

Eth. - 15th. October, 19~~5~~52.

SEXENNIAL  
*Visitation Report of* CASTLEDARE.

COMMUNITY. Brothers W. Malachy McDonnell (S.), J. Hugh Crowley (S.S. and B.)  
 R. Irenaeus Harnetty (4th. Vows), L. Hyacinth Murphy (Conversus),  
 F. Lambert Wise (Conversus).

OBSERVANCE. The condition of this Community is not satisfactory. Unfortunately there is a lack of harmony in the Community, which, small as it is, seems to be ~~xxx~~ divided into two camps - the Superior and the Sub-Superior in one, and the other three Brothers in the other. There is no open hostility, but the absence of a good spirit is very real and obvious.

The Superior and the Sub-Superior are strongly of the opinion that Brother Hyacinth is out of sympathy with them, and that he ~~ex~~ exercises a bad influence on both Brother Irenaeus and the boys. Brother Hyacinth has undoubtedly influence over the boys, and has not spared himself over the years in undertaking every responsibility that was given to him, and the Superior and the Sub-Superior feel that the boys have come to regard him so completely as in charge of everything connected with them, that they have <sup>no</sup> interest in the other Brothers, and, at times, little respect for them. The Superior and the Sub-Superior feel that Brother Hyacinth should be transferred.

I do not share their opinion of Brother Hyacinth. He appears to be ready to cooperate to the full. In my talk with him, I could detect nothing to find fault with. He seemed to be sincere and anxious to give of his best. He does exercise some influence over Brother Irenaeus, due mainly to the kind help that he gave him when, earlier in the year, he was finding difficulty in controlling the boys. Brother Hyacinth very likely realises that the Superior and the Sub-Superior have no confidence in him, and his reaction is quite normal.

I was not so favourably impressed by Brother Irenaeus, who seems to me to be somewhat selfcentred and cynical. At the same time he has found conditions at Castledare extremely difficult, so much so, that he has been strongly tempted to withdraw from the Congregation at the end of the year. The absence of anything like regular Community Life disturbed him, and he has been bewildered by the attitude of the Superior and the Sub-Superior. He told me that he wrote to one of the Consultors about a month ago, expressing his frame of mind. The principal matters that were disturbing him were (1) Absence of a regular Time-Table. (2) Unsympathetic attitude of the Sub-Superior, whose influence over the Superior, he feels, was strong. (3) Long delays by the Superior in posting, as well as in distributing, letters. (4) The Superior's seeming indifference to time and to punctuality. (5) Too many late nights driving the Superior or the Sub-Superior on business. (6) Method of conducting Prayers etc. for the boys by the Superior and the Sub-Superior. (7) Harsh treatment of the boys by the Superior and the Sub-Superior. (8) Lack of Community Recreation. (9) Schoolwork too much interfered with.

Brother Irenaeus has some justification for the points that he raised, although I believe that <sup>he</sup> wanted to be critical. Although the ages of ~~the~~ the boys range from only five to ten years, they have been saying very long Night Prayers, lasting for about half an hour, and all the time under strict supervision. Correction, and exhortation, and threats, and punishments, continue throughout the whole time of prayer. Much the same sort of thing takes place at Mass. I found it practically impossible to hear Mass, or to say the Rosary, without continual distraction. When Brother Hugh was Acting-Superior little boys were sent out from the Chapel for unsatisfactory conduct, left standing in the cold for long periods, even on frosty winter mornings,



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OBSERVANCE (continued). and were given no breakfast. The Superior's method of correction is often a smack on the face. And the children are only young - five to ten years of age. I am afraid that much of the unsatisfactory condition of the the Community is the result of the incompetency of the Superior and the Sub-Superior.

A big help in improving the discipline of the boys would be serious, uninterrupted school-work. The Superior does not seem to be able to organise the school for earnest work. There are many distractions. It is hard to believe that his own boys, the youngest ones, are being effectively taught. The other two Brothers with classes would welcome the opportunity of giving the boys solid courses of study.

The Time-Table for the Community Spiritual Exercises is not satisfactory. The Superior decided that after the midday meal was the best time. It works out to be, perhaps, the worst time. The Superior is not a practical man, nor does he readily admit weaknesses that are obvious enough. He is to do his best to put a suitable Time-Table into operation as soon as possible.

The Sub-Superior has little, if any, contact with the boys except in the Chapel, and during a short period in the playing-fields. Even during the Superior's long absences from the Community, through illness, he did not take a class. Brother Hyacinth took the Superior's boys together with his own. In my opinion Brother Hugh is not well-suited to the Castledare Community.

Brother Lambert is not doing much work in the fields. He seems to spend most of his time driving the truck. The Superior is not satisfied with what he is doing, but yet he does nothing to improve matters. He has been sending boys to Brother Lambert's room for attention to bruises and similar complaints. This is dangerous, and it should be unnecessary with the Nuns available. I told him to make a safer arrangement.

Magnificent work is being done by the Brothers under real difficulties. The boys, small and young as they are, can be unbelievably troublesome but the Brothers, by their patience and perseverance, are gradually winning them to better dispositions.

1. BOYS. There are 115 boys altogether in the Institution. Of these, 58 are Migrants, 17 are New Australians, and 40 are Australian-born. ~~xxxxxx~~ 10 of the boys are 11 years of age; 15 are 10; 21 are 9; 23 are 8; 23 are 7; 20 are 6; and 3 are 5.

48 are in Class 1, taught by the Superior. 48 are in Class 2, taught by Brother Hyacinth; and 19 are in Class 3, taught by Brother Irenaeus.

The Bursar was busy

FINANCES. ~~xxxxxx~~ getting ready for the Annual Field-Day, and the books were not ready for inspection. From last year's Balance Sheet the following was taken :

Income, £10,853. (Fees, £814; Donations, £678; Govmt. Subsidies, £6291; Field Day, £1994.)

Expenditure, £11,882. (Upkeep, £7647; Visn. £163; Repairs, £276; Games, £296; Farm Exs. £1632; Build. and Maintenance, £1375.)

Excess Expenditure, £1029. Cost per head, £103. A £2000 Loan was repaid by Tardun during the year 1951.

15/12/1951 : O/D at Bank, £2831. 15/10/1952 : O/D at Bank, £4000 approx..

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FINANCES (continued).

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BROTHERS' HEALTH. The Superior is not at all well, and during the time of the Visitation he was being troubled with haemorrhages. He is to see the specialist on Tuesday; I told him not wait until Tuesday if he felt that his condition called for earlier attention. He is looking very poorly, and the worries of the Visitation did not help his condition. Brother Hyacinth has varicose veins that will soon call for attention. The other three Brothers seemed well, thank God, though Brother Hugh looks very cadaverous and tired. He still seems to keep his unique hours for retiring to rest.

THE NUNS. There are four Nuns. They attend to the mending principally, although they also serve the boys in the refectory, and take charge of the wash-up. In spite of the four Nuns, there is still need for a domestic staff of secular people. One of the Nuns has a nasty cough, but she says that she is alright, and that she has everything that she requires to clear it up.

*J. F. [Signature]*