Act had been framed to exclude

<sup>49</sup> Welsh, L.P. Geordie - Orphan of the Empire, Perth, 1989, also Welsh, L.P. The Bindoon File, Perth, 1990.

<sup>50</sup> These matters are discussed thoroughly in Coldrey, B.M. The Christian Brothers and the Irish Revolution, 1838 - 1921, Dublin, 1988, pp. 87-109.

specifically the ordinary National schools from participation. However, a loophole permitted the Brothers to send candidates and they did so - with increasing success.

It was this success which, ironically, made the Congregation a significant and controversial factor in Irish education; and this role it has retained a century later. The Institute is both a 'significant' and 'controversial' factor in education. Over the twenty years, 1879 until 1900, the Brothers' schools dominated the Intermediate System, their pupils winning as much as 40% of the prize money allotted in many years, and rarely less than one-third of the results' fees.

This success was bitterly resented by the headmasters and clientele of many of the established secondary colleges, because the Brothers were providing secondary education - free or at nominal rates - for a class of pupils deemed not to require secondary education for their stations in life. Moreover, the Brothers' teaching the secondary work so successfully, as judged by their consistent results, had never been university trained. This galled many of the masters at established Protestant and Catholic middle class colleges who were often graduates, (in the case of Protestant staff), or priests (in the case of Catholic colleges). The charges against the Brothers were levelled with some venom: their pupils were not suited to secondary work; nor did they require it for their (lowly) avocations; the Brothers were untrained to teach higher classes, especially the classics; they were merely exploiting the pupils to make money for the Institute; they should cease doing so, and return to their real mission, that is, to primary education exclusively.

A corollary of the above view was that since neither Brothers nor their pupils, (the 'Paddy Stinks and Mickey Muds' of James Joyce's allusion), were appropriate for secondary education, the only explanation for their continued and aggravating success was that the Brothers were beating their pupils to qualify beyond their real needs and abilities. Now there was a grain of truth in this; Brothers discipline did become more urgent and severe in this period. However, discipline in all secondary

schools was and remained severe. In fact, 'every' teacher was beating his pupils to facilitate success in the wonderworld of examination where success promised so much - in the first flush of their modern use. The Brothers' reputation for severity dates from the 1880's, in their involvement in the Irish Intermediate examinations and in equivalent secondary work in other countries where they had schools and colleges. The Brothers never lost this image for severity. <sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Arnold Lunn discusses fear driven examination success in the Brothers school in Brisbane (Australia) in the years after World War II in Lunn, A. Over the Top with Jim, Macmillan, (Aust.) Brisbane, 1991.



## EXECUTIVE ATTITUDES TO DISCIPLINE

How did the Brothers' Executive react to these changed circumstances in the Brothers' role and image? Matters of school discipline do not appear to have been separately discussed at General Chapters between 1850 and 1896, which suggests that for most of that period these issues were no cause for concern. However, there were changes during the 1880's and at the 1896 General Chapter: a sub-committee was appointed to discuss the issue of 'Corporal Punishment in the Schools'. It appears to have treated the issue of school discipline exhaustively and produced a set of regulations for the Brothers which appear ahead of their times. Its Regulations and their Preamble are worth quoting in some detail:

*With a view to avoiding, as far as possible, the use of corporal punishment in the schools, the Chapter recommends the Brothers to encourage the spirit of emulation amongst the pupils by a judicious use of premiums and privileges.*

*Every Brother of experience will know how to arouse this spirit; for many useful hints on the subject the attention of the novices is directed to the article 'Greater progress with less punishment' in the Educational Record for 1892. The following regulations are to be observed in regard to corporate punishment:*

(a) *No instrument of punishment is to be used in the schools except a strap of leather, that is not to exceed 13 inches in length, 1.25 inches in width, and 0.25 inch in thickness. In junior schools the strap is to be of smaller dimensions; and in each case the strap is to be supplied by the agent for the sale of our books, Dublin.*

(b) *No child shall be punished on any part of the body save on the palm of the hand.*

(c) *Corporal punishment is to be administered by the Brothers only. Assistant teachers and monitors are not allowed to strike the pupils, and Brothers in charge of schools must not permit their assistants and monitors to have straps, sticks or pointers in class unless when they are necessary for pointing on maps or blackboards.*

(d) *Corporal punishment is not to be administered for separate home lessons. Punishment is to be reserved until all the home lessons under examination shall have been examined.* <sup>52</sup>

There were additional regulations banning punishment for failure to answer questions, 'degrading punishments' such as kneeling in front of the class, detention of pupils during recess without the express leave of the Principal or the infliction of more than five slaps on any one pupil in any school day.

These things rested and there are no references to Brothers and corporal punishment in the Superior-General's Letter Books over the next four years. However, at the General Chapter of 1900, while no special sub-committee on 'School Discipline' was appointed, the Committee on the Schools did consider the matter and its comments suggest that the issue had not been fully resolved, that is, that the incidence of corporal punishment had not declined as it was meant to do. It noted in its Report to the Chapter:

*It is generally complained that the use of the slapper in the schools is excessive. As the slapping is given chiefly for failure in Home Lessons and for incorrect work in sums, it is recommended that the Home Lessons should be suited to the Junior Classes and consist of what has been taught in school.* <sup>53</sup>

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52 Minutes, General Chapter 1896, Unpublished, Ms., Christian Brothers Archives, Rome.

53 Minutes, General Chapter 1900, Unpublished Ms., Christian Brothers Archives, Rome

The Regulations on corporal punishment were fine tuned, and Chapter directed that anything savouring of cruelty or injustice towards the children should be eschewed. The Chapter noted a recent Common Law decision which reaffirmed the right of a teacher in loco parentis to inflict 'moderate and reasonable' punishment on a pupil, but stressed that there were limits beyond which the law would not countenance severe punishment of minors.

The files of the Superior-General, M.T. Moylan, 1900-1905 show only two letters in which Moylan or an Assistant wrote criticising a Brother for using unjust and/or excessive punishment of one of the boys in his class. In November, 1901 he wrote to a Brother Alban as follows:

*Though I wrote to you so short a time ago on the necessity of treating the boys with much kindness and observing great prudence when obliged to resort to punishment I very much regret that an instance of very severe punishment alleged to have been inflicted by you within the last two or three days has just been brought under my notice.*

Moylan reminded Br. Alban that he had been 'extremely impudent' and 'absolutely unjust' in requiring a boy to come to the monastery after school hours to weed the monastery garden. The boy had not appeared and had been severely punished the following day in class, 'entirely in excess of what the Rule permits' as the Superior-General said. He concluded 'a more signal instance of injustice to a boy I do not remember to have every heard.'<sup>54</sup>

In the second letter, one of the Assistants, T.I. O'Neill, wrote to a Br. Joachim, in May 1905, that his punishment of certain boys in his class had been excessive:<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Moylan to Br. Alban, 30 November 1901. Letter Books, M.P. Moylan, Superior-General, Christian Brothers Archives, Rome.

<sup>55</sup> O'Neill to Br. Joachim, 1 May, 1905. Letter Books, M.P. Moylan, Superior-General, Christian Brothers Archives, Rome.

*We have looked into the matter of your severity towards some boys in your school - have heard both sides - and we have no hesitation in saying that you have been altogether too severe in your punishments. I need scarcely say that such conduct will not be tolerated, and if there is any repetition of it, the matter will be of serious consequence to you.*

There is no further comment in the archives on either on these two matters. Meanwhile at the General Chapter of 1905, some ten years after the matter of corporal punishment had been raised seriously and urgently, school discipline was further discussed. "Abuse of corporal punishment existed in some schools', although in others 'the Act is being carried out in the proper spirit and with the best results. <sup>56</sup> It is difficult to know how accurate this statement was, since most of the Brothers' schools had sections devoted to preparation of pupils for the Intermediate examinations and the enthusiasm for excellent results had by no means abated.

At the conclusion of each Chapter the recently elected Superior was accustomed to write to all the Brothers concerning the deliberations of the recent meeting. After the Chapters of 1896, 1900, and 1905 corporal punishment and school discipline figured strongly in these Circular Letters <sup>57</sup> and then the emphasis disappeared for many years. In Ireland, especially, political questions came to the fore and the national turbulence made school discipline a low priority for Chapter deliberations.

Over twenty years later a major revision of the Directory and Rules of the Institute included two pages on 'Conduct the Brothers are to Observe in Correcting the Pupils' and the principles outlined are along lines similar to those first published in detail at the 1896 Chapter. There is a new emphasis on the Brothers' role in residential schools, since Boarding schools were prominent in the Congregation's ministry in Australia, and Industrial schools had special prominence in the Institute's work in both Ireland

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<sup>56</sup> Minutes, General Chapter, 1905. Unpublished Ms. Christian Brothers Archives, Rome.

<sup>57</sup> Circular Letters of Superiors-General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools of Ireland, Dublin, 1934, p. 122; 191.

and the Antipodes. In these institutions, the 1927 Rules enjoined the Brothers to especially care for the pastoral welfare of the pupils: <sup>58</sup>

*As the Brothers hold the position of parents in regard to the children in these schools every effort should be made to make the school as much as possible resemble a home; in this way a nice family tone and spirit will be cultivated and much good thereby effected.*

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Directory and Rules of the Congregation of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Ireland, Dublin, 1927, p. 298.

## THEORY AND REALITY

In 1933 Superior-General, J.J. Hennessy required all Principals to see that the children in their respective schools were 'treated with kindness' and that punishment 'should be the exception, not the rule, in the classes'<sup>59</sup> It is plain that the problem did not disappear, since it was at a somewhat later General Chapter that a delegate, for the first time, remarked on the 'unenviable reputation' of the Brothers in the question of school discipline. This came after more than a half-century of ceaseless exhortation from Chapters, Superiors-General and appropriate sections of the Rules and Constitutions for Corporal punishment to be minimised.<sup>60</sup> These exhortations and regulations were honoured in the breach by many Brothers most of the time. The way official Congregation policy was ignored by the Brothers is the main finding of this study.

There is something fascinating that this should be so, since the Brothers were dedicated to the ministry of the schools and to the Religious life with its three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Since many Brothers were ignoring the repeated admonitions of higher Superiors on school discipline, there must have been weighty reasons why this was so. Until some years after World War II general discipline practice remained severe in schools in the English-speaking world. The Brothers were simply part of this world, with the educational, social and political ideas of their times. Admonitions of the Brothers' executives fell on deaf ears since the Brothers actually teaching in school were part of a long tradition in which corporal punishment was accepted as a normal mode of disciplining students.

Moreover, the Brothers since their foundation had as one of their primary thrusts, encouraging the social mobility of their deprived, working class pupils - with the explicit or tacit support of generations of ambitious parents. The education of

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<sup>59</sup> Circular Letters p. 309.

<sup>60</sup> Minutes, General Chapter, 1947. Unpublished Ms. Christian Brothers Archives, Rome.

deprived students for social mobility by means of examination success almost required severity in the classroom.<sup>61</sup>

This dilemma between admonitions to kindness and restraint in dealing with boys in school, and the requirements for examination success, many Brothers never solved. By means of severe discipline, Brothers, often working class in background themselves, imposed middle class values on their pupils, to facilitate their entry into middle class society by way of achievement in school. The imposition of sacrifices on their young was the way people in the severely deprived sub-culture raised themselves.

In addition, most Brothers, until the 1960's faced enormous classes of turbulent pupils, with few resources in their day-to-day work in the schools. These problems were accentuated in residential institutions. Punishment was necessary to keep schools and institutions functioning at all, since the nature of the staff/student ratio did not admit of a great deal of freedom for student self-expression.

Edmund Rice's zeal for compassion for the poor was side-tracked by the pressures among the deprivés themselves for upward social mobility which required, at school level, an intense driving concentration on examination success with pupils under severe control by the Brothers in the thrust for academic achievement. In this quest for social mobility the Brothers had the support of their working class clientele.

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<sup>61</sup> This question of the Christian Brothers and their influence on the upward mobility of Irish and Australian Catholics will be dealt with in another paper.

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The following books by Barry M. Coldrey are available from the respective publishers:

*Australian Federal Politics and Foreign Policy*, 3rd ed., Hargreen/Edward Arnold, Caulfield East, Victoria, 1986.

*Bruce Dawe's Poetry* (Coles Notes). T.C. Lothian (Publishers), Port Melbourne, Victoria.

*Australian History* (HSC Resources), Cooryco Publishing, Essendon, Victoria, 1985.

*Politics* (HSC Resources), Cooryco, Essendon, Victoria, 1985.

*Australian Foreign Policy*, Collins Dove, Blackburn, Victoria, 1985.

*Critical Issues in Peace Studies*, Hodder and Stoughton/Edward Arnold, Caulfield East, Victoria, 1987.

*Legal Studies* (HSC Resources), Cooryco, Essendon, Victoria, 1985.

*Education for Revolution: The Christian Brothers and Radical Irish Nationalism, 1838-1921*, Gill and Macmillan, London and New York, 1989.

*Essential English Summary*, Tamanaraik Press, Melbourne, Victoria, 1990.



# CLONTARF OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

PRES. MAURICE WHITFIELD

(FOUNDED 1960)  
Bro. O'Doherty



We, the Committee of the Clontarf Old Boys Association, all ex-pupils of Clontarf, write this letter because of the recent spate of articles attacking the Christian Brothers and their work in their institutions, namely: Clontarf, Castledare, Bindaon and Tardun.

We are disenchanted by accusations which have been made and then taken up strongly by the media and given excessive coverage. When our President objected to these attacks and spoke with thanks of the care, training and support of the Brothers, he received an abusive letter in reply. We are aware that it is a small vocal minority who are promoting these charges. Unhappy grown-ups tend to magnify the grievances of their childhood, and use this as a reason for their own failures in their adult lives. Today these embittered children have turned to the media, books, the press, television and radio, for revenge.

During our years at Clontarf we lived a very ordered way of life. Scholastically we were at school to the Junior Certificate level and those who showed an aptitude for study and further advancement were enrolled at Aquinas College to complete their Leaving Certificate. Sport was high on the agenda both within the school and beyond. Leisure activities were well catered for with the football fields, the river, the farm, horses and the band. The maintenance of the property was in our hands and each of us had to attend to daily chores. All of this instilled into us the manly virtues of discipline, self reliance, sociability and fair play. Our religious living was attended to by our daily prayer and the use of the Clontarf chapel.

We made contacts and formed firm and lasting friendships with Catholic families, when we were their guests on one Sunday of each month. Also it was organised that each boy spent the Christmas vacation with a Catholic family. As well as giving us an experience of family living, this added a refining and socialising aspect to our lives.

Last year we organised and conducted an Old Boys' Reunion at Clontarf. We were over-whelmed by the response. The majority of those contacted attended, coming from all States and New Zealand. The loyalty of these Old Boys was expressed spontaneously, when to a man they rose and gave the Christian Brothers a standing ovation.

Over the years we have received many letters of commendation, from ex-pupils commending the work and efforts of the Brothers on behalf of the under privileged at Clontarf. Many of us as parents have enrolled our children at the colleges of the Brothers as day pupils and boarders. With these loyalties we are concerned that the Brothers and their ideals should be so down graded.

We know and appreciate that the Christian Brothers through their consistent example, discipline and self sacrifice, gave us the strength and character to lead productive and decent lives as citizens of our State.

Yours sincerely,  
Clontarf Old Boys Committee

## CASTLEDARE ORPHANAGE.

### Difficulties of Finance.

Between 400 and 500 people were present yesterday afternoon at the annual reunion of the friends and benefactors of the Castledare Junior Orphanage, which was held in the grounds of the orphanage at Queen's Park. The afternoon was spent in witnessing a sports programme and in the inspection of the institution. Musical items were rendered by the Clontarf Boys' Band.

In an address to the assembled guests Mr. President Dwyer made an appeal on behalf of the orphanage and his appeal was supported by Mr. C. Cross, M.L.A., who expressed his admiration for the work which was being done at Castledare.

There are 40 children in the institution which is under the care of the Christian Brothers. The children's ages range from four to ten years, and in the orphanage they are trained, clothed and cared for preparatory to being transferred to the Clontarf Senior Orphanage, at the age of ten.

The principal (the Rev. Brother Cahill) read the financial statement, which showed that during the past 12 months the expenses of the orphanage amounted to £1,362, an average of 13/ for each child weekly. The State maintenance allowance amounted to £516, or 8/ for each child. This left a deficit of £746, against which £633 had been received from appeals, donations and bequests. The orphanage had been fortunate in receiving £225 from two benefactors during the year and in addition £164 had been received from the Lotteries Commission and £190 from direct appeal, while profit from the produce of the farm had added a further £54, making up the amount of £633. There was thus a debit balance for the 12 months of £118, and the bank overdraft amounted to £2,800. Donations received yesterday afternoon amounted to nearly £100, affording a considerable relief to the institution.

The work of the Christian Brothers is voluntary and gratuitous, but in spite of this it has not been found possible to make the institution self-supporting as the children in their charge are too young to contribute any labour to the production of profit. The orphanage is therefore entirely dependent on the bounty of the State and of private individuals.